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Implementation Of *Total Quality Management* In Improving The Quality Of Education At State Elementary School 9 Sungai Rotan, Muara Enim District

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles in improving educational quality at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan, Muara Enim Regency. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, with data analysis using a qualitative descriptive approach. The research findings indicate that: (1) The implementation of TQM principles at SD N 9 Sungai Rotan has been effective through strategies that touch upon three main dimensions: the learning process, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. (2) Factors supporting the implementation of TQM include the visionary and participatory leadership of the school principal, the involvement of all school members, a conducive and communicative work culture, commitment to continuous improvement, and external support from the school committee and government. On the other hand, the obstacles to implementing TQM include limitations in educational facilities and infrastructure, the limited digital competencies of teachers, limited time and administrative burdens on teachers, a lack of awareness of quality concepts, and limited school operational budgets. (3) The implementation of TQM has had a tangible impact on the learning process, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. In the learning process, TQM principles are reflected in continuous improvements to teaching methods and strategies. Regarding teacher performance, TQM encourages increased professionalism and responsibility. Meanwhile, in student learning

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outcomes, TQM has contributed positively to improving academic achievements and students' learning attitudes, making them more active, disciplined, and highly motivated.

Keywords: Total Quality Management, Educational Quality.

INTRODUCTION

The Indonesian education system faces a number of internal and external challenges. The eight National Education Standards (SNP) remain unmet in many institutions, representing an internal problem. Globalization is an external threat that has impacted every aspect of society (Puspitasari, 2018:339). Therefore, education is a crucial factor in determining the quality of human resources because, in the modern world, a country's superiority is determined by the quality of its human resources, not the quantity of its natural resources. This is because the quality of education is positively correlated with the quality of its human resources (Fitrah, 2017:32).

Taking into account the difficulties mentioned above, several stakeholders must continue to strive to improve educational standards to build human resources and national character. According to Mulyasa (2018: 31), improving educational standards is a goal of national educational development and an important component of initiatives to improve the standards of Indonesian society as a whole.

Changing realities are essential for improving the quality of education. Due to the ever-changing nature of science, national education must internationalize to keep pace with global developments in science and technology. Therefore, a quality management system is crucial for achieving optimal results (Makbulloh, 2018:142).

According to Widodo (2016), there are a number of reasons why education in Indonesia is still of poor quality, including: 1) inadequate physical facilities; 2) poor teacher quality; 3) low teacher welfare; 4) low student achievement; 5) limited equal educational opportunities; 6) low relevance of education to needs; and 7) high education costs. This shows that because leadership determines whether an organization's performance improves or declines, the principal's function as a manager is expected to have a significant impact on school success.

The principal is expected to determine the direction of the institution's policies, which is a crucial component in the advancement of the educational institution. As a manager, the principal is responsible for every operational aspect of the organization. Therefore, the principal must demonstrate adequate leadership in overseeing the school and human resources to implement these changes in educational quality.

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According to the research findings of Rosyadi and Pardjono (2015), the principal has managerial responsibilities, such as: 1) creating a program by detailing the needs of teachers and educational staff who will carry out the tasks, designing the curriculum to be implemented, adding guidance and counseling subjects with a time of two hours per week; 2) creating an organizational structure that involves parents of students through the school committee and completing the necessary infrastructure; 3) providing a good and calm example in working, motivating and appreciating personnel both morally and materially, improving welfare, involving educators and educational staff in training and motivating senior teachers to have a spirit of lifelong learning; and 4) supervising *output* , PBM, and students from the admission process until they finish school.

Principals should understand and be able to carry out the tasks associated with managerial responsibilities to improve the quality of education. Thorough educational management, which ensures every action has a clear purpose, is crucial to educational quality. This is clarified in Minister of National Education Regulation No. 19 of 2007 concerning Educational Management Standards for Elementary and Secondary Education Units.

Every educational unit is required to comply with educational management criteria in accordance with national standards, as stipulated in the aforementioned Ministerial Regulation on National Education. Program planning, implementation of educational work plans, and program monitoring and evaluation are all included in these management standards. The quality of an educational institution is largely determined by these three educational management standards. In other words, it can be explained that there are only three educational management standards that can be used to implement quality management in an educational institution. The principal of an educational institution is one of the human resources who can help meet these three standards (Wulogening and Timan, 2020).

