

IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Emy Damayanti¹, Nurkolis², Muhtarom³

¹²³Universitas PGRI Semarang; Indonesia

Correspondence Email; emydamayanti54@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of instructional leadership by the principal in managing student learning achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency. This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of instructional leadership practices in the school context. The data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and participant observations involving the principal, teachers, and students, while secondary data were obtained from school documents, including educational reports, learning achievement records, supervision documents, and documentation of student achievement. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis employed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that instructional leadership at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo was implemented systematically through the POAC management functions: Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling. Planning involved participatory formulation of the school's vision and learning objectives based on educational report data and previous achievement records. Organizing focused on proportional teacher assignment, coordination, and creative management of facilities and infrastructure. Actuating included learning supervision, motivation, teacher and student coaching, and achievement-oriented programs. Controlling involved continuous evaluation and follow-up through remedial and enrichment programs. The consistent integration of POAC functions contributed to improved student achievement at district and provincial levels during 2023–2025. This study provides theoretical and practical implications for strengthening instructional leadership in elementary education.

Keywords

Elementary School, Instructional Leadership, Principal Leadership, POAC, Student Achievement.



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INTRODUCTION

The success of integrating instructional leadership and POAC management is clearly evident at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, Kaliwungu Subdistrict, Kendal Regency. This leading elementary school has consistently achieved a variety of impressive accomplishments at the subdistrict, regency, and provincial levels. Actual data from the past three years (2023–2025) provides objective evidence of this school's performance leap, with championship wins expanding from the subdistrict level in 2023, advancing to the regency level in 2024, and reaching the provincial level in 2025 in various prestigious competitions such as MAPSI, FTBI, FLS2N, and POPDA. These outstanding student achievements go hand in hand with the principal's distinctive professional qualifications. The principal of SD Negeri 2 Kutoharjo is actively involved as a facilitator for teacher leaders, a deep-learning facilitator, a national literacy and numeracy facilitator, an instructor for professional self-development, and an educational resource person at the regency level. These professional roles strengthen the principal's capacity to develop teacher competencies, provide instructional support, and mobilize school resources to improve educational performance. This finding is consistent with Rivkin (2025), who highlights that principals influence student development indirectly through personnel decisions, teacher mentoring, school climate, and resource utilization.

Based on student achievement records from 2023 to 2025, the school logged three district-level and ten regency-level achievements in 2023. In 2024, the number of achievements rose to three at the district level and fifteen at the regency level. This upward trend continued in 2025, with the school securing seven district-level achievements, seventeen regency-level achievements, and one provincial-level achievement. Notably, the most significant development was the increase in regency-level achievements from ten to seventeen, alongside the emergence of a provincial-level achievement for the first time in 2025. These data demonstrate positive progress in the scope and level of student achievements over the three-year period. The implementation of instructional leadership by the Principal of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo served as the primary driver of this success. The achievement trend is consistent with the instructional leadership practices identified in this study. In the Planning function, the principal and teachers used educational report data and previous achievement records to identify priorities and establish achievement-oriented programs. In the Organizing function, teacher competencies were mapped, and responsibilities were distributed according to expertise, while facilities and resources were allocated to support

achievement development. In the Actuating function, these plans were implemented through learning supervision, teacher and student coaching, extracurricular activities, and achievement development programs. Meanwhile, the Controlling function involved regular evaluation and follow-up through remedial, enrichment, and program improvement activities.

These findings are in line with (Andriani, 2022), who found that instructional leadership in high-achieving primary schools includes establishing a mission focused on academic achievement, managing instructional programs, and developing a positive learning climate. However, their study also found that student learning monitoring and principal visibility were among the less frequently implemented practices. The present findings extend this perspective by demonstrating how instructional leadership is operationalized through a continuous POAC cycle, in which planning, resource organization, implementation, supervision, and evaluation are interconnected with student achievement development. The findings are also consistent with Lani and Pauzi (2024), whose qualitative study identified planning, program implementation, supervision, and evaluation as important components of instructional leadership for improving student academic performance. Furthermore, research by Sanchez and Watson in high-performing elementary schools found that instructional leadership practices and monitoring mechanisms can support instructional improvement associated with student achievement.

Table 1. Student Achievement by Level at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, 2023–2025

Year	Subdistrict	Regency	Provincial
2023	3	10	0
2024	3	15	0
2025	7	17	1

Source: School achievement documentation, 2023–2025.

