

DIGITAL-BASED ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNANCE MENTORING FOR ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, KINDERGARTEN AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNITS

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Received: 14/04/2026

Revised: 12/06/2026

Accepted: 16/06/2026

Abstract. Orderly administrative governance is a foundation for building effective schools, yet it remains a challenge for many educational units in rural areas. This community service program aimed to strengthen human resource capacity and organize administration at Early Childhood Education Muslimat NU, Kindergarten Wijaya Kusuma, and SDN Sumengko in Sumengko Village, Kedungpring District, Lamongan Regency, which still faced manual administration, lack of standardization, and minimal digitalization. The program was conducted from February to May 2026 through six stages: preparation, training (40 hours), technology adoption, offline and online mentoring, monitoring, and evaluation. The instruments used included knowledge tests (pre-test and post-test), administrative completeness supervision sheets, questionnaires, and focus group discussions. Data were analyzed using descriptive percentages and N-gain. The results showed that the average participant understanding increased from 45.5 to 83.4 (N-gain = 0.70; high category). Administrative completeness increased from 48% to 87%, while administrative digitalization evolved from a manual system to a structured digital system through the implementation of a spreadsheet-based Effective-School Administrative Governance System comprising 15 modules. The program also produced standardized administrative documents, supervision instruments, a KPI dashboard, and Quality Improvement Teams in each educational unit. It was concluded that digital-based administrative governance mentoring effectively improved human resource competence and administrative completeness while supporting the realization of more effective schools. Program sustainability is directed through periodic mentoring, training of trainers, the development of administrative standard operating procedures (SOPs), and the expansion of the model to other educational units in the surrounding area.

Keywords: basic education; digital governance; effective school; quality assurance; school administration

Abstrak. Tata kelola administrasi yang tertib merupakan dasar dalam membangun sekolah yang efektif, namun masih menjadi tantangan bagi banyak satuan pendidikan di daerah pedesaan. Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan memperkuat kapasitas sumber daya manusia dan menata administrasi pada EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION Muslimat NU, TK Wijaya Kusuma, dan SDN Sumengko di Desa Sumengko, Kecamatan Kedungpring, Kabupaten Lamongan yang masih menghadapi administrasi manual, belum terstandar, dan minimnya digitalisasi. Kegiatan dilaksanakan pada Februari–Mei 2026 melalui enam tahap, yaitu persiapan, pelatihan (40 jam), adopsi teknologi, pendampingan luring dan daring, monitoring, serta evaluasi. Instrumen yang digunakan meliputi tes pengetahuan (pre-test dan post-test), lembar supervisi kelengkapan administrasi, kuesioner, dan diskusi kelompok terarah. Data dianalisis menggunakan persentase deskriptif dan N-gain. Hasil menunjukkan rata-rata pemahaman peserta meningkat dari 45,5 menjadi 83,4 (N-gain 0,70; kategori tinggi). Kelengkapan administrasi meningkat dari 48% menjadi 87%, sedangkan digitalisasi administrasi berkembang dari sistem manual menjadi sistem digital terstruktur melalui penerapan Effective-School Administrative Governance System berbasis spreadsheet dengan 15 modul. Program ini juga menghasilkan dokumen administrasi terstandar, instrumen supervisi, dashboard KPI, dan Tim Peningkatan Mutu pada setiap satuan pendidikan. Disimpulkan bahwa pendampingan tata kelola administrasi berbasis digital efektif meningkatkan kompetensi sumber daya manusia dan kelengkapan administrasi serta mendukung terwujudnya sekolah yang lebih efektif. Keberlanjutan program diarahkan melalui pendampingan berkala, training of trainers, penyusunan SOP administrasi, dan perluasan model ke satuan pendidikan lain di wilayah sekitar.

Keywords: administrasi sekolah; pendidikan dasar; penjaminan mutu; sekolah efektif; tata kelola digital

How to Cite: Haq, A. M., Nikmah, D. N., Pradhana, S. K. A., Al Isyari, Z. A., Laila, N. A. & Farisah, N. (2026). DIGITAL-BASED ADMINISTRATIVE GOVERNANCE MENTORING FOR ACHIEVING EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, KINDERGARTEN, AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNITS. *Mitra Mahajana: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 7(2), 276–285. <https://doi.org/10.37478/mahajana.v7i2.7863>



INTRODUCTION

Improving educational quality is a crucial challenge for educational units in Indonesia, particularly those in rural areas. A high-quality school is ideally one that maximizes the achievement of all students by optimizing its available resources through strong leadership, quality instruction, and a collaborative culture regardless of students' socioeconomic backgrounds (Edmonds, 1979). Achieving this ideal demands orderly governance and administration, as sound administration serves as a systemic prerequisite for implementing the eight national education standards and for data-based decision-making (Purwanto, 2009; Scheerens, 2016). Accordingly, the ideal condition for an educational unit is the availability of planning, student affairs, personnel, financial, and infrastructure documents that are complete, standardized, up-to-date, and readily accessible as the basis for ongoing evaluation and improvement.

