
The Role of the Education Quality Assurance System in Improving School Education Quality: Supporting Factors and Barriers to Success

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Abstract

Education quality assurance is one of the strategic instruments for realizing quality and competitive education. The education quality assurance system is designed to ensure that the entire process of educational provision runs in accordance with established standards and undergoes continuous improvement. This library research aims to analyze the system and role of education quality assurance in improving school education quality, as well as to identify the factors that support and hinder its successful implementation. The findings show that the education quality assurance system plays an important role in improving the quality of learning, the effectiveness of school management, teacher professionalism, a culture of quality, and the accountability of educational institutions. The success of quality assurance implementation is influenced by leadership commitment, human resource competence, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, organizational culture, and stakeholder support. Conversely, limited understanding of the concept of quality, budgetary constraints, resistance to change, weak supervision, and excessive administrative burden constitute the main inhibiting factors. Synergy among all parties is therefore required so that the education quality assurance system can operate effectively and sustainably.

Keywords

education quality; assurance system; school quality; educational management; quality culture; quality improvement



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INTRODUCTION

Education is a long-term investment that determines the quality of a nation's human resources. The progress of a country is determined not only by the natural wealth it possesses but also by the quality of education that is able to produce generations who are knowledgeable, of good character, and equipped with competencies relevant to the demands of the times. Amid globalization and the continuing industrial revolution, the demand for quality education is increasingly high. Schools can no longer merely conduct the learning process; they must also be able to guarantee that the educational services provided meet established quality standards and

are able to respond to the needs of society and the labor market. Education quality assurance has therefore become a requirement that cannot be separated from the modern education system.

In Indonesia, efforts to improve the quality of education have been carried out through various policies, one of which is the implementation of the Education Quality Assurance System (Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan/SPMP).

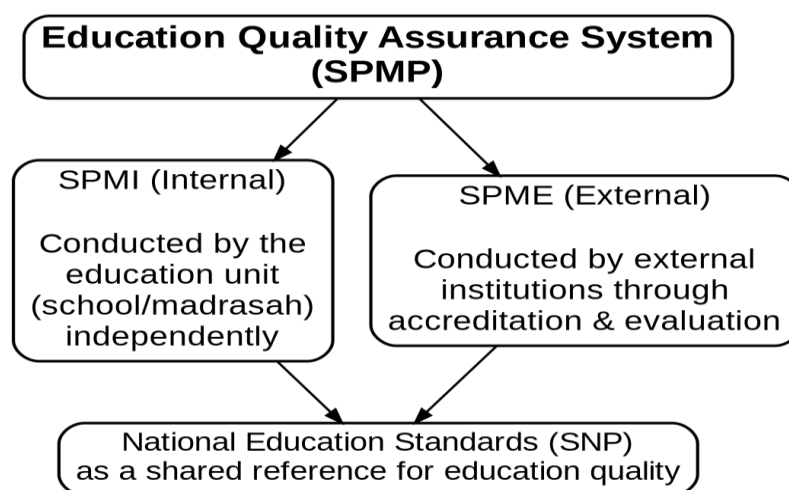


Figure 1. Structure of the Education Quality Assurance System (SPMP): SPMI and SPME
Source: developed from the manuscript's discussion, based on Sallis (2014) and Republik Indonesia (2021)

This system aims to ensure that every education unit is able to meet or even exceed the National Education Standards (Standar Nasional Pendidikan/SNP).(Badrudin et al., 2024; Qadafi et al., 2023) Education quality assurance functions not merely as an evaluation tool but also as a mechanism for the continuous control and development of education quality.(Vokasi & Bandanadjaja, 2023) This concept emphasizes that education quality must be built through a systematic, planned, and continuous process so that it is able to create a culture of quality in every aspect of educational provision, a position that is reinforced by recent studies on the management of education quality assurance in Indonesian schools.(Rahmawati et al., 2023)

For students of educational management, understanding the quality assurance system is of great importance, since the success of managing an educational institution depends heavily on the institution's capacity to maintain and consistently improve quality. Quality assurance is not limited to administrative matters; it also covers all components of education, including the curriculum, learning, teaching staff, facilities and infrastructure, school management, and relations with the community. A study of the system and role of education quality assurance is therefore

relevant for understanding how the quality of school education can be improved effectively.