Elementary school 2 Kutoharjo has recorded a very significant upward trend in both the quantity and quality of its achievements from 2023 to 2025. The graph shows an expansion in championship wins, progressing from the local level to ultimately breaking through to the provincial level in 2025. This empirical evidence proves that the implementation of instructional leadership by the principal of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo served as the vital driving force behind this success.

Several studies conducted during the last five years have examined the relationship between instructional leadership and student achievement from different perspectives. However, differences remain in terms of research design, context, variables, and the depth of analysis of instructional leadership implementation. (Andriani, 2022) Found that instructional leadership in Indonesian

primary schools involved school mission development, instructional program management, and positive learning climate development. However, the study did not explain in depth how these practices were implemented through specific management processes. The present study addresses this gap by examining instructional leadership through the POAC functions in a high-achieving elementary school.

(Li, 2023) found that principals' instructional leadership was associated with primary students' academic achievement through several mediating mechanisms. However, their statistical approach did not explore how instructional leadership was practically planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated. The present study complements this perspective by examining the POAC-based implementation process in an Indonesian elementary school. (Gatama, 2023) found that principals' instructional leadership influenced students' academic achievement in Kenyan public secondary schools. However, the study used an ex-post facto design and focused on secondary education. The present study fills this gap by investigating instructional leadership qualitatively in an elementary school context.

(Lani, 2024) identified planning, program implementation, supervision, and evaluation as important elements of instructional leadership in improving student academic performance. However, these elements were not systematically integrated into a POAC framework. The present study contributes by analyzing instructional leadership through four interconnected functions: planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. (Rodrigues, 2024) found that instructional leadership practices in Portugal were often still oriented toward administrative management, with relatively limited perceived effects on student achievement. However, the study provides limited insight into schools where instructional leadership is systematically oriented toward achievement improvement. The present study addresses this gap by examining an Indonesian elementary school where instructional leadership is implemented through achievement-oriented planning, teacher organization, instructional supervision, student coaching, and continuous evaluation.

Based on five previous studies, several research gaps can be identified. First, previous studies have mainly examined the relationships, influences, profiles, and challenges of instructional leadership, with limited attention to the management process through which it is implemented to improve student achievement. Second, quantitative and survey-based studies provide limited insight into the contextual processes underlying leadership practices. Third, few qualitative studies systematically integrate Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC) as an analytical

framework. Fourth, research on instructional leadership in high-achieving elementary schools in Indonesia remains limited.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its qualitative single-case examination of instructional leadership through an integrated POAC cycle at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo. Rather than examining only its influence on achievement, this study explains how the principal plans achievement targets based on school data, organizes resources, implements instructional and achievement programs, and evaluates outcomes through continuous follow-up. Thus, the study provides a contextual model of POAC-based instructional leadership for the sustainable management of student academic achievement in elementary schools.

This study aims to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the principal's instructional leadership in managing student learning achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, particularly through the functions of Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC). Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge on instructional leadership by providing a contextual understanding of how POAC-based instructional leadership can be implemented to manage and improve student learning achievement at the elementary school level. Practically, the findings are expected to provide useful insights for principals in developing systematic and data-driven instructional leadership practices; for teachers in strengthening instructional practices and student achievement development; for school supervisors and education authorities in designing appropriate support and evaluation strategies; and for other researchers as a reference for further studies on instructional leadership, school management, and student achievement.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach and a single case study design at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo to comprehensively explore instructional leadership practices in their natural context, in line with previous research on the role of the principal in supporting the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes (Aphane, 2025). This research runs from March 26 to May 7, 2026. The research data included the implementation of POAC (planning, organizing, actuating, controlling) management functions, supervision, teacher and student development, and evaluation of academic achievement sourced from the principal, teachers, students, and school documents. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews,

participant observation, and documentation with the researcher as the main instrument. The researcher served as the main instrument, supported by interview guidelines, observation sheets, and documentation formats. Data credibility was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, allowing information obtained from different participants and collection methods to be cross-checked. Triangulation is widely used in qualitative educational research to enhance the credibility, rigor, and trustworthiness of research findings (Morgan, 2024). Previous research on instructional leadership has similarly combined interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain a comprehensive understanding of leadership practices in schools (Sunardi, 2019). Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The analysis was conducted continuously throughout the research process to identify patterns and themes related to the implementation of instructional leadership and student academic achievement. The findings were subsequently critically interpreted by relating the empirical data to relevant instructional leadership theories, POAC management concepts, and previous studies. This process enabled the researcher to develop a contextual and comprehensive interpretation of how instructional leadership was implemented in managing student academic achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this study illustrate how instructional leadership was implemented by the principal in managing student academic achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo. The research findings are presented systematically based on the four management functions of Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling (POAC). This presentation focuses on the empirical findings obtained during the research process and describes the key activities undertaken by the principal in each management function. The findings are summarized in Table 1 to provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation of instructional leadership and its implications for student academic achievement.

