Quality Management Process of Religious-Based Primary School Education

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Abstract
This research aims to reveal in-depth and give meaning to the planning, control, and improvement of religion-based elementary school education quality. This research method uses a qualitative approach through a multivariate study plan with a constant comparative method. The research locations were SD Onekore 2 Santa Ursula Ende, SDK Santo Antonius Ende 2, and MIN Ende. The informants in this research were the Principal and Teachers. Data collection techniques use in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies. A structured set of questions designed to elicit information from stakeholders such as teachers, administrators, parents, and students about their perceptions, experiences, and suggestions regarding quality management in primary education with a religious foundation. The research results show that the Religious Primary School Quality Management Process has a strong commitment, which the founders inherited, managers, and previous education staff, and is preserved, continued, and strengthened by the management and education staff in the future. The meaning of quality by the management and educational staff of religious-based elementary schools is more holistic; the students’ personalities are intact, and the quality management of religious-based elementary schools consists of school quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. Through the quality management process of religious-based elementary schools, the school has a strong commitment, inherited by the founder, managers, and previous education staff, and preserved, continued, and strengthened by managers and education personnel.

Keywords
Management; quality of education; Religious Basis

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1. INTRODUCTION
Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Article 1 mandates students’ need for religious and spiritual strength. Article 2 also mandates, among others, that religious bases, including those on the path of formal education and at the elementary school level, have a strategic role in developing national character (Yuvens, 2018). Elementary school is one level of education whose existence is the most urgent in national education. Everyone recognizes that without completing primary education, it is formally impossible for a person to be able to attend secondary and higher education (García-Penalvo, 2016; O’Meara & Jaeger, 2019). To enter the next level
of education, it is necessary to provide children with a basic ability that makes them proficient in critical
and imaginative thinking, which is applied in the mode of writing and reading, which is indeed an
ability that is the demand of the information age (Asfahani et al., 2023; Waham et al., 2023). The influence
of elementary school on education at the next level, long before, was also mentioned by Stoopps and
Johnson (1967). He stated that elementary school is the basis of all levels of education. The success of a
student attending education in junior high, high school, and P.T. is largely determined by his success in
attending education at the elementary level.

Previous research on the quality management process of religious-based primary school education
has addressed various aspects of educational quality, religious education, and school administration.
Some studies have examined the effectiveness of quality management systems in improving academic
performance and student outcomes within religious schools. In contrast, others have focused on the role
of religious values in shaping educational practices and policies. Additionally, research has explored
the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating religious teachings into the curriculum and
school culture and the impact of religious affiliation on teacher-student relationships and school climate.
Moreover, there have been investigations into the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders,
including parents, teachers, and administrators, regarding the quality of education provided by
religious-based primary schools.

The research aims to investigate the quality management process within religious-based primary
school education, exploring the unique approaches and challenges inherent in such institutions. The
novelty lies in its focus on integrating religion into quality management practices, thereby enriching the
understanding of how faith-based values intersect with educational administration. This study fills a
gap in the literature by providing insights into implementing quality management strategies in a
religious, educational context, which can inform policymakers, educators, and stakeholders seeking to
enhance the quality of education in similar settings.

