



## Managerial Competence of Principals and Its Impact on Teacher Work Motivation in Elementary Schools of Aceh Tamiang

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### ABSTRACT

Teacher motivation is a significant barrier for improving educational quality, especially in rural and resource-limited institutions. This study examines the impact of principals' managerial competence—executed through the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC)—on improving teacher work motivation in elementary schools. Data were gathered using a qualitative methodology through in-depth interviews, observations, and recording at five public elementary schools in Gugus III Ceding Ayu, Aceh Tamiang, Indonesia. The results indicate that adaptive managerial methods, defined by participatory planning, supportive supervision, transparent communication, and context-sensitive leadership, substantially enhance teachers' enthusiasm, commitment, consistency, and teamwork. Nonetheless, challenges persist about the uniformity of follow-up oversight and the fair allocation of responsibilities. This study theoretically extends the contextual application of the POAC framework in rural educational environments and practically provides a robust model of adaptive school management to enhance teacher involvement in underprivileged areas.

### 1. Introduction

The quality of education depends directly to the motivation, dedication, and professionalism of teachers, who are the foundation of any educational system (Noorhapizah et al., 2023). Teachers motivated by a profound sense of purpose and supported by favourable working conditions are more inclined to implement new teaching strategies, weather constant student engagement, and seek ongoing professional development. In numerous developed regions, the interaction between systemic limitations and individual motivation establishes a complex dynamic that directly affects instructional quality (Nurhayati, 2023). Factors such as insufficient compensation, overcrowded classrooms, and a scarcity of pedagogical tools can undermine teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, resulting in diminished instructional effort and poorer educational outcomes. This matter has been thoroughly examined in the previous study, where recent research indicates that teacher motivation is not solely an individual characteristic but rather a manifestation of wider institutional

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and sociocultural environments that either enhance or limit teachers' professional intervention (Alene et al., 2025).

In remote and under-resourced settings, the difficulty intensifies as educators frequently function in conditions characterized by restricted access to professional development, excessive workload expectations, and isolation from supportive networks (Lito & Mallillin, 2022). Such constraints hinder their capacity to remain informed about contemporary pedagogical approaches and gradually diminish confidence. Furthermore, excessive administrative responsibilities—frequently mandated by bureaucratic accountability systems—distract teachers from their primary instructional obligations, therefore compromising both teaching quality and student performance (Lito & Mallillin, 2022). The outcome is a circular pattern wherein demotivation results in decreased educational quality, thereby fostering poor community trust and weakened institutional support for schools (Pratiwi & Warlizasusi, 2023). Addressing this necessitates focused policy interventions that improve teacher welfare, offer substantial professional development opportunities, and decentralize administrative responsibilities—changes that research in the *Teaching and Teacher Education Journal* recognizes as crucial for rejuvenating teacher motivation and enhancing educational quality in developing contexts (Berkovich & Hassan, 2024).

In this context, the school principal's position transitions from a mere administrator to a strategic instructional leader whose impact extends to all aspects of the educational process (Susanti et al., 2025). Effective principals cultivate a collective vision of education, encourage collaborative professional environments, and actively participate in teacher development via coaching and feedback systems (Moltudal et al., 2022). Their capacity to reconcile administrative responsibilities with instructional leadership is essential for maintaining teacher motivation and guaranteeing high-quality education. Research featured in the *Educational Management Administration & Leadership Journal* indicates that principals employing a transformational leadership style—marked by inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and personalized support—are likely to foster enhanced teacher commitment and increased instructional innovation (Metsäpelto et al., 2021). This leadership strategy empowers schools, especially in resource-limited environments, to surmount systemic obstacles and maintain ongoing enhancement despite external constraints (Vidergor, 2023).

