

Implementation of TQM at Palangka Raya State Vocational School: Improving the Role of Teachers and Education Personnel

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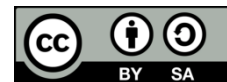
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ABSTRACT

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in State Vocational Schools (SMK) in Palangka Raya aims to enhance the quality of education sustainably through the management of learning, teacher and staff involvement, and curriculum development. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method, utilizing in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis as data collection techniques. TQM focuses on student and parent satisfaction, as well as improving the quality of graduates to be more competitive in the job market.

The results of TQM implementation indicate significant improvements in education quality, including increased satisfaction among students and parents. However, challenges such as limited human resources, budget constraints, and management's lack of sustained commitment persist. To address these challenges, State Vocational Schools have conducted teacher training, established collaborations with industries, and implemented transparent evaluation systems. By instilling a culture of quality throughout all school elements, it is hoped that State Vocational Schools can continuously improve educational quality and produce graduates who excel in the workforce.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Wherever we are, the quality of education is the determinant of a nation's future." This statement is often echoed in discussions of education policy in Indonesia. However, in fact, based on the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) report, Indonesia is still ranked at the bottom in terms of education quality compared to other countries. This challenge is increasingly evident in the teacher education system which plays a strategic role in producing quality teaching staff. Many teacher education institutions are considered unable to compete, so that the main mission of education, namely producing quality graduates, has not been fully achieved.

This gap gives rise to an urgent need to manage educational institutions professionally and improve quality continuously. Education experts offer five strategic steps, such as increasing institutional autonomy in managing education and finances, building a democratic system by involving the community, and referring to international standards in curriculum, teaching materials and assessments. All these steps aim to create competitive education at the global level.

One approach that is often proposed to improve the quality of education is Total Quality Management (TQM). TQM is a systematic approach to improving organizational performance through a quality culture that involves all elements, from teachers to students. TQM principles, such as focusing on customers (in this case students and parents), empowering teaching staff, and continuous improvement, have proven effective in various sectors, including education. According to Deming's (1986) research, implementing TQM in education can improve the quality of learning, student attendance and parental involvement.

In the Indonesian context, low teacher competency is one of the main factors hindering the quality of education. This condition highlights the importance of implementing TQM, especially in educational institutions such as State Vocational Schools, which have a vital role in preparing students for the world of work. Based on this urgency, this study aims to illustrate how the TQM model can be applied to support a quality work culture at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City.

With this approach, it is hoped that educational institutions in Indonesia will not only be able to meet local needs but also compete in the global market.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The researcher acts as the main instrument in this research, who is directly involved in the data collection and analysis process. The aim of this research is to reveal in depth the phenomena that occur, especially related to relevant situations and activities in various contexts such as education, economics and social (Creswell, 2001).

The data in this research was collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. This research seeks to obtain perspectives from school principals, ten teachers, ten staff, ten students, and ten secondary school principals regarding the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in State Vocational Schools. Respondents were asked to express their experience, level of involvement, knowledge, and views regarding the school's profile and history, vision and mission, teacher recruitment system, student entry requirements, education management, human resource management, information management, focus on customer satisfaction, and management partnership. All data was recorded in qualitative form, both in writing and in the form of audio recordings.

Data validity is maintained from the start through various stages, starting from data reduction, data presentation, to conclusion, and verified using various techniques such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility in this research was strengthened through an extended observation period, continuous observation, method triangulation by utilizing additional data sources for checking and comparison, as well as through peer discussion, negative case analysis, and peer evaluation.

The data analysis process follows the Miles and Huberman Model (Sugiyono, 2006), which involves several interrelated stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and verification. Data collection was carried out through interviews, participant observation, document analysis, and focus group discussions. The collected data is then categorized according to certain criteria. Data reduction is carried out by eliminating irrelevant information, abstracting and transforming the data to make it more focused, organized and structured systematically. Data is presented in the form of matrices, schemes, diagrams, graphs and pictures so that the data is easy to understand and analyze. The process of inference and verification begins at the initial stage of data collection to ensure the validity of the research results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Implementation of TQM in State Vocational Schools

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City involves several important aspects, including teaching, school management, involvement of teachers and staff, and curriculum development. TQM aims to continuously improve quality in all aspects of education, with a focus on customer satisfaction (students and parents), as well as improving the overall quality of education.

