



The Implementation of School-Based Management to Improve Teachers' Performance and Learning Quality in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT:

This study examines the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) as a strategic approach to improving teacher performance and learning quality in elementary schools. School-Based Management provides greater autonomy for schools in planning, managing, and evaluating educational programs in accordance with local needs and potentials. This research aims to analyze how SBM practices, including participatory decision-making, transparent financial management, and collaborative supervision, contribute to the enhancement of teachers' professional performance and the effectiveness of the learning process. The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collected through interviews, observations, and documentation conducted in selected elementary schools. The findings reveal that effective implementation of SBM significantly improves teacher motivation, accountability, and innovation in instructional practices. Teachers become more actively involved in school planning and decision-making processes, which strengthens their professional responsibility and commitment to learning quality. In addition, increased stakeholder participation, particularly from parents and the community, fosters a more supportive, collaborative, and accountable learning environment. However, several challenges remain, including limited managerial competence, constrained resources, and inconsistent policy enforcement, which may hinder optimal implementation. Therefore, strengthening school leadership, providing continuous professional development, and establishing supportive policy frameworks are essential to maximize the impact of SBM. This study concludes that School-Based Management serves as a key instrument in advancing educational quality by empowering schools to become more adaptive, accountable, and learner-centered.

Keywords: Elementary Education; Learning Quality; School-Based Management; Teacher Performance;

ABSTRAK:

Penelitian ini mengkaji penerapan Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah (MBS) sebagai pendekatan strategis untuk meningkatkan kinerja guru dan kualitas pembelajaran di sekolah dasar. MBS memberikan otonomi yang lebih besar kepada sekolah dalam merencanakan, mengelola, dan mengevaluasi program pendidikan sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan potensi lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk

menganalisis bagaimana praktik MBS, seperti pengambilan keputusan partisipatif, pengelolaan keuangan yang transparan, dan supervisi kolaboratif, berkontribusi terhadap peningkatan kinerja profesional guru dan efektivitas proses pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan studi dokumentasi di beberapa sekolah dasar terpilih. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan MBS yang efektif secara signifikan meningkatkan motivasi guru, akuntabilitas, dan inovasi dalam praktik pembelajaran. Keterlibatan guru dalam perencanaan dan pengambilan keputusan sekolah memperkuat tanggung jawab profesional dan komitmen terhadap kualitas pembelajaran. Selain itu, meningkatnya partisipasi pemangku kepentingan, khususnya orang tua dan masyarakat, menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih mendukung, kolaboratif, dan akuntabel. Namun demikian, masih terdapat kendala berupa keterbatasan kompetensi manajerial, sumber daya yang terbatas, serta penerapan kebijakan yang belum konsisten sehingga menghambat implementasi optimal. Oleh karena itu, penguatan kepemimpinan sekolah, pengembangan profesional berkelanjutan, dan kerangka kebijakan yang mendukung sangat diperlukan untuk mengoptimalkan penerapan MBS.

Keywords: Kinerja Guru; Kualitas Pembelajaran; Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah; Pendidikan Dasar

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental pillar of human resource development and national progress, particularly at the school level where foundational cognitive, social, and character competencies are established (Nofriansyah et al., 2022; Riyadi et al., 2025; Rahayu et al., 2025; Nofriansyah et al., 2025). The quality of education is strongly influenced by how effectively schools manage learning processes, human resources, and institutional governance (Dewi et al., 2025; Nofriansyah et al., 2024; Meirani et al., 2026; Nofriansyah et al., 2025). Recent international studies emphasize that improving learning quality requires not only pedagogical reform but also effective school management systems that support teachers and students in a sustainable manner (Pitriani, 2024; Nurhayati & Info, 2025; Richardson & Khawaja, 2025; Sariakin et al., 2025).

In response to the limitations of centralized educational governance, School-Based Management (SBM) has been widely adopted as a decentralization strategy aimed at transferring decision-making authority to the school level (Fikriyah et al., 2024; Nadilah et al., 2025). SBM is intended to enhance school autonomy, participatory governance, transparency, and accountability, enabling schools to respond more effectively to local needs and contexts (Caldwell & Spinks, 2013). Empirical evidence suggests that SBM can improve school effectiveness when supported by adequate leadership capacity and institutional support.

Recent studies published in Scopus-indexed journals indicate that the impact of SBM on educational outcomes depends largely on implementation quality rather than autonomy alone. Autonomy that is not accompanied by professional leadership, managerial competence, and accountability mechanisms may produce limited or inconsistent results. This highlights the importance of integrating governance reform with capacity development.

Conceptually, SBM consists of several core dimensions, including school autonomy in managing human and financial resources, participatory decision-making involving teachers and stakeholders,

transparency in planning and budgeting, and accountability for educational outcomes. These dimensions position schools as learning organizations capable of continuous improvement (Caldwell & Spinks, 2013). Teacher performance represents a key mechanism through which SBM is expected to influence learning quality. Empirical research shows that teachers who are actively involved in school decision-making and granted professional autonomy tend to demonstrate higher motivation, stronger professional commitment, and greater instructional innovation. Participation in planning and evaluation processes also strengthens teachers' sense of ownership toward learning outcomes, which is essential for improving classroom practices (Pol et al., 2021).

