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Relationship Management between Elementary School and Community: A POAC Approach to Developing Educational Collaboration

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between schools and communities is a critical factor in supporting the creation of an inclusive and sustainable educational ecosystem, particularly in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This article aims to examine school-community relationship management using the POAC (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling) management approach in a primary education context. This study employed a descriptive qualitative method with data collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The results show that planning was conducted participatively through deliberative forums and SWOT analysis involving the community; organizing involved parents' associations and external stakeholders; program implementation included direct community participation in activities such as Market Day, Outing Class, Ramadhan Talkshow, and Jesa School Care; and supervision was carried out through regular evaluations and the use of communication technology as a transparency tool. This strategy fostered tangible collaboration, enhanced the community's sense of ownership of the school, and established a professional and adaptive relationship. It is concluded that the POAC-based management approach is effective in managing school-community partnerships to improve the overall quality of education.

Keywords: School management; Elementary School; Community relations; POAC, Educational collaboration

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in shaping the quality of human resources that are competitive in the midst of global change. The success of education is not only determined by the quality of teaching in the classroom, but also by the extent to which schools are able to build positive and participatory relationships with the community. Collaboration between school and community is an important element in supporting learning in accordance with the characteristics of the surrounding environment (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). The school-community relationship is an important foundation in shaping an inclusive, mutually supportive and sustainable education ecosystem (Syeda, 2023). The community is not only the object of education policy but also an active partner in the implementation process.

The reality on the ground shows that many schools have not been able to optimize this relationship effectively. Phenomena such as low parental involvement, lack of two-way communication, and the absence of a structured participation system are the main obstacles in building strong partnerships. As stated by Zhang, (2021), the lack of transparency and openness in school decision-making often creates a distance between educational institutions and the surrounding community. In fact, when the community is actively involved, not only the spirit of collaboration increases, but also the quality and sustainability of educational programs in schools.

The digital transformation that has developed rapidly in the last decade has also opened up new opportunities for schools to improve relations with the community. The utilization of communication technologies such as social media, school information systems, and digital conversation groups can be a strategic tool to build effective and transparent communication. Kalyani (2024) mentioned that the integration of technology in education management is proven to significantly increase community participation and strengthen public accountability for school performance.

School-community relations require a systematic and sustainability-oriented managerial approach. The management functions of planning, organizing, actuating and controlling provide a comprehensive framework for managing community involvement in a structured and measurable manner. This model enables schools to design partnership programs that are based on real needs, supported by a clear collaborative structure, run in a participatory manner, and evaluated regularly.

To support the effectiveness of this approach, the theory of community engagement in education developed by Epstein (2018) provides a strong foundation. The model, which consists of six types of engagement: caregiving, communication, volunteering, home learning, decision-making and community collaboration, provides practical guidance for schools in building meaningful partnerships with the community. Epstein emphasizes that when these engagements are consistent and integrated, student learning outcomes and school climate improve significantly.

Previous research has shown the importance of good relationships between schools and communities in improving educational effectiveness. Research by Anderson-Butcher et al., (2022) highlighted how cross-sector collaboration can strengthen school capacity, while Parlier et al., (2022) found that strong partnerships with local communities contribute to improved student performance and school image. Tumin & Faizuddin (2020) emphasized the significance of active collaboration between schools, families, and communities in enhancing educational quality at the primary level. His study showed that inclusive and participatory efforts among stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and community members can create a more supportive learning environment and improve school capacity.

The research focuses on examining the implementation of school-community relations in POAC-based management in primary education units. The objectives are to describe the profile of SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 as a primary education institution in Sragen Regency in general and to analyze the implementation of school-community relations at SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 in terms of school management functions, namely planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of describing in depth the implementation of school-community relations management at SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1. Descriptive qualitative research has descriptive-narrative characteristics, is holistic and in-depth, flexible and interpretive, and emphasizes the meaning and process of participant activity (Waruwu, 2024). The main focus of the research is on the application of management functions that include planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling in establishing partnerships between schools and their social environment.

The subjects in this study were principals, teachers, and school committees, who were purposively selected because they had direct information and roles in managing relationships with the community. Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth interviews, direct observation of school activities, and documentation in the form of program reports, photos of activities, and planning documents. These techniques were chosen to obtain rich, contextual, and triangulated data that accurately reflect the reality of school-community relationship practices.

