



Principal Management in Improving Teacher Performance at Cimaja and Banyuwangi Elementary Schools

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Abstract: Basic education plays a crucial role in improving the quality of human resources, necessitating professional and competent educators to carry out the learning process. However, in practice, teachers are still found to lack the minimum academic qualification of a bachelor's degree, and there is a mismatch between their academic background and the subjects they teach. This situation demands the role of the principal as an educational manager to implement effective management to improve teacher performance. This study aims to describe and analyze the principal's management in improving teacher performance at Cimaja Elementary School and Banyuwangi Elementary School in Pasirkuda District. The focus of the study includes aspects of planning, organizing, implementing, evaluating, obstacles encountered, and solutions implemented by the principal. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data collection techniques were carried out through interviews, observations, and documentation studies. The data obtained were then analyzed using an interactive analysis model that includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the principal has implemented management functions systematically through planning teacher competency improvement programs, organizing school resources, implementing academic supervision, and continuously evaluating teacher performance. However, several obstacles remain in its implementation, including limited academic qualifications for some teachers, limited learning facilities and infrastructure, and low motivation for some teachers to develop their professional competencies. To address these challenges, principals are undertaking various efforts, such as strengthening collaboration with external parties, optimizing teacher learning communities, and encouraging teachers to pursue higher education. Therefore, planned, systematic, and sustainable principal management plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance, which ultimately impacts the quality of learning in elementary schools.

Keywords: elementary education; learning quality; principal management; teacher performance.

Introduction

Elementary education plays a crucial role in the development of a nation's human resources. At this level, students begin to build a foundation of knowledge, values, and learning habits that will influence their academic and character development in subsequent stages of education. Elementary schools serve not only as a place to transfer knowledge but also as a space for the formation of attitudes, thinking skills, and social abilities necessary for social life. Therefore, the quality of education at the elementary level is crucial for the success of the education system as a whole. A strong foundation at this stage will ensure that the learning process at subsequent levels is more effective and sustainable (Olis, 2024).

Within the context of national education policy, the Indonesian government continues to undertake various educational transformation efforts to improve the quality of learning in schools.

One strategic step taken is the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes flexible, contextual, and student-centered learning. This curriculum is designed to encourage the development of 21st-century competencies, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills. Furthermore, the Independent Curriculum also strengthens the implementation of the Pancasila Student Profile as a framework for developing student character, encompassing the values of religiosity, independence, mutual cooperation, and global diversity. This policy demands a paradigm shift in the learning process in schools, from a teacher-centered approach to a more student-centered approach. However, the successful implementation of this education policy depends not only on curriculum design but also on the quality of its implementation at the educational unit level. In this regard, teachers play a crucial role as the primary implementers of the learning process in the classroom. Teachers are not only tasked with delivering learning materials but also act as facilitators, guiding students in developing their potential and competencies (Robbins & Coulter, 2016). Therefore, the quality of teacher performance is a key factor in determining the success of the learning process in schools.

On the other hand, the principal plays a strategic role in ensuring that the learning process in the school runs effectively and in accordance with established educational goals. The principal functions not only as an administrator but also as an educational leader responsible for managing various school resources, including human resources. From an educational management perspective, the principal is expected to be able to carry out managerial functions that include planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising all educational activities in the school. Through these functions, the principal is expected to create a conducive learning environment and encourage the continuous improvement of teacher professionalism. However, in practice, the implementation of school management does not always run optimally. Various phenomena in the field indicate that teacher performance in some elementary schools still faces various challenges. One problem that frequently arises is the variation in teacher competency in implementing the learning process. Some teachers have demonstrated good performance and are able to implement learning innovations, but many teachers still face difficulties in adapting to the demands of curriculum changes and developments in educational technology (Bandura, 1977).

Furthermore, differences in work motivation among teachers are also a factor that influences the quality of learning in schools. Low work motivation can result in less than optimal performance of teachers' duties, both in terms of lesson planning, implementation of teaching and learning activities, and in the learning evaluation process. This condition indicates that improving teacher performance is not only related to professional competence, but also related to motivation and commitment to the profession. Another problem frequently encountered is the limited systematic and sustainable professional development of teachers. Although various training and professional development programs have been implemented by the government and educational institutions, the implementation of these programs at the school level is often not optimal. This indicates the need for an active role of the principal in managing and coordinating various teacher professional development programs to have a real impact on improving the quality of learning. In this context, the principal is expected to be able to fulfill his role as a learning leader or instructional leader. As a learning leader, the principal not only focuses on administrative aspects but also plays an active role in fostering and developing teacher competency. The principal needs to implement various managerial strategies, such as academic supervision, teacher empowerment through learning communities, and creating a school culture that supports learning innovation (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Theoretically, the concept of educational management emphasizes the importance of systematically applying management functions in managing educational activities in schools. George R. Terry explains that management consists of four main functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling. These four functions are interrelated and form a management cycle aimed at achieving organizational goals effectively and efficiently. In the educational context, the application of these management functions can assist principals in managing various programs to improve the quality of learning, including improving teacher performance. Several previous studies have examined the relationship between principal leadership and teacher performance. These research results generally indicate that effective leadership has a positive influence on improving teacher professionalism and the quality of learning. Instructional leadership, for example, has been shown to improve the quality of lesson planning and encourage teachers to be more active in

developing innovative learning methods (DuFour & Eaker, 2008). Furthermore, planned academic supervision can also help teachers improve classroom learning practices.

