Headmaster Academic Supervision Management in Improving the Professional Competence of Primary School Teachers in Cianjur

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Abstract. The quality of elementary education is largely determined by teachers' professional competence; however, many elementary school teachers still face challenges in mastering subject matter, managing classrooms, and utilizing instructional technology. One strategic effort to address these issues is through the principals' management of academic supervision that is well-planned, systematic, and sustainable. This study aims to analyze the management of academic supervision by principals in improving teachers' professional competence at SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari, Cidaun District, Cianjur Regency. The research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, then analyzed using data reduction, data display, and verification with triangulation. The findings revealed that at SDN Cikareo, academic supervision was scheduled and implemented according to the program, but the follow-up stage after observation remained largely administrative. In contrast, at SDN Margasari, academic supervision was more flexible but less structured and poorly documented. The main obstacles encountered included limited time, low teacher motivation, and a school culture that had not fully supported supervision. Solutions undertaken by principals included careful planning, dialogic supervision with reflective feedback, and fostering a positive school culture. The study concludes that principals' academic supervision management plays a strategic role in enhancing teachers' professional competence, particularly in subject mastery, pedagogical skills, and classroom management, which ultimately contributes positively to the quality of learning in elementary schools.

Keywords: Academic Supervision, Principal, Teacher Professional Competence, Elementary School.

1 Introduction

Basic education plays a strategic role in shaping a generation of intelligent, characterful individuals who are ready to face global challenges. Teachers, as the main actors in the learning process, are required to have professional competencies that include mastery of subject matter, pedagogical skills, classroom management, and the ability to develop themselves continuously. Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers explicitly emphasises that professional competence is one of the absolute requirements that teachers must possess. However, the reality in the field shows that

there are still many primary school teachers who are not yet optimal in carrying out their professional roles, thus impacting the quality of learning and student achievement [1].

The academic gap is evident in teachers' lack of readiness to deal with curriculum changes, limitations in utilising learning technology media, and a weak culture of reflection in teaching practices. Previous studies, such as those conducted by Halimahturrafiah et al. (2022) and Nurhadi (2021), show that the headteacher's academic supervision plays an important role in improving teacher performance. However, most studies focus more on the technical aspects of supervision, such as pre-observation, observation, and post-observation, without examining in depth how the principal carries out the overall function of academic supervision management [2], [3].

The uniqueness of this study lies in its approach to analysing academic supervision management using G.R. Terry's theoretical framework (planning, organising, actuating, controlling) combined with Achmad Sanusi's educational values. This approach offers something new because it emphasises supervision not only as an administrative function, but also as a managerial process based on theological, ethical, logical, and teleological values in building a school's academic culture. Thus, this research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the strategic role of school principals in empowering teachers [4], [5].

The purpose of this study is to analyse the academic supervision management of school principals in improving the professional competence of teachers at SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari, Cidaun Subdistrict, Cianjur Regency. The results of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of management-based academic supervision concepts, as well as practically to school principals, teachers, and policy makers in improving the quality of learning in primary schools.

2 Method

This study utilised a qualitative approach with a case study method. This approach was chosen because it was suitable for exploring in depth the experiences, practices, and meanings that emerged in the academic supervision management of school principals. Case studies allowed researchers to examine phenomena intensively in a real context, particularly at SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari, which had different characteristics but were in the same social and administrative environment. According to Dewi (2019), case studies are comprehensive, intensive, and in-depth, making them relevant for examining complex academic supervision practices.

The research targets are school principals and teachers as the main actors in the academic supervision process. School principals are the main informants because they play a central role as supervisors, while teachers are positioned as subjects who feel the direct impact of supervision on their professional competence. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account their direct involvement in the academic supervision process, so that the data obtained was truly relevant and rich in context.

Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observation was used to directly observe academic

supervision practices, both in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. In-depth interviews were used to explore the experiences, perceptions, and responses of school principals and teachers to supervision practices. Documentary studies included the analysis of documents such as the School Work Plan (RKS), supervision instruments, supervision reports, and learning documents. The combination of these three techniques enabled data triangulation, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings [6]–[8]

The research procedure was carried out in several stages. First, preliminary research to establish initial communication with the school and conduct a field survey. Second, data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation using the guidelines that had been prepared. Third, data reduction, which involved sorting and filtering data according to the research focus. Fourth, data presentation in the form of narratives, tables, and thematic matrices. Fifth, drawing conclusions by comparing field data with Terry's (1972) POAC management theory and the concept of academic supervision according to Glickman, Sahertian, and Mulyasa. Data analysis was conducted interactively using the Miles & Huberman (1994) model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification [9].

The data obtained was continuously reviewed, correlated, and verified with previous findings to form a comprehensive understanding of academic supervision practices. The POAC (planning, organising, actuating, controlling) theoretical framework was used as an analytical tool to map how the principal carried out management functions in academic supervision. With this design, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of how principal academic supervision management can play a role in improving the professional competence of primary school teachers, as well as identifying obstacles and solutions that arise in the field.

3   Result

The description of the research results is presented based on the analysis of data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation studies of school principals who supervise the improvement of primary school teachers' professional competence. The data obtained was subjected to open coding for further analysis with reference to the scope of the problem, objectives, and research questions, namely: planning, organising, implementing, evaluating, constraints, and solutions..

3.1 Configuration of Academic Supervision Management at SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari

The configuration of academic supervision management in two case schools, SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari, emphasised the interrelationship between planning, implementation, and evaluation. Findings showed that the supervision architecture in both schools was built on the POAC framework, but the degree of document neatness and consistency of follow-up differed. At SDN Cikareo, planning tools are structured through a supervision calendar, observation instruments, and lesson plan checklists. Meanwhile, SDN Margasari relies on flexible scheduling that is responsive to classroom situations, but weaknesses emerge in formal documentation. These differences

affected the quality of feedback provided to teachers. At Cikareo, supervision notes were used as a reference for learning revisions; at Margasari, feedback was more verbal and situational. This initial overview provided context on how micro-policies and work culture shaped supervision practices [10].

In terms of planning, SDN Cikareo prepares a semester supervision calendar which is disseminated at the beginning of the academic year. The principal and curriculum coordinator set subject priorities, select target classes, and establish indicators aligned with curriculum learning outcomes. Teachers receive information about observation instruments, pedagogical rubrics, and expectations for teaching evidence such as lesson plans, modules, and formative assessments. At SDN Margasari, planning is more adaptive through weekly coordination, especially to accommodate the needs of dynamic classes. This flexibility fosters a sense of ownership at the teacher level, but the regularity of planning documents is sometimes neglected. Both models have advantages and disadvantages: a neat structure encourages accountability, while flexibility fosters a quick response to real needs in the classroom [11]–[13].

The readiness of instruments is a critical point in the planning phase. In Cikareo, the observation format includes indicators of the integration of objectives, materials, methods, media, and assessment, as well as a column for evidence notes. Teachers are provided with pre-teaching reflection sheets to explain their differentiation plans and student engagement strategies. In Margasari, the instruments used are more concise, focusing on key teaching behaviours such as method variation, time management, and clarity of instructions. The positive side of the concise instrument is its ease of use in the field; the downside is the possibility of losing granular data traces. Therefore, the effectiveness of planning does not solely depend on the form of the instrument, but on consistency of use and archiving habits, so that teaching evidence becomes a strong basis for systematic improvement [14].

In implementation, the dialogic supervision style was a prominent feature in both schools, with differences in emphasis. At Cikareo, the pre-observation session was brief in order to align expectations, followed by classroom observation and post-observation using a rubric. The dialogue began with the teachers' self-assessment, so that feedback was based on self-awareness. At Margasari, the implementation was more fluid: the supervisor entered the classroom at a strategic moment and immediately provided brief situation-based coaching. This pattern was effective in solving problems on the spot, but risked losing the flow of systematic reflection if not documented. Both, however, demonstrated efforts to maintain teacher dignity, minimise judgemental language, and emphasise continuous improvement [14].

