

IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN IMPROVING COMPETITIVENESS AT PUBLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Abstract

Quality assurance in junior high schools (SMP) as one of the formal educational institutions is very urgent and necessary in order to increase competitiveness. This study aims to examine the increase in competitiveness caused by the implementation of internal quality assurance. This study uses a qualitative approach with a multi-case type. Data analysis in this study with interactive data analysis and data collection methods with interviews, documentation and direct observation in the field or two schools, namely SMPN 1 Kauman and SMPN 1 Sumbergempol. The results of this study indicate that quality assurance planning involves all elements in education, namely the principal, teachers and employees, guardians, community leaders and all students. Meanwhile, the implementation of quality assurance can have an impact on increasing output both in terms of academic achievement, in the form of increased achievement, students participating in district competitions, and non-academic achievements or student character in the form of characters that have been recorded in the quality indicators are internalized in students.

Keywords: Competitiveness; Implementation; Junior High Schools; Quality Assurance.

Abstrak

Penjaminan mutu di sekolah menengah pertama (SMP) sebagai salah satu lembaga pendidikan formal sangat urgen dan diperlukan dalam rangka meningkatkan daya saing. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti mengenai peningkatan daya saing yang disebabkan oleh implementasi penjaminan mutu internal. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis multikasus. Analisis data dalam penelitian ini dengan analisis data interaktif dan

metode pengumpulan datanya dengan wawancara, dokumentasi dan observasi langsung ke lapangan atau dua sekolah yakni SMPN 1 Kauman dan SMPN 1 Sumbergempol. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa perencanaan penjaminan mutu melibatkan semua unsur dalam pendidikan yakni Kepala sekolah, guru dan karyawan, wali murid, tokoh masyarakat dan seluruh peserta didik. Sedangkan Implementasi penjaminan mutu mampu berdampak pada peningkatan output baik dari segi prestasi akademik, yang berupa prestasinya meningkat, anak didik mengikuti lomba kabupaten, maupun prestasi non akademik atau karakter peserta didik yang berupa karakter yang telah tercatat dalam indikator mutu tersebut terinternalisasi dalam diri anak didik.

Kata Kunci: Daya Saing; Implementasi; Penjaminan Mutu; Sekolah Menengah Pertama.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education also plays an important role in the development of human civilization; therefore, education is an important sector in national development. To support the achievement of development goals optimally, it is necessary to realize a quality education system. (Liepiņa et al., 2014) In the world of education, to produce good output, it is necessary to have good quality management, which can produce output that is in accordance with the wishes of the community. Thus, quality is considered as customer satisfaction.

Improving the quality of education is not only in one aspect, but also includes all aspects related to the education process starting from input, process and output. One of the benchmarks for this improvement is in improving the aspect of good management. (Farooq et al., 2007) If management has been implemented properly, any institution including educational institutions will be able to produce quality performance and work results.

Junior high schools are the second level of formal education institutions after elementary schools, although they are still in the basic education stage. In its development, junior high schools always face challenges from outside the school or in other words are stated as competitors. Therefore, junior high schools must be competitive in order to be able to maintain their existence in the midst of globalization.

The increasingly tight competition demands that junior high schools must make changes. This change is none other than a continuous improvement in quality. (Efendi, 2022) A continuous improvement in quality cannot be achieved if there is no quality assurance in it. Therefore, as a school or formal educational institution, junior high schools must have a quality assurance system. Where this system will improve and oversee the education process so that it reaches the expected goals.

The education process in a junior high school must be in accordance with customer demand. The customers in question are guardians or parents of students who entrust their children to be educated at the junior high school. Therefore, the

educational goals at the junior high school must be in accordance with those requested by the parents of the students or in other words there is a backlash between the parents and the junior high school.

These qualities are related to the managerial quality of educational leaders, limited funds, facilities and infrastructure, educational facilities, media, learning resources, training tools and materials, school climate, educational environment, weaknesses in the quality of these components lead to low quality graduates.

