Journal of Pedagogy and Education Science (JPES)
Vol. 5, No. 01, pp. 176-189
journal.iistr.org/index.php/JPES
DOI: 10.56741/IISTR.jpes.001182

Strategy to Improve the Quality of Education at Muara Wis State Junior High School through Strengthening School Management

A Qualitative Analysis of School Management Functions and Implications for Educational Performance

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history
Received 01 July 2025
Revised 12 November 2025
Accepted 09 December 2025

ABSTRACT

Enhancing educational quality remains a pressing and strategic concern, particularly for schools in remote regions such as Muara Wis State Junior High School. This research investigates strategic efforts to improve educational quality through the reinforcement of school management practices. Employing a qualitative descriptive methodology, data were gathered from selected school principals, teachers, and parents through purposive sampling. The research instruments included in-depth interviews, direct classroom observations, and a review of relevant school documents. The collected data were analyzed using data reduction, thematic categorization, and narrative elaboration. The study indicates that the comprehensive application of fundamental management functions plays a vital role in elevating educational standards. Moreover, effective leadership, infrastructure planning, and financial management emerged as key elements that significantly shape school performance. The interaction between internal factors (e.g., principal leadership) and external influences (e.g., national education policy) was found to contribute jointly to the overall educational quality. The research concludes that school management strengthening should be viewed not only as an administrative necessity but as a strategic approach to achieving long-term improvements in educational outcomes. The insights gained offer valuable direction for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders who seek to adopt effective models of school governance in similar contexts. It is recommended that future studies incorporate mixed-method

designs to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how management strategies impact student learning and school effectiveness.

Keywords
Educational Policy
Educational Quality
Junior High School
Leadership
School Management

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Introduction

Education has a central role in shaping the progress of a nation, including Indonesia. In the midst of globalization and demands to improve the quality of education, Indonesia faces various challenges in equalizing the quality of its education with international standards. Despite improvements in the education sector, the gap in quality and access to education between urban and remote areas is still real. Based on several reports, Indonesia is still below the average global education quality, with different levels of participation in each region [1],[2]

The demand to improve the quality of education is increasingly urgent within the framework of the global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasizes the importance of quality education for all parties [3]. In this context, the effectiveness of school management is a crucial factor to overcome various educational problems, especially at the junior high school level. Strengthening the capacity of school management is an important strategy in answering the dynamics of today's educational needs. With strong management, schools can improve academic achievement, create a supportive learning atmosphere, and adapt the curriculum to the needs of the world of work in the future [4].

One of the root problems in the inequality of education quality lies in the weak management of human resources in the school environment. There are still many school principals who show variations in leadership skills, which have a direct impact on the quality of the teaching and learning process [5],[6]. In addition, in the literature review, there is still a lack of information about the specific challenges faced by schools in Indonesia, as well as how the implementation of a comprehensive management model can effectively address these problems [7],[8]. The existence of this vacancy opens up opportunities to dig deeper into relevant management practices to improve the quality of education.

In the context of national education in Indonesia, the quality of education at the Junior High School level plays an important role, especially at Muara Wis State Junior High School. Efforts to improve the quality of education must be a top priority, because education quality not only supports individual development but also has an impact on the social progress of

society at large. As stated by Komariyah et al. [9], an optimal education system needs to be supported by well-structured management, including efficient financing management, so that operational needs can be met optimally. This fact emphasizes the importance of research on school management strengthening strategies as an effort to improve the quality of education.

However, many education units still face obstacles in implementing comprehensive education standards. Revealed that limited access and a lack of quality human resources are the main causes of the difficulty in implementing education standards, especially in remote areas [10]. Therefore, an in-depth study of education management practices is becoming increasingly important in order to find an effective and efficient approach. This condition further emphasizes the urgency to explore the managerial challenges that occur at the school.

Furthermore, education problems in Indonesia do not only originate from managerial aspects, but also from how education policies are implemented at the local level. Annisa and Haryadi [11] explain that various educational problems are closely related to weaknesses in the formulation and implementation of education policies. This policy inaccuracy creates gaps in implementation in the field; this study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the role of effective school management in encouraging the quality of education more comprehensively [12].

