



Situational Leadership Management of School Principals Through Academic Supervision in Improving Teacher Performance

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Abstract: Improving teacher performance is a key factor in achieving quality basic education, which is greatly influenced by the effectiveness of the principal's leadership, particularly through the implementation of situational leadership and academic supervision. This study aims to analyze the principal's situational leadership management through academic supervision, its supporting and inhibiting factors, and its impact on improving teacher performance at SDN Palasari, Cianjur Regency, and SDN Pangestu, Sukabumi Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, with the research subjects being the principal and teachers. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that SDN Palasari implements structured and scheduled academic supervision, which has an impact on improving teacher regularity and discipline, although it still tends to be top-down. Meanwhile, SDN Pangestu implements collaborative and reflective learning community-based academic supervision, which has an impact on increasing teacher motivation and professional development, but is not yet supported by an optimal control system. The conclusion of this study indicates that the principal's situational leadership management through academic supervision is effective in improving teacher performance if it balances structural and collaborative approaches according to the teacher's needs and readiness.

Keywords: academic supervision; elementary school management; situational leadership; teacher performance.

Introduction

Improving the quality of education in educational institutions is largely determined by the quality of teacher performance in carrying out the learning process. Teachers are the primary actors who interact directly with students, making their professionalism, pedagogical competence, and performance strategic factors in achieving national education goals. This aligns with the mandate of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which affirms that education aims to develop students' potential to become faithful, knowledgeable, capable, creative, and responsible individuals. However, various studies and empirical findings in the field indicate that teacher performance is not yet fully optimal. Frequently encountered problems include non-contextualized lesson planning, a lack of innovative learning implementation, and learning evaluation that is not oriented toward improving student competency. This situation demands that school principals serve as instructional leaders capable of managing, fostering, and

developing teacher professionalism on an ongoing basis.

Principals have managerial and leadership responsibilities for improving teacher performance through various approaches, including academic supervision. Academic supervision is a series of coaching activities aimed at helping teachers improve their ability to plan, implement, and evaluate learning. According to Glickman, academic supervision is not simply an administrative oversight activity, but rather a collaborative, professional support process aimed at improving the quality of learning and teacher performance. In practice, the effectiveness of academic supervision is greatly influenced by the principal's leadership style. Principals who rigidly adopt a single leadership style are often less able to respond to the diversity of teacher characteristics, competencies, and readiness. Therefore, a flexible, adaptive, and contextual leadership approach, namely situational leadership, is necessary.

The situational leadership theory developed by Hersey and Blanchard emphasizes that no single leadership style is most effective in all situations. Leadership effectiveness depends heavily on the leader's ability to adapt their leadership style to the level of readiness, maturity, and competence of their subordinates. In the school context, principals are required to adapt their academic supervision approach based on the teachers' conditions, both in terms of professional ability and work motivation. The application of situational leadership management through academic supervision allows principals to employ a variety of leadership styles, such as directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, according to teacher needs. This approach is believed to be able to encourage more effective and sustainable teacher performance improvement because it is humanistic, participatory, and oriented toward professional development.

Normatively, the role of the principal as a leader and academic supervisor has been regulated in various education policies. Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers emphasizes that teachers are professionals who must be continuously fostered and developed. Furthermore, Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 13 of 2007 concerning Standards for School/Madrasah Principals states that principals are required to possess managerial, supervisory, and leadership competencies in managing educators and education personnel. In addition, Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 15 of 2018 concerning Fulfillment of the Workload of Teachers, Principals, and School Supervisors emphasizes that principals have the primary task of implementing managerial and supervisory responsibilities to improve the quality of learning. Despite the availability of policies and theoretical frameworks, the implementation of situational leadership in academic supervision in schools still faces various challenges. Some principals have not optimally managed academic supervision with an adaptive approach to teachers' circumstances. Supervision is still perceived as a formality and has not been fully utilized as a professional development tool that has a real impact on improving teacher performance.

Based on this description, research on the Principal's Situational Leadership Management through Academic Supervision in Improving Teacher Performance is important and relevant to be studied in depth. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of educational leadership management, as well as practical contributions for school principals in managing effective, adaptive academic supervision that is oriented towards improving teacher performance and learning quality. The main research problem in this study is how principals implement situational leadership through academic supervision in an effort to improve teacher performance in elementary schools. This problem encompasses the extent to which principals are able to adapt their leadership styles—Directing, Coaching, Supporting, and Delegating—to the level of teacher readiness, competence, and motivation in carrying out professional duties. Implementing an inappropriate leadership style can hinder the achievement of learning objectives and reduce teacher morale.

In general, this study aims to analyze the application of the principal's situational leadership style through academic supervision in improving teacher performance at SDN Palasari, Cianjur Regency and SDN Pangestu, Sukabumi Regency. This study aims to reveal the extent to which the principal is able to adapt his leadership style to the teacher's condition through the stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising, and how this application impacts the improvement of professionalism, work effectiveness, and teacher contribution in supporting the quality of education in elementary schools. The novelty of this research lies in its

analysis of the principal's situational leadership management through academic supervision, comparing two elementary school contexts that implement different supervisory approaches. This research not only captures the implementation of academic supervision but also reveals supporting factors, inhibiting factors, and their impact on teacher performance. Thus, this study provides a new perspective on the importance of balancing structural and collaborative approaches in principal leadership.

