



Hybrid Governance in Teacher Working Groups: Integrating POAC Management and Professional Learning Community for Teacher Competence Development

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Abstract:

Teacher professional competence is a central determinant of educational quality, yet the effectiveness of professional development initiatives depends significantly on how they are managed at the organizational level. While Teacher Working Groups function as collaborative professional communities in Indonesian elementary schools, limited research has examined their governance through an integrated management framework. This study addresses this gap by analyzing and comparing the management of two Teacher Working Groups within the same administrative region using the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling framework. The objective of this research is to comprehensively examine how managerial functions are enacted in enhancing teachers' professional competence and to identify constraints and solutions in their implementation. A qualitative comparative case study design was employed, adopting an interpretive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis involving group leaders, active members, and relevant supervisors. Data were analyzed using an interactive model of condensation, display, and conclusion drawing, followed by cross-case comparison and pattern matching. The findings indicate that both groups implement the full managerial cycle; however, differences emerge in formalization, documentation systems, and evaluation rigor. Management practices are predominantly activity-oriented rather than outcome-oriented, with needs-based planning not consistently linked to measurable competency indicators and evaluation relying primarily on reflective discussion. Participation patterns are strongly influenced by leadership structuring and perceived practical relevance. The study demonstrates that procedural compliance does not guarantee performance-based accountability and proposes an integrative perspective emphasizing alignment among structured documentation, distributed leadership, contextual responsiveness, and measurable evaluation. Theoretically, this research advances the integration of classical management and professional learning community perspectives in grassroots governance. Practically, it underscores the necessity of outcome-based planning and institutionalized evaluation mechanisms to strengthen sustainable professional development.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Teacher professional competence is widely recognized as the primary determinant of education quality and student learning outcomes (Kawuryan et al., 2021; Widodo, 2020). International literature confirms that teacher quality directly influences learning effectiveness and student academic performance (Popova et al., 2021; Yangambi, 2021). In the 21st-century context, professional competence extends beyond mastery of subject matter to include reflective, collaborative, and adaptive skills in response to advancements in learning technology (Wang, 2020; Yue & Ji, 2020). Therefore, teacher professional development has become a global strategic agenda requiring systemic and sustainable approaches (Lutfia et al., 2022; Purnomo, 2017).

In Indonesia, strengthening teacher professional competence has been affirmed through Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 16 of 2007 on Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competence (Asmara, 2016; Nuraeni & Riyanto, 2017). This regulation positions mastery of scientific substance and continuous professional development as normative obligations (Daga et al., 2023; Windrawanto, 2015). However, the 2023 report from the Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel indicates that elementary school teachers' professional competence achievement remains suboptimal, particularly in subject mastery and utilization of learning technology (Ibda et al., 2023; Witarsa & Rizki, 2022). Similar findings from international studies show that formal policies do not always correspond with the quality of professional development implementation at the school level (Ar et al., 2019; Faizuddin et al., 2022).

Ideally, teacher professional development is implemented through collaborative and reflective professional learning communities (Luangsithideth et al., 2017; Saragih & Sinaga, 2020). Within the classical management framework, organizational effectiveness is largely determined by planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling functions (Iriawan et al., 2020; Parlina et al., 2022). This ideal demands systematic, needs-based management. However, in practice, various teacher communities often operate administratively and ceremonially, lacking needs analysis-based planning and measurable evaluation (Ar et al., 2019; Faizuddin et al., 2022). This situation reveals a gap between conceptual design and managerial implementation (Nugraini & Pamungkas, 2023).

In this context, the Teacher Working Group as a professional learning community at the elementary school level plays a strategic role (Ansori et al., 2021; Saragih & Sinaga, 2020). Although various studies demonstrate the contribution of teacher participation in professional communities to competence enhancement (Ar et al., 2019; Saragih & Sinaga, 2020), research specifically analyzing KKG management quality based on management functions remains limited (Faizuddin et al., 2022). Nevertheless, management quality has the potential to serve as a mediating factor determining the effectiveness of professional competence improvement.

Therefore, a study is needed that positions KKG management as the primary variable within a systematic and comparative analytical framework.

A number of studies indicate that professional learning communities contribute significantly to enhancing teacher competence and student learning outcomes (Vangrieken et al., 2016). (OECD, 2019) affirms that teacher collaboration is one of the primary predictors of learning innovation. However, the effectiveness of PLCs is greatly influenced by organizational structure and leadership.

