



Implementation of POAC-Based Educational Management in Improving Learning Quality: A Case Study at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang

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Abstract

Educational management effectiveness at the school level remains a critical yet underexplored determinant of learning quality, particularly in decentralized education systems such as Indonesia's, where schools are granted substantial autonomy in planning and resource management. This study aims to examine the implementation of the four educational management functions—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC)—at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang, to assess the effectiveness of this implementation, and to identify the contextual factors that support or hinder it. A qualitative case study approach was employed, with data collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis involving the principal, vice-principals, teachers, and administrative staff, and analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that planning and organizing are procedurally well-documented but remain largely top-down, with teacher involvement limited to a consultative role, whereas actuating and controlling are more strongly associated with observable improvements in instructional practice, driven primarily by the principal's personalized leadership and a dual-layer supervisory approach combining scheduled and informal classroom observation. Overall, management implementation was found to be moderately to highly effective, with the majority of planned programs successfully realized, although supervisory follow-up documentation remained inconsistent. Key supporting factors included communicative principal leadership and an active subject-teacher forum (MGMP), while inhibiting factors included limited infrastructure, resistance to change among some senior teachers, and weak parental participation in academic decision-making. These findings suggest that the impact of educational management on learning quality is driven less by administrative procedure and more by the relational and motivational dimensions of leadership practice. This study contributes to the school-based management literature by demonstrating that effectiveness is contingent not merely on the presence of formal management structures, but on the consistency and quality of their enactment in daily school life.

Keywords: Educational Management; POAC; Management Effectiveness; Learning Quality; Instructional Leadership.



1. Introduction

Education is a strategic sector that determines the quality of human resources and the sustainability of national development. The success of educational provision at the school level is not solely determined by the availability of facilities or the size of the budget allocation, but is strongly influenced by the quality of management in organizing all school resources. International studies have shown that school management practices are closely associated with student learning outcomes. Bloom *et al.* (2015), through the development of a school management index across countries, found that management quality is linked to both standardized test results and other learning indicators. This finding is supported by meta-analytic studies on school leadership, which indicate that the type and intensity of managerial leadership practices significantly contribute to student outcomes, both academically and non-academically (Robinson *et al.*, 2008; Day *et al.*, 2016). These findings suggest that educational management should not be viewed merely as an administrative function, but as a key factor influencing the effectiveness of the learning process.

In recent decades, many countries have adopted decentralized education systems that grant greater autonomy to schools. This approach is based on the assumption that decision-making closer to local needs leads to more responsive and higher-quality educational services. In Indonesia, this policy has been implemented through school-based management, which has been in place for more than two decades and continues to evolve alongside national policy changes (Bandur *et al.*, 2022). This policy provides broader authority for school principals and school communities to plan, organize, implement, and supervise educational programs independently. However, studies have shown that the effectiveness of its implementation varies across schools. Differences in stakeholders' understanding of school-based management often contribute to the limited impact of the policy on educational outcomes (Bandur, 2018). Similar challenges are also reported in other developing countries, such as Ethiopia, where limited administrative capacity and insufficient understanding of management principles hinder effective implementation (Berhanu, 2023).

The core functions of educational management—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC)—remain widely used as a framework for analyzing school management practices (Kadariah, 2020; Putra *et al.*, 2023). A systematic review of 133 studies on educational quality management found that management practices constitute the most dominant category, indicating their central role in determining overall educational quality (Bouranta *et al.*, 2021). Empirical studies also show that the actuating function, through motivation, role modeling, and effective communication, can enhance teacher engagement in professional development, while the controlling function, when implemented systematically and based on data, helps schools address challenges more adaptively (Fauzi & Wasliman, 2025; Maulana *et al.*, 2025; DM & Helmawati, 2026). In addition to management functions, instructional leadership plays an important role in improving learning quality. This form of leadership is reflected in academic supervision and continuous professional support for teachers. Research has consistently shown that such practices contribute to improved teaching quality in both international and Indonesian contexts (Bellibaş *et al.*, 2021; Ayumi & Nasution, 2025; Lamatenggo & Sukung, 2026). However, at the secondary school level, instructional leadership is often exercised indirectly through delegation to middle-level leaders, such as vice principals or subject coordinators. This suggests that its effectiveness depends on how organizing and controlling functions are implemented within the school structure (Bendikson *et al.*, 2012).