Educational management is the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling educational resources to achieve learning objectives effectively and efficiently. Terry (Terry, 1977) stated that good management is characterized by clear planning, directed implementation, systematic evaluation, and ongoing follow-up. In the elementary school context, learning management is not solely the responsibility of teachers but involves the roles of various parties, including parents of students. Situational leadership is a modern leadership theory that emphasizes the importance of adapting leadership style to the situation and conditions of subordinates. This theory was developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard (1988) (Chandry & Tung, 2024) who argue that no single leadership style is best for all situations. An effective leader must be able to diagnose the readiness level of subordinates and then adjust their leadership style accordingly. According to Hersey and Blanchard, there are four leadership styles that a leader can use: telling, selling, participating, and delegating.

Academic supervision in the educational context is a process of professional guidance and mentoring provided by a principal or educational supervisor to teachers with the goal of improving their professionalism, pedagogical competence, and the quality of classroom learning. Academic supervision focuses not only on assessing teacher performance but also on helping teachers develop their teaching skills effectively and sustainably to optimally achieve learning objectives. Teacher performance is a measure of a teacher's success in carrying out their professional duties and responsibilities at school. According to Rivai and Sagala (Sagala, 2013), teacher performance is the work results a person can achieve in carrying out the tasks assigned to them based on their skills, experience, sincerity, and time spent. Teacher performance is greatly influenced by factors such as motivation, competence, the work environment, and the principal's leadership style.

Several previous studies have shown that a principal's situational leadership can improve teacher performance. Research by (Ramdani et al., 2024) found that the most effective leadership style implemented by principals to improve teacher performance is situational leadership. This research's empirical basis is strengthened by several previous studies examining the correlation between situational leadership, academic supervision, and teacher performance. (Ritonga et al., 2020) found that situational leadership significantly influences performance through instruction that varies according to individual needs, in line with the findings of Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (Swick, 1979) regarding the concept of developmental supervision, which emphasizes the importance of adapting leadership approaches to teachers' levels of professional development. Furthermore (Mulyasa, 2002) concluded that principal adaptability has a positive impact on school climate, motivation, and teacher professionalism. More recent research by (Nurlaela & Rostini, 2025) shows that adjusting leadership styles can increase teacher engagement by up to 70%, while Zibran Bizany et al. emphasized that matching leadership styles to staff readiness creates a more productive work environment. Finally, a study by Khasnah Syaidah and Muhammad Latif highlighted the effectiveness of participating and delegating styles in improving teacher discipline, although they continued to emphasize the importance of varying leadership styles in addressing the various supervisory challenges in the school environment (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

The theories selected in this study are directly relevant as the primary analytical tools to answer the problem formulation in depth. Situational Leadership Theory serves as the basic foundation for analyzing how the principals of Palasari Elementary School and Pangestu Elementary School adjust their managerial styles—whether through directing, coaching, supporting, or delegating approaches—when faced with diverse teacher characteristics. This is integrated with the Concept of Academic Supervision, which acts as a mediating variable or concrete action channel for situational leadership in improving the learning process. Furthermore, Henri Fayol's Management Theory provides a relevant procedural framework for systematically

mapping the principal's workflow, from the supervision planning stage to the final evaluation, thus providing this study with a clear and measurable managerial structure.

Empirically, this research is strengthened by the relevance of previous studies that serve as comparisons and validation of the findings. A study by Mulyasa (Mulyasa, 2014) provides validation of the effectiveness of situational leadership, which has been proven to significantly improve teacher performance and professionalism. From a methodological perspective, the concept of developmental supervision by Glickman et al. is highly relevant in directing observation and interview techniques to provide gradual professional assistance according to the teacher's maturity level. The latest 2025 reference by Fauzi and Bizany et al. also emphasizes the current context of this research, demonstrating that the issue of situational leadership remains crucial in facing the dynamics of education and the challenges of the latest curriculum at the elementary school level. Overall, this integration of theory and previous studies significantly contributed to strengthening the research methodology and data analysis. This relevance facilitated the development of research instruments, particularly in establishing indicators of teacher readiness and principal instructional style in the interview and observation guidelines. Ultimately, this theoretical and empirical framework served as a formal standard in the discussion chapter to compare theoretical expectations with objective facts found in the field, both at SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu, in order to produce accurate and credible research conclusions.

The theoretical framework of this research is built on the integration of classical management theory, adaptive leadership, and instructional supervision. At a macro level, the research adopts Henri Fayol's Management Theory, which views the principal as a manager who carries out planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions in managing school resources. These functions are then narrowed down through Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory, which places leader flexibility as the key to effectiveness. In this theory, the principal is required to diagnose the level of teacher readiness and adjust his behavior through four main styles: directing, coaching, supporting, or delegating. As an operational bridge, Glickman's Concept of Academic Supervision (Tomal et al., 2015), is used, which defines supervision as collaborative professional assistance to improve teacher instructional abilities, ultimately leading to improved teacher performance in accordance with competency standards set out in Indonesian education regulations.