To build and implement the principles of a quality culture within their institutions, principals need to adopt a new perspective. In times of transition, creating high-quality education requires this new paradigm or framework. Strategies are needed to implement these ideas. *Total Quality Management* (TQM) is the best approach to address this.

This research was conducted at Sungai Rotan 9 Public Elementary School, Muara Enim Regency. The researcher chose Sungai Rotan 9 Public Elementary School because it met criteria that supported the research process, including its easily accessible location, adequate school infrastructure, and resources that could support research activities.

Based on the results of initial observations conducted by researchers on May 19, 2025 to May 23, 2025, researchers found problems in the quality of education at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan,

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including the less than optimal implementation of school management where the principal did not play an active role in implementing the principal's program. The school has not been able to utilize facilities and infrastructure for the learning process and, budget limitations to provide learning infrastructure at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan. The principal has not yet optimally provided guidance, coaching and supervision to teachers to make improvements to problems related to the implementation of learning.

In addition to the concerns outlined above, inappropriate placement of teaching staff, such as appointing non-experts, can lead to suboptimal performance. Not all instructors have access to ongoing training programs, especially regarding curriculum implementation in the classroom. Some educators have created lesson plans utilizing the independent curriculum, but in practice, they still use semi-conventional approaches.

Meanwhile, the problem of implementing integrated quality management at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan that was encountered by the researcher was the weak monitoring and evaluation system carried out by the principal, this was seen where the principal rarely visited the class to monitor the teaching and learning process. In addition, the principal did not use standard instruments in carrying out supervision activities and the results of supervision were not followed up with coaching or performance improvements which had an impact on teacher self-development in carrying out the learning process.

RESEARCH METHODS

A descriptive qualitative approach was used in this study. In this study, the researcher wanted to describe and obtain an overview and also collect the necessary data and information related to the implementation of *Total Quality Management* in improving the quality of education at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan, Muara Enim Regency. The research procedure is a series of steps and techniques used to collect information and analyze data to identify objects that will be the subject of research. To obtain an overview of the implementation of *Total Quality Management* (TQM) in improving the quality of education at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan, Muara Enim Regency, the research design used was a qualitative analytical descriptive technique.

In this study, data was collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. In this study, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions are examples of data analysis approaches. Through data reduction, presentation, and verification procedures, the collected data were processed using domain analysis to produce a broad and comprehensive picture of the research object (Miles and Huberman, 2013).

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RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of TQM Principles in Improving the Quality of Education at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan

Total Quality Management (TQM) principles at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has been proven to have a significant impact on improving student learning outcomes. TQM principles, such as *continuous improvement* , *customer focus* , and *total involvement* , are implemented comprehensively in the school environment, from the learning process to evaluation and collaboration with parents. The implementation of these principles not only focuses on improving teacher performance and the learning process, but also prioritizes achieving quality learning outcomes that are in accordance with student needs.

Based on the research results, it was found that the implementation of TQM principles contributed to increased student motivation, learning quality, and behavioral changes, leading to more discipline and responsibility. This proves that the TQM approach at this school has created a culture of quality that focuses not only on academic results but also on developing students' attitudes and character.

The principle of *continuous improvement* applied to the learning process at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan demonstrates a continuous effort to improve the quality of learning. The principal, teachers, and supervisors actively analyze evaluation results to refine the teaching methods used. This evaluation process involves problem analysis and learning reflection to identify student difficulties, which are then used as a basis for developing more effective learning strategies.

The application of this principle has proven effective in improving student learning outcomes, particularly in terms of better understanding of the material. Adapting teaching methods to students' specific needs makes the material easier to understand, a feeling directly felt by students like Nayla Firanisa. Thus, continuous improvements in learning strategies have positively impacted student learning outcomes.

customer-focused principle of TQM requires schools to focus on student needs in the learning process. Teachers and principals strive to understand each student's characteristics and learning styles and adapt learning approaches to suit their needs (Jufri et al., 2023). This is reflected in the principal's policy to encourage teachers to adapt teaching methods to the differences in student abilities, as well as providing space for students to interact and be active in learning.

The application of this principle also improves learning comfort, making it easier for students to understand lessons because the approach is tailored to their abilities and focused on

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their needs (Purwowidodo & Zaini, 2023). This demonstrates that learning at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan is more humanistic, placing students at the center of every learning activity.