Furthermore, managerial proficiency is crucial in converting educational objectives into quantifiable results (Fernández Herrero et al., 2023). Effective principals exhibit expertise in planning, organizing, executing, and regulating all school operations to align resources with educational priorities. This entails establishing explicit performance objectives, optimizing human and financial resources, and fostering a school culture focused on accountability and collaborative efficacy (Yanti et al., 2025). Research published in the *Journal of Educational Administration* indicates that administrators demonstrating superior administrative competence cultivate settings characterized by trust, collaboration, and professional development, which are directly linked to improved teacher performance and student accomplishment (Marwan et al., 2024). Thus, leadership development programs for principals must emphasize the integration of managerial and instructional competencies, enabling them to both manage effectively and inspire—closing the divide between administrative efficiency and revolutionary educational leadership (Causirhom et al., 2024).

Recent educational changes in Indonesia, particularly the functional teacher career system established by PermenPAN-RB No. 1/2023, represent a significant transition towards a more meritocratic and progressive model for teacher professionalism (Amelia et al., 2022). This policy emphasizes performance-based assessment, ongoing professional development (CPD), and the fostering of collaborative school cultures as the basis for enhancing educational quality across the nation (Kia Wolomasi et al., 2023). The reform seeks to standardize teacher competency and integrate instructional practices with international standards, but its success is contingent upon effective

implementation at the school level(Iqlima et al., 2023). In this context, administrators serve as crucial policy mediators and instructional leaders, tasked with converting national directives into practical tactics that align with teachers' everyday experiences(Ansori et al., 2021). Research published in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* indicates that such reforms can only yield lasting effects when school leaders offer continuous mentorship, cultivate professional learning communities, and align teacher performance evaluations with developmental feedback instead of punitive actions(Munawarah et al., 2021).

Aceh Tamiang Regency presents a significant microcosm for analyzing the complex interplay between school leadership and teacher motivation in rural educational locations(Dahlan R et al., 2025). The circumstances in several elementary schools within Gugus III Ceding Ayu underscore a continual challenge in sustaining teacher motivation, professional dedication, and active involvement in school enhancement efforts. Observations indicating minimal engagement in institutional programs, erratic participation in professional development, and diminishing interest in educational innovation suggest underlying structural and management problems rather than individual deficiencies. In this context, the principal's managerial competence appears to be a crucial aspect, influencing both organizational culture and the motivational climate that affects teachers' sense of purpose and belonging(Attsaury et al., 2024). Research published in the *Journal of Rural Studies* indicates that in rural educational systems, when external incentives and institutional supports are frequently scarce, the quality of leadership emerges as a crucial factor influencing teacher engagement and school success(Lazaridou, 2021).

Comprehending the impact of principals' administrative skills on teacher motivation in rural schools is essential for developing targeted interventions and capacity-building initiatives(Julianda et al., 2024). Effective administrators in analogous circumstances have demonstrated the ability to motivate teachers through clear communication, collaborative decision-making, and regular acknowledgment of teacher contributions, so fostering an enhanced sense of professional efficacy and belonging. Conversely, when leaders lack the requisite organizational and interpersonal abilities to align objectives, manage resources, or promote collaboration, teachers may encounter demoralization and professional stagnation(Sasaki et al., 2024). Research published in *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* supports this idea, highlighting that managerial competence—encompassing planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—serves as both a structural and incentive mechanism in maintaining teacher effectiveness. Consequently, analyzing the Aceh Tamiang case provides both local significance and wider implications for comprehending how good school leadership can alter motivational dynamics in under-resourced educational environments(Listiningrum et al., 2020).

This study aims to investigate how principals' managing competence influences teacher motivation in rural elementary schools, particularly through the implementation of the four fundamental managerial functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Each dimension is a vital element of leadership practice that fosters a sustainable and effective educational climate. Principals set explicit objectives through planning and align them with teachers' professional objectives; organizing ensures the efficient structuring of human and material resources to support instructional aims; actuating entails motivating, guiding, and empowering teachers to excel; and controlling emphasizes monitoring progress and upholding accountability. This study is focused on clarifying the cumulative impact of managerial responsibilities on teachers' passion, dedication, consistency, and collaborative spirit, which are essential indicators of sustained motivation and school enhancement, utilizes a qualitative research approach to transcend superficial correlations and instead document the lived experiences of teachers and principals within their socio-cultural and institutional contexts. Instead of examining established assumptions, it emphasizes the

interpretation of how leadership practices are comprehended, negotiated, and modified within a rural Indonesian context characterized by distinct obstacles and specific norms. This interpretive perspective offers a detailed comprehension of the contextual elements that influence leadership efficacy and teacher motivation, revealing insights that quantitative assessments may miss. Ultimately, this research enhances the understanding of how principals' management strategies can be systematically improved to promote teacher motivation and resilience in underprivileged educational settings.