The conceptual framework in this study illustrates the flow of thought on how the principal's situational leadership is implemented through academic supervision mechanisms to influence teacher performance at SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu. This flow begins with input in the form of identification of teacher characteristics and maturity levels by the principal. In the process stage, the principal implements supervisory management that includes program planning, team organization, classroom observation with an appropriate leadership style (situational), and follow-up in the form of feedback. The relationship between these variables is positioned in such a way that academic supervision becomes an instrument or intervention variable that connects the principal's managerial policies with the quality of teacher performance. The expected output is an increase in teacher professionalism as measured by the quality of learning tools, the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in the classroom, and the accuracy of student learning outcome evaluations. Thus, this conceptual framework provides a visual and logical illustration that teacher performance is not a stand-alone variable, but rather the result of adaptive and supportive leadership management (Hornby, 2011).

This research was compiled by referring to credible and up-to-date literature to ensure theoretical and empirical validity. The main foundation of leadership in this research refers to the fundamental work of Hersey and Blanchard (1988) on Situational Leadership, which was then contextualized in the world of modern education through the thinking of Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2014) in the book *Supervision and Instructional Leadership: A Developmental Approach*. These sources provide a strong foundation for viewing the role of the principal not only as a manager, but as a supervisor who is adaptive to the professional development of teachers. To strengthen the research's relevance to the current dynamics of education in Indonesia, this article cites various recent studies published between 2023 and 2025, such as those by Syarifudin (2023), Chandra Fauzi (2025), and Bizany et al. (2025). The use of these very recent sources demonstrates that the issues of situational leadership management and

academic supervision remain crucial and relevant topics in addressing current challenges to education quality. Furthermore, aspects of legality and professional standards are based on primary sources of government regulations, including Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers and Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 13 of 2007 concerning Principal Standards, thus ensuring that all arguments developed in this study have strong legal and academic legitimacy.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type. This approach was chosen to understand in depth the Principal's Situational Leadership Management through Academic Supervision to improve Teacher Performance in elementary schools. Case studies allow researchers to explore the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating learning holistically in a real context. The research was conducted at Palasari Public Elementary School, Cibeber District, Cianjur Regency, West Java and Pangestu Public Elementary School, Sukalarang District, Sukabumi Regency, West Java, from November 2025 to January 2026. The research subjects consisted of two principals and two teachers.

Data collection was conducted through three techniques, namely: (1) in-depth interviews, to explore the understanding and experience of teachers and principals regarding the Principal's Situational Leadership Management through Academic Supervision to improve Teacher Performance in elementary schools.; (2) direct observation, to observe the planning and implementation practices of the Principal's Situational Leadership Management through Academic Supervision to improve Teacher Performance in elementary schools; and (3) documentation studies, to review learning planning documents such as RPP, semester programs, and teacher evaluation records in the Principal's Situational Leadership Management through Academic Supervision to improve Teacher Performance in elementary schools. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive analysis technique of Miles and Huberman, which includes the stages of data reduction, data presentation, as well as drawing conclusions and verification. To maintain the validity of the data, source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques were used, as well as member checks with key informants to ensure the data conforms to the researcher's interpretation (Moleong, 2019).

Results and Discussion

The results of this study revealed that the principal's situational leadership through academic supervision can improve teacher performance. The management process begins with the planning stage, in which the principals of SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu conducted an initial mapping of teacher characteristics. This identification included levels of readiness, competency, and work motivation to determine the most appropriate leadership style, including directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. This planning was then formalized into the development of an academic supervision program that included a routine schedule, assessment instruments, and performance targets based on the professional development needs of teachers at each school.

The first finding indicates that principals in both educational units begin the academic supervision planning process by mapping teacher needs and readiness. The planning is not carried out uniformly, but rather tailored to the teacher's specific needs, including pedagogical competence, teaching experience, and work motivation.

At SDN Palasari, planning is focused on teacher competency improvement programs through formal channels such as In-House Training (IHT), workshops, and webinars. The principal assessed that some teachers still needed reinforcement in the fundamentals of lesson planning and implementation, so the program was structured.

"In developing teacher competency improvement programs, I tailor my approach to the teacher's level of preparedness. Teachers who still need guidance are focused on internal mentoring and training, while teachers who have progressed are directed to ongoing professional development." (Interview with the Principal of Palasari Elementary School)

School program documents and the IHT schedule demonstrate systematic planning, although implementation remains constrained by time and human resource constraints.

Meanwhile, at Pangestu Public Elementary School, academic supervision planning emphasizes a collaborative approach through learning communities, cluster forums, and the sharing of best practices. The principal believes that teachers' primary needs are spaces for reflection and collaboration. At Palasari Elementary School, teacher competency development program planning is not conducted haphazardly or using a "one-size-fits-all" approach. The principal recognizes that the quality of classroom learning depends heavily on the capacity of the teaching staff. Therefore, program planning is strategically designed and structured, with close attention to the level of readiness and individual needs of each teacher. The principal acts as a learning designer for his teachers, dividing development strategies into two main paths tailored to the results of internal competency mapping. By differentiating treatment between teachers who still need guidance and teachers who are ready to innovate, the principal of Palasari Elementary School has created a fair, proportional, and targeted climate for Human Resource (HR) development. This step ensures that the budget and time allocated for training are truly on target and have a direct impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

"We emphasize planning based on the real needs of teachers in the classroom. Therefore, our programs are heavily focused on discussions, sharing good practices, and community learning." (Interview with Pangestu Elementary School Principal)

These findings indicate that academic supervision planning in both schools is adaptive and reflects the principle of situational leadership, namely adapting leadership strategies to the conditions and needs of teachers.