The observation techniques used include time recording, teacher-student interaction maps, and collection of student work evidence. In Cikareo, observations tend to be comprehensive across the learning cycle, from apersepsi to closure, so that pedagogical coherence can be fully understood. In Margasari, observations focus on critical segments such as activity transitions or task instructions, in order to immediately address any gaps. These two approaches reflect different philosophies: the holistic approach prioritises the integration of teaching design, while the segmental approach prioritises the effectiveness of quick action. Both are relevant in the context of 21st-century learning, which requires a balance between mature design and agile classroom responses [15].

The evaluation phase (*controlling*) in Cikareo was marked by monthly follow-up meetings that mapped findings into improvement categories: teaching planning, instructional strategies, and assessment. Each finding was assigned a person in charge, a deadline, and measurable indicators, such as improving project assessment rubrics or increasing the use of higher-order thinking questions. In Margasari, evaluation is conducted through informal conversations and short messages, facilitating rapid communication, but the record of action plan implementation is incomplete. This difference has implications for the school's ability to build institutional memory. Neat documentation enables organisational learning, while repeated verbal communication risks repeating similar problems due to a lack of learning archives [16].

The quality of feedback plays a central role in linking implementation and evaluation. In Cikareo, feedback is based on specific evidence, such as quotes from teacher instructions or examples of student work, resulting in concrete and measurable recommendations for improvement. In Margasari, feedback is prominent in the form of positive reinforcement of effective teaching behaviour and quick suggestions for overcoming obstacles. This pattern provides instant motivation, but needs to be supported by the practice of writing summary recommendations to ensure continuity. Thus, the quality of dialogic supervision is determined not only by the warmth of communication, but also by the accuracy of evidence and the continuity of follow-up [17].

The synergy between the roles of the head teacher and curriculum coordinator also distinguishes the configurations in the two schools. In Cikareo, the division of roles is relatively clear: the head teacher maintains policy direction and a reflective culture, while the coordinator manages technical instruments and teacher training. In Margasari, roles often overlap to cover resource shortages, so personal closeness becomes the capital for driving change. This overlapping pattern strengthens solidarity, but has the potential to cause role fatigue. The strategy adopted is to set intervention priorities and create short cycles—for example, focusing on one indicator every two weeks so that institutional energy is maintained and change is tangible [18].

The implications for learning are evident in the increased coherence between objectives, activities, and assessments. In Cikareo, teachers have become more adept at formulating prompting questions and designing formative assessments that guide student reflection. In Margasari, there has been an increase in student engagement through a variety of methods and the strengthening of practical instruction. Although the starting points are different, both show convergence in practices that place students at the centre of active learning. This is in line with the demands of 21st-century competencies that emphasise critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication, as well as the need for quick and meaningful feedback [19].

3.2. The Impact of Academic Supervision on Teachers' Professional Competence

The impact of academic supervision on teachers' professional competence encompasses the mastery of teaching materials, pedagogical skills, and classroom management. The analysis is based on observation evidence, post-observation notes, and learning artifacts such as lesson plans (RPP), teaching modules, and student worksheets. In general, dialogic supervision encourages teachers to shift from routine

teaching to data-driven reflection, resulting in more targeted instructional decisions. Findings indicate an increased consistency between learning objectives, activities, and formative assessments. Gradual improvements are evident in clearer instructional quality, a richer variety of methods, and the use of higher-order questions to stimulate students' critical thinking. Specific and realistic feedback serves as a bridge between evaluation and corrective actions, the progress of which can be measured over time [20].

Regarding the mastery of teaching materials, supervision encourages teachers to update the content taught to make it more relevant to curriculum outcomes and the students' local context. In several classes, teachers began incorporating applied examples closely related to daily life, making abstract concepts easier to understand. Lesson plan revisions integrate indicators of conceptual and procedural understanding, accompanied by strategies to unravel common misconceptions. The habit of conducting pre-reflection before teaching allows teachers to anticipate difficult questions, prepare alternative analogies, and link cross-thematic materials. These changes strengthen the accuracy and depth of the teaching substance while simultaneously boosting teachers' confidence when facing the dynamics of class discussions that demand quick and precise clarification [21].