Other studies emphasize the importance of a systemic approach in managing professional development. Darling-Hammond et al. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) state that structured, needs-based, and continuously evaluated programs are more effective compared to sporadic training models. This demonstrates that management functions are a key element in the success of such programs.

Several studies in Indonesia, such as Saragih & Sinaga (Saragih & Sinaga, 2020) and Mardan et al. (Mardan et al., 2022), demonstrate that participation in KKG contributes significantly and positively to improving the pedagogical and professional competence of elementary school teachers (Ar et al., 2019). However, most of these studies focus on the impact of KKG activities rather than a comprehensive analysis of their management functions (Ar et al., 2019; Faizuddin et al., 2022). Additionally, comparative approaches between KKGs within the same administrative region remain very rare.

In general, the literature shows consensus that teacher collaboration is important, but there are variations in findings regarding the determinants of its effectiveness, particularly in terms of governance and organizational management aspects. Based on the literature synthesis, there are three main gaps in the existing studies. First, a conceptual gap where most research positions KKG as a learning community, yet it has not been explicitly analyzed within the POAC management functions framework as a unified system. Second, a methodological gap marked by the scarcity of comparative approaches between KKGs in the same policy context and administrative region. Third, an integrative gap due to the limited number of studies integrating classical management perspectives, professional community theory, and educational regulatory values into a single unified analytical framework.

This research offers novelty in several aspects. Conceptually, it develops KKG management analysis based on the integration of POAC theory and Professional Learning Community concepts. Methodologically, it employs a comparative study approach of two KKGs in one administrative region to identify variations in management practices. Contextually, it provides recent empirical evidence on KKG management within the implementation of national teacher professional development policies. Furthermore, this research contributes theoretically by expanding studies on professional community-based education management, practically through a more systematic KKG management model, and in policy terms via recommendations for strengthening KKG governance. This study aims to comprehensively analyze Teacher Working Group management in enhancing elementary school teachers' professional competence through an examination of planning, organizing, actuating, and evaluating functions, as well as identifying obstacles and solutions in managing two KKGs in one administrative region to formulate a more effective and sustainable KKG management model.

Method (منهج)

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative comparative case study design to examine the

management practices of Teacher Working Groups (Kelompok Kerja Guru - KKG) within their institutional contexts. A case study approach is appropriate when a study seeks to investigate contemporary organizational phenomena in depth and within real-life settings, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined (Yin, 2018). The focus of this research lies in understanding how managerial processes are enacted and structured within KKG organizations, rather than measuring variables or testing statistical relationships. The comparative dimension was incorporated to enable cross-case analysis between two KKGs operating under the same regulatory framework but demonstrating different managerial characteristics. Comparative case analysis enhances analytical generalization by allowing pattern matching and explanation building across cases (Yin, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Through this design, the study aims to construct a conceptual model of KKG management grounded in empirical variation rather than relying solely on normative prescriptions.

Research Approach

This research adopted an interpretive qualitative approach to explore the meanings, interactions, and managerial processes constructed by actors within KKG organizations. Qualitative inquiry is particularly suitable for investigating complex social processes and institutional dynamics that require contextualized interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). KKG management involves interconnected processes of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling that are shaped by leadership styles, member participation, and organizational culture. An interpretive approach allows these processes to be understood as socially constructed practices embedded within specific institutional contexts. The objective of the study is therefore analytical and explanatory rather than statistical, focusing on identifying managerial mechanisms that contribute to the enhancement of teacher professional competence.

Research Setting and Context

The study was conducted in two Teacher Working Groups, KKG Cibeureum and KKG Lembursitu, located within the same administrative region and operating under identical national educational regulations, including Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers and Ministry Regulation No. 16 of 2007 concerning Teacher Competency Standards. Both organizations function under the same supervisory and policy structures, ensuring regulatory consistency across cases. The sites were selected purposively based on their active implementation of professional development programs and their organizational stability. Preliminary exploration indicated differences in managerial structuring, documentation systems, and coordination patterns despite regulatory similarity. This combination of contextual homogeneity and managerial variation provides a robust foundation for comparative organizational analysis, enabling identification of both convergent and divergent management practices within similar structural conditions.