## **2. Methodology**

### *2.1 Research Design*

This study employed a qualitative research approach to examine the complex relationship between principals' managerial competency and teacher work motivation in the actual environment of rural primary schools. The qualitative paradigm was chosen as it facilitates a comprehensive, contextual knowledge of participants' lived experiences, which cannot be entirely represented through numerical or survey-based data alone (Gioia, 2021). The research aimed to explain how principals comprehend and implement the four managerial functions—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—in their daily leadership practices through comprehensive interviews, observations, and document analysis. This method facilitates a detailed examination of how these practices affect teachers' motivation, professional involvement, and collaboration within their school communities.

This study prioritizes the opinions and views of participants, positioning teachers and principals as co-constructors of meaning rather than as passive subjects of analysis. Their tales offer profound insights into the perception, negotiation, and internalization of administrative acts within the distinctive socio-cultural context of Aceh Tamiang's schools. This approach facilitates the examination of emergent themes that illustrate the adaptation of leadership techniques in response to contextual realities, including resource limitations, cultural expectations, and institutional constraints. (Stanley, 2023).

### *2.2 Research Setting and Participants*

The study was conducted in five public elementary schools situated in Gugus III Ceding Ayu, Kecamatan Tamiang Hulu, Kabupaten Aceh Tamiang, an area noted for its rural environment and socio-economic heterogeneity. The site was deliberately chosen due to initial observations indicating very low teacher motivation and differing levels of principal effectiveness in leadership methods. This environment offered a pertinent and genuine framework for examining the impact of management competence among school principals on teacher work motivation, constrained by restricted resources and local socio-cultural factors.

The research included five school principals, each acting as a key informant tasked with offering insights into the managerial practices and leadership methods employed in their individual institutions. Moreover, fifteen educators—three from each institution—served as informants, embodying varied experiences and viewpoints about job motivation, engagement, and collaboration. This design facilitated an equitable representation of leadership and teaching roles, enabling the study to elucidate the dynamic interplay between management proficiency and motivational results. Information from several sources bolstered the reliability and triangulation of results, allowing for a comparison between principals' self-perceptions and teachers' lived experiences. The International Journal of Educational Research emphasizes that a multi-informant design enhances interpretative validity by uncovering both similarities and differences in the enactment and perception of leadership behaviors across various levels of the school community.

### *2.3 Data Collection Techniques*

This study utilized a multi-method qualitative strategy for data collecting to achieve a thorough grasp of the correlation between administrators' managerial competency and teacher motivation. The principal data source comprised comprehensive semi-structured interviews with both principals and instructors. These interviews provide valuable, direct insights into the implementation of leadership principles and their impact on teachers' professional excitement, teamwork, and consistency. Semi-structured interviewing provided participants the flexibility to comment on their experiences and perceptions while ensuring a consistent thematic focus among respondents.

In addition to the interviews, non-participant observations were performed to document real-time interactions inside school settings, encompassing staff meetings, classroom activities, and joint initiatives. Examining these encounters provided contextual richness to the interview data by illustrating the manifestation of leadership behaviors and motivational patterns in daily practice. Furthermore, the examination of papers including academic work plans, oversight reports, and internal policy materials yielded significant insights into managerial processes, institutional expectations, and performance accountability frameworks. This triangulated data gathering method improved the credibility and reliability of the findings, ensuring that interpretations were based on numerous, supporting sources.

