



## The Role of Principal Management in Improving Educational Quality at SMP Alimin Ibum, Bandung Regency

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### ABSTRACT

Educational quality has become one of the main indicators in determining the success of educational institutions in responding to increasingly complex social changes and global challenges. In this context, the principal plays a strategic role not only as an administrator but also as a manager, leader, supervisor, innovator, and motivator who is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of educational management. This study aims to analyze the role of principal management in improving educational quality at SMP Alimin Ibum, Bandung Regency. The study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the principal, teachers, and school staff. Data analysis followed the interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the principal has implemented management functions through planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Various strategic efforts have been undertaken, including teacher professional development, strengthening school discipline, improving facilities and infrastructure, expanding collaboration with parents and the community, and developing extracurricular activities. Supporting factors include strong collaboration among teachers, community participation, and the principal's commitment, while limited infrastructure, operational funding, and student motivation remain major challenges. The study concludes that effective principal management significantly contributes to educational quality improvement through sustainable leadership, strategic planning, and collaborative school governance

## INTRODUCTION

Education is universally recognized as one of the most influential instruments for improving the quality of human resources and promoting sustainable national development. The advancement of a nation is closely associated with the quality of its educational system because education shapes intellectual capacity, moral character, creativity, and social responsibility among citizens. Consequently, improving educational quality has become a strategic priority for governments, educational institutions, and society as a whole.

In Indonesia, educational quality remains one of the major concerns despite continuous reforms in curriculum, educational policy, teacher professional development, and school management. Numerous schools continue to experience challenges related to learning effectiveness, teacher competence, infrastructure limitations, student achievement, and institutional governance. These challenges indicate that educational improvement cannot merely rely on curriculum development or government policy but also requires effective leadership at the school level.

School leadership is increasingly viewed as one of the most decisive factors affecting school performance. Among all educational stakeholders, the principal occupies a central position because he or she coordinates educational resources, formulates strategic plans, supervises instructional activities, develops teacher competencies, and establishes partnerships with various stakeholders. Effective principals are capable of transforming schools into learning organizations that continuously improve both academic and non-academic achievements.

According to educational management theory, principals perform multiple managerial functions simultaneously. They are responsible for planning educational programs, organizing school resources, motivating teachers and staff, supervising learning activities, evaluating educational outcomes, and implementing continuous improvements. These managerial functions correspond to George R. Terry's classical management theory consisting of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC), which remains highly relevant in educational management practices.

Furthermore, contemporary educational leadership emphasizes transformational leadership, collaborative decision-making, innovation, and continuous quality improvement. Principals are no longer expected merely to administer school operations but to become instructional leaders capable of inspiring teachers, empowering students, encouraging innovation, and creating positive school cultures. Therefore, principal management has become an essential determinant of educational quality.

Educational quality itself encompasses more than academic achievement. It includes teacher professionalism, effective instructional processes, adequate learning facilities, student character development, stakeholder satisfaction, institutional accountability, and sustainable school improvement. Schools with effective leadership generally demonstrate stronger organizational commitment, better teacher performance, higher student engagement, and more adaptive organizational cultures.

Previous studies consistently report positive relationships between principal leadership and educational quality. Mulyasa (2017) emphasizes that professional principals contribute significantly to improving teacher performance, learning effectiveness, and school innovation. Wahjosumidjo (2013) also argues that successful educational institutions are strongly influenced by principals' managerial competence in coordinating educational resources efficiently. Likewise, Sagala (2013) highlights that strategic educational management enables schools to respond effectively to changing educational demands and community expectations.

However, despite the growing body of literature discussing educational leadership, empirical studies focusing on principal management practices in rural and semi-rural Indonesian secondary schools remain relatively limited. Many previous studies mainly discuss theoretical aspects of educational leadership without thoroughly exploring how managerial functions are implemented within specific institutional contexts. Moreover, relatively few qualitative studies comprehensively examine both supporting and inhibiting factors influencing educational quality improvement from the perspective of school management.