The success of educational management implementation is also shaped by various contextual factors. Supporting factors commonly identified include strong leadership, teacher collaboration, effective communication, and active involvement of school



committees and communities in decision-making. In contrast, inhibiting factors include limited resources, low participation among some school members, resistance to change, and inconsistency in program implementation (Botha, 2006; Kalman, 2020; Mohzana, 2025; Subagio, 2025; Arifin *et al.*, 2026). These conditions indicate that educational management practices are highly contextual and cannot be generalized without in-depth empirical investigation.

SMA Negeri 1 Sabang is a public senior high school that plays a strategic role in the provision of education in Sabang City, Aceh Province. As a school under the supervision of the Aceh Provincial Education Office, it is required to continuously improve the quality of its educational services through professional, transparent, and accountable resource management. This demand has become increasingly relevant in light of ongoing national education reforms that emphasize school governance, instructional transformation, and the development of students' competencies. Although studies on school management have been widely conducted, most have focused on primary and junior secondary education or on specific aspects of management. Research that examines the comprehensive implementation of all four management functions (POAC) and directly links them to learning quality at public senior high schools in Aceh, particularly at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang, remains limited. This gap forms the basis and novelty of the present study.

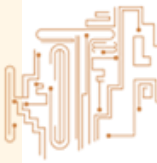
Based on this background, this study seeks to address three main questions: (1) how educational management is implemented to improve learning quality at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang; (2) how effective this implementation is; and (3) what factors support and hinder its implementation. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study aims to describe the implementation of management functions, analyze their effectiveness, and identify the contextual factors involved. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of educational management studies and to provide practical insights for school leaders and policymakers in strengthening school governance oriented toward improving learning quality.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Educational Management: Concept and Scope

Educational management is fundamentally the application of general management principles to the specific context of schooling, encompassing the coordinated use of human, financial, and material resources to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently. Cross-national evidence constructing standardized management indices for schools across dozens of countries demonstrates that management quality is not merely an administrative formality but a measurable construct that correlates strongly with student learning outcomes (Bloom *et al.*, 2015). This finding is corroborated by a large-scale systematic review of 133 empirical studies on quality management in primary and secondary education, which identified "management practices" as the single category generating the highest number of substantive findings among six broad thematic categories examined, surpassing even categories related directly to teaching methods (Bouranta *et al.*, 2021). Taken together, these studies position educational management as a central, rather than peripheral, determinant of school quality.

Within the Indonesian policy landscape, educational management has been institutionalized through school-based management (SBM), a decentralization policy intended to devolve planning, resourcing, and evaluative authority to the school level (Bandur *et al.*, 2022). Empirical assessments of SBM implementation in Indonesian schools reveal that its success is contingent upon several enabling conditions—principal decision-making authority, participatory governance involving school councils, and active teacher engagement—which collectively foster improved teaching-learning environments (Bandur, 2018). Comparable patterns have been observed beyond Indonesia; in the



Ethiopian context, for instance, SBM implementation has been constrained by low administrative capacity, unclear authority structures, and inadequate financing, underscoring that the effectiveness of decentralized management models is highly dependent on local institutional readiness rather than policy design alone (Berhanu, 2023).

2.2 Functions of Educational Management (POAC)

This study adopts the POAC framework—Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling—as originally conceptualized by George R. Terry, given its continued dominance as an analytical lens in contemporary school management research (Kadariah, 2020; Putra *et al.*, 2023).

1) Planning.

Planning constitutes the foundational function through which school leaders translate institutional needs into concrete programs, including teacher recruitment planning, curriculum design, and the allocation of guidance and counseling resources (Kadariah, 2020). Effective planning has also been shown to require systematic needs analysis; a study examining educational management in reducing access inequality found that although schools increasingly rely on administrative data systems for planning, many still lack comprehensive, data-driven needs assessments for vulnerable student populations—revealing that formal planning tools do not automatically guarantee substantively responsive plans (Rohani *et al.*, 2026).