Other research also emphasizes the importance of teacher empowerment through various professional development activities, such as training, workshops, and teacher learning community activities. For example, the Teacher Working Group (KKG) is a forum that can be utilized to improve teacher competency through experience sharing, discussions, and reflection on teaching practices. Through these activities, teachers can learn from each other and develop their professional skills collaboratively. Furthermore, developments in educational literature also indicate that effective school management requires integrating various learning innovations relevant to current developments. One approach that is increasingly being developed in the context of the Independent Curriculum is technology-based learning and a deep learning approach that emphasizes in-depth conceptual understanding. This approach requires teachers to design learning that focuses not only on mastery of material but also on developing students' critical and creative thinking skills (Herzberg et al., 1959). However, most previous research is general in nature and has not thoroughly examined how principals' managerial strategies are applied in elementary schools with diverse resource characteristics. Many studies have theoretically highlighted the relationship between principal leadership and teacher performance, but few have explored the practical application of school management in improving teacher performance contextually.

Based on this review, it can be concluded that there is still room for further research related to principal management practices in improving teacher performance in elementary schools. This study seeks to fill this gap by analyzing in more depth how principals carry out their managerial functions in fostering and developing teacher performance in the school environment. The novelty of this research lies in the analytical focus on principal management practices in improving teacher performance in the context of elementary schools that have varying teacher competencies and are implementing the latest education policies such as the Independent Curriculum. This study not only discusses the principal's managerial functions normatively but also examines how these strategies are implemented in practice to address various challenges in the field, such as differences in teacher work motivation, disparities in professional competency, and demands for change in the education system. Meanwhile, in practice, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for principals, education supervisors, and policymakers in designing more systematic, collaborative, and sustainable teacher development strategies. Thus, efforts to improve teacher performance can be carried out more effectively and ultimately contribute to improving the overall quality of elementary education.

Educational management is essentially a systematic process for managing school resources to achieve learning objectives effectively and efficiently. In the context of elementary schools, management serves not only an administrative function but also a strategic one, directly related to the quality of learning and teacher performance. As educational managers, principals are responsible for integrating vision, planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision to ensure that all school components move toward achieving national quality standards. Therefore, classical management theory remains relevant as a foundation for analyzing principal leadership practices.

One of the most influential theories is the management theory proposed by George R. Terry. Terry views management as a distinct process consisting of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This framework, known as POAC, remains a primary reference in various fields, including educational management (Terry & Rue, 2010). The strength of Terry's theory lies in its systematic and cyclical approach, enabling organizations to make continuous improvements through feedback mechanisms. In addition to Terry's, the transformational leadership perspective has also enriched the study of principal management. The transformational leadership model emphasizes the leader's ability to build a shared vision, motivate organizational members, and manage change in a planned manner. In the educational context, principals must not only manage administration but also be instructional leaders capable of motivating teachers to improve the quality of learning. On the other hand, Dessler's Human Resource Management (HRM) theory emphasizes the importance of managing teachers as a strategic school asset. The HRM approach emphasizes the process of planning teacher needs, continuous professional development, indicator-based performance evaluation, and a fair reward system. The integration of classical management theory, transformational leadership, and HRM provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how principals can improve teacher performance in a structured and sustainable manner.

According to G.R. Terry, management is a continuous process consisting of four main functions: planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising (Terry & Rue, 2010). In the school context, the planning function includes developing a vision, school work program, and teacher competency development plans. Thorough planning enables the principal to map training needs, set performance targets, and allocate resources proportionally. The organizing function in principal management is realized through a clear division of tasks, delegation of authority, and the formation of work teams such as curriculum development teams or teacher working groups. Effective organization helps create coordination among teachers and minimizes overlapping roles. With a clear structure, teachers can work according to their respective competencies, thus increasing productivity. Implementation (actuating) is a crucial stage because it is related to efforts to motivate teachers to carry out their duties optimally. At this stage, the principal acts as a motivator and facilitator. Providing academic supervision, coaching, mentoring, and performance awards are part of the implementation strategy. This function is closely related to interpersonal communication skills and inspirational leadership. Supervision (control) is carried out to ensure the entire program is running according to plan. The principal conducts classroom observations, performance evaluations, and analyzes student learning outcomes. The monitoring results then serve as the basis for program improvements in the next cycle. Thus, Terry's POAC cycle establishes a dynamic and adaptive management mechanism for continuously improving teacher performance.