This research attempts to address this gap by examining the implementation of principal management at SMP Alimin Ibun, Bandung Regency. As one of the educational institutions committed to improving educational quality, SMP Alimin Ibun provides an interesting case for understanding how school leadership contributes to educational improvement despite existing institutional limitations.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive analysis of principal management by integrating classical management functions with practical educational leadership implementation in improving school quality. Rather than focusing solely on leadership characteristics, this research investigates managerial processes, improvement strategies, supporting factors, and institutional challenges simultaneously. Consequently, the findings are expected to enrich educational management literature while providing practical recommendations for school leaders seeking sustainable quality improvement. Therefore, this study aims to:

1. analyze the implementation of principal management in improving educational quality at SMP Alimin Ibun;
2. identify strategic efforts undertaken by the principal to enhance educational quality; and
3. examine supporting and inhibiting factors affecting educational quality improvement through school management.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute theoretically to educational management literature while offering practical insights for principals, teachers, educational policymakers, and future researchers interested in school leadership and quality improvement.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *School Management*

Management is generally defined as a systematic process involving planning, organizing, leading, and controlling organizational resources to achieve predetermined objectives effectively and efficiently. According to George R. Terry (2014), management consists of four essential managerial functions known as Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC). These functions are interrelated and become the fundamental framework for organizational management, including educational institutions.

Within the educational context, management refers to the process of utilizing educational resources efficiently to achieve institutional goals. Educational management encompasses curriculum management, student affairs, financial management, facilities and infrastructure, human resource development, and community relations. Effective educational management ensures that every component of the school contributes optimally toward improving educational quality.

Hasibuan (2016) argues that management is not merely administrative work but also involves strategic decision-making, coordination, leadership, and continuous evaluation. Consequently, school management requires principals who possess managerial competence, communication skills, leadership capacity, and strategic thinking.

Among the four management functions, planning becomes the initial stage determining organizational success. Effective planning enables schools to formulate visions, missions, annual programs, budgeting systems, teacher development agendas, and learning improvement strategies. Organizing follows by allocating responsibilities according to teachers' competencies and institutional needs. Actuating emphasizes motivating teachers and educational staff to perform professionally, while controlling ensures continuous monitoring and evaluation for quality improvement.

Modern educational management has gradually shifted from bureaucratic administration toward strategic management emphasizing innovation, accountability, collaboration, evidence-based decision-making, and continuous organizational learning. Schools are therefore expected to become adaptive organizations capable of responding effectively to rapid educational changes.

### *Principal Leadership*

Educational leadership has become one of the most widely discussed topics in educational management because school principals significantly influence organizational effectiveness. A principal is not merely an administrator but serves as an educational leader responsible for directing educational processes toward institutional excellence. According to Wahjosumidjo (2013), principals perform multiple leadership roles, including educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator. These roles require principals to integrate managerial competence with instructional leadership, interpersonal communication, and organizational development.

Similarly, Mulyasa (2017) explains that successful principals continuously develop teacher professionalism through supervision, coaching, mentoring, evaluation, and motivation. They also establish positive organizational cultures that encourage collaboration, innovation, discipline, and commitment among school members.

Recent educational leadership literature emphasizes transformational leadership as an effective approach for improving school performance. Transformational principals inspire teachers through shared visions, intellectual stimulation, individualized support, and organizational commitment. Rather than relying solely on authority, transformational leaders encourage participation, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Instructional leadership has also emerged as an important perspective emphasizing principals' direct involvement in improving teaching and learning. Instructional leaders supervise classroom instruction, facilitate professional learning communities, evaluate instructional quality, and ensure curriculum implementation aligns with educational objectives.

Furthermore, distributed leadership theory suggests that school leadership should not be concentrated solely on principals. Instead, leadership responsibilities should be shared among teachers, vice principals, department heads, and other educational stakeholders. Such collaborative leadership creates organizational resilience and strengthens institutional performance.

Therefore, effective principal leadership integrates managerial competence, instructional supervision, transformational leadership, organizational innovation, and collaborative governance simultaneously.

### ***Educational Quality***

Educational quality refers to the extent to which educational institutions achieve their intended goals through effective learning processes, competent educators, adequate facilities, and positive educational outcomes. Educational quality cannot merely be measured through examination scores but must also consider character formation, student competencies, institutional effectiveness, stakeholder satisfaction, and continuous organizational development.

According to the Indonesian National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003, education aims to develop learners into faithful, knowledgeable, creative, independent, democratic, and responsible citizens. Consequently, educational quality encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions simultaneously.