Teaching: In the teaching context, Total Quality Management (TQM) is applied by improving student-centered learning methods through active, creative and innovative approaches. Teachers are encouraged to regularly evaluate the learning process and adjust teaching methods based on student needs. One teacher stated, "We are encouraged to use technology such as interactive presentations and simulations to ensure students better understand the material." This is in line with the principle of continuous improvement in TQM, which emphasizes continuous evaluation and adjustment to customer (student) needs, as explained by Deming (1986). Remedial and enrichment programs are also routinely implemented to ensure each student achieves competency targets. However, implementing this approach faces challenges such as limited technological devices in some classes and the need for further training for teachers who are not yet familiar with technology. Other schools can adopt this strategy by providing intensive training to teachers and designing remedial programs based on student needs. Thus, this approach not only increases students' understanding of the material but also strengthens student involvement in the learning process.

School Management: In the school management aspect, the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) is carried out by emphasizing transparency, accountability and continuous improvement. The principal plays a role as a leader who facilitates a collaborative work culture and supports quality improvement. One principal explained, "We involve all parties, including teachers, staff, students, and parents, in strategic decision making." This process not only creates a work environment that supports continuous improvement, but also strengthens a sense of shared ownership of the school's progress. However, this implementation faces challenges such as a lack of understanding by some parties about TQM principles. To overcome this, schools routinely hold intensive training and communication with all stakeholders. Other schools can adopt a similar approach by building collaborative teams and ensuring the evaluation process is transparent. This participatory management principle supports efficient resource management while improving the overall performance of the school, in accordance with the TQM concept proposed by Deming (1986).

Teacher and Staff Engagement: Active involvement of teachers and staff is an important element in implementing Total Quality Management (TQM). Teachers at State Vocational Schools not only act as implementers of teaching, but also as agents of change who continue to create innovations in education. Through various training and professional development programs, teachers are encouraged to improve their pedagogical competence and mastery of teaching materials. One teacher stated, "The training provided by the school helps us understand the importance of quality in every step of the teaching and learning process." In addition, administrative staff also contribute to improving service quality by ensuring that all administrative processes run according to established standards. However, challenges such as limited time for training and resistance to change often arise. To overcome this, the school schedules training in stages and rewards staff who actively contribute to the improvement program. With this approach, the involvement of teachers and staff not only supports the successful implementation of TQM, but also creates a work culture oriented towards continuous quality improvement.

Curriculum Development: TQM is applied in curriculum development by ensuring that the curriculum is always relevant to industry needs and global demands. At State Vocational Schools, the curriculum is not only designed to meet national standards, but is also adapted to the needs of the local and national job market. This curriculum is updated regularly through joint evaluation with related parties, including the business world and industrial world (DUDI). Through good collaboration with the industrial world, schools can adapt the curriculum to the latest technological developments and workforce needs, so that vocational school graduates are ready to compete in the job market.

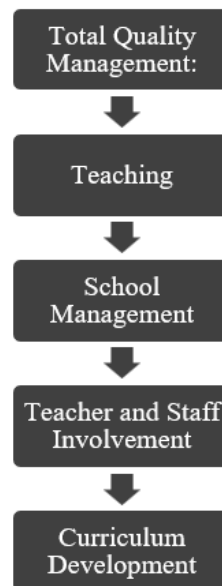


Figure 1. TQM Implementation Model in State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City

3.2. Implementation Results: Impact on Education Quality

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City has had a significant impact on the quality of education. With the implementation of TQM, the learning process becomes more structured, results-oriented, and centered on student needs. Teachers actively adjust teaching methods based on regular evaluations of student performance, creating a more effective and responsive learning environment. The use of technology and interactive learning approaches increasingly

supports students in developing their skills and knowledge, so that the quality of education in these schools continues to consistently improve.