In relation to global commitments, education quality improvement strategies are also correlated with efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Based on the findings, quality education is one of the main pillars in the SDGs agenda, and its achievement is highly dependent on the success of efficient and targeted education management. Therefore, this research is expected to make a real contribution to the discourse on improving the quality of education by offering a managerial approach that is applicable and in accordance with the context at this school.

This article aims to examine strategies for improving the quality of education through school management optimization. By examining the management practices that have been implemented and identifying the main factors that affect the quality of education, this article is expected to produce recommendations both practically and academically. It is hoped that this discussion will be able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the important role of school management in improving the quality of education, as well as encourage the birth of more adaptive and inclusive policies, in line with the ideals of Golden Indonesia 2045 [2],[13].

Overall, strengthening the managerial function in schools is a strategic step that can accelerate the overall improvement of the quality of education. Therefore, this article not only has value in the academic realm but is also practically important for policymakers and

education actors to collaborate in efforts to realize quality education throughout Indonesia [4],[14].

Literature Review

In the realm of education, a literature review on strategies to improve the quality of education is very important, especially when faced with institutional challenges in maintaining and improving the quality of education in the midst of the current competitive era. The public views education as an important means to prepare for various future challenges, so a structured and systematic managerial approach is needed in the implementation of education [15]. This also reflects the response to the increasingly high public expectations of the quality of educational services provided by schools [15],[16].

The crucial problem faced in efforts to strengthen school management is the lack of understanding and implementation of effective managerial strategies in improving the quality of education. One of the important aspects is the implementation of systematic supervision and supervision to ensure the successful implementation of quality management. In this case, the role of school supervisors is very significant, as they provide not only academic direction but also guidance in managerial aspects that support the achievement of school goals [17],[18]. Therefore, efforts to strengthen management cannot be carried out separately, but must involve collaboration between stakeholders such as principals, teachers, and school committees, so that all elements of education move in harmony towards improving quality [19],[20].

The urgency of this literature review can be seen from its ability to provide answers to research questions regarding strategic steps to improve the quality of education. By using a data-based approach and analysis of the role of key actors in the education system, this study has the potential to produce more effective policies, in accordance with the real needs of students and the community. The school-based management approach is considered an alternative solution that is relevant in this context [21]. In addition, the research also emphasizes the importance of developing an adaptive curriculum, such as the Independent Curriculum, which can be integrated with school management strategies in an effort to improve overall quality [20],[22].

By strengthening education governance and optimizing the role of all related parties, the goal of improving the quality of education sustainably can be achieved. It is hoped that the graduates produced will be able to compete at the global level and answer the demands of the times [20],[23]. This situation confirms the need for innovation in the national education system that adopts best practices in human resource management as well as the application of modern education management principles [24].

The study of strategies to improve the quality of education through strengthening school management is very important because it is directly related to the quality of learning received by students. Public expectations for quality education are getting higher, along with the need for competent future generations. In the context of the education system in Indonesia, the importance of education in Form Superior human resources places the focus of this research on strengthening school management as the main strategy in encouraging the improvement of the quality of education.

In practice, education management in Indonesia still often faces several obstacles, such as limited facilities, low community involvement, and suboptimal implementation of education policies. Winarsih [16] stated that effective school management requires the support of concrete and collaborative policies to be able to create a conducive learning climate. Strengthening school management should not only include administrative activities, but also encourage structural changes and more systematic governance, as well as the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) that support improving the quality of education [25].

One of the main problems in improving the quality of education at the school lies in the lack of integration between education policy, budget management, and education personnel development. Based on the results of research by Shodiq and Maimunah [26] the provision of adequate educational facilities must be accompanied by strengthening the school management structure. In addition, the application of a school-based management approach (SBM) is considered effective in answering these challenges because it gives schools the flexibility to make decisions that are tailored to local needs [27].

The urgency of this literature review is very clearly seen in its efforts to answer the question of how managerial strategies can improve the quality of education . From the various literature sources analyzed, it can be understood that challenges and solutions in education management cannot be equalized, but must consider local characteristics, as emphasized by [28]. This emphasizes the importance of a contextual approach in formulating and implementing effective quality improvement strategies in accordance with the real conditions in schools and their communities.