Table 2. Implementation of Instructional Leadership in Managing Student Academic Achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo

Management Function	Research Findings	Key Indicators/Activities	Achievement/Implication
Planning	Planning was implemented systematically, participatively, and based on school data.	Collaborative formulation of school vision and learning objectives. Achievement targets based on educational report data, AN/ANBK results, and previous achievement records. Development of extracurricular, literacy, numeracy, and Friday Creativity programs. Structured teacher competency development through mentoring, learning communities, coaching, and clinical supervision.	Planning provided a clear direction for academic and non-academic achievement programs and enabled the school to establish measurable and adaptive targets.
Organizing	Organizing was implemented proportionally, collaboratively, and adaptively according to teacher competencies and available resources.	Distribution of teacher roles and competition coordinators based on competencies. Regular coordination through briefings, reflections, and learning communities. Formation of collaborative work teams. Strategic management of facilities and infrastructure using BOS funds and available environmental resources.	Clear role distribution, regular coordination, and creative resource management supported the effective implementation of achievement-oriented programs.
Actuating	Implementation was active, flexible, and oriented toward improving learning quality and student achievement.	Scheduled learning supervision supported by video and CCTV when necessary. Teacher motivation, guidance, and direct modeling. Open student selection and intensive achievement coaching. Collaboration with parents. Development of an achievement-oriented school culture.	The implementation strengthened teacher and student engagement and created a supportive environment for developing academic and non-academic potential.
Controlling	Controlling was conducted continuously through evaluation, monitoring, follow-up, and reflection.	Regular evaluation of learning outcomes and student achievements. Monitoring progress through monthly and semester evaluations. Remedial and enrichment programs. Evaluation of competition participation and training strategies. Continuous reflection and adjustment of future strategies.	Evaluation results were used to improve programs, adjust strategies, and ensure continuous improvement in student achievement management.

The planning function shows that instructional leadership at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo was initiated through participatory, systematic, and data-based planning. The school formulated its vision and learning objectives collaboratively and translated them into measurable achievement targets. Educational report data, assessment results, and previous achievement records were used to determine priority areas. The school also developed extracurricular, literacy, numeracy, and Friday Creativity programs to identify and develop students' talents. Teacher competency development was integrated into the planning process through mentoring, learning communities, coaching, and clinical supervision.

The organizing function demonstrates that the school arranged human and material resources according to identified needs. Teachers were assigned responsibilities and competition-coaching roles based on their competencies and educational backgrounds. Coordination was maintained through regular briefings, reflections, and learning community activities. The school also formed collaborative working structures to support achievement programs. In terms of facilities, the school prioritized essential equipment through BOS funding and creatively utilized available spaces and surrounding public facilities.

The actuating function was characterized by the principal's active involvement in learning supervision, teacher development, student coaching, and achievement-oriented activities. Supervision was conducted regularly and could be adapted through video or CCTV monitoring. The principal also provided direct guidance and modeling to support teachers' instructional practices. Student achievement development involved open selection, intensive coaching, external trainers when necessary, and parental collaboration. These practices were accompanied by the development of a school culture that encouraged students to participate and demonstrate their talents.

The controlling function focused on continuous evaluation and improvement. Student learning outcomes and achievement programs were monitored through educational report analysis, monthly evaluations, semester reflections, and progress monitoring. Evaluation results were followed by remedial and enrichment activities, adjustments to training strategies, and selective decisions regarding competition participation. The school also continuously reviewed its strategies to respond to changes in student needs and competition condition.

Discussion

This discussion interprets the research findings by linking them to educational management and instructional leadership theories. The POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) framework is used to analyze how the principal implements instructional leadership in managing student academic achievement. These four functions are interconnected and form a continuous management cycle that supports the improvement of students' academic and non-academic achievements.