School leadership plays a decisive role in translating SBM principles into effective practice. Studies indicate that instructional and transformational leadership styles significantly shape how school autonomy is utilized and how teachers respond to management reforms. Principals who promote collaboration, shared vision, and professional trust are more likely to sustain SBM implementation and enhance teacher performance in a meaningful way.

Continuous professional development (CPD) is another essential factor supporting the effectiveness of SBM. Research syntheses demonstrate that professional development initiatives that are sustained, collaborative, and embedded within school contexts have a significant positive impact on teaching quality and student learning outcomes. These findings reinforce the interdependence between SBM, leadership practices, and teacher learning processes (Simatupang et al., 2024).

In addition to internal school dynamics, SBM places strong emphasis on the involvement of parents and communities as active stakeholders. Evidence suggests that stakeholder participation enhances accountability, strengthens social support for schools, and contributes to more inclusive and supportive learning environments, particularly within decentralized education systems (Mok, 2021). Despite its potential benefits, the implementation of SBM continues to encounter various challenges. Empirical studies report that limited managerial capacity, uneven resource distribution, and weak policy coherence often hinder the effective use of school autonomy, especially in developing educational contexts. These findings suggest that decentralization alone is insufficient without sustained institutional support and leadership development (Chen et al., 2021).

Based on these considerations, this study analyzes the implementation of School-Based Management in elementary schools and examines its impact on teacher performance and learning quality. The study also seeks to identify supporting and inhibiting factors that influence SBM effectiveness, thereby contributing to evidence-based educational policy development and improved school governance practices.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) in improving teacher performance and learning quality in elementary schools. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of processes, experiences, and interactions among stakeholders involved in school management (Creswell & Poth, 2023).

The research was conducted in several elementary schools that have implemented SBM principles for at least three years. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals, teachers, school committee members, and parents to obtain a comprehensive understanding of SBM implementation in daily school practices. Observations were carried out to capture actual management practices, teacher performance, and classroom learning activities. Document analysis focused on school development plans, meeting minutes, and performance reports related to SBM implementation.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select participants who were directly involved in the planning, management, and implementation of SBM. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, which involved systematic coding, categorization, and interpretation of the data to identify recurring themes related to SBM practices, teacher performance enhancement, and learning quality improvement (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

To ensure data validity, triangulation of sources and methods was applied by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documents. The data analysis process was conducted continuously throughout data collection and interpretation to ensure that the findings accurately reflect the realities of SBM implementation in the field. Through this research method, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of School-Based Management in empowering teachers, improving learning processes, and strengthening the overall quality of elementary education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) plays a significant role in improving teacher performance and learning quality in elementary schools. SBM enables schools to exercise greater autonomy in planning, budgeting, and instructional decision-making, allowing them to adapt educational programs to local needs and contextual challenges. Autonomy at the school level has been widely recognized as a key factor in improving institutional effectiveness when it is accompanied by clear accountability mechanisms (OECD, 2023). In practice, this autonomy allows schools to design learning programs that are more relevant, responsive, and aligned with students' socio-cultural environments, which ultimately enhances the effectiveness of learning processes.

One of the most prominent outcomes observed in SBM implementation is increased teacher involvement in school decision-making. When teachers actively participate in determining teaching strategies, program planning, and evaluation processes, they develop a stronger sense of professional ownership and commitment toward educational goals (Rahayu & Nofriansyah, 2024). This involvement strengthens responsibility for learning outcomes and reinforces teacher professionalism and a higher sense of responsibility toward learning outcomes. Empirical evidence suggests that participatory management practices foster teacher motivation and organizational commitment by creating a sense of ownership and recognition of professional expertise (Pol et al.,

2021). This finding aligns with the results of this study, where teachers reported greater engagement in collaborative planning and instructional innovation under SBM arrangements.

Teacher collaboration emerges as another critical dimension strengthened by SBM. When decision-making authority is decentralized, teachers are encouraged to work collectively to solve instructional problems, share best practices, and reflect on learning outcomes. Research on participatory school management confirms that collaborative cultures among teachers are essential for improving instructional quality and sustaining professional growth (Muhammad, 2023; Syarochil & Abadi, 2023). In the context of elementary education, where teaching requires continuous adaptation to diverse student needs, such collaboration becomes increasingly important. This collaborative culture is particularly important in elementary education, where continuous pedagogical adjustment is required to address diverse student needs.

School leadership also plays a decisive role in determining the effectiveness of SBM implementation. The findings indicate that principals who adopt participatory and distributed leadership styles are more successful in translating school autonomy into improved teacher performance and learning quality. Rather than acting solely as administrative controllers, principals function as facilitators who encourage collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility among teachers and stakeholders. Empirical studies on distributed leadership demonstrate that shared leadership practices positively influence teaching quality, school improvement, and organizational learning (Lin, 2022; Nadeem, 2024). This leadership approach supports sustainable school development by ensuring that decision-making processes are inclusive and contextually informed.