In addition to internal managerial aspects, improving the quality of education also relies heavily on the active involvement of stakeholders and the school community [29]. Within the framework of the quality assurance system, all related elements including parents, the surrounding community, and government agencies, need to be involved in order to create an educational ecosystem that supports each other [30]. Through strong synergy between various parties, it is hoped that efforts to improve the quality can take place optimally and sustainably. Such collaborative engagement also fosters shared responsibility, transparency, and continuous improvement in achieving long-term educational goals.

Material and Methods

The research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This qualitative approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring social phenomena in the realm of education and management in depth. The main focus of this study is to comprehensively understand how strengthening school management can play a role in improving the quality of education [31],[32].

The data in this study were obtained from various informants who were considered relevant, including school principals, teachers, and several parents. The selection of informants uses the purposive sampling technique, which is the deliberate appointment of subjects based on their capacity to provide relevant and valuable information in accordance with the educational context [33]. The data collection techniques used include in-depth interviews, direct observation in the school environment, and documentation from administrative records and school activity reports [34],[35].

Interviews were conducted using open-ended questions to provide space for informants to express their views on the implementation of school management and its impact on the quality of learning. Direct observation aims to monitor the interaction process in learning as well as the dynamics between teachers and students in the classroom. Meanwhile, documentation is used as a source of complementary data that can strengthen the findings, especially related to the implementation of school management and various educational activities that take place [36].

In the data analysis process, the researcher applies typical stages in a qualitative approach. After the data is collected, a data reduction process is carried out to filter important information that is in accordance with the focus of the research. The data is then compiled in the form of narrative and visual descriptions, such as charts or diagrams, in order to map the relationship between elements in the school management system. The final step is to draw conclusions that describe the main results related to management strategies in improving the quality of education [37].

This research is in line with the purpose of the article, which is to explore and analyze managerial strategies that contribute to improving the quality of education. It is hoped that the results of this study can provide relevant recommendations that can be applied in real terms to improve educational practices in the field.

By adopting a qualitative approach, this research provides a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the success of school management as well as the implementation of education strategies. The findings of this study are expected to be a reference for education policy makers in developing the quality of learning in schools that have similar characteristics [38]. Therefore, strengthening school management is not solely an administrative activity, but

is the main strategy that is very decisive in improving the quality of education in the current era of transformation.

The research, which was conducted at Muara Wis State Junior High School, Kalimantan Timur, made a significant contribution to the understanding of effective education management practices. Furthermore, the results can be used as a model for the development of advanced studies in the field of education management in the future [32].

Table 1 presents the qualitative research data collection techniques used in this study, including observation, documentation, and interviews. Each technique outlines its specific purpose, focus, instruments or analysis methods, and expected outputs. Together, these approaches provide comprehensive and triangulated data to examine school management practices and educational quality improvement.

Table 1. Qualitative Research Data Collection Techniques

Techniques	Purpose	Focus	Instrument / Analysis / Type	Output
Observation	To directly observe managerial activities and teaching–learning processes within the school	Teacher–student interactions in classrooms; Principal's managerial strategies; Staff communication and workplace climate	Instrument: Non-participant observation sheets & field notes	Empirical data on the implementation of management functions (planning, implementation, supervision)
Documentation	To review the written evidence supporting the field data	School Work Plan (RKS); Budget Plan & Financial Reports (RAPBS); Meeting minutes; Activity reports; Curriculum, teacher data, supervision reports	Analysis: Content analysis (assessing alignment between written policies and real implementation)	Data on governance effectiveness and policy implementation at school
Interview	To explore stakeholders' perceptions, experiences, and viewpoints on school management	Principal; Teachers and education staff, School committee/parents	Type: Semi-structured interview (open-ended questions); Duration: 30–60 minutes per session; Analysis: Thematic analysis (reduction, categorization, coding)	Major themes and patterns in management practice

Results

In the process of analyzing and interpreting the results of research on strategies to improve the quality of education through strengthening school management, several key findings can be associated with relevant theories and concepts in the field of education management. One of the important findings is the application of basic functions of education management, such as planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising. Table 2 presents the research findings on strengthening school management functions, including planning,

organizing, implementing, and supervising. The findings are supported by interviews, observations, and document analysis. The data demonstrate systematic managerial practices led by the principal, contributing to improved teacher performance, student engagement, and overall school governance effectiveness.