Sagala (2013) argues that educational quality depends upon several interconnected factors, including leadership effectiveness, teacher competence, curriculum implementation, learning environment, educational facilities, organizational culture, and community participation. Therefore, improving educational quality requires comprehensive institutional management rather than isolated interventions. International educational quality frameworks also emphasize continuous quality improvement through evidence-based planning, organizational learning, stakeholder engagement, and systematic evaluation. Schools are expected to monitor educational outcomes regularly, identify

organizational weaknesses, and implement corrective actions based on empirical evidence.

Within school organizations, principals become key actors responsible for integrating these quality dimensions into sustainable institutional practices. Effective principals coordinate educational resources, establish quality assurance mechanisms, strengthen teacher professionalism, and encourage innovation throughout the school community.

### ***Principal Management and Educational Quality***

Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated positive relationships between principal management and educational quality. Schools managed by competent principals generally exhibit stronger organizational performance, higher teacher commitment, better instructional quality, and improved student achievement.

Mulyasa (2017) explains that principals influence educational quality by developing teacher competencies, creating supportive learning environments, implementing effective supervision, and encouraging professional collaboration. Likewise, Wahjosumidjo (2013) argues that managerial competence enables principals to optimize educational resources efficiently while maintaining institutional accountability.

Research conducted by Hallinger (2011) further indicates that instructional leadership contributes significantly to school effectiveness through curriculum supervision, teacher support, learning evaluation, and academic monitoring. Similarly, Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) emphasize that transformational leadership enhances organizational commitment, innovation, and teacher motivation.

However, previous studies also reveal that principal leadership alone cannot guarantee educational improvement. Institutional success depends upon collaboration among teachers, parents, communities, educational authorities, and students themselves. Consequently, educational quality should be viewed as the result of collective organizational efforts coordinated through effective principal management.

The present study extends previous research by examining how principal management functions are practically implemented within a secondary school context while simultaneously identifying supporting and inhibiting factors influencing educational quality improvement.

### ***Theoretical Framework***

This study adopts George R. Terry's management theory as the primary theoretical foundation, integrated with educational leadership theories proposed by Mulyasa (2017) and Wahjosumidjo (2013).

The framework assumes that effective implementation of management functions directly influences educational quality improvement through systematic organizational processes.

### ***Planning***

1. School vision and mission
2. Annual programs
3. Educational planning

***Organizing***

1. Teacher assignment
2. Organizational structure
3. Resource allocation

***Actuating***

1. Teacher motivation
2. Professional development
3. School leadership

***Controlling***

1. Academic supervision
2. Program evaluation
3. Performance monitoring

***Educational Quality Improvement***

1. Teacher professionalism
2. Learning effectiveness
3. Student achievement
4. School culture
5. Stakeholder satisfaction

The framework illustrates that educational quality is achieved through the integrated implementation of managerial functions rather than isolated leadership activities. Effective planning supports efficient organization; effective organization facilitates implementation; implementation requires continuous supervision; and supervision provides feedback for subsequent planning cycles. Consequently, educational quality improvement becomes a continuous organizational process rather than a one-time intervention.

**METHODOLOGY**

***Research Design***

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a descriptive research design. A qualitative approach was selected because the research aims to explore comprehensively the implementation of principal management in improving educational quality within its natural setting. Rather than measuring variables statistically, qualitative research emphasizes understanding social phenomena through participants' experiences, perspectives, and interactions.

According to Sugiyono (2021), qualitative research is appropriate for examining complex educational phenomena because it enables researchers to obtain in-depth information concerning behaviors, management practices, organizational culture, and leadership processes. Similarly, Moleong (2018) argues that qualitative research allows researchers to investigate social realities holistically without manipulating research settings. The descriptive design was adopted because this study intended to describe systematically how principal management functions are implemented in improving educational quality at SMP Alimin Ibun, Bandung Regency.

**Research Site**

The research was conducted at SMP Alimin Ibun, located in Ibun District, Bandung Regency, West Java, Indonesia. The school was purposively selected because it continuously implements various educational quality improvement programs under the leadership of its principal. Furthermore, the school provides a relevant setting for examining how managerial functions are implemented despite existing institutional limitations, including infrastructure constraints and financial challenges.