The second finding that emerged was the organization of academic supervision through the division of roles, assignments, and the establishment of a teacher development structure. This organization was implemented differently in each school, but with the same goal: to support improved teacher performance. At SDN Palasari, the organization was carried out formally by forming a supervisory team involving the vice principal and senior teachers. The division of tasks and the supervision schedule were clearly outlined to ensure a focused implementation. In contrast to the formal approach emphasized at SDN Palasari, the statement by the SDN Pangestu Principal highlighted a more bottom-up and collaborative supervision paradigm. Planning was not dictated from above but rather derived from the real and specific needs (real-time problems) faced by teachers daily in the classroom. The basic principle of situational leadership emphasizes that there is no single "best" leadership style for all situations. Effective leaders must adapt their behavior based on the maturity or readiness level of their followers. This is clearly evident in the comparison of the two schools. The differences in strategy between SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu are not a managerial weakness or inconsistency, but rather a testament to the diagnostic acumen of each principal. Academic supervision at both schools is no longer viewed as an inspection or administrative assessment (finding faults), but has transformed into clinical and facilitative supervision. The principals act adaptively: serving as mentors for those in need of technical guidance and discussion partners for those seeking space to innovate.

"I clearly divide roles and responsibilities among the supervisory team, including the vice principal and senior teachers, to ensure effective supervision." (Interview with the Principal of Palasari Elementary School)

Teachers stated that this clear structure helped them understand the purpose and follow-up of supervision. The statement by the Principal of Palasari Elementary School regarding the division of roles between the vice principal and senior teachers demonstrates a paradigm shift from one-man leadership to Distributed Leadership. In the context of modern educational management, effective academic supervision cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of the principal, given the broad span of control and the existing administrative burden. Therefore, the formation of a structured supervision team is a tactical step that has several positive implications.

By involving the vice principal and senior teachers, the principal is essentially activating a collegial supervision mechanism. The appointed senior teachers typically have a recognized pedagogical track record among their peers. This creates a more fluid and horizontal guidance dynamic. Supervised teachers tend to be more open to input from fellow practitioners who are familiar with the realities and daily challenges in the classroom. A clear structure—who supervises, what instruments are used, and when—serves as a mitigation of this anxiety. This transparency shifts teachers' perception of supervision: from a "threat of judgment" to a

"professional partnership" aimed at improving the quality of teaching. Academic supervision loses its meaning without clear follow-up. The specific division of roles ensures that each supervisor (whether principal, vice principal, or senior teacher) has direct responsibility for the teachers they supervise.

The supervisory organizational structure at SDN Palasari reflects solid human resource management principles. The principal acts not only as a central supervisor but also as a system manager, building the capacity of the managerial team under him. For teachers, a transparent structure provides certainty of direction (clarity of operational objectives) so they can focus more on improving the quality of learning.

"Every teacher knows the schedule, objectives, and follow-up of supervision, so we feel it helps us improve the quality of learning." (Interview with Palasari Elementary School Teacher)

In contrast, at Pangestu Public Elementary School, the organization is more flexible and participatory. Supervision teams are formed as needed, and teachers are given space to act as facilitators within the learning community. At Palasari Elementary School, a mechanistic-structured approach is needed to provide clear guidance and build a foundation for teachers' understanding of the essence of supervision. Meanwhile, at Pangestu Elementary School, an organic-participatory approach is effective because teachers are assumed to have a higher level of collaborative readiness and initiative.

"I adjust the organization of supervision to the conditions and readiness of the teachers, so that supervision does not become a burden but a means of development." (Interview with the Principal of Pangestu Public Elementary School)

Observations suggest that this flexible structure encourages broader teacher engagement, although it can potentially lead to less consistent coordination. The principal's statement and your observation notes highlight the application of an organic organizational model to academic supervision. This approach contrasts sharply with the typically rigid and hierarchical mechanistic model. The principal's statement that supervision is tailored to "not be a burden but a means of development" demonstrates emotional intelligence in leadership. The principal understands that overly rigid and bureaucratic supervision often triggers resistance or even malicious compliance from teachers—where teachers perform well during assessments but revert to old habits after supervision is over. SDN Pangestu has successfully created a participatory and non-threatening supervision climate, but going forward, it requires "soft control mechanisms." For example, maintaining a flexible, community-based approach with mutually agreed-upon reporting deadlines or standardized reflection instruments that must be submitted at the end of a specific period.

The implementation of academic supervision at both schools demonstrated a strong application of situational leadership. The principals adapted the coaching model to the level of teacher readiness and independence. At SDN Palasari, supervision was implemented through formal classroom supervision, scheduled training, and mentoring from senior teachers to new teachers.

