

SWOT Analysis of Declining Accreditation Status of Kindergarten Institutions

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Abstract

Accreditation is a crucial indicator for evaluating the quality of early childhood education (ECE) institutions. A decline in accreditation status reflects challenges in school management. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the declining accreditation of kindergartens in Magelang Regency through a SWOT analysis. The research employed a qualitative approach using observations, interviews, and primary data collected from teachers and principals of 10 kindergartens that experienced a decrease in accreditation, as well as secondary data from assessors and the local education office. The findings reveal that the main strength lies in the collaboration among teachers, principals, students, and parents in supporting school activities. The major weaknesses include teachers' limited skills in information technology, inadequate documentation of learning activities, and insufficient mastery of learning concepts. Opportunities arise from government support and parental involvement, while threats stem from competition with newly established schools and parents' low awareness of the importance of early childhood education. In conclusion, weaknesses and threats are more dominant in contributing to the decline in accreditation scores. Therefore, improving teachers' competencies through training, strengthening parental engagement, and optimizing government support are crucial strategies to enhance the quality of ECE institutions.

Keywords

Accreditation; Decline; Quality; SWOT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential aspect of human life. Through education, individuals are equipped with the foundation to pursue their future (Waruwu, 2024). Although education is not the sole determining factor in achieving success, it plays a crucial role in sharpening one's talents and skills (Zubaidah et al., 2024). Many scholars argue that education serves as a benchmark for assessing an individual's quality. Education can be defined as conscious guidance provided by educators to learners to shape their physical and spiritual character (Hasanah, Uswatun; Fajri, 2022). Furthermore, education encompasses all elements that can become habits and constitutes a vital method for transmitting values that form an individual's character before adulthood (Hasanah, 2024). According to Ki Hajar Dewantara, education aims to nurture a generation that is independent, imaginative, and reliable, since in the past those without education tended to be weak and marginalized—further emphasizing that education should



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not only focus on scientific knowledge but also on fostering individuals with strong character (Setiawan et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, education can be pursued through three pathways: formal, non-formal, and informal (Irsalulloh & Maunah, 2023). These three forms of education are essential for all groups in society, encompassing individuals from children to adults. Their function is to equip individuals with the ability to confront various life challenges in diverse environments (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023). Formal education refers to structured learning delivered through government programs, such as schools and universities (Syaadah et al., 2022). Non-formal education encompasses flexible, structured, and voluntary learning activities that address needs not covered within formal institutions, while also involving cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral dimensions (Aulia & Salito, 2025). Meanwhile informal education is a lifelong and unstructured learning process that occurs in everyday life, often through social interactions, allowing individuals to learn in any setting (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023).

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is a formal educational institution designed for children under six years of age (Selvia & Nurachadijat, 2023). The primary objective of PAUD is to foster the development of high-quality early learners who grow and develop according to their developmental stages, thereby ensuring readiness to enter primary education (Kalsum et al., 2023). Early childhood education is guided by structured planning that organizes learning guidelines according to age groups (Setiawan et al., 2024). Childhood, often referred to as the “golden age,” is the most critical period for parents to provide stimulation and educational experiences that support children’s holistic development (Nisa et al., 2024). Children possess an exceptional capacity to absorb knowledge, and every learning experience significantly shapes their future (Syauqia et al., 2025). According to John Dewey, children at this stage should be encouraged to wisely understand social issues rather than being prematurely exposed to them (F, Sovieti; Copriady, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to provide facilities that enable children to engage in meaningful play and learning experiences. Parents are also expected to identify their child’s potential, considering that children will later require schools that align with their talents for optimal development (Hidayati et al., 2023). Every parent aspires to provide a high-quality education for their children (Baroroh et al., 2024). One common method of evaluating school quality is through accreditation scores (Musimah et al., 2025).

Accreditation of PAUD institutions is a comprehensive program designed to assess the eligibility of educational institutions based on criteria established by the National Accreditation Board for Early Childhood Education and Non-Formal Education (BAN PAUD and PNF) (Siburian & Sianturi, 2022). The evaluation process is guided by the Eight National Education Standards (SNP), which serve as benchmarks for determining institutional quality. Accreditation is carried out by a team of assessors who supervise and assist schools throughout the evaluation process (Wibowo et al., 2024). This accreditation initiative represents the government’s effort to ensure the quality of education, covering aspects such as the feasibility of learning processes, collaboration with parents, external support from educational services, and effective resource management (Susanti, 2021). The National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 explicitly states that one of the strategies for national development is implemented through evaluation, accreditation, and certification as part of strengthening the education system.