Various studies have demonstrated a significant relationship between principal management and teacher performance. Quantitative studies examining principal leadership styles found that democratic and transformational approaches positively contribute to increased teacher motivation and productivity. These studies emphasize the importance of leadership dimensions in promoting effective learning. Other studies highlight the role of academic supervision as an instrument for improving teachers' pedagogical competence. Findings indicate that regular and constructive supervision can improve the quality of lesson planning and classroom teaching practices. However, some studies have not directly explored teacher resistance to the supervision process or its impact on student learning outcomes. Technology-based studies have also shown that integrating digital-based performance evaluations and online training can improve teachers' professional skills. However, these studies have generally been conducted in areas with adequate infrastructure and have not examined the context of rural elementary schools with limited resources. In general, previous research has emphasized the importance of principal management in improving teacher performance. However, most studies are descriptive or quantitative in nature with a partial focus, thus failing to provide a comprehensive picture of the integration of management functions within a specific elementary school context (Mintzberg, 1979).

Terry's management theory is relevant to this study because it provides an analytical framework for examining the principal's role in improving teacher performance through the POAC cycle. This approach allows researchers to systematically explore how planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising are carried out in an elementary school context. Previous research findings emphasizing transformational leadership and academic supervision also reinforce the assumption that principal management has a significant impact on teacher performance. However, this study seeks to broaden its scope by integrating managerial functions comprehensively, not just the leadership or supervision aspects. Furthermore, the HRM and continuing professional development approaches are relevant in analyzing principals' strategies for systematically developing teachers. This study positions teachers as strategic assets requiring ongoing development based on real-world needs. Thus, this study not only replicates previous findings but also combines theory and practice within a comprehensive analytical framework, particularly in the elementary school context, which has its own characteristics and challenges (H. E. Mulyasa, 2022).

This research's theoretical framework rests on G.R. Terry's POAC management theory as its primary foundation. These four management functions serve as conceptual variables in analyzing principal management practices. Planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising are viewed as interrelated processes that form a cycle of teacher performance improvement. Conceptually, this research views teacher performance as the result of the interaction between individual competencies and principal managerial support. Teacher competencies encompass pedagogical, professional, social, and personality aspects. Managerial support is realized through academic supervision, training, motivation, and data-based evaluation. The relationship between principal management and teacher

performance is understood as a causal relationship mediated by motivation and the school's work culture. The more effectively the management functions are implemented, the greater the opportunity for a collaborative work environment that supports teacher professionalism. This research's conceptual framework positions principal management as the primary variable influencing teacher performance improvement. With this approach, the research seeks to systematically explain how managerial practices contribute to the quality of learning in elementary schools (E. Mulyasa, 2018).

This study refers to the classical management theory developed by Terry (1972; 2010) as the conceptual basis for POAC. Furthermore, Kotter's (1990) notion of transformational leadership serves as a foundation for understanding the principal's role as an agent of change. Dessler's concept of human resource management is used to explain the importance of teacher management as a strategic asset in educational organizations. Meanwhile, Guba and Lincoln's (1981) evaluation theory provides a perspective on the importance of data-based monitoring and evaluation in improving teacher performance. In the context of teacher professionalism, references to national regulations such as Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, and Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 16 of 2007 concerning Teacher Competency Standards serve as normative foundations, along with Government Regulation Number 57 of 2021 concerning National Education Standards. Literature on continuing professional development is also used to strengthen theoretical arguments. By integrating classical management theory, leadership, HRM, educational evaluation, and national regulations, this literature review forms a strong scientific foundation for research on principal management in improving teacher performance in elementary schools.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach because it aims to deeply understand the principal's management practices in improving teacher performance in the real context of elementary schools. This approach was chosen to explore the meaning, processes, and dynamics of interactions that occur naturally in the school environment. The focus of the study is not directed at measuring numbers or statistical relationships, but rather on a comprehensive understanding of managerial strategies, leadership patterns, and teacher responses to implemented policies. Thus, a qualitative approach allows researchers to obtain rich, contextual, and interpretive data. The type of research used is a case study. The selection of case studies is based on the consideration that this study focuses on two public elementary schools, namely SDN Cimaja and SDN Banyuwangi, Pasirkuda District, Cianjur Regency, as case units to be studied in depth. Case studies allow researchers to explore the phenomenon of principal management in real situations by considering the social, cultural, and geographical backgrounds of the schools. Through this approach, the study can reveal in detail the planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring practices implemented by principals in improving teacher performance (Arikunto, 2013).