2) Organizing.

The organizing function concerns the structuring of roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms within the school. Empirical cases demonstrate that organizing is operationalized through the formation of dedicated implementation teams, clear task delegation among staff, and the involvement of school committees or parent representatives in supporting infrastructure completion (Kadariah, 2020; Sugiono & Koswara, 2026). In curriculum-specific contexts, organizing has similarly been shown to manifest through structured coordination bodies—such as character development teams—that oversee program implementation across multiple stakeholders (Niswah *et al.*, 2026).

3) Actuating.

Actuating, or the directing function, is the mechanism through which school leaders mobilize human resources toward shared objectives. Evidence from vocational and general secondary schools indicates that principals operationalize actuating by modeling strong work ethics, providing both moral and material incentives, and fostering open, emotionally supportive dialogue with teachers to encourage professional innovation (Fauzi & Wasliman, 2025). Actuating has also been documented as extending beyond individual motivation to encompass broader mobilization of school-wide participation, particularly when integrating locally contextualized values into curriculum delivery (Maulana *et al.*, 2025).

4) Controlling.

The controlling function ensures that implemented programs remain aligned with planned objectives through systematic monitoring and evaluation. Recent case evidence shows that effective controlling combines data-driven comprehensive evaluation with direct, formative feedback mechanisms, enabling schools to address implementation constraints through adaptive solutions such as flexible scheduling (DM & Helmawati, 2026). At the same time, controlling in some contexts has been shown to rely heavily on multilayered supervision—combining scheduled observation with unannounced monitoring—to sustain consistency in program execution over time (Sugiono & Koswara, 2026).



2.3 Learning Quality

Learning quality in this study refers to the degree of excellence in the instructional process, encompassing planning, delivery, assessment, and the resulting development of student competencies. International evidence indicates that instructional quality is most reliably assessed through a combination of academic outcomes—such as standardized test performance—and non-academic indicators, including student engagement, motivation, and behavior (Day *et al.*, 2016). This multidimensional conception aligns with earlier theoretical work distinguishing between the instrumental functions of schooling, reflected in measurable academic results, and its expressive functions, reflected in staff morale, trust, and organizational climate (Uline *et al.*, 1998).

2.4 Effectiveness of Educational Management

Defining and measuring the effectiveness of educational management remains methodologically contested across the literature. One influential meta-analytic synthesis quantified leadership effectiveness through effect-size estimates linking specific leadership dimensions to both academic and non-academic student outcomes, finding that dimensions such as "promoting and participating in teacher learning and development" produced substantially larger effects than more administratively oriented dimensions like goal-setting (Robinson *et al.*, 2007). In a related but methodologically distinct approach, effectiveness has been operationalized through internationally comparable management indices constructed from twenty standardized management practice indicators spanning operations, monitoring, target-setting, and people management, with higher index scores consistently associated with better pupil-level examination outcomes (Bloom *et al.*, 2015).

For the purposes of this study, educational management is considered effective when three conditions are jointly satisfied: (1) there is demonstrable consistency between planned programs and their actual implementation; (2) established program targets are substantively achieved rather than merely reported as completed; and (3) the implementation process produces observable, positive impacts on the quality of classroom instruction and student learning experiences. This operational definition synthesizes the outcome-oriented perspective advanced by Robinson *et al.* (2007) and Bloom *et al.* (2015) with the process-oriented emphasis found in Indonesian school-level case studies (Eryani & Ahyani, 2026).

2.5 Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Educational Management Implementation

The implementation of educational management functions does not occur in a vacuum; it is shaped by a constellation of contextual enablers and constraints. Among supporting factors most frequently identified across empirical studies are strong and consistent leadership, effective inter-teacher collaboration, active community and parental engagement, and the availability of adequate resources (Mohzana, 2025). Complementary evidence from South African secondary schools similarly identifies principal leadership as the single most decisive factor differentiating schools with successful school-based management outcomes from those characterized as "totally ineffective," particularly where stakeholder participation is weak or absent (Botha, 2006). Conversely, inhibiting factors reported across diverse national contexts include insufficient professional development opportunities, limited access to financial and material resources, resistance to change among certain staff members, and difficulties in sustaining consistency in program execution over time (Kalman, 2020; Subagio, 2025).