METHOD

This study employs a library research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected from books, statutory regulations, government policy documents, and peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to education quality assurance and educational management. The collected materials were analyzed descriptively and thematically in order to map the system and role of education quality assurance in improving school education quality and to identify the factors that support and hinder its successful implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Education Quality Assurance System

The Education Quality Assurance System is a series of interrelated elements that function to ensure that the provision of education runs in accordance with established quality standards. In the Indonesian context, this system consists of the Internal Education Quality Assurance System (Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Internal/SPMI), implemented by education units, and the External Education Quality Assurance System (Sistem Penjaminan Mutu Eksternal/SPME), carried out by external institutions through accreditation and other evaluation mechanisms. This system is based on the principle of continuous improvement, which positions quality as the primary objective of every educational activity.

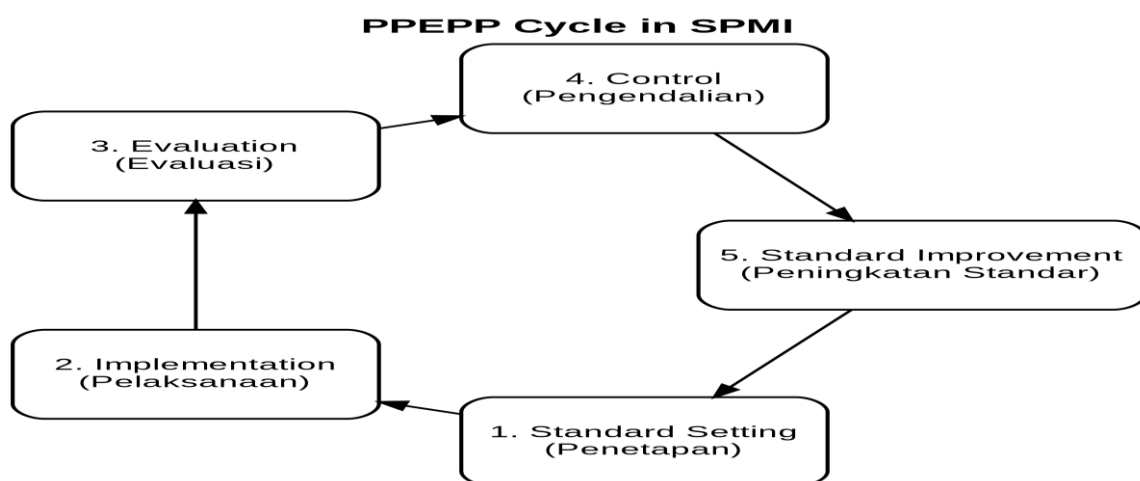


Figure 2. PPEPP Cycle (Standard Setting, Implementation, Evaluation, Control, Standard Improvement)

Source: developed from the manuscript's discussion, based on Kemendikbudristek (2023) and Mardiah et al. (2023)

SPMI is implemented through a cycle known as PPEPP: Penetapan (Standard Setting), Pelaksanaan (Implementation), Evaluasi (Evaluation), Pengendalian (Control), and Peningkatan

Standar (Standard Improvement). This cycle allows schools to independently map their quality, identify various shortcomings, and design improvement programs suited to their needs. Through this cycle, education quality is not understood as a static condition but as a dynamic process that continues to be refined. From the perspective of educational management, the quality assurance system is closely related to the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Quality assurance serves as an instrument that helps principals and the entire school community ensure that educational goals are achieved effectively and efficiently. Through this system, schools obtain accurate data on their actual conditions, enabling evidence-based decision making.

The Role of Education Quality Assurance in Improving School Quality

The primary role of education quality assurance is to ensure the fulfillment of established quality standards, which cover the standards of graduate competency, content, process, assessment, teachers and education personnel, facilities and infrastructure, management, and financing. With clear standards in place, schools have a direction and an objective measure for carrying out their education programs.

No	National Education Standard	Brief Scope
1	Graduate Competency Standard	Qualification of graduate abilities covering attitude, knowledge, and skills
2	Content Standard	Scope of material and competency level required to achieve graduate competency
3	Process Standard	Criteria for the implementation of learning within the education unit
4	Assessment Standard	Criteria regarding the mechanism, procedure, and instruments of learning outcome assessment
5	Teacher and Education Personnel Standard	Criteria for pre-service education and the physical/mental competency of educators
6	Facilities and Infrastructure Standard	Criteria for learning spaces, sports facilities, and other learning resources
7	Management Standard	Criteria for the planning, implementation, and supervision of educational activities
8	Financing Standard	Criteria for the components and amount of operational costs of the education unit

Table 1. *The Eight National Education Standards (SNP) as a Reference for Quality Assurance*

Source: developed from the manuscript, based on Republik Indonesia (2021) Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021 on the SNP