The research subjects in this study were selected purposively, based on the consideration that they possessed information relevant to the research focus. The primary participants were the principals of each school, as they play a direct role in planning and implementing school management. Furthermore, teachers involved in learning activities were also used as informants to gain perspectives on the impact of managerial policies on their performance. In addition to principals and teachers, this study also involved other relevant parties, such as school supervisors or education personnel, when necessary to enrich the data. Participant selection was carried out by considering their representativeness in terms of experience, length of service, and involvement in school development programs (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Thus, the data obtained reflects diverse perspectives and supports a comprehensive analysis.

Data collection techniques in this study included in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. Interviews were conducted semi-structured using flexible question guidelines. This technique allowed researchers to explore information regarding the principal's managerial strategies, forms of teacher development, and obstacles faced in improving performance. Through interviews, researchers obtained data in the form of participants' views, experiences, and reflections on the management practices implemented. Direct observations were conducted in the school environment to observe learning activities, supervision implementation, and interactions

between the principal and teachers. Observations helped researchers understand the real situation that is not always revealed through interviews. Furthermore, documentation studies were conducted by reviewing official school documents, such as the School Work Plan, supervision reports, teacher attendance data, and learning documents. These three techniques were used in an integrated manner to obtain complementary data and strengthen the validity of the findings (Sugiyono, 2019).

Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously from the beginning of the data collection process to the final stage of the research. This study used an analysis model that includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the reduction stage, researchers selected and grouped data according to the research focus, such as aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors of principal management. Next, the reduced data was presented in the form of descriptive narratives and a thematic matrix to facilitate researchers in understanding the patterns of relationships between findings. The final stage was drawing conclusions, which was carried out gradually by continuously verifying the obtained data. This process is cyclical, allowing researchers to make adjustments and deepen the analysis until a complete understanding of principal management practices in improving teacher performance was obtained (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Principal Management Planning in Improving Teacher Performance

The results of the study indicate that the planning stage is the main foundation for improving teacher performance at SDN Cimaja and SDN Banyuwangi, Pasirkuda District, Cianjur Regency. Both principals implemented systematic planning through identifying competency needs, developing training programs, establishing measurable objectives, planning budgets, and scheduling coaching and evaluation. Despite having a similar framework, the implementation of planning in both schools exhibited different characteristics. At SDN Cimaja, planning tended to be centralized, with the principal as the dominant actor in determining policy direction. Needs identification was carried out through classroom supervision, analysis of teacher academic qualifications, and annual performance evaluations. The programs developed were oriented towards meeting minimum standards, such as improving academic qualifications and completing learning administration.

"I usually decide the planning at this school. We assess teacher needs based on classroom supervision and annual performance evaluations. The programs we create focus more on improving qualifications and completing administrative tasks," (Interview, Cimaja Elementary School Principal, January 26, 2026).

Meanwhile, at Banyuwangi Elementary School, the planning process is more participatory. Teachers are involved in discussion forums and work meetings to map development needs. This approach not only identifies weaknesses but also explores individual teacher potential as a basis for task allocation and professional development.

"At our school, I don't determine the planning myself. We usually discuss it with the teachers in meetings to identify areas for development. So, we don't just address shortcomings, but also assess each teacher's potential so that tasks are distributed appropriately and we can develop together." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

Meanwhile, based on the statement of the teacher who was interviewed, it was revealed, "Here, we're often invited to participate in discussions when developing school programs. The principal usually asks for our opinions on training or development needs. We're also given the opportunity to demonstrate our abilities so that the tasks we're given align with our capabilities." (Interview, Banyuwangi Elementary School Teacher, January 29, 2026)

Organizing Teacher Performance Improvement Programs

The organizational phase at both schools aimed to ensure the entire program ran in a structured and coordinated manner. The school organizational structure was designed to support teacher development, with tasks delegated to the vice principal and senior teachers. However, the organizational patterns demonstrated differences in managerial orientation. At SDN Cimaja, the organizational structure functioned as an extension of the principal in implementing the program effectively. The division of tasks was more pragmatic to ensure all classes were served, although in

some cases there was a mismatch between teachers' educational backgrounds and the subjects taught due to limited human resources.

"I utilize the organizational structure at this school to help ensure the program continues to run smoothly. We divide tasks according to existing needs, as long as all classes are filled. It's true that some teachers teach classes that don't align with their educational background, but that's because we still have a limited number of teachers." (Interview, KS SDN Cimaja, January 26, 2026).

In addition, according to the SDN Cimaja teacher, he stated that in organizing the teacher performance improvement program as follows,

"At our school, the distribution of tasks is usually adjusted to the needs of the school. Sometimes, teachers teach subjects that aren't relevant to their majors, due to a shortage of teachers. The important thing is that all classes can still learn smoothly" (Interview, Cimaja Elementary School Teacher, January 27, 2026).

In contrast, at SDN Banyuwangi, tasks are distributed based on teachers' competencies and interests to optimize individual potential. While the Teacher Working Group (KKG) forum at both schools serves as a collaborative platform, at SDN Banyuwangi, it has evolved into a professional learning community that encourages innovation and the ongoing sharing of best practices.