Pedagogical skills show improvement through the application of varied methods, such as structured discussions, problem-based learning, and group work with clearly defined roles. Dialogic supervision facilitates the selection of methods appropriate to the learning objectives and student characteristics. Teachers are encouraged to design activities that foster meaningful interactions, rather than mere physical activities without cognitive goals. In some cases, the use of simple media—display sheets, concept cards, or analog simulations—results in higher student engagement. Feedback emphasizes the importance of smooth transitions between activities and the provision of brief yet comprehensive instructions. Consequently, the teaching process becomes more efficient, effective learning time increases, and learning outcomes can be monitored through formative assessments at the end of the segment [22].

Classroom management is also positively impacted through the reinforcement of routines and behavioral expectations agreed upon from the outset. Teachers have begun implementing time management techniques, such as activity duration markers and transition signals, to reduce wasted time. Teacher-student interactions are framed by open-ended questions that invite participation and encourage answer elaboration. Supervision emphasizes the importance of positive reinforcement, making the classroom atmosphere conducive and ensuring students feel safe to try. At the same time, procedures for handling disruptions are simplified with consistent and transparent steps. As a result, the classroom climate becomes more orderly without sacrificing creativity, and teachers can maintain instructional focus on the lesson's objectives [23].

One significant finding is the growth of a reflective culture, where teachers no longer view supervision as an inspection but rather as a professional learning space. Post-observation reflection sheets encourage teachers to assess the effectiveness of the strategies used, identify areas for improvement, and plan adjustments for the next meeting. This practice enhances teachers' metacognition regarding their own instructional decisions. When reflection is combined with teaching evidence data—samples of student work, recorded questions, or assessment rubrics—discussions become

highly focused and solution-oriented. Over time, follow-up meetings can be shortened as teachers have developed the habit of independently diagnosing learning, strengthening their professional autonomy and the quality of classroom decision-making [24].

The impact on formative assessment is evident in the improved design of questions and the use of simple rubrics aligned with learning objectives. Teachers began asking questions that demand reasoning, not just recall, while providing sufficient thinking time. Task assessment rubrics are carefully calibrated to evaluate the depth of understanding, enabling teachers to provide more meaningful feedback. In some classes, exit tickets are used to gauge students' quick comprehension at the end of a session, allowing teachers to plan enrichment or remediation for the subsequent meeting. These changes strengthen the feedback loop between learning and assessment, making instruction far more responsive to student needs [25].

Teachers' pedagogical confidence increases alongside the availability of consistent coaching support. When teachers feel that feedback is evidence-based and delivered empathetically, they are much more open to testing new strategies. This is evident in their courage to try collaborative activities that were previously avoided due to concerns about disrupting classroom order. The support of a supervisor acting as a partner—rather than an auditor—creates a safe space to experiment and learn from minor failures. As small successes accumulate, teachers' self-efficacy grows, profoundly influencing how they design more challenging and meaningful learning experiences for their students [26].

Despite this progress, variations in achievement among teachers remain, heavily influenced by teaching experience, pedagogical readiness, and environmental support. Therefore, coaching differentiation becomes a crucial strategy: novice teachers receive more intensive mentoring, while experienced teachers are assigned developmental projects such as compiling modules to share best practices. This approach optimizes limited resources by effectively leveraging internal capacity. Additionally, peer learning through micro-teaching and cross-observation enriches practical insights. As practical knowledge spreads, a robust professional culture flourishes, and the impact of supervision extends well beyond the one-on-one interactions between supervisors and teachers [27].

Ultimately, the impact on students serves as the most important indicator confirming the effectiveness of academic supervision. Increased participation, higher question quality, and greater independence in task completion appear consistently across observed classes. Students become accustomed to a classroom rhythm that actively demands observation, analysis, and brief presentations. Learning products—such as concept posters, simple experiment reports, or argumentative summaries—serve as tangible evidence of progress in 21st-century skills. Clear feedback helps students understand quality standards, while the opportunity to revise their work fosters a resilient, growth-oriented attitude. Thus, improvements in teacher competence resonate directly in richer, more challenging, and highly effective student learning experiences [28].

3. 3. Implementation Constraints and Improvement Strategies Based on POAC and Educational Values

This sub-chapter maps the obstacles to implementing academic supervision and offers improvement strategies based on POAC and educational values based on theology, ethics, logic and teleology. The main obstacles include time constraints, variations in teacher motivation, and an unestablished culture of documentation. At times, administrative priorities shift attention away from substantial instructional feedback. In addition, gaps in the ability to use instruments and formulate measurable indicators make action plans less effective. To address this situation, strategies are directed towards developing concise improvement cycles, clear role sharing, and the use of simple but consistent tools [29].