**Research Participants**

Participants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed direct knowledge regarding school management practices. The participants consisted of:

Table 1

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Main Information Obtained</b>
Principal	School management, planning, leadership, supervision
Teachers	Teaching implementation, supervision, professional development
Administrative Staff	School administration and organizational support
School Documents	Annual programs, organizational structure, reports, school regulations

The selection of participants ensured that multiple perspectives were represented, allowing comprehensive understanding through data triangulation.

**Data Collection Techniques**

Data were collected using three complementary techniques.

**Observation**

Observation was conducted to understand directly how management activities were implemented within the school environment. The researcher observed classroom activities, teacher discipline, school administration, leadership practices, and interactions among school members. Observation enabled the researcher to obtain authentic information concerning daily educational management practices that could not always be fully explained through interviews.

**Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and administrative staff.

Interview questions focused on:

1. implementation of planning,
2. organizational management,
3. teacher supervision,
4. leadership practices,
5. educational quality improvement,
6. supporting factors,

7. institutional challenges.

Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to explain their experiences freely while maintaining consistency with research objectives.

***Documentation***

Documentation served as supporting evidence for observational and interview data.

Documents analyzed included:

1. annual school programs,
2. vision and mission statements,
3. organizational structures,
4. teacher assignment documents,
5. school regulations,
6. supervision reports,
7. meeting minutes,
8. photographs of school activities.

Document analysis strengthened research credibility through methodological triangulation.

***Data Analysis***

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three interconnected stages.

***Data Reduction***

The researcher selected, categorized, simplified, and organized all collected information according to research objectives. Irrelevant information was excluded while important findings were grouped into major themes such as planning, organizing, implementation, supervision, supporting factors, and inhibiting factors.

***Data Display***

After reduction, data were presented narratively and supported by summary tables. Data presentation enabled the researcher to identify relationships among findings and facilitated interpretation of principal management practices.

***Conclusion Drawing***

The final stage involved interpreting findings by comparing empirical evidence with educational management theories. Conclusions were continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure consistency and trustworthiness.

***Trustworthiness of Data***

To ensure research credibility, several validation strategies were implemented. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from principals, teachers, and administrative staff. Method triangulation involved comparing findings derived from observation, interviews, and documentation. Additionally, prolonged engagement within the research setting enabled the researcher to understand school management practices more comprehensively. These strategies increased the credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of research findings.

## RESULTS

The findings indicate that principal management has played a significant role in improving educational quality at SMP Alimin Ibun. The implementation of management functions reflects George R. Terry's management theory, which consists of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The findings are presented according to the research objectives.

### *Implementation of Principal Management*

The principal performs managerial functions systematically by integrating planning, organization, implementation, and supervision into daily school management. The implementation has contributed positively to educational quality through improved teacher performance, organizational effectiveness, learning quality, and stakeholder collaboration.

### *Planning*

Planning represents the first managerial function implemented by the principal. The principal prepares annual work plans based on:

1. school vision and mission,
2. educational regulations,
3. curriculum objectives,
4. previous evaluation results,
5. community expectations.

Planning activities include:

1. teacher development programs,
2. learning improvement,
3. extracurricular development,
4. infrastructure improvement,
5. school budgeting,
6. academic supervision.

Teachers are involved in planning meetings, allowing collective decision-making and increasing organizational commitment. The findings suggest that participatory planning encourages teachers to understand institutional objectives and strengthens responsibility for program implementation.

### *Organizing*

After planning, the principal organizes educational resources efficiently. Teacher assignments are determined according to:

1. educational background,
2. teaching competence,
3. professional experience,
4. workload distribution.

Administrative responsibilities are also clearly distributed among school staff. An effective organizational structure facilitates coordination among teachers, administrative personnel, and school leaders. The study indicates that organizational clarity minimizes role conflict while improving communication and teamwork. Furthermore, regular coordination meetings enable school members to evaluate ongoing programs and discuss emerging challenges collaboratively.