Structural and human-side contextual barriers—ranging from budgetary constraints to staff attitudes and student-related issues such as absenteeism and low engagement—have also been shown to impede school improvement efforts even in contexts with otherwise capable leadership (Kalman, 2020). At the level of specific management domains, studies on teacher discipline management further confirm that limited resources and low teacher participation constitute recurring constraints, even when communication and collaborative culture are otherwise supportive (Arifin *et al.*, 2026).



2.6 Relationship Between Educational Management and Learning Quality

The theoretical and empirical linkage between educational management and learning quality is most clearly articulated through the construct of instructional leadership. Comparative analysis distinguishes between direct instructional leadership—where principals engage directly with teaching and curriculum quality—and indirect instructional leadership, which operates by creating organizational conditions conducive to effective teaching, a distinction found to be particularly salient at the secondary school level, where direct instructional oversight is often delegated to middle leaders such as heads of department (Bendikson *et al.*, 2012). Building on this distinction, subsequent research using large-scale international survey data found that while instructional leadership exerts a significant direct effect on instructional quality, the effect of distributed leadership operates primarily indirectly, mediated by teacher collaboration and job satisfaction (Bellibaş *et al.*, 2021). Academic supervision, as a core mechanism through which management translates into classroom-level quality, has been consistently shown to enhance teacher professional competence when implemented through structured planning, active engagement, and systematic follow-up (Julianda *et al.*, 2024).

This relationship holds across national contexts: studies in Indonesian junior secondary schools confirm that principal-led supervision balancing guidance, collaboration, and evaluation is essential for sustaining instructional quality (Lamatenggo & Sukung, 2026), while comparable findings from Nigerian secondary schools report a significant positive correlation between supervisory practices and educational outcomes ($r = 0.56$, $p < 0.05$) (Ekwevugbe, 2025). Nonetheless, the strength of this relationship is not universal; a recent study of rural Chinese secondary schools found that while promoting teacher learning exerted a dominant influence on instructional quality, the direct managerial function of "managing instruction" produced only a weak effect, with motivational and job-satisfaction mechanisms mediating much of the observed influence (Lin & Hu, 2025). This finding suggests that the pathway from management to instructional quality is not purely mechanical but is substantially mediated by teachers' psychological and motivational states.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Synthesizing the theoretical foundations discussed above, this study conceptualizes educational management implementation as a cyclical process comprising four interrelated functions—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—that are jointly exercised by the school principal in collaboration with teachers and staff. This implementation process is theorized to be moderated by a set of contextual supporting and inhibiting factors, and to exert its influence on learning quality both directly (through structured program execution) and indirectly (through its effect on teacher motivation, collaboration, and professional development). The effectiveness of this entire process is evaluated based on the degree of alignment between planned and realized outcomes, the achievement of established targets, and the observable improvement in the quality of classroom instruction. This conceptual framework guides the formulation of the research questions and the design of data collection instruments described in the following methodology section.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive case study design. This approach was selected because the research sought to obtain an in-depth, contextual understanding of how educational management functions are implemented in practice, rather than to test hypotheses or quantify relationships between variables. Given that the implementation of educational management involves leadership dynamics, interpersonal



coordination, and context-dependent decision-making that cannot be adequately captured through numerical measurement alone, a qualitative descriptive design was deemed most suitable for addressing the three research questions concerning implementation, effectiveness, and contextual supporting/inhibiting factors.

3.2 Research Setting

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang, a public senior high school located in Sabang City, Aceh Province, Indonesia. This site was selected based on three considerations: (1) its relevance to the research focus, as the school actively implements various school management programs aimed at improving learning quality; (2) the availability of documented evidence relevant to educational management implementation, including School Work Plans (Rencana Kerja Sekolah), School Activity and Budget Plans (RKAS), and academic supervision records; and (3) the accessibility of diverse informants directly involved in school governance, allowing for data triangulation across multiple organizational roles.