At the planning stage, the dominant constraint was the school's overloaded agenda, which made it difficult to schedule supervision. The proposed solution was a priority supervision calendar with fixed, short time slots, for example 20–30 minutes per session, and a focus on one indicator per cycle. The instrument was simplified by highlighting the core items that had the greatest impact on teaching quality. The planning document was shortened to a one-page action plan that recorded teaching behaviour targets, expected evidence, and success criteria. By streamlining the planning, schools could maintain the pace of implementation without overburdening teachers or supervisors, while ensuring that the direction of improvement remained clear and measurable [30].

During implementation, obstacles arose in the form of uneven coaching skills and a tendency to give overly general feedback. The improvement strategy was to adopt a structured coaching conversation model: starting with clarifying lesson objectives, exploring teachers' perspectives, providing evidence-based feedback, and committing to concrete actions. Supervisors were trained to use guiding questions that encourage reflection, rather than mere evaluation. In addition, the implementation encouraged targeted peer observation, so that teachers could learn good practices from each other. This approach fostered a professional learning ecosystem, balanced power relations, and strengthened a sense of ownership of the instructional improvement process at the classroom level [31].

During the evaluation stage, common issues include inconsistent follow-up and scattered documentation. A practical solution is to hold short stand-up follow-up meetings: 10–15 minutes, focusing on the status of action plans, obstacles, and evidence of progress. Each action plan must have a person in charge, a deadline, and outcome indicators, such as an increase in the rubric score for the aspect of clarity of instructions. Documentation is centralised in a shared folder with uniform templates for easy tracking. With a light but regular evaluation rhythm, schools build the habit of closing the improvement cycle, so that organisational learning can take place and practical knowledge is stored as institutional assets [31].

Theological values remind us that education is a trust; therefore, supervision is directed towards ensuring fair learning services for all students. In practice, this value translates into a commitment to providing clear instruction, equal learning opportunities, and support for students who need enrichment or remedial assistance. Ethical values guide supervisory interactions that respect the dignity of teachers, avoid judgemental language, and promote fairness in assessment. With this foundation,

technical improvements are not reduced to formalities, but rather moral efforts to improve the overall quality of learning.

Logical values demand consistency in reasoning between objectives, methods, and assessments. This is achieved by aligning observation instruments with competency indicators and calibrating rubrics to assess the quality of thinking, not just surface outputs. Student observation data and artefacts are analysed to identify patterns, not just anecdotes. Teleological values provide long-term goals: fostering independent learning, character, and 21st-century competencies. With these four values, improvement strategies are not trapped in procedural compliance but are oriented towards meaningful impacts on student learning experiences and teacher professionalism [32].

Operational strategies are summarised in a realistic "quick wins" approach. Examples include setting one teaching behaviour focus every two weeks, using one-page feedback cards, and organising monthly micro-teaching sessions. Quick wins provide an immediate sense of progress, boost motivation, and serve as a steppingstone towards more complex changes. On the other hand, schools continue to prepare annual improvement roadmaps so that quick wins are linked to medium-term goals. It is this balance between tactical acceleration and strategic direction that maintains the sustainability of improvements without overburdening the organisation's capacity.

To address variations in capacity, differentiated professional development is implemented. Teachers with basic needs receive intensive coaching on lesson planning and classroom management, while proficient teachers are facilitated to become mentors or develop good practice modules. This approach creates pedagogical career paths within the school, improves retention, and strengthens a culture of mutual learning. Clear assignments and recognition of contributions strengthen intrinsic motivation. Thus, improvement does not depend on a single figure but is supported by a growing internal capacity network [29].

System support is also needed in terms of simple tools: standardised document formats, structured shared folders, and progress boards that display the status of action plans. Progress visualisation helps all parties monitor progress and take responsibility for their commitments. In addition, integrating regular school meetings with a supervision agenda, for example, by inserting a three-minute quick report, streamlines time without adding new meetings. With a lightweight and consistent system, improvement becomes part of the daily work rhythm, rather than a one-off project.