"At our school, we divide tasks according to each teacher's abilities and interests so they can work optimally. We also promote the Teacher Working Group (KKG) activities, not just as regular meetings, but as a place to learn together, share experiences, and try out new teaching ideas." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

Apart from that, according to the teacher who was interviewed, he said "Usually, assignments are given according to our abilities and interests, so we feel more comfortable when teaching" (Interview, Banyuwangi Elementary School Teacher, January 29, 2026).

Implementation of Construction and Development Programs

Program implementation at both schools is realized through academic supervision, training facilitation, technology assistance, the application of innovative learning methods, and the provision of motivation and rewards. Academic supervision is conducted periodically, but the approach differs. At SDN Cimaja, supervision functions more as a monitoring instrument to ensure the achievement of learning and administrative standards. Feedback is provided as a form of correction and improvement.

"Supervision at our school is more about ensuring the learning process is following the rules and that the administration is complete. After that, I usually provide notes so teachers can correct any deficiencies" (Interview, KS SDN Cimaja, January 26, 2026).

Meanwhile, at SDN Banyuwangi, supervision is positioned as a mentoring process (coaching) that aims to encourage teacher creativity and innovation in the classroom.

"I supervise here as a mentor. I don't just assess, but also discuss with teachers to help them be more creative in class. During my supervision, I usually use coaching techniques." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

Meanwhile, a teacher at Banyuwangi Elementary School stated that, "Supervision at this school feels like guidance, not just assessment. We're invited to discuss things so we can try new teaching methods." (Interview, Banyuwangi Elementary School Teacher, January 29, 2026).

Furthermore, teacher training at SDN Cimaja relies more on internal activities through the Teacher Working Group (KKG), while SDN Banyuwangi combines internal and external training through partnerships with the education office and other institutions. In terms of technology utilization, SDN Cimaja continues to focus on improving teachers' basic digital literacy. Meanwhile, SDN Banyuwangi utilizes technology as a strategic solution to overcome limited resources and budget, including through online training and digital-based supervision. Awards at both schools have proven to be a motivating factor, although at SDN Banyuwangi the reward system is more structured and geared toward building a culture of collective achievement.

Continuous Evaluation and Reflection

Program evaluation is carried out systematically through teacher performance monitoring, Teacher Performance Assessments (PKG), analysis of learning documents, and regular reflection forums (Olis, 2024). At SDN Cimaja, evaluation is more managerial in nature and focuses on school

leadership as a basis for internal program improvements. The results of supervision and assessment serve as a reference for subsequent revisions to the development program.

"Evaluations are usually conducted by the principal through performance appraisals and administrative checks. Afterward, we are given guidance for improvement. The results are used to determine the next development program." (Interview, Cimaja Elementary School Teacher, January 27, 2026).

At SDN Banyuwangi, evaluation is conducted in a participatory manner through regular coordination meetings and reflection forums. Teachers are actively involved in assessing program effectiveness and formulating improvement measures. This pattern fosters an open and collaborative organizational learning culture. The continuous improvement cycle at this school is not merely administrative but also part of the collective teacher professional development process.

"At our school, evaluations are conducted collaboratively. We hold regular meetings to discuss the results of ongoing programs. Teachers contribute their opinions on what went well and what needs improvement. From there, we plan our next steps." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

This is also reinforced by the statement from the teacher who stated that

"Every time there's an evaluation, we're involved in meetings and discussions. We can share our opinions about the programs being implemented. So, improvements aren't just the principal's decision, but rather the result of a collective agreement." (Interview, Banyuwangi Elementary School Teacher, January 29, 2026)

Obstacles to Improving Teacher Performance

The study identified several major obstacles faced by the two schools, namely limited academic qualifications of some teachers, mismatch between their subject areas and the subjects taught, limited infrastructure, low motivation of some teachers, and budget constraints (Masut et al., 2025). At SDN Cimaja, the most dominant obstacles were limited academic qualifications and the number of teachers, which resulted in a high workload and low participation in development programs. This is consistent with the teacher's statement that

"The number of teachers here is limited, so we have to teach more classes. Sometimes, our busy schedules make it difficult for us to fully participate in training or development activities." (Interview, Cimaja Elementary School Teacher, January 27, 2026).

Meanwhile, at SDN Banyuwangi, the challenges were more related to the challenges of encouraging changes in work culture and innovation across the board. Limited facilities at both schools hindered the implementation of innovative learning, although the managerial responses differed.

"At our school, the challenge is more about getting all the teachers to change and try new things in teaching. Furthermore, the facilities are still limited, so we have to find ways to ensure that learning continues smoothly." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

Solutions and Follow-up Strategies

In response to these various obstacles, both principals implemented adaptive solutions. At SDN Cimaja, the solutions focused on optimizing internal resources, strengthening the KKG forum, adjusting coaching schedules, and providing rewards to increase motivation. This approach was more pragmatic and oriented toward program stabilization.

