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The Role Of National Education Standards In Improving The Quality Of Education In Indonesia

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Abstract

Quality education serves as a fundamental pillar of Indonesia's human resource development; however, disparities in educational quality across institutions remain a critical obstacle to equitable national educational services. The National Education Standards (SNP), regulated under Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021, provide a normative framework establishing eight minimum standard components to ensure uniform educational quality throughout Indonesia. This study aims to describe the implementation of SNP management within Indonesia's educational system, identify factors influencing its effectiveness, and analyze its contribution to the overall improvement of educational quality. This research employs a qualitative approach using library research methodology, drawing from reputable national scientific articles published between 2021 and 2026, retrieved through Google Scholar, Garuda, and SINTA databases. Data were analyzed using descriptive-analytic content analysis techniques. The findings reveal that integrated SNP management implemented through School-Based Management (SBM) and the PPEPP cycle within the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) framework significantly contributes to improved learning processes, graduate competencies, and accreditation outcomes. Key supporting factors include principals' managerial competence, teacher professionalism, and the collective growth of a quality culture. Conversely, infrastructure limitations in remote and underdeveloped areas, low information technology proficiency among educators, and weak data-driven decision-making constitute significant structural barriers. This study concludes that the SNP functions as a strategic instrument for quality equalization and the sustainability of the national education system. The government is recommended to strengthen

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affirmative policies for schools in disadvantaged regions through increased funding, digital literacy-based capacity building, and reinforced educational management information systems that support empirically grounded decision-making.

Keywords: Education Quality, Internal Quality Assurance System, National Education Standards, Quality Assurance, Educational Management

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as the primary foundation for the development of high-quality human resources and a strategic instrument for achieving a nation's progress. In Indonesia, efforts to realize equitable quality education have been formulated in various regulations, one of which is the establishment of the National Education Standards (SNP) as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021. The SNP serves as the minimum criteria that must be met by every educational institution throughout the territory of the Republic of Indonesia, covering eight main components: content standards, process standards, graduate competency standards, educator and educational staff standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, management standards, funding standards, and educational assessment standards. Conceptually, the SNP framework aims to provide measurable, structured, and accountable guidance for education providers in delivering equitable and high-quality educational services.

Empirically, various studies have documented that the implementation of the SNP has a positive correlation with improvements in the quality of educational institutions. The research by2020) at State Elementary Madrasah 1 in Gorontalo City demonstrated that consistent fulfillment of the eight SNP components significantly contributes to enhancing institutional competitiveness and achieving accreditation with an "excellent" rating. Furthermore, Syafii et al. (2023) developed an SNP-based *educational quality index* measurement instrument, indicating that the achievement of national standards can serve as an objective indicator for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the education system in a holistic manner. These empirical findings reinforce the position of the SNP not merely as an administrative tool, but as a pillar of quality assurance that fundamentally influences the direction of education policy.

However, on the other hand, there is a significant gap between the design of SNP policies and their implementation in the field. Ardiyan et al. (2022) , in their analysis of Indonesia's education quality standardization policies, found that disparities in institutional capacity among educational institutions—particularly between urban schools and schools in frontier, outermost,

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and underdeveloped (3T) regions—constitute the primary obstacle to the equitable fulfillment of standards. This issue is exacerbated by a shortage of competent human resources, inadequate infrastructure, and the weak managerial capacity of school principals to integrate the eight education standards into the institutional management system. Phumphongkhochasorn et al. (2022) also emphasize that weak internal quality assurance management is one of the crucial factors causing the achievement of the National Education Standards (SNP) to be suboptimal at the school level. This gap between policy ideals and implementation realities is the fundamental issue that requires serious academic attention.

From an educational management perspective, compliance with the National Education Standards (SNP) cannot be separated from the overall quality of educational institution governance. Ristianah & Ma'sum (2022) assert that management standards are a key component among the other eight SNP standards, as they serve as *the backbone* for the development and implementation of systematic and targeted educational programs. Weak management standards directly impact the quality of implementation of the other standards. In a broader context, Mohzana et al. (2024) found that a data-driven quality assurance system involving all *stakeholders* in a participatory manner has proven effective in driving improvements in educational quality at schools. This aligns with the findings of2022) , who concluded that the integration of *Total Quality Management* (TQM) with SNP-based curriculum implementation yields significant and sustainable improvements in educational quality.