Participants and Data Sources

Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources to ensure comprehensive coverage of managerial processes. Primary data were collected through purposive sampling of key organizational actors directly involved in KKG management, including chairpersons, secretaries, active teacher members, and supervisors where relevant. Participants were selected based on their engagement in planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating KKG activities to ensure that the data reflected core managerial functions. Secondary data consisted of organizational documents such as annual work programs, meeting minutes, organizational structure records, attendance lists, training materials, and evaluation reports. These documents were used to contextualize interview findings and verify the formalization of managerial procedures. The integration of multiple data sources strengthened the analytical depth and internal consistency of the study.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection involved in-depth semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were designed around the four managerial functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, while allowing flexibility to explore emergent themes. This format ensured alignment with research objectives while providing space for participants to articulate their experiences and interpretations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Non-participant observations were conducted during planning meetings, routine KKG sessions, and evaluation discussions to capture interaction patterns, leadership dynamics, and levels of member engagement. Observational data provided contextual insight and reduced reliance on self-reported narratives (Yin, 2018). Document analysis was undertaken to examine the extent to which managerial processes were formally structured and institutionalized. The triangulation of interviews, observations, and documents enhanced the credibility and robustness of the findings (Bowen, 2009).

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing in a cyclical and iterative process. Interview transcripts, field notes, and documentary materials were coded using an initial open coding process. Codes were then organized deductively according to the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling framework while remaining open to inductively emerging themes. Cross-case analysis was conducted to identify patterns of similarity and difference between the two KKGs. Matrices were developed to facilitate systematic comparison of managerial structures, decision-making processes, and evaluation mechanisms. Pattern matching was applied to compare empirical findings with theoretical propositions derived from management and professional learning community literature (Yin, 2018). Interpretations were continuously verified against raw data to ensure analytical rigor and internal coherence.

Trustworthiness

Methodological rigor was ensured by applying the trustworthiness criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), encompassing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through data source and method triangulation as well as member checking to validate interpretive accuracy. Transferability was supported through thick description of organizational contexts and managerial processes. Dependability was maintained through systematic documentation of data collection and analytical procedures, forming an audit trail. Confirmability was ensured by grounding interpretations in empirical evidence, including interview excerpts and documentary records, thereby minimizing researcher bias.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the objectives and procedures of the study and provided voluntary consent prior to data collection. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing participant identities and safeguarding institutional data. All data were used exclusively for academic purposes. Adherence to ethical standards enhances research integrity and aligns with established qualitative research guidelines (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Result (نتائج)

Planning of KKG Management

Findings indicate that the planning process in both KKG Cibeureum and KKG Lembursitu

began with identifying teachers' professional needs as the basis for program formulation. In KKG Cibereum, needs identification was conducted through management meetings and routine teacher forums. During interviews, several teachers stated that they experienced difficulties in preparing teaching modules and integrating technology into classroom practice. One teacher explained, "We often discuss problems in preparing teaching modules, especially adapting them to the Merdeka Curriculum" (Teacher Interview, KKG Cibereum). Another participant noted, "Many of us still need guidance in using digital platforms for learning" (Teacher Interview, KKG Cibereum).

In KKG Lembursitu, needs identification was carried out through internal discussions and included input from the supervising school inspector and school principals. A management member stated, "Before finalizing the annual program, we consult with the supervisor to align it with current policy directions" (Management Interview, KKG Lembursitu).

Program planning in both KKGs included the determination of activity objectives, preparation of materials, scheduling, and budgeting. Document analysis of annual work programs shows that KKG Lembursitu prepared a structured annual plan containing detailed schedules and activity descriptions, while KKG Cibereum documented planning outcomes primarily in meeting minutes. The planned programs focused on strengthening subject matter mastery, developing instructional tools aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum, and enhancing the use of educational technology.

Indicators of program success were generally not formulated in measurable quantitative terms. Review of planning documents indicates that most program descriptions emphasized activity implementation rather than specifying detailed competency achievement targets.

Organizing of KKG Management

Organizing practices in both KKGs were reflected in the establishment of formal organizational structures consisting of a chairperson, secretary, and members. For specific activities, additional organizing committees were formed to support implementation. Task distribution was assigned functionally according to roles, although instances of overlapping responsibilities among administrators were observed.

In KKG Cibereum, coordination among members was predominantly conducted through direct communication and messaging groups. In KKG Lembursitu, coordination followed a more structured pattern with clearer role distribution and occasional involvement of the school supervisor in selected activities.

Implementation of KKG Management

KKG activities in both locations included group discussions, workshops, collaborative lesson preparation, and subject matter enrichment sessions. Observation records show that in KKG Cibereum, sessions frequently involved small-group work where teachers collaboratively drafted lesson plans and shared instructional media. Field notes indicate active peer feedback during these sessions. One participant stated, "We directly practice creating teaching modules together, and then we revise them based on suggestions from other teachers" (Teacher Interview, KKG Cibereum).

