Analysis of Policies on Teacher and School Principal Performance Management In Indonesia: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Effective performance management of teachers and school principals is a critical determinant of educational quality and institutional accountability. This study analyses national policies and regulatory frameworks governing performance management within the education sector, drawing upon official policy documents, national regulations, and implementation reports. Employing a literature-based and policy analysis approach, the study identifies significant gaps between policy formulation and practical implementation at the school level. The findings reveal persistent challenges, including limited comprehension of performance indicators, inadequate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and insufficient resource support. The analysis underscores the need to strengthen managerial competencies, enhance professional development, and establish equitable and sustainable performance evaluation systems. Overall, the study highlights the importance of developing a more adaptive and context-responsive performance management model to promote continuous improvement in educational quality and leadership effectiveness.

Keywords: policy, performance, teachers, principals, literature review

INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of education is a strategic goal in Indonesia's human resource development agenda. One of the main determinants of achieving this goal is the quality of educators and educational leadership ('Aziz, 2025). Teachers play a central role in the learning process as they directly interact with students to build competencies, character, and 21st-century skills (Muhafidin, 2020; Sukmayadi, 2020). Professional, competent, and integrity-driven teachers create active, creative, and enjoyable learning environments that significantly enhance students' learning outcomes (Sagala, 2013; Kawuryan, 2021). Meanwhile, school principals function as leaders and managers responsible for directing educational activities, creating a conducive school climate, and ensuring the achievement of institutional goals (Memela, 2022; Dönmez, 2021). Principals with strong leadership capacity positively influence teacher performance and student academic achievement (Waswas, 2017; Permendikbud, 2018).

The quality of teachers and school principals is closely linked to recruitment systems, continuous professional development, and competency-based performance evaluations. Without effective performance management, educators may work routinely without motivation for improvement (Farooqi, 2023). Performance management, therefore, becomes a crucial component of education policy aimed at improving the overall quality of learning (Mulyasa, 2011; Riveras-León, 2020). Policies that promote objective, fair, and structured performance appraisals provide meaningful feedback for professional growth and foster a results-oriented work culture. Effective schools are characterised by organised management, a strong learning culture, active community participation, and a consistent focus on quality achievement (Kawuryan, 2021; 'Aziz, 2025). Teachers and principals, as agents of change, play vital roles in driving innovation and institutional development (Fullan, 2001; Dyson, 2020).

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In response to this, the Indonesian government has issued the Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 from the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency. These policies aim to strengthen professionalism and accountability among educators by integrating civil servant performance management with a merit-based system and performance-oriented career development. The circulars emphasise the preparation of Employee Performance Targets (EPT) aligned with Ministerial Regulation No. 6 of 2022 on Civil Servant Performance Management. The formulation of these EPTs is expected to align individual and organisational goals within educational institutions (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2023).

However, the implementation of these policies faces several challenges. Many teachers and principals lack adequate understanding of how to design EPTs based on measurable results and link them to institutional performance indicators (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2023). Consequently, performance targets are often developed administratively without reflecting meaningful efforts to improve learning quality or school management. Limited human resource capacity in technology utilisation and digital document management further constrains effective implementation (Muhafidin, 2020). Moreover, the e-Kinerja system, which underpins the digital management of performance data, remains unfamiliar to educators in remote and underdeveloped (3T) regions. Weak supervision mechanisms and inadequate performance evaluation practices also contribute to inconsistencies and subjectivity in assessment (Puslitjak, 2022).

Another significant barrier lies in the prevailing work culture within schools. Many institutions still lack a performance-based mindset, and performance evaluations are often perceived as administrative formalities rather than tools for reflection and professional development (Maya, 2018; Ngabiyanto, 2022). This situation is aggravated by insufficient incentive systems and rewards for high-performing educators (Mulyasa, 2013). Unrealistic performance targets, particularly in resource-limited schools, further create tension between policy expectations and field realities (Hossain, 2022; Virgana, 2025; Sagala, 2020).

Given these issues, there is a need for a critical policy analysis of the content, context, and implications of the Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 on teacher and principal performance management. The central research problem addressed in this study is: How do current policy frameworks on teacher and principal performance management reflect coherence between design and implementation, and what challenges affect their effectiveness at the school level? Accordingly, this study aims to analyse the regulatory structure and policy intent of the circular letter, identify implementation challenges faced by educational institutions, and formulate recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of performance management practices. The significance of this study lies in providing policymakers and practitioners with empirical insights and conceptual guidance for developing more adaptive and context- sensitive performance management strategies to improve educational quality in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using literature review and policy document analysis methods. This approach was chosen to explore the content, context, and implications of policies governing teacher and principal performance management, particularly those outlined in the Joint Circular Letter of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023. The qualitative-descriptive design allows for an in-depth interpretation of the meaning, objectives, and direction of policy implementation within the broader framework of educational performance management (Moleong, 2017).