"To overcome these challenges, we are maximizing the resources available at the school. We have reinstated the Working Group (KKG), adjusted the coaching schedule to avoid conflicts with teaching hours, and also provided recognition to teachers who demonstrate improvement. The important thing is that the program continues to run smoothly" (Interview, KS SDN Cimaja, January 26, 2026).

At SDN Banyuwangi, the strategy adopted was more proactive, including building external partnerships, utilizing digital technology as a managerial tool, strengthening a collaborative culture, and implementing a performance-based reward system (Johanes et al., 2022). Follow-up was carried out through quarterly reflections, data-driven individual mentoring, and flexible program adjustments to meet teacher needs.

"We try to find solutions by collaborating with external parties and utilizing technology to assist with school management. We also encourage teachers to discuss and learn together. We conduct

evaluations every few months, and provide specialized mentoring tailored to each teacher's individual needs." (Interview, KS SDN Banyuwangi, January 28, 2026).

Overall, research results indicate that the success of principal management in improving teacher performance is significantly influenced by leadership style, teacher participation levels, and the school's ability to manage resources adaptively. Collaborative and innovative approaches have been shown to have a more sustainable impact on teacher professional development than purely administrative approaches (Wulandari & Ali Imron, 2025).

The research findings indicate that the principals' management at SDN Cimaja and SDN Banyuwangi encompasses the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. This aligns with the classical management theory proposed by George R. Terry, which asserts that organizational success is determined by the integration of these four functions. The differences in managerial approaches at the two schools can be explained through a leadership perspective. The practices at SDN Banyuwangi demonstrate the characteristics of transformational leadership as proposed by Bernard M. Bass and Bruce J. Avolio, which emphasizes inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual attention in driving change. Meanwhile, the more administrative and centralized approach at SDN Cimaja is closer to the operational managerial model oriented toward stability and adherence to standards (Senge, 1990).

In the context of supervision, the coaching practice at Banyuwangi Elementary School is relevant to the concept of instructional leadership developed by Philip Hallinger and Joseph Murphy. This model emphasizes the principal's role as an active learning leader who guides teachers' pedagogical practices. Furthermore, improving teacher performance through the Teacher Working Group (KKG) forum and peer collaboration aligns with Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction, observation, and modeling. These findings reinforce the argument that changes in pedagogical practices require a social environment that supports reflection and collaboration (Siagian, 2008).

The research findings cannot be separated from the geographic and social context of the two schools. The schools' relative distance from the city center, limited internet access, and minimal infrastructure support create what can be called an environmental gap. This condition limits teachers' access to formal training and modern learning resources. In this context, the pragmatic approach at SDN Cimaja is a rational response to resource constraints. Focusing on administrative stability and meeting minimum standards serves as an adaptive strategy to maintain system sustainability. In contrast, SDN Banyuwangi demonstrates a more proactive adaptive capacity by building external networks and utilizing digital technology to expand access to professional development. Thus, the variation in teacher performance improvement outcomes at the two schools is not solely due to differences in leadership quality, but is also influenced by structural conditions and available environmental support.

The findings of this study are consistent with Prasetyo's study, which emphasized that limited teacher qualifications, facilities, and budgets are systemic barriers in regional schools (Ananda et al., 2025). However, this study adds to the literature by demonstrating that proactive managerial responses can mitigate the impact of these barriers. Rahardjo's research also found that transformational leadership significantly impacted teacher performance (Kholdun et al., 2025). The results at Banyuwangi Elementary School support these findings, particularly in terms of learning innovation and collaborative culture. Meanwhile, the findings regarding the predominance of improvements in administrative aspects over pedagogical aspects suggest that administrative changes tend to be achieved more quickly than transformations in classroom teaching practices. Thus, this study not only confirms the findings of previous studies but also adds a contextual dimension in the form of the influence of environmental disparities on school management effectiveness (Pratama et al., 2023).

Critically, this research shows that the success of principal management remains superficial, particularly in terms of administrative compliance. Fundamental changes to pedagogical practices require a more intensive and sustainable approach. While a strong administrative approach is effective in ensuring standards are met, it risks creating the perception of supervision as a formality. Conversely, participatory and coaching approaches have greater potential to foster innovation, but require time, consistency, and adequate resource support. The gap between national regulations and actual school capacity is also a crucial issue. Standards set in education policy have not been fully balanced by structural support, particularly in areas with limited access (Stufflebeam, 2000).

The theoretical implications of this research are the importance of integrating classical management theory and transformational leadership approaches in the context of primary education. Practically, these findings emphasize that strengthening a collaborative culture through KKG (Community Working Group) as a professional learning community needs to be prioritized, supervision must shift from mere administrative control to reflective mentoring, and external partnerships and the use of technology are effective strategies for overcoming structural limitations. For policymakers, these results demonstrate the need for affirmative support for schools in areas with limited resources to prevent widening quality gaps (Zulqaidah et al., 2023).