The primary goals of accreditation are to provide information regarding program feasibility, to grant recognition of eligibility rankings, to map the quality of education in accordance with the National Education Standards, and to ensure accountability to stakeholders as a form of public responsibility (Maulana, 2022). The significance of accreditation has profound implications for the future of education in Indonesia, as the nation must be able to adapt to rapid global changes and challenges (Fitri, 2023). Accordingly, accreditation organized by the government serves as a vital instrument for educational institutions to evaluate their quality and performance (Amri et al., 2022). Furthermore, the state is obliged to facilitate schools under its jurisdiction so that they have equal opportunities to achieve

accreditation status and undergo evaluation by experts in their respective fields, thereby continuously improving the quality of education (Fahrana et al., 2022).

The accreditation system is implemented across all levels of education without exception, ranging from kindergarten to higher education institutions (Widiastuti & Sudariyatna, 2022). However, in recent years, many educational institutions have increasingly been treated as part of industrial activities, placing greater emphasis on profit-making. The popularity of school brands or the facilities provided often misleads communities that lack a proper understanding of educational principles. This trend is evident among modern parents, who frequently prioritize social prestige by enrolling their children in expensive schools without thoroughly considering the actual quality of education being delivered.

Accreditation scores may change depending on the quality of a school (Garnika & Najwa, 2022). Within the accreditation process, institutional quality may decline, improve, or remain consistent with previous assessment periods (Aminah et al., 2022). Such variations are considered natural. A decline in accreditation status can be attributed to multiple factors. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (*Permendikbud*) No. 137 of 2014, eight standards are used to determine institutional eligibility: (1) child development achievement standards (STPPA), (2) curriculum standards, (3) process standards, (4) educator and education staff standards, (5) infrastructure standards, (6) management standards, (7) financing standards, and (8) assessment standards. Not all schools can fully meet these criteria, and shortcomings in fulfilling such aspects often contribute to the decline in accreditation ratings (Widiastuti & Sudariyatna, 2022).

The decrease in accreditation status may result from various causes (Kusumawati, 2022). The management of educational institutions requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the processes are running effectively and to identify whether progress has been made (Harahap & Hasibuan, 2023). Over the past five years, the Magelang Regency government has prioritized collecting data on schools that have not yet undergone accreditation. Additionally, the government has identified schools with declining scores and subsequently submitted them for reaccreditation.

The decline in accreditation status requires thorough analysis so that schools can identify the underlying causes of quality deterioration (Solikah et al., 2024). This study employs the SWOT analysis strategy. SWOT analysis is a descriptive analytical approach that categorizes situations and conditions based on their contributions (Miranti et al., 2021). It is widely used because it helps identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in a given context. SWOT analysis is useful for systematically identifying various influencing factors to formulate organizational strategies (Miranti et al., 2021). Internal factors include strengths and weaknesses, while external factors encompass opportunities and threats (Suriono, 2021).

SWOT analysis can be applied to organizations, businesses, as well as educational issues (Nababan et al., 2023). Before conducting the research, the first step undertaken by the researcher is to collect information from both internal and external factors. The four strategies under discussion consist of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Hidayat et al., 2021). This analysis is divided into two dimensions: internal analysis, which examines strengths and weaknesses that can be managed and modified from within the institution, and external analysis, which identifies opportunities and threats by collecting data from outside sources. The involvement of the entire school community is essential, not only teachers, but also all stakeholders who play a vital role in gathering relevant data and information (Najah & Darmiyanti, 2024).

SWOT analysis is conducted to identify institutional strengths and weaknesses in a gradual and structured manner, thereby generating valuable information (Nurcahyanti et al., 2024). In Magelang Regency, the researcher identified ten schools that experienced a decline in accreditation scores. These schools were found to have institutional issues in specific areas, with most cases showing a decrease in status from grade B to grade C. Re-accreditation will be conducted in the next cycle, which occurs every five years, to reassess school quality development. In essence, the improvement of educational quality

in Magelang Regency has not yet been implemented optimally.

2. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach. Qualitative research is descriptive and analytical in nature, producing descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the observed subjects (Waruwu, 2024). In this context, analysis refers to the process of interpreting, explaining, and illustrating the data obtained (Adlini et al., 2022). A case study is a research process that explores a particular case in depth to generate research findings (Ilhami et al., 2024).