The document selection process was guided by the following criteria: (1) official national regulations and ministerial circulars published between 2020 and 2024, (2) documents directly related to teacher and principal performance management, and (3) publicly accessible documents issued by authoritative sources such as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT), the State Civil Service Agency (BKN), and the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-

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RB). Key documents reviewed include Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023, Government Regulation No. 6 of 2022 on Civil Servant Performance Management, and MoECRT regulations on functional positions of teachers and school principals.

The data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis techniques. The procedure involved:

a. Data collection: Gathering relevant laws, regulations, and official guidelines from verified government portals and archives.
b. Organization and coding: Classifying content according to key themes such as performance indicators, assessment mechanisms, managerial duties, and professional development requirements.
c. Categorization and interpretation: Analysing interrelationships between policy objectives, implementation instruments, and expected outcomes, guided by theoretical frameworks of education policy and performance management.
d. Triangulation: Ensuring validity through cross-verification among policy documents, academic literature, and technical implementation guidelines issued by relevant agencies.

The literature review complements the document analysis by examining theoretical perspectives on civil servant performance management, educational leadership, and policy implementation (Zed, 2004; Baslini, 2021). This study is limited to analysing formal policy documents and secondary literature; therefore, it does not include empirical data from field implementation or stakeholder interviews. Future research may extend this analysis through case studies or policy impact evaluations to provide a more comprehensive understanding of implementation dynamics. To strengthen methodological transparency, Table 1 summarises the main documents and literature sources analysed in this study. The documents were selected based on their regulatory significance, publication authenticity, and relevance to teacher and principal performance management.

Table 1. Summary of Analysed Policy Documents

No	Document Title	Type of Document	Issuing Institution	Year	Relevance to Study
1	Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023	Joint Ministerial Circular	Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology; State Civil Service Agency (BKN)	2023	Core reference for teacher and principal performance management framework
2	Government Regulation No. 6 of 2022 on Civil Servant Performance Management	Government Regulation	Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB)	2022	Provides national framework for performance appraisal and evaluation mechanisms
3	MoECRT Regulation on Functional Positions of Teachers and School Principals	Ministerial Regulation	Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT)	2020–2023	Defines roles, responsibilities, and competency standards of educators and leaders
4	National Education Policy Reports and Technical Guidelines	Implementation Reports / Guidelines	MoECRT and Regional Education Offices	2021–2024	Provide contextual data and implementation insights at the school

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5	Academic Literature on Performance Management and Educational Leadership (Zed, 2004; Baslini, 2021)	Secondary Literature	Academic and Research Institutions	Various	level Theoretical foundation for analysis and interpretation of policy context

The Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 serves as the main reference point of the analysis. Issued jointly by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT) and the State Civil Service Agency (BKN), these circulars provide detailed guidance on the implementation of performance management systems for teachers and school principals. They outline performance indicators, assessment procedures, and the integration of professional development within the performance evaluation process. The circulars also serve as the operational basis for aligning individual performance targets with institutional goals, thus becoming the most critical document in this policy analysis.

The Government Regulation No. 6 of 2022 on Civil Servant Performance Management, published by the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB), provides the overarching legal framework for managing civil servant performance, including educators. This regulation establishes principles of accountability, measurable performance outcomes, and performance-based remuneration. It serves as a normative reference to ensure that teacher and principal performance management aligns with national civil service reform objectives.

Furthermore, the MoECRT Regulations on Functional Positions of Teachers and School Principals—issued between 2020 and 2023—define the specific duties, responsibilities, and competency standards required in these professional roles. These documents are essential in linking performance management with professional development pathways, as they determine workload distribution, evaluation criteria, and promotion mechanisms. By analysing these regulations, the study explores how role expectations are translated into measurable performance indicators and linked to continuous improvement processes.

In addition to formal regulations, National Education Policy Reports and Technical Guidelines published between 2021 and 2024 were reviewed to capture the practical implementation context at the school and regional levels. These documents, issued by MoECRT and regional education offices, contain implementation data, challenges, and best practices, which provide insights into how performance management policies are applied in real settings. They enrich the analysis by revealing discrepancies between policy design and field-level execution.