**Actuating**

The implementation stage demonstrates the principal's leadership capacity in motivating teachers and educational staff. Several leadership strategies were identified. First, the principal continuously encourages teachers to improve instructional quality through professional development activities. Second, teachers receive opportunities to participate in workshops, seminars, and educational training programs. Third, regular meetings are conducted to evaluate instructional practices and identify improvement strategies. Fourth, the principal promotes open communication, enabling teachers to express ideas and organizational concerns. These practices contribute to positive organizational culture characterized by collaboration, mutual respect, and professional commitment. The findings indicate that teachers perceive the principal as a supportive instructional leader rather than merely an administrator.

**Controlling**

Supervision represents one of the most important managerial functions implemented by the principal. Academic supervision is conducted regularly through:

1. classroom observation,
2. lesson plan evaluation,
3. teacher performance assessment,
4. feedback sessions.

The principal also evaluates:

1. student achievement,
2. teacher attendance,
3. school discipline,
4. implementation of annual programs.

Evaluation results become the basis for continuous organizational improvement. Teachers reported that supervision activities focus primarily on professional development rather than fault-finding, thereby increasing acceptance of evaluation processes. Consequently, supervision contributes positively to instructional improvement and organizational learning.

**Summary of Principal Management Implementation**

Table 1. Implementation of Principal Management Functions

<b>Management Function</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
Planning	Annual work programs, budgeting, curriculum planning
Organizing	Teacher assignments, organizational structure, coordination
Actuating	Teacher motivation, professional development, leadership
Controlling	Academic supervision, program evaluation, performance monitoring

The table demonstrates that management functions have been implemented comprehensively and continuously, providing a strong organizational foundation for educational quality improvement.

#### ***Principal's Strategies for Improving Educational Quality***

The findings demonstrate that the principal has implemented various strategic initiatives to improve educational quality. These initiatives extend beyond administrative responsibilities and encompass instructional leadership, organizational development, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous quality improvement.

#### ***Improving Teacher Professionalism***

One of the principal's primary strategies is strengthening teacher professionalism. Teachers are encouraged to participate in seminars, workshops, in-house training, and subject teacher forums (MGMP). Professional development activities aim to enhance pedagogical competence, subject knowledge, instructional innovation, and classroom management. The principal also conducts regular coaching sessions and academic discussions to evaluate classroom practices and identify areas requiring improvement. Teachers reported that these activities increased their confidence in implementing student-centered learning approaches. Professional development has become an important mechanism for maintaining instructional quality while encouraging lifelong learning among teachers. This finding indicates that educational quality improvement begins with improving teacher competence because teachers remain the most influential factor affecting students' learning outcomes.

#### ***Strengthening School Discipline***

Another important strategy implemented by the principal concerns strengthening discipline among teachers, educational staff, and students. Teacher discipline includes punctuality, lesson preparation, classroom attendance, administrative responsibilities, and professional ethics. Student discipline involves attendance, compliance with school regulations, participation in learning activities, and character development. The principal consistently emphasizes that discipline should be viewed not as punishment but as organizational culture. Through continuous supervision and exemplary leadership, discipline gradually becomes embedded within everyday school activities. The findings indicate that stronger discipline has contributed to smoother educational processes, improved learning environments, and higher organizational commitment among school members.

#### ***Developing Educational Facilities***

Educational facilities significantly influence learning effectiveness. Therefore, the principal continuously seeks to improve classrooms, learning equipment, library collections, and educational media despite financial limitations. Infrastructure development is implemented gradually according to institutional priorities and available financial resources. The principal also encourages efficient utilization of existing facilities while collaborating with external stakeholders to obtain additional educational support. Teachers acknowledged that although facilities remain limited, careful management has enabled learning activities to continue effectively.

### ***Building Partnerships with Parents and the Community***

Educational quality cannot be achieved solely through internal school efforts. Consequently, the principal actively establishes partnerships with parents, community leaders, and local institutions. Parent meetings are conducted regularly to discuss students' academic development, discipline, and school programs. Community participation is encouraged through educational activities, social programs, and school development initiatives. These partnerships strengthen mutual trust between schools and society while increasing community participation in educational improvement. The findings suggest that stakeholder collaboration creates a supportive educational ecosystem that benefits both students and the institution.

### ***Developing Extracurricular Activities***

The school also recognizes extracurricular activities as an important component of holistic education. Various extracurricular programs provide opportunities for students to develop leadership, creativity, teamwork, communication skills, sportsmanship, and moral values. Rather than emphasizing academic achievement alone, the principal promotes balanced student development encompassing intellectual, emotional, social, and character dimensions. This holistic approach reflects contemporary educational perspectives emphasizing twenty-first-century competencies.