Data validity was conducted using source and method triangulation techniques to ensure the accuracy and validity of the information. Data analysis was conducted interactively with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The results of the analysis were then described in narrative form to illustrate the managerial practices of school and community relations that actually occurred in the field.

RESULTS

SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 is a public primary school located at Jl. Sangiran 13, Jetiskarangpung Hamlet, Jetiskarangpung Village, Kalijambe Sub-district, Sragen Regency, Central Java Province, with the zip code 57275. This school has public status and is under the auspices of the Regional Government and uses the Merdeka Curriculum in the learning process. The latest Dapodik data as of March, 2025, the number of active educators and education personnel is 19 people, consisting of 16 teachers and 3 education personnel. The number of students reaches 284 students, consisting of 140 boys and 144 girls. The school's physical facilities include 14 classrooms, 1 library room, 2 laboratory rooms, as well as a worship room and a leadership room. SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 also serves students with special needs in the learning difficulties category, and has been accredited A.

The school conceptualizes strategic collaboration with the community by recognizing local stakeholders as integral partners in achieving educational goals. The orientation arises from the understanding that educational success depends not solely on internal institutional processes but also on the extent of community engagement. Epstein (2018) framework on school-family community partnerships emphasizes reciprocal collaboration as a mechanism for enhancing student achievement and institutional effectiveness. Guardians and local leaders, including hamlet heads, neighborhood unit leaders, and religious figures, contribute intellectual, material, and logistical support to reinforce school programs. The involvement of these actors reflects a broader educational ecology grounded in participatory governance.

The school conducts a preliminary SWOT analysis to assess internal strengths and weaknesses alongside external opportunities and threats in cultivating sustainable partnerships. High levels of parental participation and a well-functioning school committee emerge as core strengths. Resource limitations and variability in community readiness are identified as critical concerns. The diagnostic approach aligns with Iyabode Comfort et al. (2024) advocacy for data-driven strategic planning in public and non-profit institutions. The school establishes community consultation forums to gather input and articulate shared objectives. These forums provide a deliberative space in which parents and community representatives co-design programs and propose contextually relevant initiatives. The inclusion of community members in agenda-setting processes fosters legitimacy and promotes the equitable distribution of decision-making authority.

The school integrates digital communication tools into its outreach strategy in response to emerging societal trends. Social media platforms and school-managed digital channels function as conduits for program dissemination, community interaction, and public transparency. Rivera-Vargas et al. (2024) assert that digital infrastructure enhances collaborative engagement and real-time feedback loops between institutions and stakeholders. Increased digital literacy among parents and community actors strengthens the bidirectional flow of information and raises awareness regarding educational innovations. The school enhances public visibility and stakeholder accountability through digital presence, reinforcing institutional credibility in the wider social sphere.

The planning process reflects a distributed leadership paradigm in which authority is shared among institutional actors and community members. Moon & Kim (2023) emphasizes that distributed leadership enables schools to function as adaptive learning organizations, capable of responding to environmental shifts and community-specific demands. Community members assume the role of active agents in defining educational priorities rather than passive recipients of school policy. Legitimation of institutional actions arises from inclusive and dialogic engagement. The planning architecture supports good governance principles in education and lays a foundational framework for sustainable, locally embedded school development.



Figure 1. *Parents' Association Meeting*

The school establishes a parents' association at each grade level to formalize and strengthen the role of families in educational governance. The association assumes an active role in planning, coordinating, and executing various academic and extracurricular programs. The school engages external stakeholders, including village officials, health cadres, and local community leaders, to expand the collaborative ecosystem and ensure broader community representation. The organizational structure for school activities incorporates a formally appointed executive committee composed of teachers, student guardians, and community representatives, each with delineated responsibilities.

The school structures committee membership proportionally to reflect balanced representation among internal staff and external collaborators. In the context of Market Day, the parents' association coordinates logistics by delegating roles into specialized subgroups such as food and beverage management, material supply, venue decoration, and security operations. Chima et al. (2024) emphasize that inclusive community participation in school initiatives fosters a greater sense of belonging and shared accountability, which ultimately enhances program effectiveness and community-school integration.