Although studies on the SNP and educational quality have been conducted extensively, most previous research has focused on implementation aspects in specific educational institutions in a fragmented manner, or has examined only a single component of the SNP in isolation. There have been few literature reviews that comprehensively analyze the dynamics of SNP management as a unified system within the context of efforts to improve educational quality in Indonesia. Pamancar et al. (2025) , in their study on a TQM model based on the SNP for school principals in Medan, concluded that a holistic and integrative management model is needed that combines all dimensions of the SNP within a single strategic framework. This is where *the novelty* of this research lies: in the effort to synthesize and deeply analyze various findings from recent research on SNP management to offer a more comprehensive, critical, and practical perspective within the context of national education quality improvement policies.

Based on the background outlined above, the research questions in this study are as follows: first, how is National Education Standards management implemented within the education system in Indonesia?; second, what factors influence the effectiveness of SNP

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implementation in improving education quality in Indonesia?; and third, how does SNP management contribute to the overall improvement of education quality in Indonesia? In line with the research questions above, this study aims to: first, describe and analyze the application of NES management within the Indonesian education system; second, identify the determining factors that influence the effectiveness of NES implementation; and third, analyze the contribution of NES management to improving the quality of education in Indonesia based on relevant and up-to-date literature reviews.

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to enrich the body of knowledge in educational management, particularly regarding quality assurance theory and the implementation of national education policies. Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for *policymakers* in formulating more effective strategies to strengthen the SNP, for school principals in optimizing standards-based governance, and for education researchers as a conceptual foundation for the development of more in-depth and contextual follow-up research.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using *library research*, a scientific procedure that treats library materials as the primary focus of the study without requiring direct field research. As emphasized by Adlini et al. (2022) , qualitative research using literature review is descriptive in nature and aims to reveal phenomena holistically and contextually through the collection, reading, and in-depth analysis of various relevant literature sources. This approach was chosen because it is deemed appropriate for comprehensively examining the topic of the management of the National Education Standards (SNP) within the context of improving the quality of education in Indonesia, drawing from various previous research findings and studies. All data sources in this study are secondary, obtained from scientific articles and reputable national journals published from 2021 to 2026. The literature search was conducted systematically through online scientific databases, including Google Scholar, Garuda (Garba Rujukan Digital), SINTA (*Science and Technology Index*), and the portals of reputable higher education institutions in Indonesia. Keywords used in the search process include: *national education standards management*, *Indonesian education quality*, *SNP implementation*, *education quality assurance*, *internal quality assurance system*, *education management standards*, *education quality assurance*, and *school quality improvement*. Data collection was carried out through the stages of reading, noting, reviewing, and classifying information from all relevant sources. Sari & Asmendri

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(2020) emphasize that in literature reviews, the validity and relevance of sources are key, so the literature selection process was conducted rigorously based on topic relevance, journal quality, and year of publication. The data analysis technique used is *content analysis* of a descriptive-analytical nature, which involves filtering, synthesizing, and interpreting key ideas from various sources in a critical and in-depth manner. The results of the analysis are then presented narratively in the form of systematic paragraphs to address all research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the National Education Standards Management in the Indonesian Education System

1. Regulatory Framework and Managerial Mechanisms for the Implementation of the Eight Components of the National Education Standards

The implementation of the National Education Standards (SNP) in Indonesia is based on a strong regulatory framework, specifically Government Regulation No. 57 of 2021, which mandates that every educational institution must conduct integrated planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes based on eight standard components. These eight components include content standards, process standards, graduate competency standards, educator and educational staff standards, facilities and infrastructure standards, management standards, financing standards, and educational assessment standards. Helda & Syahrani (2022)) emphasize that the SNP serves as the minimum criteria that serve as a reference in from planning to the supervision of the implementation of national education, so that all educational institutions within the territory of the Republic of Indonesia are obligated to comply with them without exception. This standards-based managerial mechanism requires educational institutions to establish a structured work cycle, beginning with an analysis of standard requirements, followed by the development of measurable programs, then consistent implementation, and concluding with an evaluation that yields actionable recommendations for improvement. Daniati (2022) adds that school administration managed through such standard-based mechanisms serves as a strategic instrument in driving the sustainable improvement of Indonesia's educational quality, as the standardization of the education system is, in essence, the government's effort to ensure equitable quality across all educational institutions.