The research findings indicate that the principal of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo performs the planning function in a systematic, participatory, and data-driven manner. The formulation of the school vision and learning goals through discussions involving teachers, the school committee, and supervisors reflects the characteristics of effective instructional leadership. This practice is consistent with (Hallinger, 2025) assertion that defining the school mission involves framing school goals and communicating these goals to members of the school community. The participatory formulation of the school vision consequently creates a sense of ownership and shared commitment, which strengthens synergy in the implementation of school programs.

This participatory planning approach is also consistent with the educational planning theory proposed by (Engkoswara, 2015), which emphasizes that educational planning is a rational and systematic process involving relevant stakeholders so that established goals are realistic and achievable. (Amalia, 2024) Similarly, explain that the planning component of POAC requires educational institutions to identify needs, formulate objectives, and determine appropriate programs before implementation. In the context of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, the involvement of teachers and the school committee in formulating the vision and developing programs demonstrates that planning is not conducted through a purely top-down mechanism, but rather through collective deliberation (Ritia Sari, 2021).

The findings further indicate that the principal uses Education Report Card data and previous achievement results as the basis for determining school targets. This reflects data-driven decision-making in instructional leadership. As emphasized by Robbins (Yusrianti, 2025), rational planning should be based on accurate and relevant information. The use of educational data enables the principal to identify trends, determine areas requiring improvement, and formulate programs that correspond to actual school conditions. The principal does not merely collect data but compares current performance with previous years to identify increases, decreases, and specific areas of

change. Thus, planning can be understood as a dynamic and responsive process rather than merely an administrative requirement (Gazali, 2023).

This finding is reinforced by Grissom (2021), who highlights the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement. Their work emphasizes that school principals can contribute to student outcomes through leadership practices that shape instructional conditions and teacher practices. In this regard, planning conducted by the principal of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo becomes an important initial mechanism for translating school goals into instructional priorities and student achievement programs. Similarly, (Akomodi, 2025) emphasizes the importance of instructional leadership in directing educational institutions toward the achievement of learning objectives. Therefore, the principal's role in establishing clear learning goals and achievement targets is not simply managerial but constitutes an essential element of instructional leadership.

The planning of achievement-enhancement programs, including extracurricular activities, literacy, numeracy, and Creative Fridays (Jumat Kreasi), demonstrates the principal's understanding that student achievement encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions. These programs provide opportunities to identify and develop students' talents and interests. (Shaked, 2022) asserts that effective instructional planning is characterized by clear learning objectives and alignment between the school's vision and classroom instructional practices. At SD Negeri 2 Kutoharjo, Creative Fridays provides a platform for students to express their talents while enabling the school to identify potential that can subsequently be developed through extracurricular activities and competition coaching.

The dynamic development of school programs also indicates that the principal does not rely rigidly on previously established programs. Instead, new initiatives are developed based on experiences, competition results, and emerging student needs. This finding is consistent with the broader perspective presented by (Akomodi, 2025) who argues that instructional leadership requires school leaders to continuously direct and improve educational processes in response to changing educational needs. Therefore, planning at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo reflects an adaptive form of instructional leadership in which school programs are continuously adjusted according to evidence and experience.

Planning for teacher competency development through pairing teachers with external coaches or mentors is another significant finding. Rather than depending exclusively on

conventional training, the principal provides teachers with opportunities to learn through direct interaction and practical guidance from external experts. This strategy aligns with (Bellibaş, 2025), who identify instructional quality and teacher professional development as important mechanisms linking instructional leadership to student achievement. It also reinforces Hallinger's perspective, as cited in (Annisa, 2025) that effective instructional leadership should be accompanied by systematic support for teacher capacity building.

The teacher competency development strategy is consequently implemented through learning communities (*kombel*), clinical supervision, mentoring, and training based on instructional needs. Such practices demonstrate that planning for teacher development is structured and sustainable rather than incidental. The planning process, therefore, provides the foundation for instructional leadership because it connects school vision, student needs, teacher competency development, and achievement targets within an integrated framework.

The findings regarding organizing at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo demonstrate that the principal performs this function collaboratively, strategically, and adaptively despite limitations in school resources. The allocation of teaching responsibilities according to teachers' competencies and academic backgrounds, together with the appointment of specific teachers as competition coordinators, reflects effective organizing principles. (Setiawan, 2024) explains that organizing involves defining activities, grouping tasks, establishing authority, and assigning responsibilities to individuals within an organization.