### *2.4 Data Analysis*

The data analysis in this study adhered to an interactive and iterative paradigm, highlighting ongoing engagement with the data throughout the research process. The initial phase, data reduction, entailed the methodical selection and condensation of raw data acquired via interviews, observations, and documents. Irrelevant or redundant information was omitted, while important remarks and repeating phrases were thematically coded using NVivo software, enabling the researcher to separate emergent patterns and conceptual categories. This process guaranteed that the research was anchored in participants' genuine perspectives while facilitating a more profound interpretation of how administrators' administrative functions—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—influenced teachers' motivation and engagement.

## **3. Results**

### *3.1 Analysis of Planning Function Implementation.*

The implementation of the planning function constitutes the foundation of the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling) managerial cycle and is crucial in influencing teachers' job motivation. In Cluster III Ceding Ayu, the planning phase was not only administrative but also strategic and participatory, allowing leaders to synchronize institutional objectives with teachers' professional goals and contextual circumstances. The principal's proficiency in articulating a clear and comprehensive vision, mission, and objectives established an integrating direction for all school operations. This clarity developed an understanding of purpose among teachers, improving their comprehension of how individual contributions lead to collective achievement. When educators recognize that their everyday teaching duties are connected to a larger, significant vision, their intrinsic motivation and dedication to enhancing the school environment significantly improve. Effective planning facilitated the prioritization of acceptable tasks, ensuring that resources were allocated to efforts that improved teaching quality and student results.

Moreover, the collaborative aspect of the planning process improved teacher involvement and commitment to school objectives. Educators were urged to offer suggestions, give feedback, and jointly formulate action plans that aligned with institutional objectives and classroom conditions. This inclusive strategy fostered trust and cultivated a sense of professional autonomy, which is crucial for

enduring motivation. The principal's ability to convert the school's vision and mission into tangible, quantifiable programs established alignment between policy expectations and educational execution. Regular planning sessions and collaborative conversations enabled teachers to attain a greater comprehension of performance objectives, timetables, and the reasons for particular activities. This organized and transparent planning fostered a culture of accountability, mutual respect, and collective commitment, which are essential factors influencing teacher morale and job excitement. In rural schools such as those in Aceh Tamiang, good planning by the principal acts as a motivational accelerator and an organizational guide, aligning human and institutional components of education for continuous enhancement.

Teacher participation in the planning process is inconsistent across schools in Cluster III Ceding Ayu; but, where it is properly executed, it acts as a significant catalyst for improving motivation and professional dedication. In schools where principals intentionally engage teachers in the design of learning programs, the co-development of activity schedules, and the identification of educational priorities, teachers demonstrate a heightened feeling of ownership and excitement for school efforts. This participatory planning method enables educators to perceive themselves not solely as executors of mandates but as proactive participants in institutional advancement, promoting enhanced coherence between personal professional aspirations and collective school aims. The ability to articulate thoughts, share classroom insights, and incorporate creative concepts into school planning fosters a sense of acknowledgment and esteem, thereby enhancing intrinsic motivation. When educators recognize that their contributions significantly impact decision-making, they become more aggressive in program implementation, more reflective in instructional design, and more consistent in meeting performance objectives.

Moreover, fluctuations in participation levels frequently correlate with principals' leadership styles and the prevailing corporate culture. In institutions where planning remains hierarchical and bureaucratic, educators often experience disconnection from the decision-making process, resulting in passive involvement and a reduction in creative initiative. In contrast, schools employing a collaborative planning model have principals fostering open communication, appreciating multiple viewpoints, and assigning responsibilities according to teachers' skills and interests. This inclusive technique democratizes school management and enhances interpersonal relationships between leadership and personnel, fostering a healthy and encouraging school climate. Educators assigned significant responsibilities during the planning phase generally exhibit greater dedication to executing school programs and are more inclined to exert effort in enhancing instructional quality. Consequently, teacher involvement in planning serves as an essential motivational tool—connecting managerial strategy with human engagement—by converting planning from a mere procedural obligation into a collaborative, empowering professional experience.