2. METHODS

The research method used is qualitative. Considerations for using qualitative methods to answer
problems include the following: naturalistic qualitative research presents a holistic (comprehensive)
form for analyzing a phenomenon. This type of research is more sensitive to capturing descriptive
qualitative information by maintaining the integrity of the subject under study. This research strategy
lies in the cursiveness of the problem studied, the absence of similar research conducted, and the
peculiarities of the problem to be studied. The design used in this study is a multicase study. As
recommended by Yin (2002), if the subject matter is related to “how” and “why” and relates to more than
one case, then the study uses a multicase study. Researchers compare and contrast findings in
individual cases or cases and then construct findings, propositions, and substantive theories across cases
as final findings, as suggested by Bogdan & Biklen (1982) and Yin (2002). Some concise step-by-step
processes with many cases using a qualitative approach and information sources: 1) Case Selection and
Sampling: Start by deliberately selecting several elementary schools with a religious emphasis to ensure
a varied sample, namely SD Onekore 2 Santa Ursula Ende, SDK Santo Antonius Ende 2, and MIN Ende.
2) Data collection involves semi-structured interviews with school administrators, teachers, parents,
and students, focus group discussions to gather collective perspectives, and analysis of school policy
documents, curriculum materials, and quality management reports. Additionally, participant
observation in classrooms and school events to capture real-time experiences. 3) Data analysis
techniques use thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, patterns, and differences across cases.
Triangulating data from interviews, observations, and document analysis strengthens findings and
ensures data validity. 4) Cross-Case Comparison: comparing findings between cases to reveal
similarities, differences, and unique strategies used in quality management in religiously affiliated
elementary schools. Look for different insights and contextual factors that influence quality
management practices. 5) Validation and Reflexivity: Validate findings through member checking with participants and exercise reflexivity by critically examining the researcher’s biases and assumptions throughout the research process. Seek input from external experts or peer briefings to increase credibility and rigor. Reporting and Dissemination: Present comprehensive findings in a research report, highlighting key themes, implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for improving quality management processes in faith-based basic education. Disseminate results through academic publications, conferences, and professional networks to contribute to the field of education and inform stakeholders. 6) The data collection techniques that researchers use are in-depth interviews, participant observations, and documentation studies. A structured set of questions designed to elicit information from stakeholders such as teachers, administrators, parents, and students about their perceptions, experiences, and suggestions regarding quality management in primary education with a religious foundation. An open-ended question is a question that avoids a yes or no answer. With open questions, researchers will be more able to recapture research subjects towards the focus of research, especially when researchers are out of the context asked. Since this research is categorized as a multicase study, the analysis technique is carried out in two stages. The first stage, individual case analysis (in each case), is carried out with the flow model as above. In the second stage, the individual case data was analyzed cross-case, as Yin (2002) recommended. If the flow model analysis techniques by Miles and Huberman (1992) are combined, then the industrial case flow model analysis and cross-case analysis look like the diagram below.

![Diagram Individual and cross-case case analysis](image-url)

**Figure 1.** Diagram Individual and cross-case case analysis
3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Cross-case research propositions for S.D. quality management were prepared based on observations and interviews with various related parties, religion-based as follows:

a. Religious-based elementary schools are strongly committed to quality, inherited by the founder, managers, and previous education staff and preserved, continued, and strengthened by managers and education staff.

b. The meaning of quality, by managers and education staff of religious-based and holistic elementary schools, is not limited to academic and non-academic quality but also concerns the complete personality of its students.

c. Religious-based elementary school managers carry out quality management processes through school quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement.

Research Proposition on Quality Planning of Religious-Based Elementary Schools

a. School quality planning is the first step in overall school quality management carried out by religious-based elementary school managers.

b. School quality planning aims to formulate a quality picture that will be realized and implemented in the future.

c. Religious-based elementary school managers carry out school quality planning, consisting of medium-term and short-term planning (annual and semester).

d. In religious-based school quality planning involving school stakeholders.

e. School quality planning involves school stakeholders through repeated discussions and reviews and with validation.

f. The substance contained in the quality planning of religious-based elementary schools is the vision and mission of the school that prioritizes the quality to be achieved, gap analysis, goals and targets that lead to efforts to realize school quality, targets and programs that are loaded with quality, activities that support quality achievement, and resources (including budget) that favor quality creation.