The principal's decisions concerning teacher placement are based on direct observation, educational qualifications, and demonstrated competence. This indicates that teacher assignments are not arbitrary but reflect an effort to achieve a fit between individual capabilities and organizational responsibilities. (Yusrianti, 2025) emphasizes that effective organizing requires consideration of the relationship between tasks and individual abilities in order to optimize organizational performance. In the school context, this alignment is important because the quality of teacher placement can affect the quality of instruction, student mentoring, and achievement development.

The findings are also consistent with (Amalia, 2024) who describe organizing within POAC as the process of distributing responsibilities, establishing roles, and coordinating human resources to ensure that planned programs can be implemented effectively. At State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, the existence of official decrees (*Surat Keputusan/SK*) concerning teacher assignments

provides evidence that the distribution of responsibilities is systematically documented. This formal structure is complemented by informal collaboration among teachers, enabling the organization to remain flexible while maintaining accountability.

Routine coordination and communication through scheduled briefings, weekly reflection activities, learning communities, and various communication channels further strengthen the organizing process. The principal does not merely receive reports from coordinators but also participates directly in resolving problems, including difficulties involving communication between teachers and students' parents. This practice is consistent with (Bush, 2020), who argues that effective educational leadership encourages collective and collaborative work cultures. It also corresponds with the principles of POAC-based management described by (Amalia, 2024) in which organizing requires a clear structure and continuous communication among members.

The establishment of learning communities that meet regularly also reflects the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community (PLC). (Bush, 2020), explains that effective educational leadership promotes collective learning and collaboration through professional forums in which teachers can share instructional practices. The learning community is not limited to classroom instruction but also discusses strategies for improving student achievement in competitions. Consequently, the organizational structure connects curricular and extracurricular programs and creates opportunities for teachers to learn from one another.

This finding is relevant to the broader evidence concerning principal leadership and student achievement. (Grissom, 2021), emphasize the importance of principal leadership in shaping school conditions associated with student outcomes. The organizing function provides one mechanism through which such leadership can operate because the principal creates structures that enable teachers to collaborate, assume appropriate responsibilities, and work toward common instructional objectives.

The role of instructional technological leadership also becomes increasingly relevant to the organizing process. (Siti, 2023), through their bibliometric analysis of instructional technological leadership, demonstrate the growing scholarly attention to the relationship between instructional leadership and technological dimensions of educational management. Although the present findings primarily emphasize direct interpersonal coordination and learning communities, the use of communication channels and digital resources by the principal indicates that organizing is increasingly supported by technological means. Technology, therefore, functions as a

complementary resource for coordinating school programs and maintaining communication among stakeholders.

The creative management of facilities and infrastructure, despite limited space and equipment, further demonstrates the principal's ability to organize available resources. The allocation of BOS funds for priority resources such as rebana drums, laptops, and crayons, together with the use of the prayer room and public spaces as learning environments, reflects an adaptive approach to resource management. (Engkoswara, 2015) emphasize that educational organization includes the management of facilities and infrastructure so that available resources can support educational objectives. The use of improvised equipment by the Physical Education teacher and the utilization of the prayer room by the Islamic Religious Education teacher demonstrate that resource limitations do not necessarily prevent the achievement of educational objectives.

Thus, organizing is not limited to establishing formal structures. It encompasses the strategic distribution of human resources, collaborative communication, professional learning, technological support, and creative utilization of facilities. These practices provide the organizational foundation necessary for the effective implementation of instructional leadership.

The implementation of instructional leadership at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo is characterized by the principal's direct involvement in supervision, motivation, mentoring, and student achievement development. George R. Terry cited in (Setiawan, 2024) views actuation as the stage at which plans and organizational structures are translated into action. Accordingly, the findings demonstrate that the principal does not stop at planning and organizing but actively ensures that instructional programs are implemented effectively.

Scheduled instructional supervision conducted through face-to-face interaction, video, and CCTV reflects a shift from conventional administrative supervision toward a more collaborative and reflective approach. The principal does not simply verify the completeness of instructional documents but also provides direct examples through modeling in the classroom, such as demonstrating literacy instruction using a big book. (Bush, 2020), argues that effective instructional supervision should prioritize improvement in instructional quality rather than merely evaluating teacher performance. (Dwiyono, 2022) similarly emphasize that instructional leadership requires principals to play an active role in the instructional process, guide teachers in performing their teaching responsibilities, and safeguard instructional quality to improve student outcomes.