Based on the analysis, it is recommended that both schools strengthen their transformational leadership approach, focusing on long-term capacity development. Cimaja Elementary School can begin integrating more intensive coaching and collaboration practices, while Banyuwangi Elementary School needs to ensure consistent program implementation to prevent sporadic innovation. Furthermore, synergy between schools, local governments, and the community is needed to provide facilities, improve teacher qualifications, and expand access to digital training. This study argues that effective principal management relies not only on administrative skills but also on adaptive capacity, transformational vision, and the ability to build collaborative networks. Innovative and participatory approaches have been shown to be more sustainable in driving teacher performance improvements than approaches solely focused on administrative compliance (Ramadan et al., 2024).

The discussion of this research shows that principal management plays a strategic role in improving teacher performance through the implementation of management functions including planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating. These four functions do not exist separately, but rather form an interrelated management cycle in building a teacher development system within the school environment. From an educational management perspective, this process reflects how the principal acts as a leader of the educational organization responsible for directing, coordinating, and developing the potential of the school's human resources. Thus, the effectiveness of principal management is determined not only by the existence of teacher development programs, but also by how these programs are designed, implemented, and evaluated on an ongoing basis (Suryosubroto, 2010).

During the planning stage, management practices observed in both schools indicate that the principals have attempted to develop a structured teacher performance improvement program. Planning is carried out by considering teacher competency needs, available resources, and desired achievement targets for improving the quality of learning. In the context of educational management, planning is the initial step in determining the direction of organizational development policies and strategies. Through this process, the principal establishes program priorities deemed most relevant to the school's needs (Rasuani et al., 2025). However, an analysis of planning practices in both schools reveals differences in managerial orientation. A more centralized approach positions the principal as the dominant actor in determining the direction of teacher development policies and programs. This model tends to produce a stable and controlled management system because all strategic decisions are concentrated in a single control center. In schools with limited resources, this approach can be a pragmatic strategy for maintaining program sustainability and ensuring that minimum educational standards are met. However, an overly centralized approach has the potential to limit teacher participation in the decision-making process, thus slowing the development of pedagogical creativity and innovation (Sutisna, 2011).

In contrast, a more participatory planning approach demonstrates a more collaborative management approach. In this model, teachers are positioned not only as program implementers but also as part of the school policy formulation process. Teacher involvement in the planning process creates space for the emergence of new ideas and allows for a more accurate mapping of professional development needs. This approach also has the potential to increase a sense of ownership of school programs, thereby strengthening teacher commitment to program implementation. From an educational leadership perspective, this pattern demonstrates the characteristics of transformational leadership that encourages participation, empowerment, and individual capacity development within the school organization (Usman, 2018).

The organizational stage in principal management also demonstrates different approaches to managing human resources in schools. Organizational planning essentially aims to ensure that each planned program can be implemented effectively through a clear division of tasks and good

coordination between organizational elements. In practice, organizing is carried out through the establishment of a school organizational structure, delegation of tasks to teachers and staff, and structuring work mechanisms that enable programs to run systematically. A pragmatic organizational approach indicates that the division of tasks is often based on the school's operational needs. When there are limited teachers, principals need to make adjustments to ensure all learning activities can continue. This strategy demonstrates managerial flexibility in dealing with limited human resources. However, a mismatch between a teacher's educational background and the subjects they teach can impact the quality of learning if not balanced with adequate professional development (Wahjosumidjo, 2013).

Organization based on teacher competencies and interests demonstrates a more strategic management approach. Dividing tasks that consider individual potential allows teachers to work more optimally because the tasks assigned align with their abilities and interests. This approach also opens up opportunities for the development of competency specialization within the school environment. Furthermore, the existence of collaborative forums such as Teacher Working Groups is an important tool in building professional learning communities in schools. Through intensive interaction between teachers, the learning process takes place not only individually but also collectively through the sharing of experiences, reflection, and the development of more innovative learning practices. During the implementation phase, the principal's management is realized through various teacher coaching and professional development activities. Program implementation includes academic supervision, training, assistance in the use of technology, and providing motivation and rewards to teachers. These activities aim to improve teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies as part of the standards of professionalism in education (Hidayat et al., 2025).

Academic supervision is a crucial instrument for ensuring the quality of classroom learning. In a more administrative approach, supervision serves as a control mechanism to ensure that teachers implement the learning process according to established standards. This approach is effective in maintaining compliance with regulations and ensuring the completeness of learning administration (Qudsyah et al., 2023). However, if supervision focuses solely on administrative aspects, the potential for teacher pedagogical development is suboptimal because the supervision process is perceived more as an assessment activity than as a coaching activity. Conversely, a mentoring approach to supervision positions the principal as a professional partner for teachers in developing learning practices. In this model, supervision serves not only as an evaluation tool but also as a space for reflective dialogue between the principal and teachers. Through discussion and coaching, teachers are encouraged to evaluate their teaching practices and experiment with more innovative learning strategies. This approach aligns with the concept of instructional leadership, which emphasizes the principal's role as an active pedagogical mentor in improving learning quality (Azis & Nobisa, 2022).