Research Proposition on Quality Control of Religious-Based Elementary Schools

a. Quality control is the second step in the overall school quality management process carried out by religious-based elementary school managers, after school quality planning.

b. Quality control is an activity carried out by religious-based elementary school managers to realize that what is planned in quality planning can be implemented and meet quality targets.

c. In quality control, religious-based elementary school managers use control cards and appreciate education personnel who can achieve or exceed quality targets.

d. Activities contained in quality control consist of implementing quality plans, controlling the achievement of quality targets, and making improvements to quality if the quality is less than targeted.

Research Proposition on Quality Improvement of Religious-Based Elementary Schools

a. Quality improvement in the third quality management process carried out by religious-based elementary school managers after quality planning and control.

b. Religious-based elementary school managers improve quality in response to input stakeholders, which dynamically provides meaning and quality demands.

c. Quality improvement is carried out by religious-based elementary school managers after quality achievement or the school has reached the quality target.
Quality improvement carried out by religious-based elementary school managers gradually and continuously, departing from the quality that has been achieved previously.

Religious-based elementary school managers improve quality by involving and directing internal and external resources.

Quality improvement carried out by religious-based elementary school managers leads to optimizing quality achievement as interpreted by managers, education staff, and stakeholders.

**Figure 2. Religious-Based SD Quality Management Process**

From the figure above, it is known that the substantive theory in the form of this research proposition can be stated that the quality management process begins with quality planning, continues with quality control, and ends with quality improvement. In each process, faith-based elementary school managers carry out activities whose direction remains focused on creating academic and non-academic quality. If the research argument is presented as an image, the quality management process and the things involved can be seen.

**Quality Planning for Religious-Based Elementary School**

Religious-based elementary schools have a strong commitment to quality, inherited by the founders, managers, and education staff before, preserved, continued, and strengthened by managers and education staff next. The meaning of quality, by the management and staff of religious-based elementary school education, is more holistic, not limited to academic quality, but also concerned with the integrity of the students. They are related to the findings of quality commitment. Arifin (1998) and Kusmintradjo (2003) have found that quality commitment belongs to leaders of good and outstanding schools and, in general, is inherited from previous school leaders and even founders. Likewise, it prioritizes the urgency of the quality of school residents to create high-performance schools (Eyob Kenta, 2019; Herry et al., 2019).
Related to the meaning of quality, literature studies show that quality will always be dynamic by the development of stakeholders’ demands, aspirations, and expectations. GATE (1998) defines quality as distinctive excellence that meets the limits of minimum standards or conformance to standards. The dynamic meaning of quality also parallels the meaning of quality schools, with various levels also developing as an effective school (school effective) that ineffective schools dictate (Bray et al., 2023; Tafani & Kamaludin, 2023). Good schools (Postman, 1979; Deroche, 1985; Bafadal, 1994) are dictated by poor schools (Doroche, 1985), and elite schools are dictated by populistic schools (Misbah et al., 2015; Rahmelia et al., 2022). Banhkan Hopkin, as Bush and Coleman (2000) quoted, coined the word 
goro the moving school.

The implication of the findings on this holistic definition of quality is that quality cannot be standardized statically but must be interpreted dynamically according to the development of stakeholders’ demands, expectations, and aspirations. Therefore, studies on the quality of education in the future, both by A.P. majors at LPTK and by researchers, must be more holistic because it is proven that the success of one's life is also not only a factor of academic achievement but also a non-academic achievement and other personality factors.

Religious-based elementary school managers were found to carry out a quality management process based on a strong quality commitment. The quality management process of religious-based elementary schools consists of school quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. Various research has been carried out but is still limited to quality improvement management due to the forerunner of the School-Based Quality Improvement Management (MPMBS) discourse (Abdurahman et al., 2023; Ardiansyah, 2021). Quality must be realized by planning, quality control, and quality improvement.

The implication for practitioners and education providers in the field is that realizing the holistic quality that stakeholders dynamically interpret cannot only be done by implementing quality improvement management. Still, it must be carried out as a whole management, consisting of quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement. The implication for the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Education Office is that the School-Based Management (SBM) policy, which is another form of School-Based Quality Improvement Management (MPMBS), must be refined into School Quality Management (MMS), because to create quality it is not enough to improve quality, but also by planning quality and controlling quality.