3.3 Participants

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, a technique appropriate for qualitative research where informants are chosen based on their direct involvement in, and depth of knowledge about, the phenomenon under investigation rather than statistical representativeness. Data collection continued until informational redundancy (data saturation) was achieved. The profile of research informants is presented in Tabel 1.

Table 1. Participant Profile

No	Informant	Number	Focus of Information
1	Principal	1	Planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling of school programs; supporting and inhibiting factors
2	Vice Principal (Curriculum)	1	Curriculum management, instructional planning, and learning evaluation
3	Vice Principal (Student Affairs)	1	Student development programs and support for learning quality
4	Subject Teachers	4–6	Planning, implementation, and evaluation of classroom instruction
5	Head of MGMP (Subject Teacher Forum)	1	Teacher professional development and coordination of instructional materials
6	Administrative Staff	2	Academic administration and school service support
Total		10–12	

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three complementary techniques: observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis.

- 1) Observation was conducted using a non-participant approach, guided by a structured observation protocol covering five domains: planning, organizing, actuating, controlling, and indicators of learning quality.
- 2) Interviews were semi-structured, allowing the researcher to follow a predetermined set of core questions while retaining flexibility to probe emergent themes raised by informants.
- 3) Document analysis involved the review of institutional records including the school's vision and mission statements, organizational structure, School Work Plans, academic



supervision programs, academic calendars, teacher lesson plans, meeting minutes, and prior program evaluation reports.

The relationship between the four management functions, data collection techniques, and relevant data sources is summarized in Tabel 2.

Table 2. Data Collection Matrix Based on Management Functions

Management Function	Observation	Interviews	Documentation
Planning	Program planning meetings	Principal, Vice Principal (Curriculum)	School Work Plan (RKS), School Budget Plan (RKAS), Academic Calendar
Organizing	Task distribution and coordination	Principal, Vice Principal (Student Affairs)	Organizational Structure
Actuating	Supervision and classroom activities	Teachers, Head of MGMP	Teacher development programs
Controlling	Monitoring and evaluation processes	Principal, Teachers	Evaluation reports, meeting minutes
Learning Quality	Classroom teaching and learning process	Teachers	Lesson plans, student learning outcomes

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, comprising three concurrent and iterative stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The overall analytical process is illustrated in Gambar 1.

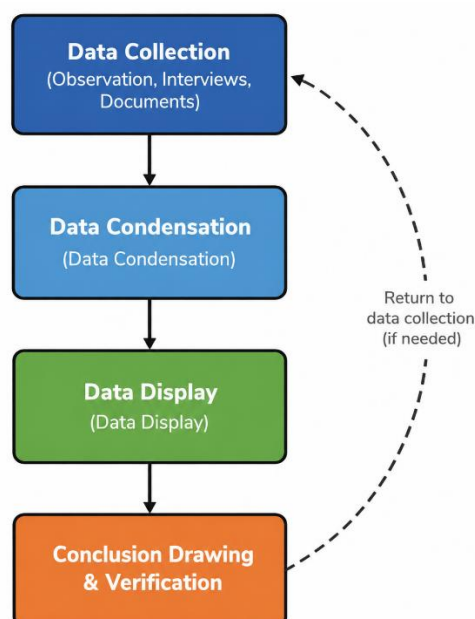


Figure 1. Interactive Data Analysis Model



During data condensation, raw data from interview transcripts, field notes, and documents were coded and categorized according to the four POAC functions, learning quality indicators, and supporting/inhibiting factors. During data display, condensed data were organized into narrative summaries and thematic matrices. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involved iteratively comparing emerging patterns against theoretical propositions and cross-checking interpretations across data sources. To operationalize the assessment of effectiveness (Section 2.4), the analysis specifically examined the degree of alignment between documented plans and their actual implementation, the extent to which program targets were achieved, and evidence of resulting changes in instructional quality.

3.6 Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure credibility and dependability of findings, this study applied four verification strategies, summarized in Tabel 3.