4   Discussion

The research findings confirm the relevance of the POAC framework in interpreting academic supervision as both a managerial function and a pedagogical practice. SDN Cikareo represents a structured model that excels in accountability and continuity of follow-up; SDN Margasari represents an adaptive model that is responsive to classroom needs. The two are not opposites, but rather a continuum that can be combined. The quality of supervision relies on clear objectives, traceable evidence, and professional conversations that encourage reflection—a combination that leads to instructional improvement and enhances the student learning experience. This position broadens the meaning of supervision from compliance auditing to coaching for learning.

In the realm of planning, supervision calendars, the selection of priority indicators, and the right instruments are key. Cikareo demonstrates the benefits of semester scheduling and comprehensive instruments for building a cross-time data trail, but its effectiveness remains dependent on a culture of reflection and a neatly closed cycle. Margasari displays the advantage of flexibility that allows for quick adjustments, but risks losing institutional memory when documentation is minimal. The practical implication is the adoption of concise, core indicator-based planning accompanied by a one-page documentation mechanism so that adaptability remains traceable and replicable [33], [34]

In practice, both schools implemented dialogic supervision with different emphases: Cikareo began with teacher self-assessment and rubric-based feedback; Margasari prioritised situational coaching at critical moments. The literature on instructional coaching emphasises the importance of guiding questions that trigger meta-reflection, specific feedback on evidence, and a commitment to small actions that can be immediately tested. At the evaluation stage, a striking difference lies in measurable action plans and archiving: a light but regular evaluation rhythm with "good enough to move forward" indicators fosters momentum for change. Without concise notes, success is difficult to replicate and prone to regression; therefore, a simple standard documentation format is necessary.

The impact on teachers' professional competence can be seen in the increased variety of methods, clarity of instructions, and quality of formative assessments (higher-order thinking questions, exit tickets, simple rubrics) that provide meaningful feedback. The integration of theological, ethical, logical, and teleological values deepens the technical dimensions: fair service mandate, relationships that respect the dignity of teachers, consistency in instructional reasoning, and long-term goal orientation. Amidst time constraints, diverse motivations, and an unestablished documentation culture, quick win strategies focusing on one indicator, one-page feedback cards, micro-teaching become a realistic bridge that increases collective efficacy and maintains the rhythm of change.

Strengthening the discourse includes distributed leadership, an equity lens, a proportional data culture, and teacher professionalism as process owners. Policies should provide a minimum corridor (core instruments, frequency, concise reporting) while protecting pedagogical autonomy for innovation. Methodologically, a realistic evaluation approach ("what works, for whom, under what conditions") helps assess the transferability of practices. Contribution of this article: linking structured–adaptive models through dialogical principles and consistent minimal documentation, and presenting a replicable operational package. Strategic recommendations: institute evidence-based teaching reflection forums, standardise 1-page documentation, maintain quick wins, and maintain coherence between objectives evidence dialogue so that the impact is felt in the learning process and outcomes of students.a.

5   Conclusion

The principal's academic supervision management plays a central role in improving the professional competence of primary school teachers. Through careful planning, dialogic supervision, reflective follow-up, and participatory evaluation, academic

supervision can create a more effective, creative, and meaningful learning process. Findings from SDN Cikareo and SDN Margasari show that despite differences in implementation structure and documentation, both demonstrate the positive impact of supervision on improving teachers' mastery of subject matter, pedagogical skills, and classroom management.

From a practical perspective, this study recommends that school principals strengthen the supervisory function not only as an administrative control mechanism, but also as a value-based managerial strategy oriented towards guidance. Teachers are expected to be more open to feedback, develop a culture of reflection, and increase creativity in utilising learning media and methods. Meanwhile, for education policy-makers, the results of this study can serve as input for strengthening technical policies and resource support in the implementation of academic supervision in primary schools.

Thus, the headteacher's academic supervision not only plays a role in ensuring the achievement of school programmes, but also serves as a strategic instrument in building a positive academic culture, enhancing teacher professionalism, and strengthening the quality of basic education in a sustainable manner.

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