Professional development is another key factor enhanced through SBM. With greater autonomy, schools are able to design professional development programs that are directly aligned with teachers' instructional needs and classroom realities. The findings suggest that school-based professional development initiatives under SBM contribute to improvements in instructional strategies, assessment practices, and classroom management. Research confirms that professional development embedded within school contexts has a stronger impact on teaching quality compared to one-off training programs (Balta et al., 2023; Ventista & Brown, 2023). This highlights the importance of aligning professional learning with school-level governance and instructional goals.

In terms of classroom practices, SBM supports the implementation of student-centered and adaptive learning approaches. Teachers are given greater flexibility to select teaching methods, learning media, and assessment strategies that suit students' abilities and learning styles. This flexibility is particularly relevant in contemporary educational contexts characterized by rapid technological change, diverse student needs, and post-pandemic learning recovery. UNESCO emphasizes that flexible school management and adaptive pedagogy are crucial for improving learning quality and resilience in modern education systems (UNESCO, 2024). The findings of this study indicate that SBM provides a structural framework that enables such flexibility at the classroom level. This flexibility enables schools to respond more effectively to contemporary challenges such as digital transformation, learning loss, and diverse student backgrounds.

SBM also strengthens collaboration between schools and the broader community. The inclusion of parents and community representatives in school committees fosters mutual trust, enhances transparency, and ensures that educational programs align with local values and expectations. This shared governance model contributes to a more holistic and sustainable approach to school improvement. Community participation improves accountability and contributes to better educational outcomes, particularly in decentralized systems. In practical terms, community support provides schools with additional resources, local knowledge, and social legitimacy, all of which are essential for sustainable school improvement.

From a governance perspective, SBM promotes transparency and accountability in school management. The findings reveal that schools implementing SBM tend to adopt open budgeting processes and participatory evaluation mechanisms, which reduce the risk of mismanagement and build public trust. International studies indicate that transparent school governance is associated with higher institutional effectiveness and stronger stakeholder confidence (OECD, 2024). These governance practices are particularly important in the current era, where public accountability and evidence-based management are increasingly demanded in the education sector.

Despite its positive impacts, SBM implementation also faces several challenges, particularly related to leadership capacity and resource disparities between schools. Not all principals and teachers possess sufficient managerial and leadership skills to effectively utilize school autonomy, and schools in disadvantaged or rural areas often struggle with limited infrastructure and access to professional development. These findings indicate that decentralization without equitable resource distribution and sustained capacity-building may exacerbate educational inequalities.

In the broader context of societal change and technological advancement, SBM offers a governance framework that aligns with the demands of the 21st century. Education systems are increasingly expected to prepare students with critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability skills. SBM supports these goals by empowering schools and teachers to innovate and respond to emerging challenges. By promoting autonomy, participation, and accountability, SBM contributes not only to improved learning quality but also to the development of resilient and future-oriented education systems.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that SBM is an effective strategy for improving teacher performance and learning quality when supported by strong leadership, continuous professional development, community participation, and equitable resource allocation. SBM provides tangible benefits for educational practice and policy development, particularly in elementary education where foundational learning takes place. These findings have important implications for policymakers, school leaders, and educators seeking to improve educational quality in a rapidly changing world. SBM can therefore serve as a foundation for sustainable school improvement and meaningful educational reform in both current and future contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM) plays a crucial role in improving teacher performance and learning quality in elementary schools. By granting schools greater autonomy in planning, decision-making, and resource management, SBM creates a more responsive and accountable education system. The findings indicate that SBM strengthens teacher motivation, professional competence, and instructional innovation, while also supporting the development of student-centered and adaptive learning processes. These results confirm that SBM is an effective governance model for enhancing educational quality at the elementary level when implemented in a systematic and participatory manner.

The findings of this study have important implications for educational practice and policy. Effective SBM implementation requires strong instructional leadership, active stakeholder participation, and transparent governance mechanisms. School leaders play a central role in translating autonomy into meaningful improvements in teaching and learning, while community involvement contributes to accountability and sustainability. Therefore, education authorities should prioritize leadership development programs, continuous professional development for teachers, and equitable resource allocation to ensure that school autonomy leads to consistent and inclusive improvements across different school contexts.

Despite its contributions, this study also highlights the need for further research to strengthen the understanding of SBM implementation. Future studies are encouraged to employ empirical and mixed-method approaches to examine the long-term impact of SBM on student learning outcomes, teacher professionalism, and school effectiveness. Comparative studies across diverse socio-economic and geographic contexts would also be valuable in identifying best practices and contextual factors influencing SBM success. Such research can inform more adaptive policies and support the development of sustainable, high-performing elementary schools capable of responding to the challenges of 21st-century education.

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