Based on this approach, data were collected through observation and interviews. The research subjects consisted of ten kindergarten institutions in Magelang Regency that experienced a decline in accreditation status. The sources of data included both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through surveys and direct interviews with schools that had experienced accreditation decline, while secondary data were derived from assessors and the Department of Education. The interviews aimed to identify the problems faced by schools that contributed to the decline in accreditation ratings (Aminah & Amiliya, 2021). The interview results were then analyzed using the SWOT technique, whereby the researcher identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that are presented in this study. The data obtained through interviews were organized into interview grids (Toyyibah et al., 2022). This research employs direct interviews, where the researcher meets the informants in person at the institution.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Over time, education evolves in response to its changing circumstances and needs. The education regulations implemented are expected to encourage educators to compete and innovate in advancing education in Indonesia. Especially for kindergarten teachers, many things continue to change over time. Facing significant challenges, kindergarten teachers are expected to possess competencies that support their daily classroom activities. These competencies are beneficial for both children and parents in achieving educational goals. Achieving these goals requires cooperation between teachers and parents.

Quality improvement is not only directed at human resources but also at schools as institutions that must be assessed periodically. Education units undergo an accreditation process to evaluate their eligibility. Through this process, schools may experience an increase, remain at the same level, or even see a decrease in their accreditation scores. The score does not merely function as a number, but also provides parents with information about the school's feasibility.

To analyze this situation, the author conducted a study using a SWOT analysis approach. The data were obtained through interviews and document analysis. The sources of data consisted of teachers and school principals in the Magelang district whose schools experienced a decrease in accreditation scores over the past five years. The research instruments used included interview guidelines, school accreditation documents, and observation notes. Interviews were conducted directly by the researcher with teachers and principals, and the data collection took place in ten kindergarten schools across the Magelang district.

The findings reveal that many teachers do not fully understand how the accreditation process is carried out. Some contributing factors include the lack of a linear educational background and limited teaching experience. Additionally, changes in several aspects of accreditation indicators create confusion among teachers when preparing the required documents and evidence. However, this problem should not be viewed as insurmountable, as focusing solely on one aspect may lead to the

neglect of other important aspects. Through SWOT analysis of the ten schools studied, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats were identified.

In terms of strengths, preparation for accreditation is viewed as a significant advantage because schools feel more confident when the accreditation process is supported by thorough preparation. Togetherness in performance also becomes a significant strength, as cooperation fosters a strong sense of unity among teachers when facing accreditation. Additionally, having an energetic young teacher helps convey enthusiasm to children, making them more eager to participate in learning activities. Schools also benefit from having students who are willing to cooperate during the learning process.

Regarding weaknesses, several challenges were identified, including an unbalanced teacher-to-student ratio and inadequate facilities. Teachers' limited ability to operate IT and their lack of skill in documenting every learning activity remain major concerns. The availability of a variety of interesting toys remains insufficient, and learning facilities, such as loose parts and APE, are inadequate due to cost constraints. Children are also less interested in loose parts, especially in rural areas where natural materials such as shells, wood, pine flowers, and seeds are already familiar daily toys, causing boredom when used again at school. Teachers' limited ability to organize play activities contributes to children's lack of interest, and their limited mastery of learning concepts makes lesson planning using the available curriculum challenging, resulting in the continued use of worksheets. Another weakness is the lack of discipline among some children when entering school, which leads to time imbalance during learning activities.

Opportunities were also identified, as all schools expressed optimism about achieving improvement in the next year's accreditation due to the evaluations they have conducted and efforts to address deficiencies noted by assessors. The availability of new, young teachers with linear educational backgrounds presents an opportunity to enhance school quality, particularly because they are expected to be more proficient in IT and learning concepts, allowing them to adapt to competition and changes in the education sector. The accreditation experience itself has enriched teachers' knowledge, making them better prepared for future accreditation processes. Support from outside the school, such as the district government and parents, also contributes to a sense of being cared for and supported.

In terms of threats, the emergence of other schools in the area increases competition, especially those using the indent concept, which makes it difficult for certain schools to attract students. A school environment that is not child-friendly becomes another threat, alongside the lack of support from foundations and village government institutions, which leaves schools feeling less valued. Parents' limited educational awareness often leads to reluctance in sending children to kindergarten, and economic difficulties further reduce interest in early childhood education. Global competition, which requires teachers to be versatile and proficient in online systems, also poses challenges, particularly for older teachers who struggle to adapt. Additionally, parental demands remain a threat, as many still expect their children to master calisthenic skills upon graduating from kindergarten, despite this stage not being designed for such learning.