In practice, a substantial gap exists between this ideal and the administrative realities of many educational units, particularly in rural settings. Several studies affirm that the quality of education in Indonesia continues to be hampered by weak governance, limited managerial competence, resource inequalities, and inadequate technological infrastructure (Hidayat et al., 2024; Nugraha & Hambali, 2023; Widiastuti, 2025). Administrative and management problems in basic education have even been identified as a source of inefficiency that directly affects service delivery performance (Jannah et al., 2025; Suri, 2024). This situation is compounded by socioeconomic factors: low economic backgrounds correlate with limited access to quality educational services (Nuraeni et al., 2024; Putri & Sabic-El-Rayess, 2024).

The partner institutions in this program are three educational units within a single village ecosystem in Sumengko Village, Kedungpring District, Lamongan Regency: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION Muslimat NU, TK Wijaya Kusuma, and SDN Sumengko. Sumengko Village is home to approximately 1,678 residents, the majority of whom are farmers (70%), most of whom have completed no more than senior high school education, and 60% of families belong to low-income households. The three institutions are closely interconnected in providing continuous educational services from the early childhood education level through to basic education. Collaborative integration models among rural educational institutions have been demonstrated to effectively enhance efficiency and service quality through shared resources and knowledge (Turwelis et al., 2022); however, this potential cannot be optimized when the administrative foundation is weak.

Preliminary observations, interviews, and discussions with the village head and the principals and education staff of all three partner institutions identified three fundamental problems. First, the administrative management system remained manual and non-standardized; curriculum, student affairs, personnel, and financial documents were stored separately without a consistent system, making evaluation and data-based decision-making difficult. Second, the partners' human resources had limited understanding of effective school concepts, the eight national education standards, and the use of Rapor Pendidikan (Indonesia's school report card platform) data as a planning basis; as a result, Rapor Pendidikan tended to be treated merely as an administrative report rather than a self-evaluation instrument (Kemendiknas, 2022). Third, no periodic monitoring and evaluation mechanism was in place, making it difficult to measure program effectiveness. Left unaddressed, these gaps risk reducing accountability, undermining accreditation readiness, and widening quality disparities across regions (Daga et al., 2023; Ghufroon et al., 2024).

Various prior studies underscore the urgency of addressing these issues. School-based management and data-based decision-making contribute positively to improved learning outcomes (Chen, 2011; Schildkamp et al., 2013), while the quality of schools in remote areas is largely determined by leadership and managerial capacity (Juharyanto et al., 2023). Sound administrative management and a quality culture have also been shown to sustain service delivery in elementary schools (Marmuah et al., 2022). However, most of these studies take the form of macro-level research or policy analysis, whereas practical mentoring that integrates standardized administrative structuring, human resource capacity building, and simple

digitization across EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION-TK-SD levels within a single village ecosystem remains rarely documented. This gap constitutes the service-learning niche that this program seeks to address.

Based on the foregoing, this mentoring program is both relevant and urgently needed. Its objectives are: (1) to improve the understanding and competence of school principals, teachers, and education staff regarding effective school concepts and data-based administrative governance; (2) to organize and standardize the administrative documentation of all three partner institutions in accordance with applicable regulations; (3) to implement a simple, cost-effective, and sustainable digital administrative governance system; and (4) to establish a monitoring-evaluation mechanism and a sustainability structure so that improvements can be maintained independently. The novelty of this program lies in its cross-level approach within a single village ecosystem and in the development of the Effective-School Administrative Governance System, a spreadsheet-based platform adaptive to the partners' resource constraints.