Table 2. Research Findings on School Management Strengthening

Management Function	Findings	Supporting Evidence	Source Type
Planning	The school develops annual work and budget plans focused on infrastructure improvement and teacher professional development.	"The principal prepares the annual RKAS (School Activity and Budget Plan) together with teachers to align with the curriculum and students' needs."	Interview with Principal.
	Lesson plans (RPP) are designed based on the national curriculum and local community context.	Lesson plans emphasize contextual learning that reflects local life in Muara Wis.	School Document Review
Organizing	The principal establishes clear task divisions among teachers and the school committee.	"Each teacher has an additional role, such as coordinating extracurricular programs or managing school facilities."	Interview & Observation
	Teamwork and collaboration are strengthened through regular coordination meetings.	Meeting minutes and attendance sheets indicate consistent monthly coordination sessions.	School Documentation
Implementing	Teachers apply active learning strategies under direct supervision by the principal.	"During classroom visits, the principal observes and provides constructive feedback to improve teaching performance."	Observation Notes
	Student engagement in extracurricular and academic activities has increased significantly.	"We are encouraged to guide students in competitions as part of the school's quality improvement program."	Teacher Interview
Supervising	The principal carries out routine supervision and gives feedback to teachers for professional growth.	"Every two weeks, I visit classrooms to ensure lesson plans are properly executed."	Principal Interview
	Monitoring includes evaluating facilities, infrastructure, and financial management reports.	Internal supervision checklists and financial documentation show systematic control.	School Documents

Research conducted revealed that comprehensive management of education management functions can have a significant positive influence on the quality of educational institutions [39]. These results are in line with the findings of Alhabsyi et al., which show that the success of educational institutions is largely determined by the management of input and

output aspects in the education management system [40]. The implication is that when the school is able to carry out all management functions optimally, the quality of education will improve comprehensively, including academic and non-academic aspects.

Furthermore, research by Maryana et al. [13] show that effective management of facilities and infrastructure greatly affects the smooth learning process. These findings support the importance of developing educational facilities in supporting student learning effectiveness. Meanwhile, research by Barlian et al. [41] emphasize that planned and organized budget management is a vital component in strengthening school management, which has an impact on improving the quality of education.

Several internal and external factors also influenced the results of this study. From the internal side, the leadership of the principal has an important role in driving an effective management system. This is reinforced which shows that the involvement of school principals in education quality management encourages the involvement of all parties in schools [5]. On the external side, the implementation of national education standards is also an important determinant in the effectiveness of school management, as conveyed by Ridho et al. [42].

However, this study has limitations, especially in terms of the lack of emphasis on specific forms of strategic implementation that can provide a more detailed picture of the influence of management on the quality of education. Therefore, follow-up studies are recommended to use a mixed method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative data to gain a deeper understanding of education management practices [12].

For future improvements, it is recommended that there be increased training for teachers and education personnel related to school management, as well as the need to strengthen the participation of the community and parents of students in the education management process. Further research is also recommended to explore the effectiveness of different management strategies and involve all stakeholders to build a conducive and sustainable learning environment.

Thus, the results of this study provide a deep understanding of the urgency of strengthening school management as a key strategy in improving the quality of education, as well as identifying various factors that support the success of quality education.

The results of this research reinforce the notion that efficient school management serves as a crucial determinant in elevating educational quality, particularly within rural settings, including the school. Who asserted that the four core management functions (planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising) are the essential pillars of educational success. It also aligns with the conclusions of Barlian et al. [41], who highlighted that well-structured financial management enhances operational efficiency and ensures the sustainability of school programs.

In comparison with previous studies, the present research supports the findings of Muflihah and Haqiqi [5], which indicated that a principal's leadership exerts a direct influence on both teacher performance and student achievement. The headmaster's proactive supervision and collaborative planning emerged as the key elements that nurtured a culture of teamwork and boosted learning outcomes. Similarly, Maryana et al. [13] found that well-managed infrastructure contributes significantly to effective teaching and learning, a conclusion reflected in this school's efforts to improve facilities and strengthen extracurricular engagement.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings correspond with the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM) in education, which advocate for continuous improvement, stakeholder participation, and data-driven decision-making [25]. The structured supervision and strategic planning demonstrate these principles in practice, underscoring that sustained quality improvement can be achieved through consistent internal evaluation and participatory leadership.