"I provide intensive support to teachers who still need guidance, while I direct teachers who are already independent towards reflective discussions." (Interview with the Principal of Palasari Elementary School)

Teachers perceived supervision as nurturing and providing clear direction. These findings demonstrate that SDN Palasari has successfully eroded the long-held stigma that supervision is merely an "inspection" or a search for administrative errors. By personalizing their communication style and the intensity of their guidance while in the field, the principal successfully created a sense of psychological safety. Teachers recognized that the ultimate goal of the principal's presence in the classroom (or in the discussion room) was purely to help them develop into better educators.

"We received clear direction and feedback, which improved our performance in managing learning." (Interview with a Palasari Elementary School Teacher)

At Pangestu Public Elementary School, supervision is primarily conducted through peer mentoring and reflection within the learning community. The striking differences in the implementation of academic supervision at these two schools highlight two distinct paradigms, both of which ultimately lead to improving the quality of learning management. At Palasari

Elementary School, teacher statements affirm the successful implementation of a highly structured clinical supervision model. This approach is characterized by providing specific, objective, and direct, actionable feedback. The clarity of feedback from supervisors—whether principals or delegated teams—serves as a concrete roadmap for teachers to analyze learning instruments and address technical deficiencies in the classroom. The impact of this clarity of instruction is significant psychologically and operationally; teachers are not left to fumble or assume where their weaknesses lie, but instead receive tactical solutions that can be immediately implemented to improve their pedagogical performance in subsequent meetings.

In contrast, supervision at Pangestu Public Elementary School took a much more horizontal and organic approach, utilizing peer mentoring and collective reflection within a learning community. Rather than relying on unilateral observation and instruction from an authority figure, this approach distributes the evaluation role evenly among fellow educators. In this model, teachers act as "critical friends," observing and providing feedback on their colleagues' teaching practices. The reflection process facilitated within the learning community allows for the exchange of experiences, real-time problem-solving, and the adoption of more fluid and contextual teaching strategies. This approach has proven effective in breaking down rigid hierarchical barriers, allowing teachers to feel more secure in admitting weaknesses and more motivated to learn from their colleagues' successes.

The contrasting phenomena in these two institutions demonstrate that the effectiveness of supervision implementation is not limited to a single method, but rather to the selection of appropriate instruments that align with the school's culture. SDN Palasari demonstrated that straightforward, precise, and top-down instruction is crucial for ensuring quality standards and providing a sense of security through certainty of direction. Meanwhile, SDN Pangestu successfully demonstrated that empowering a peer ecosystem (bottom-up) can foster high self-efficacy, collective awareness, and teacher independence in continuously evaluating and refining their teaching practices.

"Teacher mentoring is done through a learning community. We observe each other and provide open feedback." (Interview with Pangestu Elementary School Teacher)

Observations show that this approach enhances teachers' sense of community and confidence in developing instructional practices. The mentoring practices through learning communities and cross-observation among teachers at Pangestu Public Elementary School represent a radical shift from the traditional hierarchical supervision paradigm to a fully collaborative and horizontal supervision model. Teachers' statements about "observing each other and providing feedback openly" are a concrete manifestation of the implementation of Peer Coaching within the Professional Learning Community. In this ecosystem, the principal consciously relinquishes his monopoly as the sole evaluator and distributes responsibility for quality improvement to all educators. This model transforms the previously private and closed classroom into a public laboratory for fellow teachers to learn from each other, test new pedagogical strategies, and solve learning problems in real time without the threat of administrative assessment.

The impact of this participatory approach is clearly confirmed through observational findings, namely the development of a sense of togetherness (collegiality) and increased teacher self-efficacy. Psychologically, when a teacher is observed by his or her own colleagues—who face the same daily challenges, student characteristics, and workload—the level of evaluative anxiety decreases dramatically. Openness in providing feedback is no longer interpreted as destructive criticism, but rather as a constructive professional dialogue. Teachers realize that weaknesses in teaching are not a professional disgrace, but rather a starting point for collaborative innovation. The establishment of this safe space is what ultimately fosters a very strong sense of mutual trust among educators at SDN Pangestu.

This community-based approach creates sustainability in teacher professional development. Unlike external training, which is often disconnected from the school context, the feedback generated by this learning community is highly specific, relevant, and immediately applicable in their respective classrooms. The observed increase in self-confidence arises from teachers feeling autonomous over their own professional growth. They act not merely as recipients of instruction, but are empowered as active subjects, critical thinkers, and agents of

change for their colleagues. Ultimately, the collegial supervision model at SDN Pangestu demonstrates that social capital (a network of trust among teachers) is one of the most powerful catalysts in boosting the quality of collective learning practices.

The final finding concerns academic supervision, which focuses on monitoring, performance assessment, and follow-up. In both schools, supervision is not seen as mere control, but rather as a means of development. At SDN Palasari, supervision is conducted formally through supervision instruments, written reports, and post-training evaluations.