METHOD

The community service activity was conducted at Sumengko Village Hall, Kedungpring District, Lamongan Regency, East Java approximately 53 km from Universitas Sunan Gresik from February to May 2026. The target partners were three educational units within a single village: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION Muslimat NU (22 students, 2 teachers), TK Wijaya Kusuma (47 students, 3 teachers), and SDN Sumengko (101 students, 11 teachers; NPSN 20506623, accredited A). The primary participants were the principals, teachers, and education staff of all three institutions, with a total of 16 core participants who completed both the pre-test and post-test in full. The program employed andragogical (adult learning) and asset-based participatory approaches, emphasizing experiential learning, active engagement, and direct application in the workplace. The implementation team comprised three lecturers from the Educational Management Study Program and three student assistants (one per educational unit) serving as technology facilitators and documentarians. The program was designed to be systematic and replicable through six sequential and interrelated stages, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Implementation stages of the mentoring program*

Stage	Key Activities	Techniques & Instruments
Preparation	Internal team coordination; coordination with the village head and partner institutions; needs assessment and baseline condition mapping	Observation, interviews, document review, questionnaires, Rapor Pendidikan review
Training	Intensive workshop (40 contact hours, 9 sessions) covering effective schools, Rapor Pendidikan, RKT/RKAS, and digital administration	Interactive lectures, case studies, simulations, hands-on practice, group presentations
Technology Adoption	Implementation of the spreadsheet-based Effective-School Administrative Governance System (15 modules) and standardized templates	Hands-on training, account creation, data entry, conversion of manual documents to digital format
Mentoring	On-site mentoring (minimum twice monthly) and online mentoring; cross-institution peer mentoring based on specific needs	Technical assistance, WhatsApp/online consultation, digital template repository
Monitoring	Periodic monitoring of document implementation and administrative practices	28-item administrative supervision sheet (7 dimensions), KPI dashboard
Evaluation	Measurement of process, output, and impact; preparation of follow-up recommendations	Pre-test/post-test, document rubric, satisfaction questionnaire, focus group discussion (FGD)

The data collection instruments consisted of: (1) a comprehension test in multiple-choice and open-ended formats (converted to a 0–100 scale) administered before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the training; (2) a 28-item administrative completeness supervision sheet covering

seven dimensions legality and institutional standing, curriculum, student affairs, teacher and education staff, finance, infrastructure, and general administration/records management rated on a 1–4 scale; (3) a participant satisfaction questionnaire; and (4) a focus group discussion guide. Data were analyzed using descriptive percentages for administrative completeness and digitization level, and normalized N-gain scores to measure the effectiveness of comprehension improvement, categorized as low ($g < 0.30$), moderate ($0.30 \leq g \leq 0.70$), and high ($g > 0.70$). Success criteria were established as an N-gain improvement of at least the moderate category and administrative completeness reaching a minimum of 80%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Baseline Administrative Governance Conditions of Partner Institutions

Diagnostic assessment during the preparation phase confirmed that the administrative governance of all three partner institutions was in an inadequate state. Results from the 28-item supervision sheet revealed an average administrative completeness of only 48%, with the lowest scores in the general administration/records management and teacher-education staff dimensions. Strategic planning documents such as the Annual Work Plan and School Budget Plan had not yet been prepared by the early childhood education and kindergarten units, while archiving was performed manually and without a systematic approach. Detailed baseline conditions by dimension are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. *Baseline administrative completeness of partner institutions by dimension (% attainment)*

Administrative Dimension	Early Childhood Education	Kindergarten	Elementary School	Average
Legality & Institutional Standing	55	60	68	61
Curriculum Administration	40	45	55	47
Student Affairs Administration	45	52	60	52
Teacher & Education Staff Administration	35	42	52	43
Financial Administration	38	45	58	47
Infrastructure Administration	40	45	52	46
General Administration & Records Management	30	38	50	39
Overall Average	40	47	56	48

These findings are consistent with studies asserting that weak administration and management constitute a latent problem in basic educational units in Indonesia (Jannah et al., 2025; Suri, 2024). This condition served as the starting point for intervention, as disorganized administration impedes the self-evaluation and data-based planning functions that are central to effective schools (Schildkamp et al., 2013).

Strengthening Partnership Commitment and Program Implementation

The program began with coordination meetings aimed at aligning perspectives, identifying partner needs, and strengthening commitment among stakeholders. These activities involved the village government, school leaders, teachers, and administrative staff to ensure a shared understanding of the program objectives, implementation process, and expected outcomes. As a form of formal commitment, a cooperation agreement was signed between the Universitas Sunan Gresik community service team and the partner educational institutions (Figure 1). The agreement established a collaborative framework and clarified the roles and responsibilities of each party throughout the implementation of the program. This step also reflected the readiness of the partner institutions to actively participate in training, mentoring, monitoring, and evaluation activities (Kasanah et al., 2025).