Quality assurance also plays a role in improving the quality of the learning process. Learning is the core of all educational activities, so improving school quality depends heavily on the quality of teaching and learning taking place in the classroom. Through systematic evaluation and monitoring, schools can identify various weaknesses in learning, such as ineffective methods,

suboptimal use of media, or low student engagement. The results of such evaluations are then used as the basis for improving and innovating learning so that student learning outcomes can improve significantly. (Nurhayati et al., 2023; Shu & Gu, 2023)

In addition, quality assurance contributes to improving the professionalism of teachers and education personnel. Teachers are the spearhead of educational success because they interact directly with students. The quality assurance system encourages schools to carry out continuous professional development programs through training, workshops, seminars, classroom action research, and learning community activities. As teacher competence improves, the quality of learning also improves, which in turn affects the quality of the graduates produced. Quality assurance also makes an important contribution to creating a culture of quality within the school environment. A culture of quality is a condition in which the entire school community is aware of the need to consistently deliver its best performance and to make continuous improvements. Within a culture of quality, every individual understands that quality is a shared responsibility, not merely the task of the principal or the quality assurance team. Such a culture encourages innovation, work discipline, organizational commitment, and a spirit of collaboration, which ultimately improves the overall quality of education.

Furthermore, quality assurance functions as a means of public accountability. As a public service institution, schools are obliged to account for the quality of the services they provide to the community. Through the quality assurance system, schools can demonstrate their performance achievements and the quality of the educational services they have provided. Good accountability increases public trust in schools and strengthens the support of various parties for the development of education.

No	Role	Brief Description
1	Fulfillment of Quality Standards	Ensures that graduate competency, content, process, assessment standards, etc. are met, providing schools with direction and a measurable benchmark
2	Improvement of Learning Quality	Systematic evaluation and monitoring identify weaknesses in learning to improve student learning outcomes
3	Enhancement of Teacher Professionalism	Encourages continuous professional development (training, workshops, classroom action research, learning communities)
4	Development of a Quality Culture	Builds collective awareness among the school community to consistently perform well and pursue continuous improvement
5	Public Accountability	Enables schools to account for their performance achievements and the quality of services provided to the community

Table 2. *Five Main Roles of Education Quality Assurance in Improving School Quality*

Source: developed from the manuscript's discussion (Republik Indonesia, 2021; Sammara & Hasbi, 2023; Fattah, 2018)

Supporting Factors for the Success of Education Quality Assurance

The success of implementing the education quality assurance system is greatly influenced by various supporting factors. The first factor is visionary, quality-oriented principal leadership. Principals play a central role in directing, coordinating, and mobilizing all school resources to achieve established quality goals. Strong leadership creates collective commitment in carrying out the quality assurance program.(Mulyasa, 2021) The second factor is human resource competence. Teachers, education personnel, and the quality assurance team must possess an adequate understanding of the concepts, principles, and procedures of quality assurance. Good competence enables them to carry out their duties professionally and to produce accurate quality data for decision making.

The third factor is the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure. Complete and high-quality educational facilities support the implementation of effective learning and facilitate the process of monitoring and evaluating quality. The availability of information technology is also an important factor, as it can accelerate the management of quality data and the reporting of school performance. The fourth factor is a positive organizational culture. Schools with a collaborative work culture that are open to change and oriented toward continuous improvement will find it easier to implement the quality assurance system compared with schools that still maintain traditional working patterns. The fifth factor is stakeholder support. Parents, school committees, local governments, businesses, and the community all play an important role in supporting various quality improvement programs. Such support may take the form of funding, supervision, policy input, and active participation in school activities.

No	Supporting Factor	Brief Description
1	Principal Leadership	Visionary, quality-oriented leadership creates collective commitment in carrying out the quality assurance program
2	Human Resource Competence	Teachers, education personnel, and the quality assurance team possess adequate understanding of quality concepts and procedures
3	Facilities and Infrastructure	Complete educational facilities and available information technology accelerate the management of quality data
4	Positive Organizational Culture	A collaborative work culture that is open to change and oriented toward continuous improvement
5	Stakeholder Support	Parents, school committees, local governments, businesses, and the community support quality improvement programs

Table 3. *Supporting Factors for Successful Implementation of Education Quality Assurance*

Source: developed from the manuscript's discussion (Mulyasa, 2019; Engkoswara & Komariah, 2015)

Inhibiting Factors for the Success of Education Quality Assurance

Despite its considerable benefits, the implementation of education quality assurance often faces various obstacles. One major obstacle is the school community's limited understanding of the concept of quality assurance. Many schools still regard quality assurance merely as an administrative activity related to accreditation, so that its implementation is less than optimal. The next obstacle is budgetary constraints. Implementing a quality improvement program requires considerable funding, ranging from teacher training and facility procurement to monitoring and evaluation activities. Schools with limited funds often find it difficult to implement quality programs to the fullest extent.