2. Management Models and Approaches for Integrating the SNP into Educational Institution Governance

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In the context of integrating the SNP into the governance of educational institutions, the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) model with its *Plan, Do, Evaluate, Set New Standards, and Improve* (PPEPP) cycle serves as the most relevant and comprehensive managerial approach. This cycle enables educational institutions to independently diagnose gaps between actual conditions and established standards, and then design targeted interventions on an ongoing basis. Sumaryanti & Purwanto (2023)) demonstrate that the implementation of School-Based Management (SBM), which involves the participation of all school stakeholders, has proven capable of significantly promoting the fulfillment of the eight National Education Standards (SNP), with management prioritizing programs to improve the quality of graduates and educators as the primary focus. Within this framework, the school principal serves as the primary driving force, not merely performing administrative functions but also leading an organic transformation of the culture of quality within the educational institution. Mesiono et al. (2022)) reinforce these findings by demonstrating that the implementation of management functions—namely planning, execution, and supervision—that are cohesively linked to each component of the SNP results in measurable improvements in accreditation, proving that an integrated managerial approach is the key to the successful implementation of standards at the school level.

Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of SNP Implementation in Improving Educational Quality

1. Supporting Factors for the Effectiveness of SNP Implementation

The effectiveness of SNP implementation at the school level is largely determined by a number of supporting factors that interact dynamically and synergistically. The managerial competence of the school principal is the most influential variable, as their leadership capacity determines the quality of program planning, the consistency of implementation, and the rigor of standards-based monitoring. Susanti (2021) states that effective educational leadership at the strategic, managerial, and operational levels directly supports the fulfillment of standards for educators and educational staff, which in turn contributes to the overall improvement of educational quality. In addition to leadership, the availability of competent human resources is also a determining factor that cannot be overlooked in the quality assurance ecosystem. Susanto et al. (2025)) empirically demonstrated that effective learning management strategies, *transformational* leadership support, and the availability of adequate resources play a crucial role in enhancing teacher competencies, and these findings underscore the need to strengthen sustainable professional development programs accompanied by transparent performance evaluations. Furthermore, the growth of a collective quality culture within the school environment

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reinforces the sustainability of SNP implementation because the entire school community feels a shared responsibility for achieving the standards set at the national level.

Factors Hindering SNP Implementation

Conversely, there are structural barriers that weaken the effectiveness of SNP implementation, particularly in educational institutions located in remote, frontier, and underdeveloped (3T) areas. Ardiyan et al. (2022)) identified that the management of process standards and teacher standards has not been optimally implemented in many schools, with the main obstacle being the low level of information technology proficiency among teachers as a learning support tool that is increasingly inseparable from the modern educational process. Disparities in institutional capacity between urban schools and 3T areas create significant gaps in standard achievement that are difficult to address through a uniform policy approach. Furthermore, the weakness of data systems in *data-driven decision-making* causes the evaluation of " " standards to proceed without a strong empirical basis, resulting in interventions that are often misdirected. Fadhila (2021) adds that education funding that is not managed effectively and efficiently also serves as a critical barrier, given that the functions of financial management—including planning, accounting, utilization, recording, monitoring, and accountability—must operate synergistically to ensure that the linear correlation between education costs and quality outcomes is optimally realized.

Table 1. Supporting Factors and Barriers to SNP Implementation in Educational Institutions

Dimension	Supporting Factors	Barriers
Leadership	Principal's managerial competence	Inconsistency in regional policy support
Human Resources	Teacher professionalism and competence	Teachers' low level of ICT proficiency
Resources	Availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure	Budget constraints in 3T regions
Organizational Culture	*A collectively developed culture of quality*	Resistance to changes in standards
Information Systems	Evaluation based on empirical data	Weaknesses in data-driven decision making

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Financing	Transparent financial management	Inefficiency in the allocation of education budgets

Source: Adapted from Susanti (2021) , Susanto et al. (2025) , Ardiyan et al. (2022) , and Fadhila (2021)

The Contribution of SNP Management to Improving the Quality of Education in Indonesia

1. The Direct Contribution of SNP Management to the Quality of the Learning Process, Graduate Competencies, and Accreditation Outcomes