Lastly, academic literature, such as Zed (2004) and Baslini (2021), serves as the theoretical foundation supporting the analysis. These sources provide conceptual frameworks on public sector performance management, educational leadership, and policy implementation. The integration of academic and regulatory sources enables a comprehensive understanding of both the normative and practical dimensions of teacher and principal performance management in Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Policy Analysis on Teacher and Principal Performance Management

The analysis of the Joint Circular Letter of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 demonstrates an important step in aligning teacher and principal performance management with modern public sector performance systems, as mandated by the Ministry of State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation No. 6 of 2022. From the perspective of performance management theory, this policy reflects a shift from an input- and activity-based approach toward a results-oriented performance model, consistent with Armstrong (2014) model of performance management, which emphasises accountability, developmental feedback, and

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measurable outcomes. The regulation seeks to make performance assessment a reflective process that promotes professional growth and organisational improvement, rather than a mere administrative exercise.

However, document analysis reveals a gap between policy design and actual practice. Many teachers and principals have not fully internalised the results-based management paradigm, as their performance targets (SKP) often remain procedural and detached from educational outcomes. This situation reflects the challenges identified in Mulyasa's (2013) theory of educational leadership, which argues that performance improvement requires both technical competence and moral commitment from school leaders. Moreover, insufficient training and uneven digital readiness—particularly in remote and underdeveloped (3T) areas— have limited the effective implementation of digital performance systems. The weakness of mentoring and supervision structures also indicates a lack of distributed leadership and inadequate organisational learning mechanisms within schools.

A comparative perspective from OECD (2020) and UNESCO (2021) reports highlights that countries with successful teacher performance management systems, such as Singapore and Finland, combine clear standards with continuous professional development, peer evaluation, and trust-based accountability. In contrast, the Indonesian system still relies heavily on hierarchical supervision, which may limit opportunities for professional dialogue and innovation. Integrating formative evaluation practices and school-based mentoring could bridge this gap and make performance management more developmental.

Critically, while the policy framework provides clarity in procedural aspects, it lacks sufficient operational guidance on how to link performance indicators to student learning outcomes and school leadership effectiveness. To strengthen implementation, a multidimensional approach is needed—one that combines structural adjustments, digital capacity building, and leadership empowerment at the school level. The policy's long-term success depends on transforming performance management from a bureaucratic compliance mechanism into a strategic tool for continuous improvement and educational innovation.

Reconstructing Policies on Teacher and Principal Performance Management Based on Analysis Results

The results of the analysis of the implementation of the Joint Circular Letter of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 indicate that although this policy promotes a more progressive approach to managing the performance of teachers and school principals, there are a number of significant obstacles to its implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to reconstruct the policy in a normative manner, as well as to be responsive to the dynamics of the field and the needs of education implementers. First, policy reconstruction begins with simplifying and contextualising performance indicators to make them relevant to the tasks and challenges faced by teachers and school principals in various regions. The formulation of employee performance targets should be tailored to the characteristics of educational institutions, including geographical factors, students' socio-economic backgrounds, and school resource capacities. This aligns with Hallinger's (2010) perspective that the effectiveness of school leadership and teacher performance depends on local contexts and organisational characteristics.

Second, it is important to integrate continuous coaching mechanisms into the performance management system. Currently, the performance appraisal process for teachers and school principals is administrative in nature and is not fully utilised as a tool for professional development. Therefore, intensive training and regular coaching by school supervisors and assessors are needed to guide teachers and principals in setting, implementing, and evaluating employee performance targets based on learning outcomes and effective school management (Puslitjak, 2022; Mulyasa, 2013). Third, strengthening the role of principals as learning leaders is an important part of this policy reconstruction. School principals become administrators who set employee performance targets, as well as strategic actors in building a performance culture, initiating learning communities, and supporting teacher capacity building (Agyeman, 2024). For this reason, performance management policies need to provide adequate space and incentives for school principals to optimally carry out their transformational leadership functions (Leithwood, 2006).

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Fourth, policy reconstruction considers aspects of inclusive and equitable digitalisation. e-Performance platforms and other digital reporting systems take into account technological access limitations in 3T areas. The government provides user-friendly technological solutions accompanied by technical assistance so that all teachers and school principals have equal opportunities to manage and report their performance in an accountable manner (UNESCO, 2021). Thus, the reconstruction of teacher and school principal performance management policies focuses on creating a more adaptive, collaborative, and transformative system that measures performance quantitatively and encourages changes in work culture and professionalism in schools. A good policy is one that can be implemented in practice and has a real impact on the quality of learning and student welfare.