One of the main results of implementing TQM is increasing the quality of State Vocational School graduates. An updated curriculum in line with local and national industry demands helps students to develop practical skills relevant to the world of work. Vocational school graduates are better prepared to compete in the labor market thanks to being equipped with skills that suit industry needs. This creates graduates who not only have technical abilities, but also have an understanding of the work ethic and professional standards required in the field, making them more competitive.

The implementation of TQM also has a positive effect on the level of student and parent satisfaction. Students feel more involved in the learning process because of a more personalized and varied approach, such as remedial and enrichment programs. Transparent evaluations give students a clearer view of their progress. On the other hand, parents feel more confident in the education system implemented at State Vocational Schools, thanks to open communication and their involvement in satisfaction surveys and dialogue with the school. Improving the quality of graduates and ensuring the relevance of the curriculum to the world of work gives parents confidence that their children are well prepared for the future.

The implementation of TQM has a significant impact on the quality of education at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City. One student said: "With an interactive learning approach, I feel better prepared to face the world of work." The use of technology and personalized learning creates a more effective learning environment.

The increase in the quality of graduates can also be seen from school data which shows 85% of students found jobs within six months of graduation. Parents appreciate the school's transparency, as stated by one parent: "We are involved in satisfaction surveys and get regular reports on our children's progress."

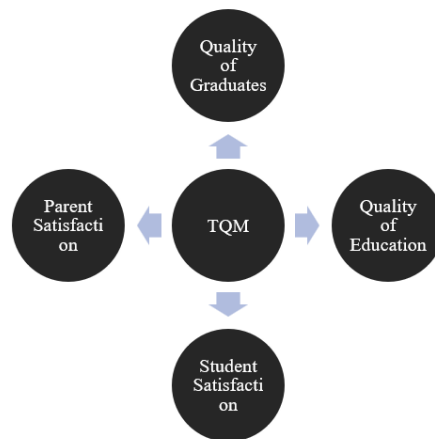


Figure 2. TQM Impact on Education Quality

3.3 Challenges in Implementing TQM in Vocational Schools: Human Resources, Budget, and Continuous Commitmen

Implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in vocational schools faces several main challenges, one of which is limited human resources (HR). Many teachers and administrative staff do not fully understand the principles of TQM, so their implementation is not optimal. One teacher mentioned, "We need additional training, especially to understand how to apply TQM in teaching." However, training and capacity development programs are often hampered by budget and time constraints. Apart from that, resistance to change from some teachers who are used to old work methods is also an obstacle in creating a culture of continuous improvement.

Budget limitations are also a significant challenge in implementing TQM in vocational schools. The development of technology, infrastructure and human resource training requires sufficient financial support, but many schools operate with limited funds. As a result, important facilities such as laboratories, the latest technological devices and innovative teaching materials cannot be provided adequately. This limits opportunities to improve the quality of learning and school management in accordance with TQM standards. In conditions like this, schools often have to prioritize other urgent needs, so that important aspects of TQM receive less attention.

Another challenge is the lack of ongoing commitment from management and stakeholders. Although TQM emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement, many initiatives stop at an early stage without consistent evaluation and follow-up. This often occurs due to a lack of support from decision makers or a lack of understanding of the importance of program sustainability. Apart from that, the involvement of parents and

the community is still low, even though they are important elements in creating a quality educational environment based on TQM principles. To overcome this obstacle, a stronger commitment from all parties is needed as well as a collaborative approach to support the implementation of TQM as a whole.

3.4 Efforts to improve quality through the TQM concept at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City

Improving the quality of education through the implementation of the Total Quality Management (TQM) concept at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City is carried out through various structured efforts. One of the main steps is to strengthen training and competency development of teachers and education personnel. Regular training programs are organized to improve their pedagogical knowledge and technical skills. With better abilities, teachers can apply learning methods that are innovative and responsive to student needs, creating a conducive learning environment and supporting the achievement of competency.

Apart from that, collaboration with the industrial world is an important strategy in implementing TQM. One principal explained, "Partnerships with industry really help our students be ready to face the challenges of the world of work." State Vocational Schools actively establish partnerships with various companies and institutions, ensuring the curriculum is relevant to the needs of the job market. Through practical fieldwork programs, students gain hands-on experience and build useful professional networks. This collaboration creates graduates who are competent and ready to compete in the world of work.