Some aspects identified in this study describe the internal and external conditions of the schools by using SWOT analysis. Internal factors are categorized as strengths and weaknesses, while external factors are categorized as opportunities and threats. The data in this section were obtained through interviews with teachers and principals, observations of school activities, and documentation related to the accreditation process. Based on the interviews, teachers explained that one of the strengths of their schools lies in the sense of togetherness among school members. They reported that cooperation and mutual support have become a crucial foundation for running school programs. This finding was supported by observation results, which showed that teachers and staff frequently collaborated in organizing activities and addressing classroom needs.

In addition to strengths, the interview data also revealed several weaknesses. For example, some teachers admitted having difficulty operating information technology, especially in documenting

children's learning activities. They explained that although documenting activities by taking photos seems simple, it becomes challenging when the number of teachers is very limited. In one of the schools observed, there was only one teacher who had to simultaneously guide learning and attempt to document activities, which was considered ineffective given the high level of activity among young children. From the document analysis, it was also found that completeness of documentation is one of the aspects requested by assessors during accreditation. Teachers acknowledged this and expressed concern that during the next accreditation period, assessors would again ask for evidence of learning documentation, such as photos and videos of children's activities

The findings from interviews and observations indicate that teachers have started to make efforts to ensure that documentation is always available, especially as part of preparation for the next accreditation period. Several teachers explained that documentation is considered important so that there will be no shortcomings when assessors request evidence. In addition, interview results revealed that one of the abilities teachers feel they still need to improve is mastery of learning materials. Teachers with non-linear educational backgrounds and limited teaching experience admitted that this condition affects their understanding of the learning content they deliver to students.

From the document analysis, it was also found that the Magelang district government provides guidance and technical assistance programs. Teachers reported that opportunities to participate in technical guidance and training activities were very helpful in increasing their skills and knowledge. Other findings also highlight external factors. For example, teachers stated that the emergence of new schools in the surrounding area creates competition. Many of these new schools, especially those with a religious foundation, are considered attractive to parents because they offer more comprehensive facilities compared to public schools. According to some respondents, these schools can attract a large number of students each year, and if the quota is full, they even apply an indent system for the following year. This situation, as described by the teachers, has resulted in an uneven distribution of students among schools in the Magelang district.

Based on the interview data and accreditation documents, respondents most frequently mentioned weaknesses and threats as the factors that strongly affected the decline in accreditation scores in several kindergartens in the Magelang district. Teachers explained that limitations in documentation, lack of mastery of learning materials, and insufficient human resources were identified as major weaknesses. Meanwhile, the emergence of new schools with more attractive facilities and religious-based programs was perceived as a threat, resulting in reduced student enrollment in public and smaller private schools. Observations and document analysis also supported these findings, showing that many schools still had incomplete evidence for accreditation requirements, particularly in the aspect of learning documentation. Teachers and principals acknowledged that these internal and external factors had a direct impact on the final accreditation score. Some schools reported that they had already begun making improvements based on the assessors' notes, particularly in completing administrative documents and strengthening teacher competencies.

Discussion

Over time, education will continue to evolve in response to its changing circumstances and needs. The educational regulations that are implemented are expected to encourage educators to compete and innovate in advancing education in Indonesia. Being a professional teacher requires mastering four competencies: pedagogical, personal, professional, and social. These four competencies are expected to enable teachers to educate children professionally. This ability is not only useful for children but also for parents in achieving educational goals. Collaboration between teachers and parents can have a profoundly positive influence on children's development.

An active role must be taken by establishing effective communication between schools and parents, as strong communication helps reinforce children's educational foundation. Teachers who possess the necessary abilities and skills in their fields will find it easier to achieve educational goals, namely,

shaping a superior and future-ready generation. Therefore, a platform that can facilitate teachers' professional development is needed. Apart from teachers' competence, the quality of schools must also be monitored regularly. The government, through an established institution, is responsible for assessing the quality of educational units in Indonesia.

To ensure quality standards, the government establishes a special team called the Assessor Team, which is responsible for conducting the accreditation process. The process begins with the submission of documents by the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) unit. The school then uploads a formal application letter as part of the initial stage. The second stage requires the education unit to complete the Accreditation Prerequisite Assessment (PPA) through the Accreditation Assessment System (Sispena) platform. The data entered into Sispena is integrated with the national education database (Dapodik). Therefore, schools are encouraged to provide accurate data and upload a statement of authenticity. In the third stage, BAN PAUD and PNF assign assessors to verify the data by analyzing its existence, completeness, and alignment with implementation. The fourth stage is the validation of the visitation results conducted by assessors, followed by the final stage: ratification and issuance of the Accreditation Decree, signed by the Chair and Secretary of BAN PAUD and PNF via the BAN PAUD website. Schools may also download the accreditation certificate through the designated platform. This accreditation process applies to all PAUD units across Indonesia.