Contextual and structural challenges significantly influence the implementation of planning functions in the schools of Cluster III Ceding Ayu. Constraints in financial resources, insufficient facilities, and a lack of qualified educators necessitate that principals implement strategic modifications to their school planning processes. Such constraints frequently require the prioritization of essential programs at the expense of developmental initiatives, consequently limiting opportunities for widespread teacher participation. In resource-limited schools, planning primarily emphasizes the maintenance of essential operations rather than fostering innovation or enhancing pedagogical practices. Thus, while teacher involvement in planning is acknowledged as advantageous, it is not consistently practical or uniformly allocated. Teachers not involved in decision-making may view planning solely as an administrative task, diminishing their sense of ownership and intrinsic motivation. The limited proficiency in digital tools and information systems among certain principals and teachers hinders planning efficiency. Inadequate technological

integration hinders information sharing, complicates coordination, and restricts the ability to employ data-driven methods for target setting and progress evaluation. This highlights the necessity of enhancing ICT competencies as a fundamental aspect of managerial capacity-building, enabling school leaders to plan more effectively in both traditional and digital contexts.

The study indicates that, despite existing obstacles, effective and adaptive planning serves as a significant motivational driver for teachers, particularly when it includes clarity, participation, and opportunities for growth. When principals effectively articulate realistic goals, align them with available resources, and engage teachers meaningfully—even under constrained circumstances—teachers exhibit increased enthusiasm, commitment, and professional satisfaction. Adaptive planning customizes strategies to the unique conditions and human dynamics of each school, facilitating the transformation of limitations into opportunities for innovation. Principals who promote creative initiatives among teachers in resource-limited settings cultivate a culture of resilience and collective responsibility. This form of responsive leadership positions planning as a dynamic, collaborative framework rather than a static bureaucratic process, facilitating ongoing improvement. In the context of Cluster III Ceding Ayu, adaptive and participatory planning sustains teacher motivation and reinforces the school's collective capacity to address challenges, maintain its vision, and enhance overall educational quality.

### *3.2 Analysis of Organizing Functions.*

The organizational function constitutes the second essential phase in the POAC managerial cycle, significantly impacting the efficiency, collaboration, and motivation of educators within the educational setting. In Cluster III Ceding Ayu, principals have established organizational structures that define roles, responsibilities, and reporting hierarchies. The practical effectiveness of these structures varies considerably among schools. Although formal documentation of organizational charts and job descriptions is available, the implementation frequently lacks consistency, leading to overlapping responsibilities for certain teachers and underutilization of others. The unequal distribution of workload results in operational inefficiencies and fosters perceptions of unfairness, potentially undermining morale and diminishing collective commitment. Educators with excessive responsibilities frequently encounter fatigue and reduced motivation, whereas those with lighter workloads may exhibit disengagement or diminished investment in school activities. Studies in educational management indicate that equitable distribution of tasks and clear role assignments are essential for promoting professional trust and maintaining teachers' sense of belonging and accountability within educational institutions.

The organization of curriculum management and infrastructure utilization reflects the principal's ability to effectively balance resources and human potential. In multiple schools within the cluster, curriculum management predominantly relies on the principal's guidance rather than collaborative contributions from teaching teams, thereby constraining opportunities for shared leadership and innovation. The absence of a systematic approach for duty rotation and workload assessment has exacerbated disparities in responsibility and acknowledgment. Conversely, schools led by principals who implement a participatory organizational approach—inviting teachers to engage in curriculum planning, task coordination, and decision-making—generally demonstrate elevated teacher motivation and enhanced collegial relationships. Effective organization transcends mere administrative structure; it encompasses a culture of fairness, communication, and empowerment. When principals provide clear task delegation, equitable workload distribution, and access to sufficient facilities and support, teachers are more likely to experience professional justice and engagement. In rural educational contexts such as Cluster III Ceding Ayu, organizational coherence is

crucial for sustaining teacher motivation, reducing burnout, and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the school as a unified educational community.