Another effort is the implementation of a transparent and sustainable evaluation system. State Vocational Schools use a feedback mechanism that involves students, parents and teaching staff in assessing the learning process and its results. This system helps identify areas of improvement while developing appropriate solutions, thereby increasing accountability and building trust among all stakeholders.

Finally, quality culture is a key element in implementing TQM. State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City encourage the active participation of all school members, including students, teachers and staff, to create an innovative environment and support continuous improvement. By consistently applying TQM principles, schools not only meet established educational standards but also produce quality graduates who are able to compete in the world of work.

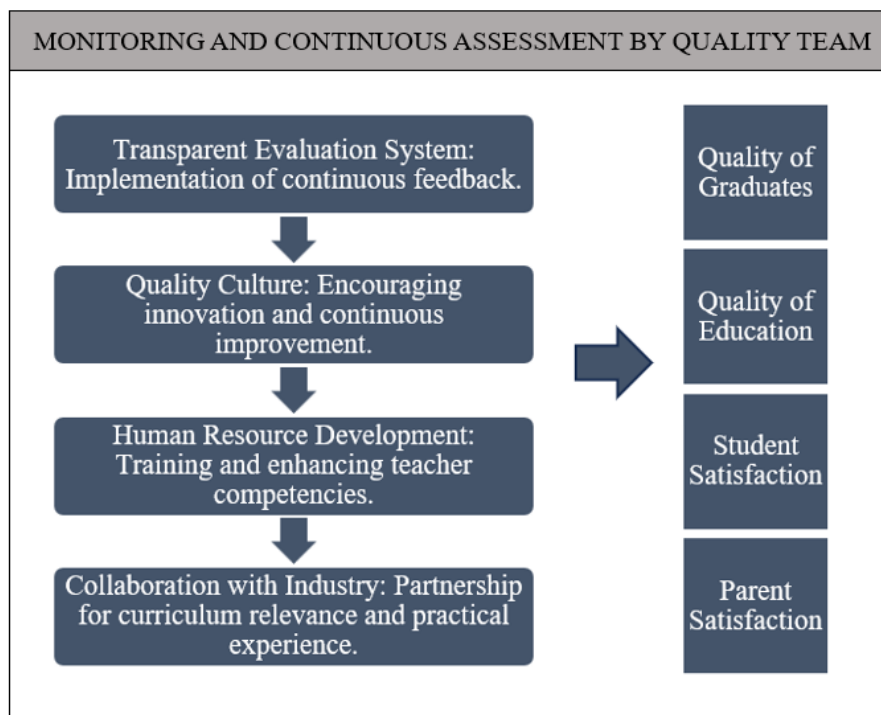


Figure 3. Quality improvement through the TQM

3.5 Relationship to Literature and Practical Implications

This finding is in line with TQM theory in education, as proposed by Deming (1986), which emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement and participation of all parties. The practical implication is that other schools can learn from the experience of Palangka Raya City State Vocational School in implementing relevant curricula and collaborating with industry.

The implementation of TQM at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City shows positive results in improving the quality of education, even though there are challenges such as limited human resources and budget. With continuous training, regular evaluations, and closer collaboration with DUDI, the implementation of TQM can be optimized to create quality education that is future-oriented

4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) at State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City has had a significant positive impact on the quality of education, by creating a more responsive and innovative learning environment. TQM encourages teachers to continue to improve teaching methods and increase student involvement in the learning process. This contributes to improving the quality of graduates who are better prepared to face the challenges of the world of work.

The implementation of TQM also strengthens the relevance of the curriculum to industry needs, ensuring graduates not only have technical skills, but also an understanding of the work ethic required in the field. Although much progress has been made, challenges related to limited human resources, budgets and ongoing commitment remain. Therefore, further efforts are needed to strengthen training for teachers and staff and improve facilities that support maximum implementation of TQM.

By consistently applying TQM principles, State Vocational Schools in Palangka Raya City can continue to improve the quality of education and produce human resources who are more competitive and ready to face the future.

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