Draft Implementation of Policy on Teacher and Principal Performance Management with Consideration of Policy Making Dimensions and Management Functions

In the effort to ensure that the performance management of teachers and school principals is transparent, accountable, and measurable, Joint Circular Letters No. 17 and No. 9 of 2023 promote the use of an integrated information system for managing the performance of civil servants. According to Dunn (2003), public policy design can be analysed through four key dimensions: normative, constitutive, structural, and technical. The normative dimension concerns the values and goals a policy seeks to achieve; the constitutive dimension relates to the legal and institutional legitimacy of a policy; the structural dimension focuses on the organisational framework and actor involvement; and the technical dimension deals with the operational procedures and resources supporting implementation.

Normative Dimension

The normative dimension focuses on the ideal goals and fundamental values underpinning the policy. In the context of performance management, the implementation of a digital information system seeks to enhance accountability, efficiency, and the quality of education services. These values are embedded in the policy documents and communicated to all stakeholders. The digital system also serves as a reflective tool that fosters the continuous improvement of teacher competence and school leadership effectiveness (Hallinger, 2010; Bäcklund, 2022). To reinforce these normative goals, policymakers should establish clear performance standards linked to measurable learning outcomes and leadership effectiveness. Regular reflection sessions and performance dialogues at the school level should be institutionalised to ensure that digital tools are not merely administrative, but also developmental instruments that strengthen the culture of accountability and learning.

Constitutive Dimension

The constitutive dimension pertains to the legal basis and institutional legitimacy required to operationalise the policy. Although the Joint Circular Letter provides formal direction, its binding authority must be strengthened through derivative regulations, such as ministerial decrees and regional technical guidelines. Integration with the State Civil Service Agency's e-Kinerja or State Civil Service Information System is essential to ensure coherence and enforceability. For example, regulations should ensure that digital-based performance evaluations contribute to credit point assessments and career advancement for teachers and school principals (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2023). It is recommended that the Ministry issue a complementary ministerial regulation that formalises the linkage between digital performance evaluations and promotion mechanisms. This will ensure legal consistency, institutional alignment, and stronger incentives for educators to engage meaningfully with the system.

Structural Dimension

The structural dimension addresses the organisation, coordination, and participation of actors in the policy implementation process. The effective use of a performance information system requires collaboration

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between the central government (MoECRT and BKN), regional governments (Education and Civil Service Agencies), and schools as implementing units. The leadership of school principals and supervision by school supervisors play pivotal roles in ensuring data accuracy and meaningful evaluation (Haris, 2018; Puslitjak, 2022). For example, establishing district-level technical support units could provide ongoing training, mentoring, and troubleshooting assistance to users. Strengthening coordination mechanisms through multi-level governance and capacity-building programs is essential. Local education offices should appoint dedicated performance management coordinators to facilitate communication between schools and higher authorities, thereby reducing administrative bottlenecks and ensuring uniform understanding of policy procedures.

Technical Dimension

The technical dimension concerns the operational mechanisms, standard operating procedures, and infrastructure supporting system implementation. The digital performance management system should be designed to be user-friendly, accessible both online and offline, and compatible with devices commonly available in schools. For instance, the e-Kinerja platform provides Employee Performance Target (EPT) templates tailored to teaching and leadership tasks, allowing reporting based on learning and management outcomes. To enhance usability, regular online training sessions and simple user manuals are necessary for teachers with diverse digital literacy levels (UNESCO, 2021). The Ministry should prioritise the continuous improvement of the e-Kinerja interface and provide periodic refresher training to ensure inclusivity. Additionally, schools should be equipped with adequate internet connectivity and digital facilities to prevent implementation disparities, particularly in 3T (underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost) regions.

The following is a draft implementation of the teacher and principal performance management information system policy as viewed from the four basic functions of management.

1. Planning

Planning serves as the foundational stage in implementing the teacher and principal performance management information system. This stage includes defining objectives, identifying required resources, setting implementation timelines, and developing strategies for socialisation and capacity building. The primary goal is to establish an adaptive, transparent, and quality-oriented performance system. At the national level, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT) and the National Civil Service Agency (BKN) formulate an implementation roadmap, while regional education offices translate it into local action plans. For instance, the roadmap integrates employee performance targets (Sasaran Kinerja Pegawai or SKP) with digital platforms such as e-Kinerja and the Civil Service Information System, ensuring alignment with the Ministry of State Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform Regulation No. 6 of 2022. At the school level, principals plan internal training schedules and data verification timelines to ensure timely submission of performance reports (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2023; Mulyasa, 2013). Planning should involve participatory consultation with school principals and supervisors to identify contextual challenges, especially in schools with limited digital infrastructure. Developing a standardised annual planning template for performance management can help schools align their local plans with national objectives and improve implementation consistency.