Reality shows that quality educational institutions are increasingly in demand by the community, even though to be able to access them the community must spend more money. Currently, many institutions ranging from private to state institutions prioritize quality with various names and programs offered. Actually, all of this shows that the quality of education in Indonesia is currently better, so that it will affect customer satisfaction.(Pusvitasari, 2021) While customer satisfaction is a standard indicator of the quality standards that have been set, with an indicator of no complaints from customers which is often known as Zero Defect.

Quality is a structured process to improve the output produced. The quality of education referred to here is the ability of educational institutions to utilize educational resources to improve learning abilities as optimally as possible.(Rokke & Prakash Yadav, 2012) Quality in the context of education is related to efforts to provide complete and satisfying services for users of educational services. In the education system, the quality aspect will also always be related to how the input of students(Marzuki & Maulana, 2022), the process of organizing education with a focus on student services to how the output of graduates is produced.

The dynamics of integrated quality management in schools today which are run by competent people and collectively (teamwork) can attract influence to realize the management of Islamic-based educational institutions that achieve achievements. The ability to plan, organize, communicate, motivate, direct, and supervise and follow up on school activities is very necessary to improve school quality management.(Iskandar et al., 2022) Even focusing on customers and also the involvement of all school residents as a measure of the quality of education on an ongoing basis(Salabi, Muadin, & Prasetyo, 2023). Thus, the important things that will be studied in this dissertation are quality planning, quality implementation, and also quality evaluation in the internal customer and external customer sections.

Absolute quality measures are difficult to apply in the world of education with assessments from various parties and heterogeneous service management. People will look at it from various directions and all directions or aspects have certain quality measures(Lovegreen, 2020). Therefore, quality measures must be applied relatively, namely determined based on customers. In this case, it means not only producers, but customers also determine the quality.(Wajdi et al., 2023)

Thus, a good quality benchmark is not an absolute benchmark, but a relative benchmark, namely one that is in accordance with customer needs.

The implementation of education today does not run as smoothly as an asphalt road. There must be obstacles or barriers, both internal and external. The obstacle that is currently felt in these schools is the existence of quite tight competition from other schools (Velkoska, 2022). There was even a case in one of the junior high schools in Tulungagung Regency where the students only got 20 children because they lost out to other junior high schools or formal educational institutions.

SMPN 1 Kauman and SMPN 1 Sumbergempol are two junior high educational institutions that are quite popular among the community because they implement continuous quality assurance. The two junior high schools are in great demand by the community because their graduates are quite good and the image of the two institutions is very good in the eyes of the community. Many people compete to send their children to these two junior high schools.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a post-positivistic or naturalistic paradigm that is natural and aims to understand a case. This type of research is qualitative and field study because it aims to understand what is implied behind what is written. (Daymon & Holloway, 2005) The design of this research is a case study, because it understands a particular case in depth and the type of research is a multi-site study because the type of location characteristics are the same, so the cases studied are automatically the same. Research on the implementation of a quality assurance system in increasing competitiveness uses a naturalistic qualitative approach with a multi-site study design (Sherman & Webb, 2005).

The researcher uses a naturalistic qualitative approach, because the object being studied takes place in a natural setting and aims to know, understand, and appreciate carefully, about how the implementation of a quality assurance system in increasing competitiveness. This research was conducted at SMPN 1 Kauman and SMPN 1 Sumbergempol. Data collection techniques in this study were in-depth interviews, participant observation and documentation studies. (Patton, 2015) While data analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Milles Huberman and Saldana (2014), namely data condensation, data collection, data presentation and drawing conclusions. Data Validity includes extending observations, requiring research persistence, triangulation, discussion with colleagues (Yin, 2018).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Quality assurance planning at SMPN 1 Kauman involves all stakeholders, namely: the Principal, teachers and employees of SMPN 1 Kauman, guardians, community leaders and all students, all must change in viewing education, education is not only pursuing high academic results by ignoring the realm of

social, mental and spiritual development, where the highest responsibility for the character of these students is to Allah SWT and to the parents who have entrusted their children to us.