Table 3. Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness

Strategy	Description
Source Triangulation	Comparing information from different informants (principal, teachers, vice principals) on the same topic
Technique Triangulation	Cross-checking data obtained from interviews, observations, and documents
Time Triangulation	Conducting observations and interviews at different times to ensure consistency
Member Checking	Confirming interview transcripts and initial interpretations with key informants

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

Data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis were organized according to the four management functions (POAC), the effectiveness criteria outlined in the theoretical framework, and the contextual supporting/inhibiting factors relevant to implementation. Findings are presented thematically below, moving from the implementation of management functions to their effectiveness, contextual influences, and ultimately their impact on learning quality. Planning at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang follows a structured annual cycle in which the School Work Plan (RKS) and School Activity and Budget Plan (RKAS) are prepared through an internal evaluation of the previous year's program achievements, followed by a needs analysis involving teachers and subject teacher forums (MGMP). As the principal explained, "Setiap awal tahun ajaran kami melakukan rapat evaluasi program tahun sebelumnya, baru kemudian menyusun RKAS berdasarkan kebutuhan yang belum tercapai." Document analysis confirmed the existence of formally documented RKS and RKAS containing specific, measurable targets.

However, several teachers reported that their involvement remained largely consultative rather than co-constructive, since input was solicited but not always visibly reflected in the final program design. Organizing, meanwhile, is anchored in a formal organizational structure supplemented by task-specific working teams, such as the curriculum implementation team and student character development team. Coordination meetings are held biweekly to synchronize cross-divisional activities, yet newer teachers noted occasional ambiguity regarding overlapping responsibilities between student affairs and MGMP coordination—particularly in scheduling extracurricular activities—



suggesting that formal structural clarity does not always translate into unambiguous task boundaries in daily practice.

Actuating was found to be strongly shaped by the principal's personalized leadership style, consistently described by informants as approachable, motivating, and responsive to teachers' classroom challenges. During an observed staff meeting, the principal opened the floor for teachers to raise implementation obstacles before presenting administrative directives, reflecting a participatory mobilization approach. Material incentives, such as certification-related training allowances, and non-material recognition, such as public acknowledgment during school assemblies, were also identified as key actuating mechanisms that encouraged teachers to experiment with new instructional strategies. Controlling, for its part, combined scheduled academic supervision, unannounced classroom visits, and periodic evaluation meetings.

Formal supervision is conducted by the curriculum vice-principal at least once per semester using a standardized instrument, while the principal occasionally performs informal classroom observations. Feedback is typically delivered constructively within one week, enabling timely instructional adjustments; however, document analysis revealed that follow-up documentation of corrective actions was inconsistently archived, indicating that while the process of controlling was consistently practiced, its administrative traceability remained comparatively weak. A summary comparison across all four functions is presented in Tabel 4.

Table 4. Summary of POAC Implementation at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang

Function	Identified Practices	Level of Consistency with Planning Documents	Key Findings
Planning	Annual evaluation and preparation of RKS/RKAS based on institutional needs	High	Teacher involvement remains consultative rather than fully participatory
Organizing	Formal organizational structure and formation of program-specific teams	Moderate–High	Overlapping roles identified, particularly in extracurricular activities
Actuating	Role-model leadership and provision of material and non-material incentives	High	Teachers are motivated to innovate in instructional practices
Controlling	Scheduled and unscheduled supervision with direct feedback mechanisms	Moderate	Strong supervision practices, but weak documentation of follow-up actions

Applying the effectiveness criteria established earlier—alignment between plans and implementation, achievement of program targets, and observable improvement in instructional quality—triangulated data indicate that the school demonstrates moderate-to-high effectiveness. Of the eight major programs listed in the 2024/2025 RKAS, six were verified as fully implemented as planned, one was partially implemented due to budget reallocation, and one experienced delay attributable to facility procurement issues. Notably, informants consistently linked improvements in teaching practice to the actuating and controlling functions rather than to planning alone, suggesting that effectiveness in this



context is driven less by the sophistication of planning documents and more by the consistency of follow-through and feedback.