Resistance to change is also a fairly significant inhibiting factor. Some teachers or education personnel sometimes feel comfortable with old working patterns and are less open to innovation or systemic change. This condition can slow down the process of implementing quality assurance and reduce the effectiveness of the programs designed. In addition, a weak system of supervision and evaluation is an obstacle that is frequently found. Monitoring that is not carried out consistently causes various quality problems to go unidentified. As a result, the corrective actions taken become less well targeted. Another factor that frequently arises is excessive administrative burden. In some cases, quality assurance focuses more on the preparation of documents than on the improvement of the substance of education. As a result, teachers and education personnel spend a great deal of time meeting administrative demands, so that attention to the quality of learning is reduced.

No	Inhibiting Factor	Brief Description
1	Limited Understanding of the Concept	Schools still regard quality assurance merely as an administrative activity related to accreditation
2	Budgetary Constraints	Quality improvement programs require considerable funding (training, facilities, monitoring and evaluation) that is often insufficient
3	Resistance to Change	Some teachers or education personnel remain comfortable with old working patterns and are less open to innovation
4	Weak Supervision and Evaluation	Inconsistent monitoring causes quality problems to go unidentified, leading to less targeted corrective actions
5	Excessive Administrative Burden	Excessive focus on document preparation reduces attention to the substance of learning improvement

Table 4. *Inhibiting Factors for Successful Implementation of Education Quality Assurance*

Source: developed from the manuscript's discussion (Bahri, 2024; Sagala, 2017)

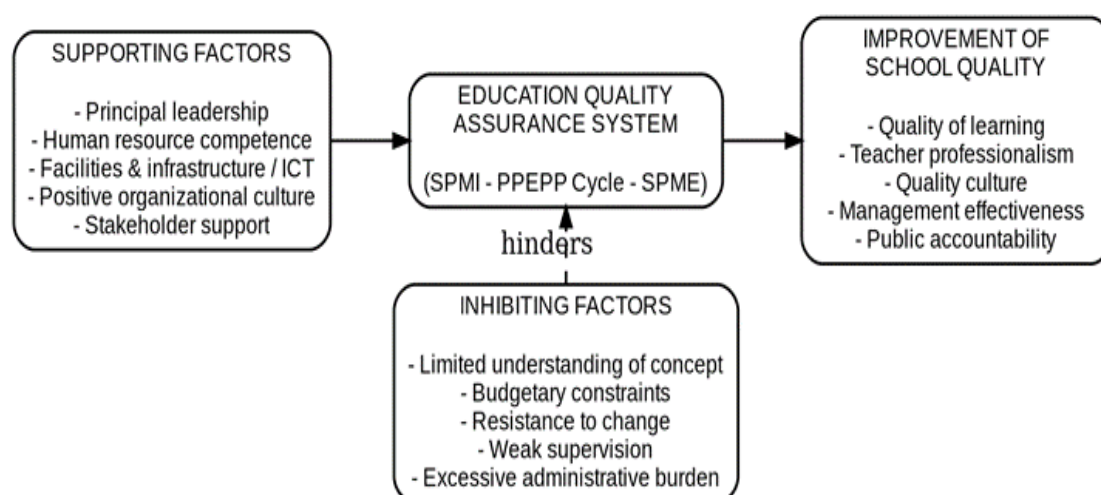


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework: Relationship among Supporting Factors, the Quality Assurance System, Outcomes, and Inhibiting Factors

Source: developed from the overall results and discussion of the manuscript

CONCLUSION

The education quality assurance system is an important instrument for improving school education quality through the application of the principle of continuous improvement. Quality assurance plays a role in improving the quality of learning, teacher professionalism, the effectiveness of school management, a culture of quality, and public accountability. The success of quality assurance implementation is greatly influenced by principal leadership, human resource competence, adequate facilities and infrastructure, a positive organizational culture, and stakeholder support. Conversely, limited understanding of quality, budgetary constraints, resistance to change, weak supervision, and the dominance of administrative aspects are inhibiting factors that need to be addressed. Quality assurance must therefore be understood as a strategic process that involves the entire school community and is implemented consistently so that the goal of improving education quality can be achieved optimally.

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