### ***Supporting Factors***

The study identified several supporting factors contributing to successful educational management.

#### ***Teacher Collaboration***

Teachers demonstrate strong collaboration in planning instructional activities, sharing teaching experiences, solving educational problems, and implementing school programs. Collaborative culture enhances organizational learning because teachers continuously exchange knowledge and instructional innovations.

#### ***Principal Commitment***

The principal demonstrates high commitment toward educational improvement through consistent supervision, participatory leadership, strategic planning, and continuous evaluation. Leadership commitment has become the driving force behind organizational change and institutional development.

#### ***Community Support***

Parents and community members actively support school activities through participation in meetings, educational programs, infrastructure development, and student supervision outside school. Such support strengthens school-community relationships and increases institutional sustainability.

#### ***Inhibiting Factors***

Despite considerable achievements, several institutional challenges remain.

#### ***Limited Educational Facilities***

The most significant challenge concerns infrastructure limitations. Several classrooms, instructional media, and supporting facilities require further

improvement. Although these limitations do not prevent educational activities, they reduce instructional effectiveness and learning comfort.

#### ***Limited Operational Budget***

Financial constraints restrict infrastructure development, teacher professional development, and implementation of innovative educational programs. The school therefore prioritizes available resources according to institutional urgency.

#### ***Student Learning Motivation***

Teachers also reported that some students demonstrate relatively low learning motivation. Factors influencing motivation include family background, socioeconomic conditions, peer influence, and individual learning characteristics. Consequently, the school continuously develops counseling services, character education programs, and motivational activities to improve student engagement.

#### ***Summary of Findings***

The overall findings indicate that educational quality improvement at SMP Alimin Ibun results from systematic implementation of management functions supported by collaborative leadership. Although institutional challenges remain, effective principal management has enabled the school to maintain organizational stability while continuously improving educational quality.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings demonstrate that principal management plays a strategic role in improving educational quality through the implementation of systematic managerial functions. The principal successfully integrates planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling into everyday school management. This finding supports George R. Terry's management theory, which argues that organizational effectiveness depends upon the successful implementation of interconnected managerial functions.

Planning emerges as the foundation of educational quality improvement because it determines institutional direction, resource allocation, and program implementation. The participatory planning approach identified in this study reflects modern educational management emphasizing collaborative governance rather than centralized decision-making. Teacher involvement in planning increases organizational commitment and ownership of institutional programs, thereby facilitating successful implementation.

The organizing function also contributes significantly to institutional effectiveness. Appropriate distribution of responsibilities according to teachers' competencies enhances organizational efficiency while minimizing role ambiguity. This finding supports Hasibuan's (2016) argument that effective organizational structures facilitate communication, coordination, and institutional productivity.

The implementation phase illustrates that principal leadership extends beyond administrative responsibilities. The principal actively motivates teachers, promotes professional development, facilitates communication, and encourages innovation. These findings are consistent with Mulyasa (2017), who emphasizes

that successful principals function as educators, motivators, innovators, and instructional leaders simultaneously.

Moreover, the findings reveal that academic supervision serves not as an instrument of control but as a mechanism for continuous professional development. Teachers perceive supervision positively because feedback focuses on instructional improvement rather than fault identification. This approach aligns with contemporary instructional leadership theory, which views supervision as collaborative professional learning rather than hierarchical inspection.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between leadership and organizational culture. The principal's consistent emphasis on discipline, collaboration, and professional responsibility gradually shapes positive school culture. Organizational culture subsequently influences teacher commitment, student behavior, and institutional performance. This supports transformational leadership theory, which argues that sustainable organizational change occurs through cultural transformation rather than administrative regulation alone.

The study also confirms that improving educational quality requires comprehensive stakeholder participation. Collaboration among principals, teachers, parents, administrative staff, and community members contributes substantially to institutional success. This finding supports distributed leadership theory, suggesting that educational leadership should be shared across organizational members rather than concentrated solely on school principals.