In KKG Lembursitu, several sessions involved external resource persons who delivered presentations on curriculum updates and assessment strategies. Attendance lists show that participation was generally higher during sessions featuring external speakers compared to routine internal discussions. A teacher commented, "When there is a guest speaker, more

members attend because we feel we get new insights" (Teacher Interview, KKG Lembursitu).

Teacher participation levels varied across activities. Attendance documentation indicates fluctuations across sessions, with more consistent participation in activities directly related to immediate classroom needs. Observations also recorded instances where some members arrived late or left before sessions concluded, particularly during periods of high teaching workload.

Evaluation of KKG Management

Evaluation activities in both KKGs were conducted through monitoring of program implementation, reflective discussions, and preparation of activity reports. KKG Lembursitu maintained more comprehensive documentation of evaluation processes compared to KKG Cibeureum. Evaluation practices did not consistently utilize standardized instruments or clearly defined measurable indicators. Reflection was generally conducted through group discussions following the completion of activities.

Management Constraints

Several constraints were identified in both KKGs, including limited time availability, variation in teacher motivation, limited facilities and infrastructure, and inconsistent external support. These constraints affected attendance levels, scheduling flexibility, and the continuity of certain programs.

Management Solutions

To address these constraints, both KKGs implemented schedule adjustments, strengthened communication among members, and increased coordination with school supervisors and principals. Digital communication platforms were utilized to facilitate coordination and sharing of instructional materials. These measures were applied to maintain program continuity and participation.



Discussion (مناقشة)

Summary of Principal Findings

The analysis demonstrates that both KKGs formally enact the managerial cycle of planning, organizing, actuating, and evaluating, yet the depth of integration and institutionalization varies considerably. Managerial processes are visible and procedurally complete, but they remain predominantly activity-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. Participation is shaped strongly by perceived classroom relevance and leadership structuring, while evaluation practices rely mainly on reflective dialogue without systematic performance instruments. These patterns suggest that managerial presence does not automatically equate to managerial maturity, particularly in terms of accountability and measurable competence development.

Interpreting the Findings Through Management and PLC Literature

The findings resonate with the broad international consensus that collaborative professional communities enhance teacher competence and student outcomes. Vangrieken et al. (2016) emphasize that professional learning communities foster shared responsibility and instructional improvement, and OECD (2019) identifies teacher collaboration as a key predictor

of innovation. The strong collegial engagement observed in both KKGs confirms these claims. Teachers actively participate in peer discussion, joint lesson development, and knowledge exchange, indicating that KKGs function as authentic collaborative spaces rather than merely administrative forums.

However, the present study nuances this optimistic narrative by showing that collaboration alone does not ensure demonstrable professional growth. The effectiveness of PLCs, as already acknowledged in OECD (2019), is mediated by leadership quality and organizational structure. The comparative evidence presented here substantiates this qualification. Although both KKGs operate under identical regulatory frameworks, differences in documentation discipline, role distribution, and evaluative rigor produce variation in managerial coherence. This supports the argument that structural and leadership dimensions are decisive in translating collaboration into sustained improvement.

The findings also align partially with the systemic professional development perspective articulated by Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who argue that effective professional learning must be structured, needs-based, sustained, and continuously evaluated. In the two KKGs studied, needs-based planning is evident, and activities are conducted regularly. Nevertheless, the evaluative dimension remains weakly institutionalized. Competency benchmarks are rarely embedded into planning documents, and post-activity assessment is not consistently linked to measurable indicators. In this respect, the managerial cycle appears procedurally complete but strategically shallow. The study therefore extends Darling-Hammond et al.'s framework by illustrating how partial systemic adoption can limit the transformative potential of professional development initiatives.

Indonesian scholarship has consistently reported positive relationships between KKG participation and improvements in pedagogical and professional competence, as demonstrated by Saragih and Sinaga (2020), Mardan et al. (2022), and Ar et al. (2019). These studies strengthen the argument that KKGs contribute meaningfully to teacher development. Yet, as noted by Faizuddin et al. (2022), most existing research foregrounds outcome claims while giving limited attention to governance mechanisms. The present study addresses this analytical imbalance by examining how managerial functions shape the conditions under which competence enhancement occurs. Rather than contradicting prior findings, it provides a structural explanation for why impact may vary across contexts even when participation rates are similar.