"I conduct supervision continuously, not to find fault, but to ensure that teacher performance improves." (Interview with the Principal of Palasari Elementary School)

Meanwhile, at Pangestu State Elementary School, supervision is carried out through joint reflection and learning community discussions. The statement by the principal of Palasari Elementary School, emphasizing that supervision is "continuous" and "not for fault-finding," marks a significant epistemological leap in educational management. Historically, supervision has often been trapped in a summative and inspection paradigm—a process in which superiors merely assess final results and highlight shortcomings in subordinates for administrative purposes. However, the approach at Palasari Elementary School represents a genuine application of Formative Supervision and the principles of Continuous Quality Improvement.

By positioning supervision as an ongoing process, the principal positions himself as a coach, not a judge. This approach effectively neutralizes teachers' evaluative anxiety, as they recognize that any weaknesses discovered in the classroom will not result in sanctions but will instead be addressed with corrective interventions (follow-up). The ultimate goal is precisely calibrated: ensuring teachers' performance consistently improves over time through a series of monitoring, mentoring, and tactical corrections.

On the other hand, the supervision practice at Pangestu Public Elementary School offers a completely different evaluation design alternative, namely through the lens of Collective Accountability. At this school, supervision is no longer viewed as a vertical activity from superiors to subordinates, but rather a horizontal process that merges with collective reflection within the learning community. Through peer discussion and reflection, teachers independently evaluate their teaching practices (self-evaluation) and receive feedback from their colleagues. The supervision process at Pangestu Public Elementary School has essentially transformed into Reflective Practice. This mechanism demands a high level of professional maturity, where quality control no longer relies on the principal's physical presence in the classroom, but rather arises from intrinsic awareness and a culture of mutual reminders among educators.

The contrast in these oversight stages reaffirms the consistency of managerial strategies at each institution. SDN Palasari relies on the strength of structured and persistent evaluation from a central leadership figure to ensure quality improvement. Meanwhile, SDN Pangestu relies on the power of dialogue and autonomous awareness from its peer ecosystem to maintain quality standards. Both demonstrate that successful academic oversight boils down to one fundamental principle: evaluation must serve as a catalyst for improvement, not simply a bureaucratic reporting instrument.

"Supervision helps us evaluate our performance periodically and encourages us to improve our teaching." (Interview with Pangestu Elementary School Teacher)

Documentation and observations indicate that follow-up in Palasari was structural, while in Pangestu it was collaborative. Both contributed positively to improving teacher performance, albeit with different characteristics. Overall, the research findings indicate that the principals' situational leadership management through academic supervision at SDN Palasari and SD Negeri Pangestu has been implemented in accordance with the management function and contextual needs of the schools. The differences in approaches actually demonstrate that the effectiveness of academic supervision is largely determined by the principal's ability to adapt his leadership style to the conditions of the teachers and the school environment.

The closing quote from a teacher at Pangestu Public Elementary School, along with documentation and observations from both schools, confirms that the essence of supervision and follow-up lies in its drive to stimulate reflection and continuous improvement, not merely the fulfillment of administrative obligations. These findings empirically validate the successful application of situational leadership theory in educational management. Overall, the leadership

management implemented by the principals at Palasari Public Elementary School and Pangestu Public Elementary School has proven to be highly aligned with the managerial functions and contextual needs of each institution. The approach used indicates that the principals at both institutions possess sharp contextual intelligence in diagnosing technical pedagogical readiness, teacher psychological maturity, and the organizational culture within their schools.

This research clearly maps two fundamentally different typologies of supervisory follow-up that lead to the same success. At SDN Palasari, follow-up was designed using a structural approach driven top-down by the leadership. The advantage of this model lies in standardization and certainty of direction, which are crucial to ensuring that every teacher—especially those still in need of technical guidance—receives precise interventions to build a foundation of core competencies. In contrast, SDN Pangestu adopted a collaborative model based on peer dynamics, or bottom-up. Supervision and follow-up at this school are integrated into the learning community, so that teachers are no longer positioned as objects of evaluation but rather as autonomous learning subjects. This participatory model has proven highly effective in educator ecosystems that already possess a high level of independence, a strong sense of ownership, and a full readiness to innovate.

The differences in approach at the two schools deconstruct the long-held assumption that there is a standard or "one-size-fits-all" approach to evaluating educational quality. The effectiveness of academic supervision is rooted in a leader's adaptability. Successful principals do not impose a rigid managerial style, but instead engineer supervision instruments and approaches to consistently resonate with the realities of the field and the characteristics of teachers. Through this flexible yet purposeful situational leadership, the academic supervision agenda has successfully transformed from a mere annual bureaucratic ritual into a catalyst for enhancing educators' professional capacity that is authentic and has a real impact on the quality of learning.

Research findings at SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu indicate that the effectiveness of improving teacher performance is largely determined by early-stage maturity, which theoretically reinforces Henry Fayol's Planning Theory. Fayol emphasized that planning is a crucial step in looking to the future and developing action plans. In the field, this is evident in the actions of school principals who do not directly conduct supervision, but rather begin by mapping teacher competencies and readiness levels. Synchronization between field findings and Fayol's theory is evident in the systematic preparation of supervision schedules and the establishment of objective assessment instruments. This is a concrete manifestation of leaders' efforts to minimize uncertainty and ensure the efficiency of the school organization.