The school institutionalizes collaboration through structured role distribution and clearly defined duties within event planning. Effective organizing requires the alignment of stakeholder capacity with organizational goals (Khadija, 2022). By engaging diverse actors through formal structures, the school optimizes collective competencies and encourages ownership of educational initiatives. The participatory organizational model practiced by the school aligns with principles of distributed leadership and community empowerment (Vandersmissen & George, 2024), reinforcing the institutional capacity to adapt and respond to evolving educational demands.

The organizing function serves as a foundational mechanism to coordinate human resources, clarify roles, and institutionalize participatory culture. The alignment of stakeholder engagement with organizational planning ensures continuity, transparency, and community-driven implementation of school programs. Through structured organizing, the school not only enhances programmatic efficiency but also legitimizes its governance model in the eyes of both internal and external stakeholders.



Figure 2. *Counseling and Anti-Smoking Education*

The school implements community collaboration through a range of concrete, participatory activities designed to directly involve external stakeholders. These initiatives reflect a shift from transactional to transformational engagement, reinforcing the reciprocal value of school-community partnerships. One of the flagship programs is the *Learning with the Sragen Fire Department*, where students engage in fire safety simulations while parents attend parallel counseling sessions on household risk prevention. In addition, the school collaborates with *Puskesmas Kalijambe* to deliver adolescent counseling and anti-smoking education aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of tobacco use and promoting healthy lifestyles among students. This form of experiential learning provides real-world relevance and bridges school content with everyday civic and public health knowledge (Wong et al., 2022).

The school hosts a Ramadhan Talkshow each year, structured as a seminar featuring religious leaders who strengthen students' character development. This activity fosters spiritual growth and collective identity formation while enabling broader community involvement as both participants

and co-organizers. Religious events in schools, when inclusive and well-integrated, have been shown to promote social cohesion and moral education (Lapis, 2025).

Market Day serves as an integral part of the P5 (Profil Pelajar Pancasila) program. Students collaborate with parents in hands-on entrepreneurial experiences. Guardians assist by supplying materials, offering mentoring, and participating as buyers. This type of learning-by-doing activity cultivates creativity, economic literacy, and family engagement, aligning with Weng et al. (2022) statement for education that is contextual, inclusive, and competency-based.

The Halal Bihalal event, held post-Eid al-Fitr, provides a space for strengthening interpersonal relationships among students, parents, teachers, and local leaders. Student performances and religious lectures reinforce cultural literacy and the spirit of togetherness. These communal celebrations serve as instruments of cultural continuity and school identity (Nyalang et al., 2025).



Figure 3. *Jesa School Care*

Outing Class activities are conducted during semester breaks and involve educational trips to museums, nature reserves, and interactive learning centers. Parents and students jointly participate, strengthening learning outside the classroom and reinforcing parent-child academic interaction. Research by Rugaiyah (2022) confirms that field-based learning improves student engagement, contextual understanding, and long-term retention.

The Jesa School Care program epitomizes civic participation, mobilizing community resources financial, human, and material to improve school facilities, including the paving of the backyard and the funding of competitions. This aligns with the notion of civic capacity (Kinoshita et al., 2020), wherein local institutions and communities collaborate to address shared challenges and co-produce solutions.

The school records consistently high community participation. A notable example is the weekly voluntary infaq contributed by parents every Friday, which funds school development initiatives. The school maintains this collaboration through active communication, consistent social media updates, and transparent reporting of financial and operational outcomes. These practices foster sustained trust, reinforce accountability, and promote adaptive community engagement (Dea, 2023).

Supervision is conducted through a systematic and continuous evaluation process implemented at the conclusion of each school activity. The evaluation process involves the principal, teaching staff, school committee, and selected representatives of student guardians. Evaluation sessions examine challenges encountered during implementation, assess the effectiveness of the

activity, and determine follow-up strategies to improve future execution. This ongoing reflective practice reinforces the principles of adaptive leadership and data informed decision making (Mat Shoib et al., 2025).

The school highly values community input in its monitoring framework. Feedback mechanisms are facilitated through multiple communication channels including WhatsApp, email correspondence, and scheduled in-person meetings. The school also utilizes digital platforms such as its official website and social media accounts to openly publish activity reports and invite public aspirations. These tools foster a culture of transparency and co-accountability, empowering stakeholders to participate in continuous school improvement (Yanti et al., 2025).