Several recurring contextual factors shaped this pattern of implementation, summarized in Tabel 5: strong, communicative principal leadership and an active MGMP culture consistently supported implementation, while resistance among some senior teachers toward new instructional methods, limited laboratory and internet infrastructure, and inconsistent supervision documentation constrained it further. Parental involvement in academic decision-making was also notably weaker than their involvement in physical infrastructure programs.

Table 5. Matrix of Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Management Implementation

Category	Supporting Factors	Inhibiting Factors
Leadership	Visionary, communicative, and reflective school principal	No significant inhibiting factors identified
Collaboration & Work Culture	Strong collaborative culture and active teacher working groups	Resistance from some senior teachers toward instructional innovation
Resources	Relatively stable BOS funding	Limited laboratory facilities and internet access
Stakeholder Participation	School committee involvement in physical development programs	Low parental involvement in academic decision-making
Administration	Well-organized RKS/RKAS documentation system	Inconsistent documentation of supervision follow-up

Across data sources, informants consistently associated improvements in learning quality with three specific practices: structured academic supervision that produced actionable feedback, MGMP-facilitated peer learning among teachers, and the principal's consistent encouragement of instructional innovation. Classroom observations conducted during the study period showed comparatively high student engagement in classes taught by teachers who had recently received supervisory feedback, suggesting a plausible—though not strictly causal—link between controlling practices and classroom-level instructional quality.

4.2 Discussion

The finding that planning is technically well-documented yet only moderately participatory reflects a broader tension long recognized in educational leadership research between formal planning procedures and genuinely responsive planning outcomes. Hallinger and Heck (2010) similarly argue that principals often satisfy administrative planning requirements while leaving substantive teacher co-construction underdeveloped, a gap that can limit how accurately plans capture classroom-level realities. The organizing function's clear structural documentation, paired with practical ambiguity in task boundaries, echoes Hoy and Miskel's (2013) classical observation that formal organizational charts frequently fail to eliminate coordination friction once programs move into daily operation, implying that organizational clarity must be actively renegotiated during implementation rather than assumed from structure alone.

The prominence of the principal's personalized leadership style in actuating findings resonates strongly with distributed and transformational leadership theory. Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) contend that principals influence teacher practice most effectively not through direct control but by shaping motivation, commitment, and collective efficacy—a pattern closely mirrored in this study, where recognition and moral support, rather than administrative directives, appeared to drive teachers' willingness to innovate. This is further



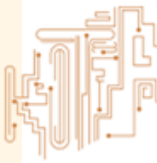
reinforced by Marks and Printy's (2003) concept of shared instructional leadership, wherein principals and teachers jointly construct instructional norms; the participatory tone observed during staff meetings at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang suggests an emerging, if not yet fully mature, version of this shared leadership model. Meanwhile, the dual-layer supervisory approach identified in controlling—combining scheduled and unannounced observation—aligns with Supovitz, Sirinides, and May's (2010) finding that principal visibility in classrooms, even informally, meaningfully strengthens instructional accountability. Nonetheless, the comparatively weak documentation of supervisory follow-up identified here represents a genuine limitation; Fullan (2014) cautions that without systematic tracking of corrective actions, even well-intentioned supervision risks becoming episodic rather than cumulative in its impact on teacher development.

The moderate-to-high effectiveness identified in this study, characterized by largely but incompletely consistent plan-implementation alignment, is consistent with Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson's (2010) large-scale finding that even high-performing schools rarely achieve full congruence between stated plans and realized practice, with leadership consistency over time mattering more than planning precision itself. This lends support to the pattern observed here, in which actuating and controlling—not planning—were most strongly associated with perceived instructional improvement. The persistence of resource-related constraints, particularly limited laboratory and internet infrastructure, further echoes Sahlberg's (2011) comparative observation that even schools with strong internal leadership cannot fully offset systemic under-resourcing through managerial effort alone. At the same time, the relatively low level of parental participation in academic decision-making—contrasted with stronger involvement in infrastructure matters—extends this discussion by suggesting that school-based management, as a decentralization mechanism, may be unevenly internalized across different domains of governance, being more readily accepted in tangible, resource-related decisions than in matters of academic policy.