In practice, Fayol's theoretical postulates were clearly manifested through the tactical actions of the principals at both institutions. Rather than immediately conducting sporadic classroom observations that could potentially trigger anxiety, these school leaders consciously postponed direct evaluative actions and began with diagnostic mapping. They collected comprehensive baseline data on each teacher's level of pedagogical competence, psychological readiness, and individual maturity characteristics. This preventative measure demonstrates the application of the principle that quality planning requires an accurate database, ensuring that principals avoid making assumptions and can ensure that the chosen supervisory approach is truly aligned with the educator's profile.

The synchronization between field reality and Fayol's theory is increasingly crystallized in the form of planning outputs, namely through the development of a systematic supervision schedule and the establishment of objective assessment instruments. The existence of this structured schedule and transparent instruments is not merely an administrative document fulfillment, but rather a managerial mitigation mechanism. In accordance with Fayol's basic principles, this is a concrete manifestation of the leader's proactive efforts to minimize uncertainty in the work environment, prevent overlapping tasks, and create a sense of security for teachers. Ultimately, this data-driven planning becomes a solid operational foundation to ensure the efficient use of time and resources in the school organization in achieving its targets for continuous quality improvement.

Furthermore, Fayol's theory explains that good planning must have the characteristics of unity, continuity, and flexibility. This relevance is found in the principal's policy of adjusting the

coaching program based on the specific needs of each teacher, a manifestation of flexible planning according to the demands of the field situation. This theoretical reinforcement confirms that the success of academic supervision in both schools is not a coincidence, but rather the result of the implementation of a mature managerial planning function. By referring to Fayol's standards, the planning activities carried out by the principal have succeeded in providing clear direction for teachers, so that each coaching intervention carried out has a measurable target achievement in improving teacher professionalism and performance.

The distinctive characteristics of elementary schools at both Palasari and Pangestu Elementary Schools, where the relationship between the principal and teachers tends to be familial yet hierarchical, make an adaptive leadership style highly relevant. The principal acts not only as a formal manager but also as a mentor, understanding that each teacher has a different competency background and length of service. This is evident in how academic supervision is adapted to the applicable curriculum (such as the Independent Curriculum), which demands teachers to be more innovative. The principal responds to this challenge by providing support for senior teachers to remain adaptive to technology and providing instructional guidance for junior teachers to ensure the quality of learning is maintained according to national standards. The relevance of situational leadership through academic supervision is also evident in the principal's ability to utilize the school ecosystem as a learning space. The collaborative culture fostered through the internal Teacher Working Group (KKG) forum at the elementary school level serves as an effective means of contextualizing supervision results into daily teaching practices. Considering the complex workload of elementary school teachers, including classroom teachers covering multiple subjects, the principal implements supervision that is not administratively burdensome but is rigorous in pedagogical development. This approach demonstrates that improving teacher performance is not simply a matter of strict supervision, but rather a matter of situational leadership, creating a conducive work environment that values the role of teachers and aligns with the specific needs of each elementary school.

The findings of this study align with the studies of Ahmad Syarifudin (2023) and Mulyasa (2013) in confirming a positive correlation between situational leadership and teacher performance. However, the novelty of this study lies in the integration of digital media such as WhatsApp and Google Classroom as real-time supervision instruments that make coaching in elementary schools more organic and familial, in contrast to the focus on formal vocational school discipline in Khasnah Syaidah's (2025) study. Furthermore, this study provides a unique contribution by detailing the application of Fayol's management in addressing competency disparities between senior and junior teachers through peer learning methods and collective reflective discussions. Unlike the general study of Tri Wahyu Chandra Fauzi (2025), this study offers a more adaptive, technological, and collaborative supervision management model specifically for elementary education.

The implementation of situational leadership at SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu has the main advantage of being humanistic and adaptive, where the principal successfully avoided a rigid approach by diagnosing teacher maturity levels before supervision. This significantly increased teacher confidence and created a responsive work culture, especially with the support of digital media that shortened bureaucratic distances. However, there are objective limitations in the form of high subjectivity on the part of the principal in assessing teacher competency without precise diagnostic instruments, which risks triggering misjudgments due to seniority alone. The biggest challenge lies in providing consistent feedback amidst the principal's high administrative burden, as well as digital literacy barriers among some senior teachers. Therefore, the effectiveness of this model depends heavily on long-term leadership commitment and systemic organizational support to transform supervision outcomes into a sustainable quality culture, rather than simply fulfilling managerial formalities.

The implementation of this model is not without several objective limitations and challenges in the field. The most fundamental limitation lies in the high potential for subjective bias among principals in assessing teacher competency, given the lack of a truly precise and standardized initial diagnostic instrument. This situation risks triggering misjudgments or assumptions of efficacy based solely on seniority. Furthermore, the biggest managerial challenge faced is maintaining consistent feedback amidst the high administrative burden of principals.

This operational obstacle is further exacerbated by the digital literacy gap among some senior teachers, which has the potential to hinder the optimization of technology-based supervision. The effectiveness of this situational leadership model cannot rely solely on the leader's personal initiative. Its success depends heavily on long-term leadership commitment and systemic support from the school organization. Systemic interventions—such as the provision of objective diagnostic tools and digital literacy support—are essential to transform supervision outcomes from mere managerial formality to an authentic and sustainable culture of quality.