School quality planning is the first in overall school quality management carried out by religious-based elementary school managers. Some say that school quality planning is an effort to formulate a quality picture that will be realized and implemented in the future in the form of a strategic plan (Renstra), which is followed up by the preparation of a school Budget plan (RAPBS) (Faisal & Kisman, 2020; Rohaeni et al., 2021). School quality planning carried out by religious-based elementary school managers consists of medium-term and short-term planning (annual and semester). In school quality planning, religious-based elementary school managers involve school stakeholders through repeated discussions and reviews and end with ratification. The substance contained in the quality planning of religious-based elementary schools is the vision and mission that promotes the quality to be achieved, gap analysis, goals, and targets that lead to efforts to realize school quality (Ardiyanti et al., 2021; Bray et al., 2023; Tafani & Kamaludin, 2023). Goals and programs have quality content, activities supporting quality achievement, and resources (including budgets) that favor quality creation.

Classical management theories, abstracted by Foyal, Gulcik, Tylor, and other experts. It almost always places planning in the first process of management before other processes, which are organizing, mobilizing, and supervising. Current management theories such as TQM (Nabilah Mokhtar et al., 2023; Nishant et al., 2020; Nugraha et al., 2022) also put planning in the first process because the TQM steps consist of the plan, do, check, and action. The strategy management discourse put forward by Kritener, in the first management step, is called strategy planning.
This research for education providers implies that when you want to create quality in a school or educational institution, it should start with quality planning. Quality planning should use strategic steps that lead to the ratification of the RAPBS and involve stakeholders to get support at the planning and implementation levels. The implication for researchers is that it is necessary to make changes in school quality between schools that plan the quality of their schools and those that do not. It is also necessary to research the differences between schools that plan quality using strategic plans and schools that do not use strategic plans. Including also needs to be studied. Are there differences in support in the implementation of the quality plan? Between schools involving stakeholders and schools not involving stakeholders in planning.

**Quality Control of Religious-Based Elementary Schools**

Quality control is the second process in the overall quality management of schools carried out by religious-based elementary school managers and after-school quality planning. Quality control is an activity carried out by religious-based elementary school managers to realize quality so that what is planned in quality planning can be implemented and meet quality targets. In quality control, religious-based elementary school managers use control cards and appreciate education personnel who can achieve or exceed quality targets. Activities contained in quality control consist of the implementation of quality plans, control of the implementation of quality plans, control of achieving quality targets, and making improvements to quality if the quality is less than targeted.

In quality management, it is known as the Jura trilogy (1989), which states that quality must be planned (quality planning), controlled (quality control), and improved (quality improvement). Quality improvement is part of quality control, so continued quality improvement will be carried out properly (Măţă Liliana et al., 2023; Sari et al., 2020). This distinguishes it from TQM, which requires the correct process to be found from the beginning so that an error does not occur. Even in classical management, quality control is almost always abstracted with various labels such as actuating, controlling, and evaluating. Even to control quality, many management activities intend to control activities with labels such as monitoring and evaluation (money).

The implication for quality management practitioners is that they should follow up on quality planning with quality control on an ongoing basis to achieve what is targeted in quality planning. The implication for researchers is that the effect of quality control on the quality of a school needs to be studied, and various alternative quality control models that can contribute to school quality holistically also need to be researched and developed with research and development designs.

**Quality Improvement of Religious-Based Elementary Schools**

Quality improvement is the third management process by religious-based elementary school managers after planning and quality control. Religious-based elementary school managers perform quality improvement in response to stakeholder input that dynamically provides meaning and quality demands. Religious-based elementary school managers improve school quality after achieving or exceeding quality targets. Quality improvement is carried out by religious-based elementary school managers gradually and continuously, departing from the quality achieved before. Religious-based elementary school managers carry out quality improvement by involving and mobilizing internal and external school resources (Abdurahman, 2021; Sari et al., 2020). Quality improvement by religious-based elementary school managers leads to optimizing quality achievement as interpreted by managers, educators, and their stakeholders.