One of the most striking impacts of implementing TQM principles is increased student motivation and discipline in the learning process. Principals instill important values such as discipline, responsibility, and a passion for learning through routine activities that support a culture of quality. Teachers also play a key role in this by providing positive role models, where their discipline and enthusiasm in teaching serve as examples for students to emulate. This aligns with observations by school supervisors who stated that student motivation increases because teachers provide positive role models.

Furthermore, providing positive feedback from teachers helps students feel valued and more motivated to learn. Student motivation increases when they receive praise or recognition for their efforts, creating a more positive and productive learning environment. As a result, students like Nayla Firanisa feel more enthusiastic about learning and strive to improve their performance.

the total involvement principle in TQM at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan is reflected in the close collaboration between teachers, the principal, and parents. Regular communication between the school and parents helps monitor student learning progress, both academically and behaviorally. The principal holds monthly meetings with parents to discuss student progress, which contributes to achieving better learning outcomes.

Teachers also frequently communicate with parents, both in person and via text messages, to report on student progress. This helps create synergy between home and school in supporting student learning outcomes. Furthermore, parental involvement in the learning process has been shown to increase student motivation, as expressed by Nayla Firanisa, who felt more cared for because her parents received information directly from teachers.

The implementation of TQM principles at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has had a significant impact on students' academic achievement and changes in their learning behavior. Along with the implementation of the principles of continuous improvement, student focus, and collaboration with parents, student achievement in subjects such as Indonesian and science has shown significant improvement over the past three years. In addition to improving academic scores, changes in student attitudes and behavior have also been seen, leading to greater discipline, confidence, and responsibility, indicators of the success of the quality-based learning process.

As the principal stated, this improvement is not only evident in report card grades, but also in students' more disciplined and confident behavior. This is reinforced by statements from school

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supervisors and teachers who observed significant changes in student attendance and behavior. These student achievements and behavioral changes demonstrate that the implementation of TQM at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has successfully created a more productive and results-oriented learning environment.

Overall, the implementation of TQM principles at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has had a positive impact on student learning outcomes, both academic and non-academic. Through continuous improvement in learning strategies, a focus on student needs, increased motivation and discipline, and close collaboration with parents, the school has successfully created a more effective and humane learning environment.

The implementation of TQM has also been proven to not only improve student academic achievement but also shape student character, making them more disciplined, confident, and responsible. This demonstrates that TQM principles can be effectively applied in educational contexts to improve the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of *Total Quality Management* (TQM) at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan

Total Quality Management (TQM) principles at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has been supported by several factors that strengthen its effectiveness in the field. These factors include organizational culture, school practices, and learning approaches.

The culture of punctuality at Sungai Rotan 9 Public Elementary School is a key supporting factor in the implementation of TQM. Punctuality, applied to all learning activities, provides a strong foundation for discipline within the school. This creates order, which is crucial for ensuring that all activities, both teaching and administration, run efficiently and according to plan.

The second supporting factor is the implementation of clear and concise classroom *Standard Operating Procedures* (SOPs), which help reduce confusion in the classroom and facilitate teachers' implementation of each stage of learning. With clear SOPs, teachers can be more organized in managing their classes, reduce errors in teaching, and more easily maintain consistency in teaching quality.

Another factor is that the habit of reading 15 minutes before class has been proven effective in increasing student readiness to learn. This habit helps students better prepare themselves before starting core learning. Observations have shown that students who habitually read before class can concentrate and understand the material better. This habit also contributes to students' literacy development, which in turn improves their learning outcomes.

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Furthermore, *coaching* and *lesson study* are methods that support the professional development of teachers at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan. Teachers at this school share experiences and help each other overcome learning challenges. Through these activities, teachers can continuously improve their skills and develop better teaching methods, while also enriching their knowledge of more effective teaching techniques. Through *lesson study* , teachers can observe and learn from their colleagues' teaching practices, and develop approaches that better suit students' needs.

Another factor is the collaboration between schools and parents, which plays a crucial role in supporting TQM implementation. Through structured communication, such as regular meetings and regular reports on student progress, parents can better understand their child's learning process. This parental involvement supports student learning outcomes, as they can provide consistent support at home and collaborate with the school to improve the quality of learning.

As Innaba (Purnamasari, Widayatsih, and Fitriani 2022) points out , parents are not only obligated to provide school facilities and fees. Children also need guidance from their parents. Consistent parental involvement as mentors at home in implementing TQM through collaboration with the school will provide support in improving the quality of learning, thus impacting student learning outcomes.