The involvement of the village government and school leadership provided important institutional support for the program. Such formal commitment is essential for ensuring sustainability, as leadership support and local governance buy-in are key prerequisites for successful school quality improvement efforts (Juharyanto et al., 2023). Through this partnership,

a strong foundation was established for the implementation of activities and the achievement of the program's objectives.



Figure 1. *Signing of the cooperation agreement between the service team and partner schools*

The training phase was delivered in the format of an intensive 40-contact-hour workshop divided into nine thematic sessions, covering topics from quality assurance paradigms and effective school concepts, introduction and exploration of Rapor Pendidikan, analysis of institutional profiles based on the eight national education standards, self-reflection for identifying root causes, preparation of RKT/RKAS, through to digital administration management. Content was delivered using a systematic subject-matter map (Figure 2) with participatory methods, so that participants not only absorbed concepts but also applied them within the context of their own institutions.



Figure 2. *Delivery of effective school concepts and mentoring materials by the resource person*

Improvement in Human Resource Understanding and Competence

The effectiveness of the training was evaluated through pre-test and post-test assessments covering eight competency dimensions targeted by the program. To improve efficiency and ensure accurate data collection, the assessments were administered digitally using QR codes, allowing participants to complete the tests through their mobile devices and enabling automatic data recording (Figure 3). The results indicated substantial improvement across all competency dimensions following the training and mentoring activities. The average participant comprehension score increased from 45.5 in the pre-test to 83.4 in the post-test, resulting in an overall N-gain of 0.70, which falls within the high category. These findings suggest that the program was effective in enhancing participants' knowledge and understanding of school administrative governance. Among the assessed dimensions, digital administration management

showed the greatest improvement with an N-gain of 0.77. This result indicates that digital competencies were highly responsive to the intervention, particularly because digital administration had been one of the weakest areas prior to the program. Detailed results of the pre-test, post-test, and N-gain analysis are presented in Table 3.



Figure 3. Participants completing the digital comprehension assessment (pre-test/post-test) via QR code

Table 3. Improvement in participant understanding and competence (scale 0–100; $n = 16$)

Competency Dimension	Pre-test	Post-test	Gain	N-gain
Concept & Characteristics of Effective Schools	48	83	+35	0.67
Understanding of 8 NSE & Legal Basis	41	80	+39	0.66
Exploration & Analysis of Rapor Pendidikan	38	79	+41	0.66
Data-Based RKT/RKAS Preparation	45	85	+40	0.73
Self-Reflection & Root-Cause Analysis	50	84	+34	0.68
Standardized Administrative Document Management	55	88	+33	0.73
Digital Administration Management	40	86	+46	0.77
Monitoring, Evaluation & Supervision	47	82	+35	0.66
Mean	45.5	83.4	+37.9	0.70

The high N-gain category of comprehension improvement indicates that the andragogical approach, combined with hands-on practice, is effective for adult participants in a workplace setting. These findings are consistent with evidence that strengthening teachers' personal and professional resources has a tangible impact on school management quality (Ghufron et al., 2024). Building the capacity to interpret and act upon Rapor Pendidikan data is also a strategic step, given that data utilization is foundational to quality-improvement decision-making (Kemendiknas childhood education nudristek, 2022; Schildkamp et al., 2013).

Changes in Administrative Completeness and Digitization

During the technology adoption and mentoring phases, the team guided the partner institutions in organizing their administrative documents using standardized templates and implementing the Effective-School Administrative Governance System a spreadsheet-based platform comprising 15 modules: visitor book and correspondence register, inventory, class schedule, school calendar, instructional supervision, student data, attendance, student transfer records, teacher attendance, teacher performance appraisal, BOS cash book and accountability reports, RKAS, effective-school KPI dashboard, and principal supervision instrument. Post-program supervision results showed that administrative completeness rose from an average of 48% to 87%, with all partner institutions surpassing the 80% success threshold. Attainment per educational unit is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Changes in administrative completeness of partner institutions before and after the program (%)*

Educational Unit	Before (%)	After (%)	Increase (%)	Final Category
Early Childhood Education Muslimat NU Sumengko	40	83	+43	Good
Kindergarten Wijaya Kusuma Sumengko	47	87	+40	Very Good
SDN Sumengko	56	91	+35	Very Good
Mean	48	87	+39	Very Good