This research further contributes by identifying the contextual challenges faced in applying management strategies within remote schools. Distinct from studies in urban contexts [4],[43], the school contends with limitations in human resources and infrastructure. Nevertheless, through adaptive leadership and community involvement, the school successfully maintained educational standards aligned with national objectives. These results imply that management models adapted to local sociocultural realities can be as effective as uniform policy-based approaches.

Moreover, the implementation of SBM supports the argument that decision-making autonomy empowers schools to innovate in line with their contextual needs. Such autonomy enhances teacher motivation and accountability, fostering a more dynamic learning atmosphere. The supervisory role, as emphasized by Muflihah and Haqiqi [17], remains vital in sustaining these management practices and ensuring their long-term consistency.

Overall, this study advances the body of educational management literature by presenting empirical evidence on the interaction of management functions in a rural Indonesian environment. It effectively bridges theoretical frameworks with practical realities, showing that even amid limited resources, systematic application of planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision can significantly elevate educational quality. Future studies are encouraged to examine these dynamics using quantitative or mixed methods to assess the long-term impacts of school management capacity-building on teacher performance and student achievement. These findings also provide practical insights for policymakers and school leaders in designing sustainable management improvement programs.

Conclusion

The strategy comprehensively reviews the central role of school management as a strategic approach in facing the challenge of education quality at the junior high school level, especially in relatively remote areas. In this case, strengthening the main functions of management, such as planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising, is the main focus. This article highlights that the consistent and systematic implementation of managerial functions can have a major impact on improving the quality of education, both in academic and non-academic aspects. This is reinforced by the findings from, who state that effective management is the foundation of the success of an educational institution.

Furthermore, this article underlines that the effectiveness of quality improvement strategies relies heavily on the active participation of all stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, school committees, and parents. The existence of school supervisors also has a vital role in providing academic and managerial direction consistently. In addition, important components such as the management of facilities and infrastructure, budget management, and the leadership of the principal also contribute to the implementation of optimal management. This article also highlights the differences between internal factors, such as leadership ability, and external factors, such as national education policies, which both affect the achievement of the quality of education.

Although it makes a meaningful contribution, this study acknowledges its limitations, especially in explaining in detail the quantitative influence of the implementation of managerial strategies on educational outcomes. Therefore, this article recommends the use of mixed research methods in future studies to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of school management and its implications for educational outcomes [37]. The recommendations offered include developing teacher capacity in the field of management, improving the quality of facilities and infrastructure, and strengthening the participation of the community and stakeholders in the education management process.

The entire content of this article directly supports its main goal, which is to identify and evaluate effective management strategies in efforts to improve the quality of education. The various findings presented affirm the importance of strengthening management as the core of superior school governance. This article also presents policy directions that are relevant to local conditions and have a tangible impact on the continuous improvement of the quality of education. Thus, this paper not only contributes to the academic realm but also offers practical guidance for the development of better educational management.

Limitation and Suggestions

As a final discussion, it is important to emphasize that strengthening school management is not just an administrative obligation, but an important strategy that plays a big

role in determining the direction and quality of education, especially in areas with limitations. Effective, participatory, and data-based management is a strong foundation for the birth of educational institutions that not only excel in the academic field but are also able to respond to real needs at the local level.

Thus, all actors in the education ecosystem, from school principals and educators to policymakers, are expected to develop a managerial system that is flexible, inclusive, and focused on positively improving quality. Sustainable. Quality education cannot be created from a stagnant system, but must come from a governance process that is continuously enhanced through reflection, continuous training, and active involvement of all components of society.

For this reason, the author invites readers not to view the results of this research only as an academic reference, but also as an initial foothold to think more deeply and act concretely in improving education management at various levels. It is time for schools to become the center of change, not only for students, but also as a driver of social progress and the civilization of the nation in the future.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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