While many supporting factors contribute to TQM implementation, there are also a number of barriers that must be overcome to ensure effective and sustainable implementation. One such barrier is the slow transition between activities. The process of moving from one learning topic to another or from one method to the next can sometimes take a significant amount of time, resulting in wasted time. This reduces the time that should be used for core learning processes, which can impact learning effectiveness. Therefore, efforts are needed to expedite activity transitions to maximize the time available for learning.

Furthermore, the lack of availability of teaching materials for learning is another significant obstacle. In some cases, the teaching materials needed to support the learning material are unavailable or not ready to use on time. This unpreparedness hinders the smooth running of the learning process and reduces the quality of instruction. Therefore, it is crucial for schools to ensure that all necessary teaching materials are prepared well in advance so that learning can proceed as planned.

The excessive administrative burden is a significant obstacle to the smooth running of teaching at Sungai Rotan 9 Public Elementary School. The numerous administrative tasks teachers must complete reduce the time they can spend preparing lessons and innovating teaching

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methods. A high administrative burden can also cause stress for teachers and affect the quality of instruction. Therefore, reducing the administrative burden would be highly beneficial in ensuring teachers have more time and energy to focus on improving teaching.

In some classes, the use of limited learning methods is a barrier that affects the quality of learning. Monotonous and lack of variety in teaching methods can make students bored and less engaged in learning. This leads to decreased motivation. To improve learning outcomes, it is important to provide teachers with further training in using more engaging and varied learning methods and supporting students to be more active in the learning process.

To address the identified barriers, several mitigation measures have been implemented. One is the use of 80/20 mapping, which helps schools focus resources on two dominant issues every 6-8 week cycle. This approach allows schools to more efficiently address the issues that most impact the quality of learning.

The implementation of TQM at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan is supported by various factors, such as a culture of punctuality, concise class SOPs, a 15-minute reading habit, *coaching/lesson study* , and collaboration with parents. However, obstacles such as slow activity transitions, unprepared teaching materials, excessive administrative burdens, and limited method variations must be overcome so that TQM implementation can run more effectively and sustainably. Mitigation efforts undertaken, such as 80/20 mapping, the use of transition timers, and strengthening a culture of peer appreciation, are expected to improve the TQM implementation process and enhance the quality of learning at this school.

The Impact of the Implementation of *Total Quality Management* (TQM) on Improving the Quality of Education at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan

Total Quality Management (TQM) principles at Sungai Rotan 9 Public Elementary School has shown a significant impact on the learning process. One of the most visible impacts is the increased consistency of SOP implementation and the efficiency of transitions between learning activities. According to an interview with the school supervisor, “Changes are most readily seen in the process; impacts on outcomes follow when interventions are maintained consistently across cycles.” This statement demonstrates that while impacts on learning outcomes may take time to become apparent, changes in the process can be readily identified when TQM principles are consistently applied.

Increasing the efficiency of transitions between activities means reducing the time lost during transitions. With clear and consistently implemented SOPs, learning activities become

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more structured and organized. This more structured learning process allows teachers to focus more on core learning and better address students' individual needs. This improves the implementation of core learning steps, and allows for more optimal use of available learning time.

The implication of this improved process is the creation of a more organized and focused learning environment, which in turn impacts improved student learning outcomes. A more structured process allows teachers to allocate more time to teaching and provide individual attention, especially to those who require more attention in their learning.

The impact of TQM implementation is also significantly felt on teacher performance. One of the most striking results is more systematic collaboration between teachers. Previously, activities such as lesson study and peer observation tended to be conducted incidentally and without a well-scheduled schedule. However, with the implementation of TQM, these activities have become a regular part of the school's routine. This collaboration between teachers provides an opportunity to share good practices, identify learning challenges, and find joint solutions.

By using more concise data and data-driven analysis, decisions are made more quickly and accurately. This data helps teachers more quickly identify areas for improvement in their teaching and enables them to promptly make changes to their learning strategies.

These impacts demonstrate that TQM plays a crucial role in creating a more responsive learning environment. Teachers have the opportunity for more accurate and systematic data-driven reflection, which empowers them to make improvements and adjustments to instructional strategies more quickly. The implication of this improved teacher performance is an improvement in the overall quality of teaching. When teachers have the opportunity to share knowledge and proven strategies, the quality of teaching across the school becomes more consistent and standardized.