The quality assurance implemented is internal quality assurance in the form of SPMI and also external quality assurance, namely BAN S-M accreditation. To achieve quality standards, SMPN 1 Kauman has prepared strategic steps. These steps begin with the formation of an SKL implementation team. This team is tasked with assisting the principal in internal development, including overseeing the implementation of the quality assurance system. This team was formed because the tasks and problems are increasing and cannot be handled by the principal alone. After the Team is formed, the director's duties are focused on communication and external development of the institution. The implementation of quality assurance can have an impact on increasing output both in terms of academic achievement, in the form of increased achievement, students participating in olympiad competitions, and non-academic achievements or student character in the form of characters that have been recorded in the quality indicators are internalized in students.

For SMPN 1 Sumbergempol, quality assurance planning at SMPN 1 Sumbergempol involves all stakeholders, namely: the Principal, teachers and employees, school committees, community leaders. Planning is carried out through workshops at the beginning of the school year. SMPN 1 Sumbergempol usually holds workshops to plan what must be achieved along with strategies for achieving it and invites resource persons to formulate quality assurance indicators. However, the finalization is in the form of adding and deciding on Pancasila and national values to the values that must be instilled in students with adaptation by SMPN 1 Sumbergempol.

SMPN 1 Sumbergempol did not directly adopt the SKL that had been formulated by one of the Ministries, but instead held a workshop to plan and invite resource persons to help formulate quality assurance indicators

The initial step taken by the school to achieve quality standards was to conduct socialization to all parents. This socialization was carried out so that parents would know what quality standards were set by the school. When the twelve quality standards were socialized, parents felt that the standards were in accordance with expectations, and what received the most attention was morals. Based on this initial socialization, the school then tried to understand what kind of morals parents wanted and tried to formulate its program.

Activities that are in accordance with local wisdom at SMPN 1 Sumbergempol are a strategic effort to implement quality assurance at SMPN 1 Sumbergempol in order to boost competitiveness so that they can compete with other institutions or junior high schools. The commitment and sincerity of the managers and academic community at SMPN 1 Sumbergempol is the strategy for implementing quality assurance in this school, resulting in increased

competitiveness in this school, and this school is included in the category of schools that are quite well-known.

Strategies for improving the quality of education, namely improving the quality of education that is oriented towards skills (broad based education) and improving the quality of education that is oriented towards academics (high based education)(Sanusi, 2020). Efforts to improve the quality of education that is oriented towards academics can be taken through: (1) Quality assurance for all educational institutions so that they can prepare students to be filtered when quality control is carried out through national exams; (2) Guaranteeing the welfare of education personnel so that they can live decently and can focus their attention on teaching activities; and (3) Encouraging regions and institutions to be able to mobilize various sources of funds in order to improve the quality of education services.(Chandra et al., 2018)

The quality assurance steps in both schools are in accordance with the steps proposed by Juran.(Al Faruq et al., 2024) In this second concept, ten steps are proposed to improve quality, namely:

1. Creating awareness of the need for improvement and opportunities for improvement.
2. Setting improvement goals.
3. Organizing to achieve the goals set.
4. Providing training.
5. Carrying out projects to solve problems
6. Reporting progress
7. Giving awards.
8. Communicating achievements.
9. Storing and maintaining results achieved
10. Maintaining momentum by implementing improvements in the organization's regular system.

However, the difference is that both schools carry out quality assurance systematically and online. Sometimes quality assurance does not take place online such as accreditation and so on, it just requires a fairly large quality cost.

The character of diligent reading and loving the Qur'an that is embedded in students as a result of the implementation of the habit of reading the Qur'an and practicing it little by little in everyday life. This increases the competitiveness of educational institutions

For SMPN 1 Sumbergempol, it was found that the implementation of quality assurance was able to have an impact on increasing output both in terms of academic achievement, in the form of increased achievement, students participating in district competitions, and non-academic achievements or student characters in the form of characters that have been recorded in the quality indicators are internalized in students. This has an impact on increasing school competitiveness.