Furthermore, professional teacher development constitutes one of the strongest determinants of educational quality identified in this research. Teachers participating in workshops, coaching sessions, and professional discussions demonstrate greater instructional confidence and pedagogical competence. These findings reinforce previous studies emphasizing that teacher quality remains the most influential school-level factor affecting student achievement.

However, the study also reveals several institutional challenges. Limited infrastructure and financial resources continue to constrain educational innovation. These findings correspond with numerous studies conducted in developing educational contexts, where resource limitations remain persistent organizational obstacles. Nevertheless, effective leadership enables schools to optimize available resources through strategic prioritization and community collaboration.

Student motivation also emerged as an important challenge. Educational quality depends not only upon teacher competence and leadership effectiveness but also upon students' willingness to engage actively in learning. Therefore, quality improvement should integrate instructional innovation, counseling services, character education, and family involvement to address motivational issues comprehensively. Overall, the findings demonstrate that educational quality improvement is a multidimensional process requiring strategic leadership, effective management, organizational collaboration, continuous evaluation, and stakeholder participation. Principal management serves as the

central coordinating mechanism integrating these components into sustainable institutional improvement.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the role of principal management in improving educational quality at SMP Alimin Ibun, Bandung Regency. The findings indicate that effective school management has become one of the primary determinants supporting sustainable educational quality improvement.

The implementation of management functions through planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling has enabled the school to organize educational programs systematically and continuously. Strategic planning allows the school to establish measurable educational objectives, while effective organizational management ensures that teachers and educational staff perform their respective responsibilities according to institutional needs.

The implementation function demonstrates that the principal has successfully encouraged teacher professionalism through continuous motivation, coaching, supervision, and professional development programs. Such initiatives have contributed positively to instructional quality, teacher commitment, and organizational performance. Furthermore, continuous supervision has enabled the school to evaluate educational activities regularly and implement necessary improvements based on evaluation findings.

The study also identified several strategic initiatives contributing to educational quality improvement, including strengthening teacher professionalism, improving school discipline, developing educational facilities, promoting extracurricular activities, and establishing collaborative partnerships with parents and local communities. These initiatives illustrate that educational quality improvement is a multidimensional process involving both instructional and managerial aspects.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that educational quality improvement is strongly supported by collaboration among teachers, principal commitment, and community participation. Conversely, limited infrastructure, insufficient operational funding, and relatively low student learning motivation remain significant institutional challenges requiring continuous attention.

Overall, this research concludes that educational quality cannot be improved solely through curriculum development or educational policy. Instead, successful educational improvement depends upon effective principal management capable of integrating leadership, organizational management, teacher development, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous institutional evaluation.

### ***Recommendations***

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be proposed.

First, principals should continuously strengthen participatory leadership practices by involving teachers and educational staff in planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Such participation enhances organizational commitment and promotes shared responsibility toward institutional goals.

Second, schools should prioritize sustainable teacher professional development through regular training, instructional supervision, mentoring programs, and participation in professional learning communities. Improving teacher competence remains fundamental to enhancing instructional quality.

Third, educational authorities should provide greater support regarding school infrastructure development, instructional facilities, and financial assistance. Adequate educational resources significantly contribute to effective teaching and learning.

Fourth, stronger collaboration between schools, parents, local governments, and communities should be encouraged to establish a supportive educational environment that enhances student development both inside and outside school.

Finally, principals should continue developing innovative educational programs that integrate digital learning, character education, student-centered pedagogy, and continuous quality assurance to respond effectively to educational challenges in the twenty-first century.

#### **FURTHER STUDY**

Although this study contributes to understanding principal management in improving educational quality, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the study was conducted in only one junior secondary school. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized directly to all educational institutions because each school possesses different organizational cultures, leadership characteristics, and environmental contexts.

Second, the study employed a qualitative descriptive approach emphasizing in-depth understanding rather than statistical generalization. Future researchers may consider employing mixed-methods or quantitative approaches to examine causal relationships among leadership, organizational management, teacher performance, and educational quality.

Third, this research mainly focused on principal management. Future studies may investigate other important variables influencing educational quality, including transformational leadership, instructional leadership, organizational culture, teacher motivation, digital leadership, school climate, educational innovation, and quality assurance systems.

Finally, comparative studies involving public and private schools or schools located in different geographical contexts would enrich educational management literature and provide broader perspectives concerning effective school leadership.

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