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# Exploring Primary School Management Practices Focused on Students' All-Round Development

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**Abstract:** Primary school is a critical stage in which children's cognitive abilities, moral character, physical health, aesthetic taste, and working habits take shape, and the quality of school management at this stage largely determines whether students can develop in an all-round manner. Against the backdrop of deepening educational reform, primary schools in many regions have moved beyond the narrow pursuit of examination results and begun to build management systems that integrate moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education. This paper first reviews the current situation of primary school management, including both the policy-driven progress achieved in recent years and the persistent imbalances between academic pressure and holistic growth. It then analyzes the value of student-centered management, discussing its significance for lifelong development, educational equity, and the harmony between school and family. Based on this analysis, the paper identifies several guiding principles, namely student-centeredness, balanced integration of the five domains of education, and collaborative governance among the school, family, and community. Finally, it proposes concrete management strategies covering curriculum and teaching management, teacher professional development, evaluation reform, and campus culture construction, with the aim of offering a practical reference for school leaders seeking to place students' all-round development at the center of daily management.

**Keywords:** Primary school management; All-round development; Student-centered management; Five domains of education; Educational evaluation; School governance

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## 1. Introduction

For a long time, primary school management in many contexts was dominated by examination performance and discipline maintenance, with the result that students' emotional well-being, physical fitness, artistic sensitivity, and practical abilities were relatively neglected [1]. As education reforms emphasize quality-oriented development, policy makers and practitioners alike have come to recognize that the ultimate purpose of school management is not to produce compliant performers in standardized tests but to cultivate complete persons who are intellectually curious, morally responsible, physically healthy, and capable of creative and

cooperative work. This shift has placed new demands on the professional competence of school principals and administrators, who must redesign routines, allocate resources, and coordinate multiple stakeholders around a common vision of holistic child development.

The concept of all-round development, understood as the coordinated growth of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor capacities, provides both the value orientation and the operational framework for this transformation [2]. The present paper explores how primary school management practices can be organized around this concept. It begins by outlining the current state of primary school management, proceeds to justify the value of a developmental orientation, discusses the principles that should guide management decisions, and concludes with practical strategies that schools can adopt. The discussion is intended to help school administrators reflect on their existing practices and identify feasible pathways for continuous improvement.

## 2. Current situation of primary school management

### 2.1. Policy-driven progress and institutional innovation

In recent years, educational authorities have issued a series of policies that encourage primary schools to reduce excessive academic burden, enrich after-school services, and strengthen instruction in moral, physical, aesthetic, and labor education. As a result, many schools have established curriculum committees, introduced diversified elective courses, and expanded extracurricular activities in sports, arts, science, and community service [3]. School-based management has become more flexible, with greater autonomy granted to principals in arranging timetables, designing school-based curricula, and allocating teaching resources. Meanwhile, the construction of digital platforms for teaching management, student growth records, and home-school communication has improved the efficiency and transparency of daily operations, enabling teachers to track each child's development more systematically [4]. These institutional innovations show that the direction of management reform has been widely accepted, and a growing number of schools are experimenting with organizational structures that serve holistic growth rather than merely test preparation [5].

### 2.2. Persistent imbalances and practical dilemmas

Despite this progress, significant imbalances remain between the stated ideal of all-round development and the reality of daily management [6]. In many schools, academic subjects still occupy a dominant position in timetables and resource allocation, while moral education, physical exercise, art appreciation, and labor practice are often squeezed into marginal time slots or treated as optional extras. Performance evaluation of teachers and schools continues to rely heavily on examination results, which creates strong incentives for administrators to prioritize measurable academic output [7]. Furthermore, the pressure from parents who equate school quality with high scores frequently undermines the school's efforts to promote balanced growth, and teachers report that time devoted to comprehensive development activities is difficult to protect. The contradiction between long-term developmental goals and short-term accountability demands constitutes the central dilemma of contemporary primary school management, and it explains why the concept of all-round development is often acknowledged in principle but incompletely implemented in practice [8].