School competitiveness is influenced by several factors: First, the leadership of the principal. The level of school competitiveness is greatly influenced by the quality of the leadership of a principal (Sukadari, Huda, Perianto, Haryanto, & Subarkah, 2021). High-quality principal leadership will be able to mobilize, utilize and build a high commitment to all elements of the school to jointly increase school competitiveness (Alemayehu Assefa, 2024). Even quality principal leadership will also be able to utilize the potential of stakeholders to support increasing school competitiveness. (Sahri et al., 2023)

Second, the factor of school learning innovation. The level of school competitiveness will also be greatly influenced by the presence or absence of learning innovation. This learning innovation can be in the form of a renewal of the methodology in learning, so as to improve the quality of student learning outcomes (Syauqy Iqbal Saifani & Lusida, 2024). This learning innovation can also be substantive, by providing additional materials outside the conventional curriculum that are indeed very much needed to equip students in facing the challenges of life in the era of global civilization. Learning innovation can also be instrumental by preparing sophisticated, more modern, unique learning facilities, which have an attraction and positive image for the community who will enter school. The existence of this learning innovation is very dependent on the principal and teachers. (Imaduddin et al., 2022).

Third, the quality of educators. The quality of educators greatly influences the level of school competitiveness. The quality of educators will have a positive impact on improving the quality of students in achieving achievements (Istikomah, Ramadlon, & Nadlif, 2023). Furthermore, the more students who excel, the more it will have an impact on increasing the competitiveness of the school. The quality of educators is greatly influenced by the leadership of the principal, in the sense of the extent to which the principal provides coaching, guidance, control, evaluation and motivation to teachers. (Umiarso, 2022).

Fourth, the quality of facilities. The quality of facilities is also an important factor in increasing school competitiveness. In several schools that are categorized as superior, they generally have adequate quality and variety of facilities (Neyestani, 2017). The higher the quality of the facilities, the more attractive it will be for the community to send their children to school. The existence of facilities is also very dependent or influenced by the leadership pattern of the principal (Ismail, Muis, Pawero, & Umar, 2020).

Fifth, the quality of cooperation. Cooperation will provide great benefits, both material and non-material. The existence and quality of school cooperation also depend greatly on the leadership pattern of the principal. Sixth, school achievement. School achievements in both academic and non-academic fields in competitions both at the local and national levels held by educational units or organizations can encourage increased school competitiveness. (Mutohar, 2014) School achievement is one indication of a quality and competitive school. (Nurlina et al., 2023) The greater the number of school achievements obtained, the more

it will increase the public's appeal, which means that the school's competitiveness will also increase (Kumar, 2016). School achievements can be in the form of student, educator, or institutional achievements (Ngambi & Nkemkiafu, 2015). Seventh, public interest. The large number of applicants who enter the school can be seen as an indication that the school is of high quality and has high competitiveness. The higher the number of school applicants, the more it will allow for student selection, so that the school gets quality student input. This quality student input will certainly make it easier for schools to improve their achievements.

D. CONCLUSION

Quality assurance planning involves all stakeholders, namely: Principals, teachers and employees, guardians, community leaders and all students, all must change in viewing education, education is not only pursuing high academic results by ignoring the realm of social, mental and spiritual development, where the highest responsibility for the character of these students is to Allah SWT and to the parents who have entrusted their children to us. The quality assurance implemented is internal quality assurance in the form of SPMI and also external quality assurance, namely BAN S-M accreditation. To achieve quality standards, educational institutions prepare strategic steps. These steps begin with the formation of an SKL implementation team. This team is tasked with assisting the principal in internal development, including overseeing the implementation of the quality assurance system. This team was formed because the tasks and problems are increasing and cannot be handled by the principal alone. After the Team is formed, the director's duties are focused on communication and external development of the institution.

The implementation of quality assurance can have an impact on increasing output both in terms of academic achievement, in the form of increased achievement, students participating in Olympiad competitions, as well as non-academic achievements or student character in the form of characters that have been recorded in the quality indicators being internalized in students. Increased competitiveness includes: the character of diligent reading and loving the Qur'an which is embedded in students as a result of the implementation of the habit of reading the Qur'an and practicing it little by little in everyday life. This increases the competitiveness of educational institutions. The implementation of quality assurance can have an impact on increasing output both in terms of academic achievement, which is in the form of increased achievement, students participating in district competitions, as well as non-academic achievements or student character in the form of characters that have been recorded in the quality indicators are internalized in students. This has an impact on increasing school competitiveness.

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