The school maintains active social media presence, with an Instagram account ([@sdn_jetiskarangpung1](#)), a dedicated website ([sekolahjesa.wordpress.com](#)), and a YouTube channel ([@sdnjetiskarangpung1](#)), all of which are used strategically to ensure visibility, accessibility, and documentation of activities. The convergence of digital transparency with participatory evaluation ensures that the community remains an integral component of the school's governance architecture.

DISCUSSION

The management of the relationship between school and community at SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 demonstrates a systematic, collaborative, and context-based application of management theory grounded in real needs. The implementation of the POAC management functions Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling is carried out strategically, involving various stakeholders, and is oriented towards fostering an open and participatory educational ecosystem. This aligns with Epstein (2018) assertion that collaboration between schools and communities enhances educational quality and reinforces community engagement in sustaining school programs.

In the planning phase, the school adopted a data-driven and inclusive strategy through a SWOT analysis and stakeholder deliberations. Identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats serves as the foundation for designing relevant and community-responsive partnership programs. This approach is consistent with the views of Colan & Susanu (2022) and Holme et al. (2022), who emphasize participatory planning in public education management. It also resonates with Iyabode Comfort et al. (2024), who advocate for strategic planning grounded in empirical data and active stakeholder involvement, particularly in public and nonprofit educational institutions.

In the organizing function, the presence of parents' associations at each grade level, involvement of local leaders and village officials, and the establishment of proportionally structured event committees reflect an inclusive and accountable organizational model. Events such as Market Day, Halal Bihalal, and Outing Class are managed by mixed teams of teachers, parents, and community members, each assigned specific roles. These practices exemplify the "Decision Making" and "Collaborating with Community" components of Epstein (2018) framework, while also supporting the collaborative governance principles emphasized by Vandersmissen & George (2024), who note that participatory structures enhance program sustainability and accountability.

The actuating function is evident in the school's implementation of direct community-engagement programs, such as fire safety education with the Sragen Fire Department, the Ramadhan Talkshow, and Jesa School Care. These initiatives reflect a shift from transactional to transformational partnerships. As noted by Chima et al. (2024) and Anderson-Butcher et al. (2022), community involvement in school activities fosters a strong sense of ownership and collective responsibility. Furthermore, community-based activities like Market Day and Outing Class support

competency-based learning and entrepreneurial values in alignment with Weng et al. (2022), reinforcing contextual and inclusive education from an early age.

The controlling function is executed through routine and transparent evaluation processes involving school principals, teachers, committee members, and parent representatives. These evaluations focus on identifying challenges, assessing program effectiveness, and proposing improvements. Additionally, the use of digital communication tools such as WhatsApp, school websites, and social media platforms enhances two-way communication and information dissemination. This approach supports findings from Kurniawan et al. (2024), who stress that digital integration in educational supervision fosters transparency, communication efficiency, and community participation. Rivera-Vargas et al. (2024) also assert that technology facilitates real-time interaction and feedback between schools and their stakeholders, thereby enhancing institutional responsiveness.

Overall, the school-community relationship at SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 is managed in a professional, participatory, and adaptive manner. The practices observed not only align with the Merdeka Curriculum's emphasis on multi-stakeholder collaboration but also reflect local wisdom in the form of gotong royong (mutual cooperation) as a core value of educational governance. As Pope & Miles (2022) emphasize, effective educational partnerships contribute to the development of inclusive, empowering, and socially cohesive learning environments. Drawing on recent literature, it is evident that the POAC-based management model implemented in this primary education setting embodies principles of modern, adaptive, and community-driven educational leadership.

CONCLUSION

School-community relations management at SD Negeri Jetiskarangpung 1 has been running effectively by applying the POAC principles (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, and Controlling). Planning involves the community in a participatory manner, organizing is done through collaborative structures such as associations and committees, implementing activities involves the community directly in educational programs, and controlling is carried out transparently with the support of communication technology.

Schools are advised to maintain and improve the patterns of communication and collaboration that have been built, while still opening up space for broad community participation to support the progress of inclusive and sustainable education. The findings will be used as a reference in developing a more strategic school partnership program and will be disseminated through academic forums and teacher training so that it can be applied in other schools.

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