## 2. The value of primary school management focused on students' all-round development

### 2.1. Laying the foundation for lifelong development

Childhood is the period in which learning habits, value systems, physical foundations, and social-emotional competencies are established, and the experiences children have in primary school exert a lasting influence on their later academic careers and adult lives [9]. Management that focuses on all-round development ensures that children are not reduced to test scores but are supported in exploring their interests, building confidence, developing resilience, and learning to cooperate with others [10]. When schools deliberately balance intellectual training with moral guidance, physical activity, aesthetic appreciation, and manual work, they help students acquire a broad set of capacities that standardized examinations cannot measure, but that are essential for adaptability, creativity, and well-being in the long run [11]. From this perspective, student-centered management is not a departure from academic quality but rather the most reliable route to sustainable academic achievement, because children who are healthy, motivated, and emotionally secure learn more effectively than those who are anxious and exhausted [12].

### 2.2. Promoting educational equity and school quality

An all-round development orientation also contributes to educational equity, because it broadens the criteria by which student success is defined and enables children with different talents to find recognition [13]. In an examination-dominated system, students who excel in sports, arts, or practical skills are often marginalized, and the school's management culture implicitly privileges a narrow segment of learners. By contrast, a management system that values all domains of development creates multiple pathways for achievement, giving every child an opportunity to shine and reducing the sense of failure that harms vulnerable students. At the same time, such a system tends to improve overall school quality: schools that invest in teacher development, curriculum enrichment, and positive campus climates usually see higher levels of student engagement, lower dropout and discipline problems, and stronger trust from families. Consequently, the pursuit of holistic development and the pursuit of school excellence are mutually reinforcing rather than competing objectives [14].

### 2.3. Responding to the needs of families and society

Modern families increasingly expect schools to cultivate well-rounded children who are healthy, kind, confident, and capable of independent thinking, and the wider society demands citizens who can adapt to rapid technological and economic change. Management practices that ignore these expectations risk losing the confidence of parents and alienating the community that the school serves. By placing all-round development at the center of management, schools send a clear message that they care about the whole child, which strengthens home-school cooperation and builds a supportive environment for educational reform [15]. Moreover, in an era when information technology is transforming the nature of work and knowledge, the capacity for lifelong learning, teamwork, and responsible citizenship has become more valuable than the memorization of facts [16]. A management system oriented toward holistic growth therefore prepares students not only for the next level of schooling but also for the demands of a rapidly evolving society.

## 3. Principles of primary school management focused on students' all-round development

### 3.1. Student-centeredness as the core value

The first principle is that all management decisions should be made with students' developmental needs as the starting point and ultimate criterion. This means that administrative arrangements, from timetable design and class grouping to discipline rules and reward systems, should be examined in terms of how they affect children's physical health, psychological safety, motivation, and sense of belonging. A student-centered school respects individual differences, offers choices that match children's interests and abilities, and protects the time and space students need for play, rest, and self-directed learning [17]. Practically, this principle requires administrators to listen to the voices of students and teachers, to collect feedback regularly, and to be willing to adjust school routines when evidence shows that existing arrangements are harming rather than helping children. Student-centeredness should not be confused with permissiveness; rather, it is a demanding standard that expects adults to take responsibility for creating conditions in which every child can thrive.

### 3.2. Balanced integration of the five domains of education

The second principle concerns the balanced integration of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education, which are often referred to collectively as the five domains. These domains should not be treated as separate subjects competing for time, but as interconnected dimensions that reinforce one another within a unified curriculum and school life. For example, moral values can be cultivated through sportsmanship in physical education, through the discipline of artistic practice, and through the sense of responsibility developed in labor activities, while intellectual learning benefits from the curiosity and persistence that aesthetic and practical experiences nurture. Management must therefore ensure that the timetable, the arrangement of teachers, the design of facilities, and the allocation of funds all support this integration, so that no single domain is sacrificed for the sake of another[18]. A useful managerial approach is to plan educational activities at the school level around integrated themes and projects, in which students apply knowledge from several domains to authentic tasks.

### 3.3. Collaborative governance among school, family, and community

The third principle is that all-round development cannot be achieved by the school alone, because children's growth is shaped jointly by the family, the school, and the community [19]. Management should therefore be conceived as collaborative governance, in which parents are treated as partners rather than clients, and community resources are mobilized to enrich students' learning experiences. Concretely, this involves establishing parent committees, organizing open school days, communicating learning objectives and progress transparently, and providing guidance to families on how to support children's balanced development at home [20]. It also means building partnerships with cultural institutions, sports organizations, enterprises, and volunteer groups so that students can learn through real-world experiences outside the classroom. Collaborative governance requires the school leader to act as a coordinator who aligns the expectations of different stakeholders, resolves conflicts between academic pressure and developmental goals, and maintains a consistent educational philosophy across all settings in which children grow.