In addition to supervision, teacher professional development is also carried out through training activities and strengthening learning communities. The differences in training strategies at the two schools demonstrate varying approaches to utilizing available resources. An approach that relies more on internal activities demonstrates the school's efforts to maximize the potential within the school environment. Meanwhile, an approach that combines internal and external training reflects a strategy that is more open to learning resources from outside the school. Partnerships with educational institutions and the use of digital technology allow teachers to gain broader access to new knowledge and skills. The evaluation stage is a crucial part of the principal's management cycle because through this process, program effectiveness can be measured and continuously improved. Evaluation is conducted through various mechanisms such as teacher performance assessments, analysis of learning documents, and reflection on program implementation. In a more centralized approach, evaluations are conducted by the school principal as a basis for determining next steps for improvement. This approach provides strong control over program quality, but teacher participation in the reflection process is relatively limited (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

Participatory evaluations enable teachers to actively participate in the organizational reflection process. Teacher involvement in evaluations not only provides space for diverse perspectives to emerge but also strengthens the organizational learning culture within schools. In this context, schools function not only as teaching venues but also as learning organizations that continuously develop themselves through reflection and continuous improvement. Analysis of the various obstacles faced shows that improving teacher performance is inextricably linked to the structural conditions that

influence the school environment. Limited teacher numbers, low academic qualifications of some educators, limited infrastructure, and minimal budget support are factors that influence the effectiveness of teacher development programs. Geographical conditions and access to learning resources also shape the dynamics of education management at the school level (Pratama et al., 2023).

In situations like this, the principal's ability to manage limitations is a key factor in determining the success of teacher performance improvement programs. An adaptive managerial approach allows schools to continue implementing coaching programs despite facing various limitations. Optimizing internal resources, strengthening teacher learning communities, and utilizing technology are strategies that can be used to overcome structural barriers. This research analysis shows that the success of principal management in improving teacher performance is determined not only by the existence of coaching programs, but also by the leadership style implemented, the level of teacher participation in the management process, and the school's ability to adapt to existing environmental conditions. A collaborative and innovative management approach tends to have a more sustainable impact on teacher professional development than an approach solely oriented towards administrative compliance (Agustin & Kustiana, 2025). These findings confirm that transforming the quality of learning in elementary schools requires educational leadership that focuses not only on administrative aspects but also on empowering teachers as the main agents of change in the learning process. Thus, effective principal management must be able to integrate managerial functions with a leadership approach that is inspirational, collaborative, and adaptive to the ever-evolving dynamics of education.

Conclusion

Principal management plays a significant role in improving teacher performance. Principals carry out management functions through planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising, aiming to create a more focused and sustainable teacher development system. Various teacher competency development programs are systematically designed, including academic supervision, strengthening the Teacher Working Group (KKG) forum, and assigning tasks based on each teacher's abilities and potential. The implementation of these programs has had a positive impact on improving work discipline, teacher participation in professional development activities, and improving the quality of classroom learning interactions. However, the improvements in teacher performance have not been evenly distributed among all teachers. This study also found differences in managerial approaches between the two schools. At SDN Cimaja, the management model applied tends to be pragmatic, with an orientation toward meeting minimum operational standards. Decision-making is largely centralized by the principal, allowing the school's management process to run stably despite resource constraints. However, this approach leaves relatively limited room for innovation for teachers. Meanwhile, SDN Banyuwangi applies a more strategic and participatory managerial approach by involving teachers in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of school programs. This approach fosters shared commitment, fosters a sense of collective responsibility, and strengthens a collaborative culture within the school environment. Differences in the principals' leadership styles are also quite evident in program implementation and activity organization. On the one hand, there is a leadership model that emphasizes program control and administrative order. On the other hand, there is a leadership approach that emphasizes mentoring, empowerment, and stimulating learning innovation. Nevertheless, both schools still face relatively similar challenges, such as limited teaching staff, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, limited funding, and a need for improved motivation among some teachers. These conditions create a gap between the program planning and its implementation in classroom learning practices. The findings of this study confirm that the success of principal management in improving teacher performance is determined not only by the comprehensiveness of the program designed, but also by how the principal interprets and manages the various obstacles encountered. When limitations are viewed as mere obstacles, the innovation process tends to be slow. Conversely, if these challenges are managed creatively, adaptively, and collaboratively, opportunities for development will increase. Therefore, the effectiveness of improving teacher performance is greatly influenced by the principal's leadership style, consistency in program implementation, availability of adequate resources, and the school's ability to build collaborative networks with various parties on an ongoing basis to support improving the quality of education.

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