The theoretical implications of this study reinforce the relevance of Henry Fayol's Situational Leadership Theory and Planning Function, which emphasizes that academic supervision planning should not be static but rather based on diagnostic data on teacher competency. These findings provide a new perspective that teacher performance effectiveness is the result of synchronizing the principal's leadership style with the educator's level of professional maturity, thus enriching the literature on human resource management in primary education organizations. In practical terms, this model encourages teachers to be more open to reflection and digital technology to improve pedagogical competency. For schools, these results can serve as operational standards for more humanistic supervision through the development of teacher readiness diagnostic instruments. Meanwhile, for the Department of Education, this study provides a foundation for designing situational-based managerial training and digital literacy for school principals, so that academic supervision transforms from a mere administrative burden into a concrete strategy for equalizing teacher performance quality.

The results of this study affirm and expand the meaning of Henry Fayol's Situational Leadership Theory and the Planning Function. In the context of primary education management, this study demonstrates that the planning function can no longer be operated mechanically and statically. Academic supervision planning must transform into a dynamic, precise, and data-driven process, specifically derived from the initial diagnosis of teachers' competency maps and psychological readiness. These findings offer a new perspective that shifts the old paradigm in educational management. The effectiveness of improving teacher performance is proven not to be the result of implementing a single authoritative leadership style, but rather arises from the precise synchronization between the flexibility of the principal's leadership style and the level of professional maturity (competence and commitment) of each educator. These findings directly enrich the literature on Human Resource Management (HRM) in the primary education sector, proposing that a humanistic, differentiated, and adaptive approach is far more effective in boosting teaching quality than a bureaucratic approach oriented solely toward compliance.

The research also identified supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of situational leadership management. At SDN Palasari, the main supporting factors were a clear managerial structure and a planned supervision system, while the obstacle lay in a tendency towards a top-down approach that limited teacher reflection. At SD Negeri Pangestu, a collaborative culture was a key supporting factor, but the uneven quality of mentoring presented a challenge. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of situational leadership is largely determined by the balance between direction and empowerment. Overall, this study shows that the implementation of principal management functions at SDN Palasari and SD Negeri Pangestu has been carried out in accordance with Fayol's theory and national education policy. The differences in the formal-structural approach at SDN Palasari and the reflective-participatory approach at SD Negeri Pangestu are complementary. The integration of these two approaches has the potential to become an effective situational leadership management model for sustainably improving elementary school teacher performance.

Conclusion

The principal's situational leadership management in improving teacher performance is systematically implemented through four main stages. This begins with thorough planning through mapping teacher competencies and motivations as the basis for developing a precise supervision program. Next, in the organizing stage, tasks are delegated to the supervisory team using a variety of approaches, both through formal instructional channels and collaborative learning communities. In the implementation stage, the principal applies a flexible leadership style (from directing to

delegating) supported by digital media innovation for more responsive interventions. This series concludes with supervision and evaluation through constructive feedback that significantly improves teacher discipline, the quality of learning tools, and instructional innovation. Overall, adaptive and structured leadership has proven to be a key factor in improving teacher professionalism in elementary schools. The effectiveness of academic supervision is rooted in diagnostic integration-based planning, where the principal conducts an in-depth mapping of teacher competencies and motivations to develop precise coaching strategies. This success is supported by the adaptability of a flexible, situational leadership style, ranging from providing detailed instructions to full delegation, thus creating a more humanistic and personal approach to increasing teacher confidence. Furthermore, digital transformation and collaboration through the use of digital media and peer learning methods have occurred, breaking down bureaucratic barriers and creating a real-time, democratic learning ecosystem. This entire management series has had a significant impact on improving discipline, the quality of learning tools, and classroom innovation, confirming that this leadership model is a strategic instrument in building a professional teacher work culture oriented towards quality learning. The relevance of Hersey-Blanchard and Henry Fayol's theory through the "Diagnostic-Based Adaptive Supervision" model, which proves that management effectiveness is highly dependent on the leader's ability to assess the maturity of subordinates. Practically, the results of this study transform educational interactions and the quality of learning tools through personal support and the use of digital media that simplify the coaching bureaucracy. Furthermore, in the policy realm, this research provides a strategic basis for education authorities to shift the supervision paradigm from merely document review to continuous mentoring through peer learning. Thus, this research offers a more humanistic, collaborative, and adaptive management prototype in improving the professionalism and quality of education in elementary schools. The research shows that the improvement in teacher performance at SDN Palasari and SDN Pangestu was successfully achieved through integrated and adaptive situational leadership management. This success began with accurate diagnostic planning in mapping teacher competencies, which was then followed up with the application of flexible leadership styles (instruction, guidance, support, and delegation) according to the maturity level of each educator. Furthermore, there was a modernization of mentoring through the use of digital media and collaboration between teachers, creating a more democratic and efficient learning ecosystem. This entire series of processes significantly encourages professional transformation, as evidenced by increased discipline and the quality of classroom learning interactions.

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