## 4. Management strategies of primary school focused on students' all-round development

### 4.1. Reconstructing curriculum and teaching management

The first strategy is to reconstruct the curriculum and teaching management system so that all-round development is embedded in the daily routine rather than added as an extra. Schools should review their timetables to guarantee adequate time for physical education, arts, moral education, and labor practice, and should protect these periods from being occupied by academic subjects. School-based curricula should be designed to connect textbook knowledge with real life, offering elective courses and project-based learning that allow students to pursue their interests and apply what they have learned. In teaching management, lesson preparation, classroom observation, and teaching research should shift their focus from the delivery of content to the cultivation of competencies such as critical thinking, communication, and cooperation. Administrators should also establish flexible arrangements for individual needs, including remedial support for struggling students and enrichment opportunities for gifted ones, so that the principle of student-centeredness is realized in the most concrete dimension of school operation.

### 4.2. Strengthening teacher professional development

Because teachers are the direct implementers of any management policy, the second strategy is to strengthen teacher professional development in ways that support holistic education. Schools should organize systematic training that helps teachers understand child development, design integrated curricula, apply diversified instructional methods, and conduct development-oriented assessment. Beyond subject expertise, teachers need competence in classroom management that is positive and inclusive, in identifying and supporting students' emotional needs, and in communicating constructively with parents. Management should provide time and resources for collaborative teaching research, peer observation, and cross-disciplinary teamwork, and should encourage teachers to design joint activities across the five domains. Equally important, the performance appraisal of teachers must be reformed so that it recognizes contributions to students' overall growth, such as the quality of teacher-student relationships, the organization of extracurricular activities, and the support provided to individual children, rather than relying solely on students' test scores.

### 4.3. Reforming evaluation and quality monitoring

The third strategy is to reform the evaluation system so that management practices are guided by accurate and comprehensive information about student development. In addition to academic examinations, schools should establish growth portfolios that record students' progress in moral conduct, physical fitness, artistic expression, labor participation, and social-emotional skills, and these records should be used for formative feedback rather than for ranking children. School-level quality monitoring should regularly survey students' happiness, health, engagement, and sense of safety, as well as the balance of the curriculum and the burden of homework, so that problems can be identified and corrected at an early stage. Evaluation results should be communicated to teachers and parents in a constructive manner, emphasizing the identification of strengths and areas for improvement rather than the labeling of failure. When the school's internal evaluation consistently reflects the value of all-round development, teachers and parents will gradually align their behavior with this value, and the gap between policy rhetoric and daily practice can be narrowed.

### 4.4. Creating a supportive campus culture and environment

The fourth strategy is to build a campus culture and physical environment that embody the school's commitment to holistic development. The atmosphere of the school, reflected in its rituals, slogans, rules, and daily interactions, should celebrate effort, kindness, creativity, and cooperation as much as academic achievement, and should make every student feel valued and safe. School leaders should model the values they expect others to follow, treating teachers with respect and fairness so that teachers in turn treat students with warmth and encouragement. The physical environment, including playgrounds, art studios, reading corners, and gardening or workshop spaces, should be designed and maintained to support diverse activities, and students should be involved in beautifying and caring for their surroundings, which is itself a form of labor and moral education. Finally, the school should organize regular events such as sports meets, art festivals, science fairs, and community service days that bring the whole school together and demonstrate, in visible ways, that every domain of development matters.

## 5. Conclusion

Primary school management focused on students' all-round development represents both a response to contemporary educational reform and a return to the fundamental purpose of schooling, which is to cultivate complete human beings rather than narrow examination performers. The current situation shows that although policy support and institutional innovation have advanced considerably, the imbalance between academic pressure and holistic growth remains a serious practical challenge. The value of a developmental orientation lies in its contribution to lifelong development, educational equity, and the satisfaction of family and societal needs, while its successful implementation depends on the principles of student-centeredness, balanced integration of the five domains, and collaborative governance among the school, family, and community. On the basis of these principles, the paper has proposed strategies in curriculum and teaching management, teacher professional development, evaluation reform, and campus culture construction. It should be acknowledged that the transformation of school management is a gradual process that requires the sustained effort of administrators, teachers, parents, and society, and future research could examine the actual effects of specific management interventions through empirical investigation in different school contexts.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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