Beyond document completeness, a transformation in digitization level and governance readiness also occurred. The administrative digitization level rose from manual to a structured digital system; the RKAS, which had not yet been prepared by early childhood education and kindergarten, was compiled and endorsed; and a Quality Improvement Team was established in each unit as a guardian of sustainability. A summary of governance and digitization indicator attainments is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Attainment of administrative governance and digitization indicators*

Indicator	Before Program	After Program
Completeness of mandatory documents	48% (partial)	87% (nearly complete)
Archiving orderliness	Poor; manual, fragmented storage	Good; organized, digital system
Availability & realization of RKAS	Not yet prepared (early childhood education & kindergarten)	Prepared & endorsed
Digitization level (scale 1–4)	1 (manual)	3 (structured digital)
Readiness for supervision/accreditation	Not ready	Ready (Good category)
Quality Improvement Team	None established	Established in all 3 units

These changes depict a shift from reactive and operational administration toward planned, documented, and data-based governance. The spreadsheet-based system implementation represents a contextually appropriate solution, low-cost, lightweight, and operable within the partners' infrastructure constraints while remaining consistent with recommendations for technology utilization grounded in users' actual needs (Azoulay & Antoninis, 2023). The cross-level restructuring of early childhood education–kindergarten–elementary within a single village also creates continuity of data and good practices across institutions, reflecting the advantages of rural school integration models (Turwelis et al., 2022).

Success Indicators and Program Sustainability

Based on the established indicators, the program can be considered successful. Participants' comprehension improved significantly, achieving an N-gain score of 0.70, which exceeds the threshold for the moderate category and falls within the high category. In addition, administrative completeness in all partner institutions surpassed 80%, indicating substantial progress in the organization and management of school administration. The success of the program was not limited to the production of administrative documents and digital tools. More importantly, it contributed to improvements in participants' competencies, awareness, and work culture related to administrative governance. School personnel demonstrated greater confidence in managing administrative tasks, applying standardized procedures, and utilizing digital systems to support daily operations (Weng & Tang, 2014; Aprilia et al., 2024). These changes indicate a positive shift toward more systematic and accountable administrative practices.

From the perspective of the effective school's framework, the intervention strengthened two important correlates, namely documented instructional leadership and regular progress monitoring (Edmonds, 1979; Scheerens, 2016). The availability of structured administrative documents, supervision instruments, and monitoring mechanisms provides stronger support for school management and continuous quality improvement efforts (Ashagre & Furi, 2024). To promote sustainability beyond the program period, a quality improvement team was established

in each partner institution, administrative standard operating procedures were drafted, and agreements were made to continue periodic mentoring and monitoring activities. The collective commitment of the partner institutions to sustain and further develop the program outcomes was formally expressed during the closing session of the program (Figure 4).



Figure 4. *Closing session reflecting commitment to sustainable administrative improvement.*

Overall, the program's results address the objectives set out in the introduction: improved human resource competence, standardized administrative documentation, implementation of simple digitization, and the establishment of a monitoring-evaluation mechanism (Dinata et al., 2025). The program's concrete contribution is the availability of an administrative governance system that can be replicated by other educational units with similar characteristics, while simultaneously serving as a cross-level, village-ecosystem-based community service model.

CONCLUSION

The digital-based administrative governance mentoring program has proven effective in improving educational service quality at three partner institutions in Sumengko Village, Lamongan. Key outcomes include: an increase in the mean participant comprehension score from 45.5 to 83.4 with an N-gain of 0.70 (high category); an improvement in administrative completeness from an average of 48% to 87%; and an advancement in digitization level from manual to a structured digital system. Tangible benefits for the partner institutions include the availability of standardized planning documents, a ready-to-use 15-module administrative governance system, KPI-based monitoring instruments, and the establishment of a Quality Improvement Team in each unit. Accordingly, all three partner institutions have moved appreciably closer to the characteristics of effective schools orderly, accountable, and data-driven.

Follow-up activities are directed toward phased sustainability reinforcement. In the short term, periodic mentoring will be conducted every three months, and a training-of-trainers program will be offered to senior teachers to enable independent skill transfer. In the medium term, revisions to the administrative standard operating procedures and semester-based internal audits using the KPI dashboard will be undertaken. In the long term, the mentoring model will be scaled to other educational units in Kedungpring District through Teacher Working Group (KKG/MGMP) forums, and the partnership with Universitas Sunan Gresik will be strengthened, including exploring opportunities for the partner schools to join the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka program. This phased roadmap is expected to sustain program impact while extending its benefits toward more equitable educational quality in rural areas.

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