Effective organization necessitates coordination among team members, regular internal communication, and adaptive scheduling. The conditions of rural schools and limitations in resources improve the situation, necessitating that principals actively ensure equitable distribution of responsibilities and access to support facilities. The principal aims to foster a collaborative work atmosphere by promoting open communication and including teachers in curriculum management decisions. Observations indicate the existence of frequent coordination venues, including weekly meetings and teacher team gatherings, which facilitate information exchange and collaborative problem-solving. Teacher engagement in these forums fluctuates based on their expertise, duties, and workload. Effective organization enhances operational efficiency and bolsters teachers' loyalty and dedication to the institution. Principals who can adjust their organization to local conditions and teacher attributes can enhance general work motivation, thereby facilitating the more effective attainment of the school's objectives.

### *3.3 Actuating Function Analysis.*

The actuating function embodies the dynamic and human-centric stage of management, when leaders convert goals and organizational structures into tangible actions that motivate, direct, and maintain teacher engagement. In Cluster III Ceding Ayu, this phase constitutes the essence of effective school leadership, with principals undertaking diverse responsibilities as motivators, facilitators, and mentors. Their capacity to invigorate educators, cultivate professional zeal, and establish a culture of perpetual learning directly influences the efficacy of instructional methods and the overall performance of the school. Principals who effectively motivate teachers—via acknowledgment, support, and personal involvement—foster a sense of purpose and pride in the profession. By establishing themselves as collaborative leaders rather than simple supervisors, these principals cultivate a supportive environment that prioritizes professional development, transparent communication, and reciprocal respect. In practice, these leadership behaviors have demonstrated the ability to elevate teacher morale, foster classroom innovation, and reinforce collective dedication to school objectives.

Furthermore, the roles of principals as facilitators and mentors are equally vital in maintaining teacher motivation. As facilitators, they provide chances for teachers to engage in seminars, peer discussions, and collaborative teaching sessions that enhance pedagogical proficiency and collegial bonds. Mentorship empowers administrators to offer personalized coaching, assisting teachers in surmounting educational obstacles, enhancing their classroom management abilities, and aligning their professional objectives with the school's overarching mission. In rural schools, where formal professional development opportunities are frequently scarce, on-site mentorship and facilitation are essential for sustaining teacher engagement and alleviating feelings of isolation. Principals in Cluster III Ceding Ayu, who constantly exemplify passion, integrity, and commitment, serve as symbolic leaders, illustrating that motivation comes from shared values and collaborative effort. The actuating function not only implements managerial plans but also humanizes leadership, converting administrative processes into motivational practices that enable teachers to perform with confidence, inventiveness, and dedication, especially in resource-limited environments.

The correlation between teacher empowerment and intrinsic motivation is evident. Teachers have the ability to form recommendations, innovate instructional methodologies, and engage in program planning perceive themselves as appreciated and exhibit heightened commitment. Implementation strategies in Aceh Tamiang necessitate modification to the local context, encompassing constrained resources, geographical constraints, and access to external training. School principals leverage local

resources, promote collaboration among educators, and establish school-based learning communities as a strategy for mobilization. This method introduces innovation to managerial practices by combining transformational leadership with contextual adaptation to enhance teacher motivation and learner efficacy.

### *3.4 Analysis of the Implementation of Controlling Functions.*

The supervisory function is a crucial aspect of the principal's managerial position, acting as a means to ensure consistency, quality, and accountability in teaching performance. In Cluster III Ceding Ayu, principals conduct supervision via direct classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, coordination meetings, and program performance assessments, ensuring that teacher actions fit with institutional objectives and educational standards. This comprehensive approach enables the principal to gain an integrated picture of classroom dynamics, instructional methods, and student involvement levels. Consistent oversight facilitates the early identification of educational issues and the formulation of focused solutions to overcome them. By engaging in supervision as an interactive and dialogical process instead of a bureaucratic formality, principals cultivate a culture of professional reflection and continual improvement, which is vital for enhancing teacher motivation and instructional excellence.