Quality improvement management, which in Indonesia was launched through MPMBS and later SBM policies, proved to be able to make schools that implement it able to improve the quality of their schools (Ministry of Education, 1999; 2000; 2003). In other countries, as Timar (1991) found, school-based management (SBM), school-shared decision-making, and grass-roof management have been able to reform schools to make them perform better (Saha, 2023; Sebsibe et al., 2023). Other names for SBM are
school-based quality improvement management, school site management (Angraini & Harwani, 2020; Herry et al., 2019; Lis & Szyszka, 2020), school-level management (Kamis et al., 2017; Marfan & Pascual, 2018; Motsumi et al., 2020), local-school development, school building management (Faisal & Kisman, 2020; Milner IV, 2011; Rohaeni et al., 2021), and school-based leadership (Sebsibe et al., 2023). Researchers (2010) also found that schools implementing MPMBS increase process, output, and outcome.

The implication for education providers is that quality improvement must always be carried out after quality control steps in the quality management process. This will also answer stakeholders' demands, aspirations, and expectations for school quality. The implication for researchers is the need to examine the contribution of each quality management process (quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement) to school quality. In high-performing schools, examining the differences in activities that lead to quality planning, quality control, and quality improvement is necessary. Thus, it will be known empirically what percentage of the activities of these highly qualified schools lead to quality planning and some percent that lead to quality control and quality improvement.

Research findings from several elementary schools on this topic reveal several important insights. First, all schools emphasize integrating religious values and teachings into their quality management processes, calling it a fundamental aspect of holistic education. Second, there are variations in implementing quality management practices, with some schools emphasizing teacher training and professional development. In contrast, others focus on parent involvement and community partnerships. Third, challenges such as limited resources and different interpretations of religious principles impact the consistency and effectiveness of quality management across schools. Finally, this study highlights the importance of continuous evaluation and adaptation of quality management strategies to ensure alignment with religious values, educational goals, and stakeholder expectations. These findings underscore the complex interaction between religious ethos and quality management in basic education, requiring a tailored approach that balances cultural sensitivity, pedagogical principles, and organizational capacity.

Analysis of research findings on several elementary schools reveals several critical insights. First, integrating religious principles into quality management practices is a fundamental aspect of these schools, reflecting their commitment to holistic education. However, the level and approach to this integration varies widely across schools, indicating a diversity of interpretations and applications in faith-based education environments. Second, an emphasis on teacher training and professional development emerged as a common strategy among schools, indicating recognition of the important role of teachers in providing quality education complemented by religious values. Additionally, varying levels of parent and community involvement observed across schools underscore the importance of collaboration and partnerships beyond the classroom for comprehensive quality management. Third, challenges such as limited resources, differences in interpretations of religious doctrine, and potential conflicts between educational standards and religious teachings were identified as obstacles to achieving consistent and effective quality management practices. This analysis underscores the complex and diverse nature of quality management in religiously affiliated elementary schools, requiring a differentiated and context-specific approach that considers the interrelationships between religious ethos, educational goals, stakeholder dynamics, and organizational capabilities.

4. CONCLUSION

Religious-based elementary schools show a strong commitment to quality management, rooted in the dedication of founders, managers, and past staff, and upheld and reinforced by current staff. Quality, for these schools, is holistic, encompassing not just academic and non-academic aspects but also the overall development of students' personalities. Managers in these schools prioritize quality through planning, control, and improvement processes. Future research should adopt a multicase study
approach and use multicare analysis techniques for a more robust understanding of religious-based quality management, with subsequent empirical verification by other researchers using quantitative methods to formalize the resulting substantive theory.

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