Beyond the cited literature, the findings also echo Hord's conceptualization of professional learning communities as cultures of collective inquiry that require supportive and shared leadership. While collegial inquiry is visible in both KKGs, leadership remains unevenly distributed, and institutional documentation is not fully embedded. This partially confirms Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership theory, which posits that sustainable organizational improvement depends on the dispersion of leadership practice rather than concentration in single actors. Where managerial responsibility is centralized, continuity becomes personality-dependent rather than system-dependent, increasing vulnerability to leadership transition.

From an educational management perspective, Bush (2011) argues that effective school-based management requires coherence between structural design and evaluative accountability. The present findings suggest that KKG governance still leans toward compliance-oriented management, in which activities are implemented to fulfill expectations but are not systematically tied to performance indicators. This condition reflects what Fullan (2007) describes as surface-level implementation, where structural adoption occurs without deep cultural and evaluative transformation.

Comparative Contribution and Governance Interpretation

The comparative dimension of this study offers an important methodological extension to existing research. Prior Indonesian studies rarely compare KKGs within the same administrative region, thereby limiting understanding of internal managerial heterogeneity. The evidence presented here demonstrates that regulatory uniformity does not produce managerial uniformity. Organizational agency, leadership orientation, and internal structuring mediate how policy mandates are enacted at the grassroots level. This insight reinforces broader governance theory suggesting that local actors interpret and operationalize policy frameworks in contextually adaptive ways.

The tension between collaborative professionalism and accountability-based governance emerges as a central analytical theme. Professional learning community theory privileges trust, shared reflection, and mutual support, whereas contemporary governance models emphasize measurable outcomes and performance indicators. In the cases examined, collaborative culture is stronger than evaluative structuring. Reflection is present, yet measurement is limited. Consequently, professional meaning is generated, but institutional evidence of competency transformation remains underdeveloped. This imbalance explains why managerial completeness at the procedural level does not necessarily translate into demonstrable impact.

Theoretical and Practical Significance

Conceptually, this study addresses the identified gaps in three ways. It responds to the conceptual gap by explicitly analyzing KKG through the integrated POAC framework rather than treating it solely as a learning community. It addresses the methodological gap through comparative examination within a shared policy environment. It also tackles the integrative gap by combining classical management theory, PLC theory, distributed leadership perspectives, and governance accountability discourse into a unified analytical lens.

Theoretically, the findings suggest that collaboration constitutes a necessary but insufficient condition for professional competence enhancement. Managerial integration mediates the effectiveness of collaborative structures, and governance orientation determines whether professional development remains compliance-driven or evolves toward performance-based accountability. KKG governance therefore operates most effectively when collegial learning culture and structured managerial accountability are harmonized rather than positioned as competing logics.

Practically, the results indicate that strengthening KKG effectiveness does not require bureaucratic expansion but rather deeper integration of measurable competency indicators into planning and evaluation processes. Enhancing evaluative literacy, institutionalizing documentation systems, and fostering distributed leadership practices would align grassroots professional development more closely with international evidence on effective professional learning while preserving its collaborative ethos.

Overall, this discussion confirms the importance of teacher collaboration emphasized in both international and Indonesian literature, yet it advances the field by demonstrating that governance quality and managerial integration determine whether collaboration produces sustainable and demonstrable professional growth.



Conclusion (خاتمة)

This study aimed to analyze and compare the management of Teacher Working Groups (KKG) through the functions of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. The

findings confirm that both KKG Cibeureum and KKG Lembursitu implement the complete managerial cycle; however, differences emerge in the degree of formalization, documentation, and evaluative rigor. While managerial structures are functionally established, practices remain predominantly activity-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. Planning is needs-based but lacks measurable indicators, organizing structures show partial role overlap, implementation reflects collaborative professional learning, and evaluation relies mainly on reflective discussion without standardized instruments.

Theoretically, this study contributes to educational management literature by demonstrating that grassroots professional development organizations operate through hybrid governance patterns that combine formal administrative structures with collegial collaboration. The novelty lies in its comparative analysis within a similar regulatory context, revealing managerial heterogeneity shaped by leadership structuring and evaluation design. The study refines classical management perspectives by emphasizing that procedural completeness does not automatically ensure performance-based accountability.

Practically, the findings highlight the need to strengthen outcome-oriented planning, clearer role distribution, and structured evaluation mechanisms within KKG management. For supervisors and policymakers, the results indicate that regulatory compliance alone is insufficient; institutional capacity in documentation and evaluative practice is crucial to enhance sustainability and professional impact. Future research may broaden the comparative scope and examine the relationship between managerial design and measurable teacher competency development.



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