In addition to organizational oversight, the principal in Cluster III Ceding Ayu serves as a mentor and developmental leader, framing supervision as a constructive rather than a punitive process. Principals offer constructive comments, disseminate practical teaching insights, and motivate teachers to explore innovative instructional techniques through mentoring. This mentorship-focused supervision fosters a supportive professional environment in which teachers feel esteemed and directed rather than examined. In numerous schools, post-supervision discussions have transformed into collaborative problem-solving forums, allowing instructors to share experiences, exchange techniques, and reinforce collegial relationships. Such techniques transform supervision from a mere compliance mechanism into a professional learning opportunity, consistent with exemplary practices in instructional leadership. In remote areas such as Cluster III Ceding Ayu, where access to external training is restricted, this integrated methodology guarantees that supervision serves as a continuous, in-school form of professional growth. The principal's supervisory role—rooted in advice, empathy, and accountability—serves as a fundamental element of teacher empowerment, ongoing motivation, and enhancement of educational quality within the cluster's schools.

This analysis of the supervisory function demonstrates that its efficacy transcends the simple performance of routine assessments or administrative supervision. The success of the controlling function is fundamentally determined by the quality of interpersonal relationships, the contextual adaptation of supervisory tactics, and the principal's ability to provide constructive and motivating feedback. In Cluster III Ceding Ayu, relational and context-sensitive supervision has demonstrated greater efficacy than solely procedural monitoring. Principals who facilitate open communication with teachers, recognize their difficulties, and together formulate enhancement strategies cultivate a heightened sense of trust and professional esteem. Such interactions convert supervision into a mode of ongoing professional assistance rather than a compliance-oriented requirement. When principals customize supervisory methods to align with local conditions—such as resource limitations, cultural standards, and individual teacher competencies—they increase the pertinence and receptivity of their feedback, thereby enhancing the likelihood of achieving concrete behavioral and instructional advancements.

The study affirms that managerial proficiency in supervisory roles is crucial for enhancing instructors' discipline, consistency, and motivation. Principals who exhibit empathy and equitable authority during supervision foster an environment in which teachers feel both responsible and

supported. Constructive feedback presented in a developmental manner enables teachers to reflect on their work without apprehension of criticism, thereby fostering intrinsic drive for improvement. This approach fosters a culture of self-assessment and shared accountability, wherein educators perceive supervision as a learning opportunity rather than a form of evaluation. In multiple schools within the cluster, principals who consistently implemented reflective supervision procedures noted enhancements in lesson planning quality, classroom management, and professional collaboration among staff. Thus, the regulating function—when executed with contextual intelligence, feedback literacy, and relational leadership—emerges as a vital catalyst for teacher development and institutional efficacy, underscoring its importance within the overarching framework of principal managerial competence.

## 5. Conclusions

This study shows that the managerial competency of principals is an essential aspect influencing teacher work motivation, especially in rural elementary schools where contextual limitations are significant. The results from Gugus III Ceding Ayu demonstrate that when principals effectively execute the four managerial functions—planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling—they can foster a positive and motivating school environment marked by teacher enthusiasm, commitment, consistency, and collaboration. Each function uniquely contributes to this process: strategic and participatory planning aligns educators' efforts with common objectives; equitable and transparent organization cultivates trust and fairness; motivational leadership through activation enhances engagement and professional development; and reflective supervision within the controlling function maintains accountability and ongoing improvement. These factors collectively illustrate that good management competence encompasses not just administrative efficiency but also transformational and context-responsive leadership that integrates managerial practices with the realities of rural education. However, the study also recognizes enduring obstacles that impede the complete actualization of these managerial capabilities. Unequal job allocation persists in creating discrepancies in teacher involvement and morale, while collaborative planning is inconsistent owing to differences in leadership approaches and time limitations. Furthermore, follow-up monitoring is not consistently executed, so constraining prospects for ongoing professional development. To rectify these deficiencies, there is an urgent necessity for systemic intervention, encompassing specialized leadership training programs, policies aimed at alleviating principals' administrative responsibilities, and investments in educational infrastructure and digital resources. Enhancing these institutional supports would allow principals to concentrate more on educational leadership and teacher motivation instead of routine administration.

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