SNP management, when implemented consistently and in a structured manner, makes a measurable direct contribution to the quality of the learning process in educational institutions. When process standards are implemented correctly, teaching and learning activities become more focused, planned, and oriented toward achieving the graduate competencies that have been nationally established. Syafar & Sidik (2025) *)* demonstrate that educational institutions that adhere to all eight SNP standards while integrating them with internal standards based on *inputs*, *processes*, *outputs*, and *outcomes* have successfully become model schools with superior management, proving that this dual approach yields a more comprehensive impact on quality. Contributions to enhancing graduate competencies serve as the most tangible and measurable quality indicators, as graduates who meet competency standards reflect the overall success of the consistently applied standard management system. Siswopranoto (2022) emphasizes that quality education must produce graduates possessing integrated academic, vocational, personal, and social competencies, in line with the SNP's primary orientation toward fostering well-rounded individuals. The achievement of educational institution accreditation further serves as formal and objective evidence that SNP management has been effective, as accreditation is essentially an external verification mechanism of the level of standard compliance achieved by the school.

2. The Long-Term Strategic Contribution of SNP Management in Building a Just and Sustainable Education System

Strategically and in the long term, SNP management contributes to building the foundation of a national education system that is equitable, equitable, and sustainable through the strengthening of quality assurance as a transformative instrument. National quality assurance based on the SNP serves as a mechanism for the redistribution of educational quality, enabling educational institutions across various regions to achieve equivalent standard levels without geographical discrimination. Mesiono et al. (2022) explain that the quality of educational

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services—encompassing facilities, curriculum, teacher competencies, leadership, as well as a conducive school culture and environment—collectively establishes an educational institution as a trusted and chosen partner by the community for the strategic development of Indonesia's human resources. Furthermore, nationally established standards encourage every educational unit to continuously update and adapt to the demands of local, national, and global life, which are constantly evolving dynamically. Yanti & Syahrani (2025) *)* emphasize that standards for educators within the SNP framework are a crucial element, given that educators are the government's frontline agents directly interacting with students; thus, strengthening educator standards through sustainable SNP management constitutes the most fundamental long-term investment in transforming Indonesia's education system into one that is high-quality, equitable, and globally competitive.

Table 2. Contribution of SNP Management to the Dimensions of Educational Quality

Quality Dimensions	Achievement Indicators	Contributing SNP Components	Nature of Contribution
Learning Process	Quality of learning planning and implementation	Process Standards and Content Standards	Direct
Graduate Competencies	Academic, character, and life skills achievements	Graduate Competency Standards	Direct
Educator Competencies	Teacher professionalism and performance	Standards for Educators and Educational Staff	Direct
Accreditation	BAN-S/M Accreditation Rating	Compliance with the 8 components of the National Education Standards	Direct
Quality Equity	Quality equity across regions	SNP as a shared national standard	Long-Term Strategy
System Sustainability	National Quality Culture and Quality Assurance	SPMI based on the PPEPP cycle	Long-Term Strategy

Source: Adapted from Syafar & Sidik (2025) , Siswopranoto (2022) , Mesiono et al. (2022) , and Yanti & Syahrani (2025)

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CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the consistent implementation of *the National Education Standards* (SNP) through the *School-Based Management* (SBM) approach and the *PPEPP* cycle within the framework of *the Internal Quality Assurance System* (SPMI) significantly contributes to improving the quality of the learning process, graduate competencies, and accreditation achievements of educational institutions in Indonesia. Key supporting factors include the managerial competencies of school principals, teacher professionalism, and the growth of a collective *quality culture*, while structural barriers—such as infrastructure limitations in *3T* regions, low *ICT* proficiency, and weak *data-driven decision-making*—remain serious challenges. Strategically, the National Education Standards (SNP) serve as an instrument for quality equity and the sustainability of the national education system. However, this study has *limitations* due to the reliance on secondary data from literature reviews, so generalizing the findings requires caution. Practical *implications* call for strengthening school principals' managerial capacity and accelerating the fulfillment of standards in underdeveloped regions as a national policy priority.

Based on the findings of this study, educational institutions are advised to optimize the implementation of the SPMI cycle independently and consistently by involving all internal *stakeholders* as part of the internalization of *a quality culture*. Central and local governments need to strengthen affirmative policies that support educational institutions in *3T* areas, including increased budget allocations, *digital literacy-based* teacher *capacity-building* programs, and the strengthening of educational management information systems that support data-driven decision-making. Policy-making institutions are recommended to revise the SNP evaluation approach to make it more adaptive to local contexts without compromising national standards. For future research, it is suggested to conduct *mixed-method* studies or comparative *field research* among educational institutions from various geographical and socio-economic contexts, to produce findings that are more *valid*, *reliable*, and broadly generalizable in the development of equitable national education policies.

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