The most anticipated impact of TQM implementation is improved student learning outcomes. Clearer and more targeted feedback allows students to focus more on areas where they need to improve. Previously, feedback was often general and did not provide enough specific information for students. With the consistent implementation of rubrics and exit tickets, students now receive more detailed feedback, which helps them more clearly understand what needs to be improved.

Furthermore, student engagement in learning also increased. Students felt more engaged in the learning process because they were given the opportunity to reflect on their understanding of the material through reflective closure at the end of each lesson. This reflective closure helped students evaluate their own understanding and provided an opportunity to practice areas of

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weakness.

This impact is particularly evident in the reduction in the need for repeated remediation, which was previously a challenge for many students. With clearer feedback and the opportunity to make immediate improvements, students can more quickly address their difficulties and improve their understanding of the material. This is reflected in student portfolios, which demonstrate the improved quality of their answer elaboration and their ability to revise their work based on feedback.

The implications of this impact are that students become more active in their learning, develop deeper understanding, and are able to identify and improve their weaknesses more independently. Therefore, the implementation of TQM in this school not only improves students' academic achievement but also strengthens their metacognitive skills, enabling them to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

Thus, the impact of implementing TQM principles in the learning process is reflected through continuous improvement efforts in teaching methods and strategies. Teachers play an active role in developing more effective and enjoyable learning. The principal serves as a facilitator, encouraging collaboration between teachers. The reflective culture that has developed in this school strengthens the spirit of continuously improving the quality of learning according to student needs. In terms of teacher performance, the implementation of TQM encourages increased professionalism and responsibility. Teachers demonstrate a high awareness of the importance of work quality, from planning and implementation to evaluation of learning. The principal, as a quality leader, also plays a role in creating an open, participatory, and collaborative work environment.

Support from school supervisors also strengthens the direction of quality improvement-oriented development. In terms of student learning outcomes, TQM principles have been shown to positively impact academic achievement and student learning attitudes. Focusing on individual student needs, improving learning methods, and involving parents in the educational process significantly improve learning outcomes. Students become more active, disciplined, and highly motivated to learn .

Overall, the implementation of TQM principles at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan has had a significant positive impact on the learning process, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. These impacts confirm that TQM implementation can improve the quality of education in a more structured, efficient manner, and focused on teacher professional development and student learning outcomes. As a recommendation, the school should continue and strengthen the

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implementation of TQM, with greater attention to collaboration between teachers and more efficient time management .

In implementing TQM, there are several important factors that must be considered to achieve the status of a quality and guaranteed educational institution. Continuous improvement, establishing quality standards (quality assurance), changing organizational culture (cultural change), restructuring the organizational structure (inverted organization), and fostering positive relationships with all stakeholders (maintaining closeness to customers) are some of them. A strong TQM implementation strategy, close collaboration among all components of the educational institution, and the institution's ability to overcome obstacles are crucial to its success.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that the application of TQM principles in improving the quality of education at SD N 9 Sungai Rotan has been running well through various strategies that touch three main dimensions, namely the learning process, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. Supporting Factors for the Implementation of TQM at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan are supported by several interrelated supporting factors, both from the aspects of leadership, human resources, work environment, and external support, including a) Visionary and Participatory Leadership of the Principal; b) Involvement of All School Residents (*Total Involvement*); c) Conducive and Communicative Work Culture; d) Commitment to Continuous Improvement *e* . External Support from the School Committee and the Government. Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of TQM at SD Negeri 9 Sungai Rotan. These obstacles come from internal and external factors that are interrelated and influence the effectiveness of the implementation of TQM principles, including: a) Limited Educational Facilities and Infrastructure; b) Limited Digital Competence of Teachers; c) Limited Time and Administrative Burden of Teachers; d) Lack of Awareness of Some Parties towards the Concept of Quality; e) Limited School Operational Budget.

The implementation of TQM principles at SD N 9 Sungai Rotan has had a significant impact on the learning process, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. In the learning process, TQM principles are reflected through continuous improvement efforts in teaching methods and strategies. In terms of teacher performance, TQM implementation encourages increased professionalism and accountability. In terms of student learning outcomes, TQM principles have been shown to have a positive effect on improving academic achievement and

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student learning attitudes. Students become more active, disciplined, and have a high learning motivation.

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