2. Organizing

Organizing entails structuring institutional frameworks, clarifying roles, and coordinating key actors responsible for implementation. Effective coordination is needed among MoECRT, the Civil Service Commission, the Regional Civil Service Agency (BKD), local education offices, and school work units. Each actor has distinct but interconnected responsibilities. For instance, regional education offices establish performance management task forces to support teachers and principals in setting SKP based on student learning outcomes, while schools appoint internal coordinators to monitor data entry and compliance. In several districts, such as Sleman and Bandung, local task forces have successfully provided direct technical assistance to schools during the initial roll-out of e-Kinerja (Puslitjak, 2022). To strengthen organisational

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effectiveness, regional governments should institutionalise task forces or "performance management support units" with clear mandates, resources, and authority. Regular coordination meetings between these units and school principals can ensure coherence and timely problem resolution in data submission and evaluation processes.

3. Actuating

The actuating function refers to the execution phase, encompassing training, mentoring, system utilisation, and performance evaluation. It involves motivating and empowering teachers and principals to adopt the new performance management system meaningfully. Implementation requires a humanistic and participatory approach, ensuring that educators understand that the system is not merely a bureaucratic obligation but a tool for professional growth. For instance, schools in Yogyakarta have conducted in-house training sessions where principals and supervisors guide teachers in setting measurable learning outcome indicators through e-Kinerja. Moreover, peer learning forums or communities of practice are organised to share best practices in performance reflection and data-driven instruction (Leithwood, 2006; Mulyasa, 2013). Continuous mentoring programs and peer collaboration should be embedded into school culture. The Ministry and regional governments can collaborate to develop certified online courses for teachers and principals, ensuring long-term sustainability and professional accountability in using performance systems.

4. Controlling

The controlling function ensures that policy implementation proceeds according to plan and meets established standards. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential to track performance progress, identify bottlenecks, and make timely adjustments. Nationally, BKN and MoECRT employ a digital monitoring dashboard that provides real-time updates on the completion rates of SKP submissions by teachers and principals. At the regional and school levels, supervisors conduct performance audits and give feedback aligned with previously set indicators (UNESCO, 2021). In some schools, periodic performance review meetings are held every quarter to discuss progress, challenges, and follow-up actions based on data analytics from the e-Kinerja platform. To enhance effectiveness, an integrated feedback mechanism should be established between schools and supervisory bodies. Periodic system-based performance reviews at the district level can help identify common challenges, while the inclusion of self-evaluation tools can foster reflective practice and continuous improvement among educators.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The analysis of the Joint Circular Letter No. 17 of 2023 and No. 9 of 2023 issued by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency demonstrates that the policy represents a progressive step toward reforming teacher and school principal performance management in Indonesia. The findings reveal that although the policy framework is well-structured and aligned with the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum and the Merdeka Belajar vision, significant gaps remain between policy design and implementation. These include limited understanding of performance indicators among educators, insufficient readiness of human resources to adopt digital-based systems such as e-Kinerja, and weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Moreover, disparities in resources between urban and remote schools contribute to uneven implementation and reduced policy effectiveness.

From a policy perspective, these findings highlight the need for stronger institutional capacity-building and continuous professional development programs to ensure that teachers and principals can effectively translate performance targets into measurable educational outcomes. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT) should strengthen inter-agency coordination with the State Civil Service Agency (BKN) and local education offices to harmonize performance standards, develop adaptive digital tools, and ensure fair evaluation practices. At the regional level, local governments should allocate adequate resources for training, supervision, and technological infrastructure to support equitable implementation across diverse educational contexts. Strategically, the development of a context-responsive performance management model is recommended—one that integrates competency development, digital

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literacy, and accountability mechanisms. This model should not only assess outcomes but also support continuous professional learning, fostering a culture of reflection and improvement among educators and school leaders. Strengthening incentive systems and reward mechanisms for high-performing educators would further enhance motivation and policy sustainability.

This study is limited to a qualitative analysis of policy documents and secondary literature without direct empirical validation in schools. Future research should conduct field-based evaluations or case studies to examine the actual implementation of performance management systems and their impact on school performance and student learning outcomes. Such empirical evidence will be essential for refining policy instruments and ensuring that teacher and principal performance management contributes effectively to educational transformation in Indonesia.

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