This finding is strongly supported by (R. Walean, 2023), who emphasize the role of instructional leadership in improving learning. The principal's direct engagement with classroom instruction at SD Negeri 2 Kutoharjo demonstrates that instructional leadership is enacted through concrete practices rather than merely through administrative policy. The principal's willingness to observe, model, guide, and provide feedback establishes a direct connection between leadership practice and classroom learning.

The principal's motivational practices are also implemented through leading by example and providing tangible support for academic and non-academic activities. The Islamic Religious Education teacher reported that the principal consistently supports religious activities, including the commemoration of Isra Mi'raj and Ramadan community service activities. This finding corresponds with (Hasdianti, 2026), who argue that instructional principals prioritize the learning agenda and provide appropriate support to improve teaching performance and classroom learning. (Liu, 2020) likewise emphasize that instructional principals seek to create positive learning environments by supporting professional development, sharing a common vision, and providing motivation and inspiration for teachers.

(Akomodi, 2025) further underscores the importance of instructional leadership in guiding teachers and maintaining a strong focus on educational improvement. In the context of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, this is visible through the principal's willingness to become directly involved in instructional and student development activities. The principal, therefore, functions not only as an administrator but also as a learning leader who provides motivation, support, modeling, and professional guidance.

The specialized coaching of high-achieving students represents another important form of implementation. Students are selected through an open process and subsequently receive intensive training from internal teachers or external coaches, supported by collaboration with parents. This systematic approach creates a structured pathway for developing student potential. (Nurabadi, 2021) demonstrate that instructional leadership can influence student achievement directly and indirectly through improvements in teacher performance. (Mulyasa, 2022) likewise positions student achievement management as an integral component of school management aimed at improving learning quality and student outcomes.

The development of an achievement-oriented school culture also represents an important dimension of actuation. The principal emphasizes that achievement forms part of the school's vision

and public identity while maintaining transparent and fair student selection processes. (Yenni, 2020) explain that learning-oriented principal leadership contributes to improved school performance and ultimately affects student learning outcomes. At State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, the principal communicates that achievement is a shared objective that requires the hard work and collaboration of the entire school community.

The Jumat Kreasi program strengthens this culture by providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their talents, while open selection processes communicated through group channels ensure fairness and equal opportunities. In this sense, actuation is not simply the implementation of technical programs but also the process of mobilizing teachers, students, and parents around a shared vision of achievement (Goddard, 2025).

The findings can therefore be understood as evidence that instructional leadership becomes meaningful when the principal actively translates the school's vision into daily practices. Supervision, modeling, mentoring, motivation, student coaching, and the cultivation of an achievement-oriented culture represent interconnected forms of actuation that strengthen the relationship between management and instructional improvement.

The controlling function within instructional leadership at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo is not punitive but evaluative, reflective, and improvement-oriented. George R. Terry's definition cited in (Setiawan, 2024) describes controlling as the process of establishing standards, measuring performance, identifying deviations, and taking corrective action. The findings show that the principal conducts reflection sessions, analyzes evaluation results, and follows up with improvements in subsequent strategies. This practice reflects the principle of continuous improvement in educational quality management, in which evaluation results must be transformed into concrete improvement actions (Najiah, 2022).

The use of Education Report Card data, monthly assessments, and semester reflections enables the principal to monitor student achievement systematically. This approach reinforces the importance of data-based instructional leadership. (Grissom, 2021) emphasize the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement, indicating that leadership practices can contribute to student outcomes through the conditions and processes established within schools. In Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, evaluation data provide the principal with evidence for determining whether programs have achieved their intended objectives and which areas require further intervention.

The use of clear success indicators, achievement data, and year-to-year comparisons allows program effectiveness to be assessed objectively. The improvement in achievement from 2023 to 2025 indicates positive program outcomes. Nevertheless, the principal maintains a reflective orientation and does not regard current success as a reason to stop innovating. Instead, the principal recognizes that strategies that are effective at one point may become less effective as educational contexts and competition change.

This finding is consistent with (Jiangping, 2025), who discuss the association between principal leadership and student achievement. The relationship between leadership and student outcomes indicates the importance of continuous assessment of leadership practices and their educational consequences. Similarly, (Sermantho, 2025) demonstrate the relevance of instructional leadership to teachers' organizational behavior, suggesting that leadership practices can shape not only student-related outcomes but also the attitudes and behaviors of teachers within the school organization.