Finally, the observed relationship between structured supervision, MGMP-facilitated peer learning, and improved classroom engagement lends contextual support to Darling-Hammond's (2010) argument that sustained, collaborative professional learning communities are a stronger driver of instructional improvement than isolated supervisory checks. Importantly, teachers in this study attributed their willingness to adjust instructional practices not merely to the feedback received, but to the constructive, non-punitive manner in which it was delivered. This reinforces the view articulated by Handayani and Rasyid (2024) in their study of Indonesian secondary schools, that management influences learning quality substantially through its effect on teachers' sense of psychological safety and professional trust, rather than through administrative oversight in isolation—suggesting that the relational quality of managerial interaction, and not merely its procedural regularity, is what ultimately translates management practice into improved learning outcomes.

5. Conclusion

This study set out to examine how the four functions of educational management—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—are implemented at SMA Negeri 1 Sabang, how effectively this implementation translates into improved learning quality, and what contextual factors support or hinder the process. The findings indicate that management implementation at this school is procedurally sound but unevenly mature across functions. Planning and organizing are well-documented through formal instruments such as the RKS, RKAS, and organizational structure, yet both retain a degree of top-down character, with teacher involvement remaining largely consultative and task boundaries



occasionally ambiguous in daily practice. In contrast, actuating and controlling emerged as the two functions most closely associated with tangible improvements in teaching practice, driven primarily by the principal's personalized, motivational leadership style and by a dual-layer supervisory approach that combined scheduled and informal classroom observation. This suggests that within this context, the relational and follow-through dimensions of management—how consistently and constructively leadership engages with teachers—matter more for instructional improvement than the sophistication of planning documentation alone.

In terms of effectiveness, the school demonstrated moderate-to-high performance, evidenced by the successful implementation of the majority of its planned programs and by informants' consistent attribution of instructional gains to actuating and controlling practices rather than planning per se. This finding reinforces the broader theoretical proposition, supported by prior research, that leadership consistency over time is a more decisive determinant of effectiveness than planning precision in isolation. At the same time, the study identified a persistent gap between the process quality of supervision and its administrative traceability, indicating that while feedback mechanisms function well interpersonally, they are not yet fully institutionalized as a documented, cumulative system for teacher development.

Several contextual factors were found to shape this pattern of implementation. Strong, communicative principal leadership and an active subject-teacher forum (MGMP) consistently supported effective management, while resource limitations—particularly in laboratory facilities and internet access—along with resistance to change among some senior teachers, constrained it. A particularly notable finding was the asymmetry in stakeholder participation: parental and community involvement was substantial in infrastructure-related programs but markedly weaker in academic decision-making, suggesting that school-based management as a decentralization principle has been only partially internalized across different domains of school governance. Collectively, these findings affirm that the impact of educational management on learning quality operates less through administrative procedure and more through the cultivation of teacher motivation, professional trust, and psychological safety—a pathway that is relational and cumulative rather than mechanical.

Based on these conclusions, several practical recommendations can be offered. First, the school should consider formalizing mechanisms for genuine teacher co-construction in the planning process, moving beyond consultation toward shared ownership of program design. Second, a more systematic documentation system for supervisory follow-up is needed to ensure that the currently strong interpersonal quality of controlling is matched by administrative continuity, enabling long-term tracking of teacher development. Third, efforts to expand parental and community engagement should be deliberately extended into academic governance, not only infrastructure support, to more fully realize the participatory intent of school-based management policy. Finally, continued investment in resolving infrastructural constraints—particularly laboratory facilities and internet connectivity—remains necessary, as even strong leadership cannot fully substitute for adequate physical resources.

This study is limited by its single-site case study design, which, while enabling rich contextual understanding, constrains the generalizability of its findings to other schools with differing leadership styles, resource conditions, or regional contexts. Future research would benefit from comparative multi-site studies across schools with varying levels of management maturity, as well as longitudinal designs capable of tracing how the relational dynamics identified here—particularly the interplay between supervisory feedback and teacher motivation—evolve and translate into sustained improvements in student learning outcomes over time.



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