Accreditation is generally renewed every five years, as the previous status is considered expired. However, many educators lack a full understanding of the accreditation process, often due to non-linear educational backgrounds or limited teaching experience. This contributes to weaknesses within schools. Government Regulation No. 137 of 2014 states that educators must hold at least a Diploma IV (D-IV) or a Bachelor's degree (S1) in Early Childhood Education and demonstrate the four core competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional. In addition, changes in accreditation procedures often cause confusion among teachers. Nevertheless, this should not be viewed as a major issue, as focusing only on certain aspects while neglecting others may lead to unbalanced results.

The results of the accreditation process can be further analyzed to identify schools' internal and external conditions using the SWOT framework (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats). The outcomes of this competition depend on how effectively schools design and implement strategies. A successful strategy in education requires the integration of technology, capitalizing on strengths, and reducing threats by addressing weaknesses. SWOT analysis provides a clear structure for collecting information from various sources and mapping internal factors (strengths and weaknesses) and external factors (opportunities and threats). This framework helps schools understand the factors influencing their accreditation outcomes.

The strengths identified include a spirit of collaboration and mutual support among school members. Such solidarity is essential in improving teacher performance, as it positively impacts overall work quality. Conversely, one of the main weaknesses faced by schools is teachers' limited ability to use IT, particularly in documenting children's daily activities. Technological advancements have had a profound impact on education, and teachers play a crucial role in determining its quality. This aligns with Government Regulation No. 74 of 2008 on teachers, which emphasizes the continuous development of competencies through science, technology, arts, and culture.

According to this regulation, teachers are required to adapt to changing times continually. The lack of documentation in accreditation assessments often stems from a shortage of teaching staff. For instance, assigning one teacher to handle both classroom activities and documentation is considered ineffective, especially when dealing with highly active young children. During assessor visits, the lack of supporting documentation was noted as a weakness, encouraging teachers to improve their practices. They acknowledged that in future assessments, assessors would require more comprehensive evidence, such as photos and videos. Apart from IT and documentation, some teachers also struggle with mastering learning concepts. Contributing factors include non-linear educational backgrounds,

frequent curriculum changes, and age-related challenges as some teachers near retirement. Older teachers often find it more challenging to adapt to technological changes, which makes it harder for them to integrate technology into their teaching.

The curriculum itself will continue to evolve to address shortcomings in previous versions and prepare for future challenges. Therefore, teachers' competencies must also be continuously developed. Despite existing weaknesses, schools strive to improve their quality by addressing challenges systematically. Recognizing their limitations, many institutions benefit from district government support, such as technical guidance and professional development programs designed to enhance teacher competence. This is seen as an opportunity to strengthen school quality. According to Law No. 23/2014, local governments are responsible for implementing education and are granted the flexibility to innovate. This regulation allows the Magelang district government, for instance, to improve education quality by conducting various training and capacity-building activities for teachers and principals.

Meanwhile, one of the external threats schools face is the emergence of new educational institutions, which increases competition. While competition can drive innovation, it may also exacerbate inequalities, as well-funded schools often gain an advantage while less-resourced schools struggle. Parents and students now have more options, including public, private, and religious-based schools. Currently, many newly established schools are private Islamic institutions that integrate both general and religious curricula. For parents seeking a balance between the two, Islamic schools are an attractive option. However, it is important to note that many public schools are also incorporating religious values into their programs to remain competitive. By embedding spiritual education alongside academics, these schools aim to balance themselves against Islamic institutions. In this way, competition among schools is expected to enhance both the quality and efficiency of education.

4. CONCLUSION

Using the SWOT analysis technique, ten schools that experienced a decline in accreditation scores in the Magelang district area found that the decline in scores was influenced by both internal factors (Strengths and Weaknesses) and external factors (Opportunities and Threats). Internal factors appear to be influenced by the strengths built through togetherness among teachers, principals, students, and parents. Additionally, the weaknesses experienced included the limited ability of teachers to operate IT, particularly in documenting every child's activity. Additionally, teachers' ability to understand learning materials also needs improvement. However, they have the opportunity to improve in the upcoming accreditation. This opportunity arises due to the attention and guidance from the Magelang district government for teachers, in the form of providing technical support to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in schools. At the same time, a considerable threat arises from the emergence of other schools, making the school more competitive. From the SWOT analysis of the decline in the accreditation status of kindergarten institutions in the Magelang district area, the results show that weakness factors (Weakness) and threats (Threats) dominate over other factors. The school's effort to improve quality is the right step in keeping pace with the evolving education landscape.

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