Continuous evaluation is also consistent with (Supriatna, 2024), who argue that ongoing supervision enables schools to make continuous improvements in student learning outcomes. The principal's approach at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo reflects this principle because evaluation is used to determine whether existing strategies should be maintained, modified, or replaced.

Follow-up actions, including remedial and enrichment programs documented in the ProPP, demonstrate that evaluation does not end with measurement. Instead, evaluation results are translated into concrete instructional actions. Differentiated learning approaches documented in lesson plans and teaching modules also represent part of this formative supervision process. The principal and teachers use evaluation findings to improve subsequent planning, thereby creating a dynamic POAC cycle in which planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation continuously influence one another.

The decision not to participate in competitions that demonstrate limited potential also reflects rational and data-based controlling. Rather than allocating funds and teacher energy to activities with limited prospects, the school reallocates resources to areas where student performance can be developed more effectively. This decision demonstrates that evaluation is not merely intended to identify success or failure but to support rational resource allocation and strategic decision-making.

The broader policy dimension of this process can also be understood through (Yuliah, 2020), who emphasizes that educational policy implementation requires the translation of policy objectives

into practical action. Evaluation consequently becomes essential for determining whether educational policies and programs have been implemented in accordance with their intended objectives. In the case of Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo, evaluation serves as the mechanism through which school-level policies and instructional programs are reviewed against actual achievement data.

(Naz, 2022) emphasize the importance of systematic data collection through qualitative semi-structured interviews in case study research. This perspective is relevant to the present study because the evaluation of instructional leadership is not based solely on numerical achievement data but is also informed by the experiences and perceptions of principals, teachers, and other stakeholders. Likewise, (Safarudin, 2023) emphasize the importance of systematic qualitative research procedures in understanding educational phenomena within their natural contexts. The combination of observation, interviews, documentation, and achievement data, therefore, strengthens the interpretation of the principal's instructional leadership practices.

A principal's honest and improvement-oriented reflection demonstrates awareness of the need to continuously learn and adapt. Positive assessments from teachers regarding the principal's leadership, including the PAI teacher's statement that the principal performs professional responsibilities exceptionally well, indicate that instructional leadership is experienced not only through formal policies but also through daily practices. (Maula, 2024) argue that systematic and continuous instructional supervision can improve student academic achievement because principals who consistently monitor learning outcomes and act upon evaluation findings can make instruction more focused and responsive to students' needs.

Overall, the controlling function at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo demonstrates that evaluation operates as the final stage of one management cycle while simultaneously becoming the starting point for the next planning cycle. The POAC process, therefore, functions as a continuous loop: data and evaluation findings inform planning; planning determines organizational arrangements; organizing facilitates implementation; implementation generates evidence; and evaluation uses that evidence to improve the subsequent cycle. This cyclical process strengthens instructional leadership because it enables the principal to continuously adapt school programs, teacher development, student achievement strategies, and resource allocation to changing educational needs.

CONCLUSION

The principal's instructional leadership in managing student learning achievement at State Elementary School 2 Kutoharjo is implemented through participatory, systematic, and data-driven planning. The principal involves teachers, the school committee, and supervisors in formulating the school vision and learning objectives, while achievement targets are established based on educational report data and previous achievement records. Flagship programs, including extracurricular activities, literacy, numeracy, and Friday Creativity, are collaboratively developed and continuously refined. Teacher competency is strengthened through mentoring, learning communities, and structured clinical supervision.

The organizing function is carried out proportionally and collaboratively by assigning teachers according to their competencies, establishing clear coordination through regular briefings and learning communities, and optimizing available resources. Creative management of facilities, supported by BOS funding and the use of surrounding community resources, enables the school to sustain achievement programs despite limited infrastructure.

The actuating function emphasizes active supervision, teacher motivation, professional coaching, and student development. The principal conducts flexible instructional supervision, provides constructive feedback, supports teachers through direct involvement, and fosters an achievement-oriented school culture. High-achieving students receive intensive coaching through transparent selection processes, collaboration with parents, and guidance from both internal and external trainers.

The controlling function is implemented through continuous evaluation, reflection, and follow-up actions. Student achievement is monitored using educational report data, monthly evaluations, and semester reflections. Evaluation results are followed by remedial and enrichment programs, while school strategies are continuously revised based on performance outcomes. This cyclical implementation of the POAC management functions ensures continuous improvement in instructional leadership and contributes to the sustainable enhancement of student academic achievement.

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