

## **Integrating Total Quality Management into National Education Quality Assurance: A Conceptual Analysis of the Indonesian SPMP**

**Luthfiani<sup>1,2</sup>, Widiastuti<sup>1,3</sup>, Madhakomala<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia, <sup>2</sup>Universitas Negeri Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia, <sup>3</sup>Universitas Bani Saleh, West Java, Indonesia

Corresponding author e-mail: [luthfiani@fip.unp.ac.id](mailto:luthfiani@fip.unp.ac.id)

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to examine the integration of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles and models within the framework of the Indonesian National Education Quality Assurance System (SPMP). The research employed a literature review methodology, analyzing related regulations, theoretical frameworks, and documented implementation strategies pertaining to TQM and the SPMP. The analysis indicates that TQM, including the PDCAE model and principles like stakeholder involvement and a customer-centered approach, has been formally adopted into the SPMP in Indonesian schools. However, its implementation has not been optimal, hindered by constraints such as limited funding, inadequate resources, and an unsupportive operational environment. Consequently, TQM integration remains largely theoretical and has not yet solidified into a pervasive, practical quality culture within the school system. To move beyond theoretical adoption, education policymakers and school administrators must prioritize securing adequate resources, building institutional capacity, and fostering an organizational environment that actively supports the practical application of TQM principles to establish a sustained quality culture. This study provides a structured analysis of the specific challenges in translating TQM theory into practice within Indonesia's national education quality assurance framework. It contributes by highlighting the commonality of this theory-practice gap in developing countries and by clearly identifying the systemic barriers financial, resource-based, and cultural that impede the full realization of a TQM-based quality culture in schools.

**Keywords:** Indonesian National Education Quality Assurance, Literature Review, Total Quality Management

### **A. Introduction**

Education serves as a fundamental criterion for a nation's overall prosperity. Moreover, education has increasingly been recognized as a long-term investment in contemporary society. It is anticipated that education will serve as the primary cornerstone for the enhancement of human quality. Consistent with the assertions of Apriyanti and Subiyantoro (2025), who articulated that education constitutes a human

investment, the augmentation of skills and competencies is regarded as a pivotal element in equipping individuals to confront diverse challenges in life. Through the attainment of high-quality education, individuals can effectively prepare themselves for future uncertainties.

Furthermore, quality education facilitates individuals' ascension to elevated positions within the social hierarchy. The caliber of education is indicative of the overall quality of the populace. Education profoundly influences human existence and the choices individuals make on a daily basis (Donkoh, et al., 2023). Fomba et al. (2021) indicated that substandard education is prevalent in numerous developing nations. In the context of Indonesia, the quality of education persists as an unresolved predicament. This situation is attributable to the consistently inadequate quality of education across multiple educational tiers. Continuous efforts aimed at enhancing educational quality at all levels are imperative to adequately address forthcoming challenges. Puspita and Andriani (2021) asserted that the components of input, process, and output are interrelated and exert a significant influence on the quality of education. In order to establish quality education, it is essential that inputs (which encompass educators, students, learning materials, curriculum, and the surrounding environment) are adequately met. When these inputs are satisfied, the educational process is likely to exhibit quality and yield the intended outcomes.

Total Quality Management (TQM) existed to bridge the gap between user needs and the expectation for quality education. As a strategic paradigm, TQM emphasizes the necessity of ongoing enhancement facilitated by the active involvement of organizational members. Abbas and Kumari (2023) articulated that TQM constitutes a robust structural framework capable of catalyzing substantial organizational transformation. Within the educational milieu, TQM represents a fundamental basis for cultivating a quality-oriented culture, wherein every facet of the institution is directed towards the satisfaction of customers, including students and the broader community. Juran (1999) elucidated that quality pertains to customer satisfaction, particularly when a product fulfills their requirements.

The effective management of quality is paramount for achieving success in the realm of education. TQM advocates for a critical reassessment of reporting systems, the integration of continuous improvement initiatives, and the measurement of consumer-centric outcomes, which synergize with organizational transformation (Bobe & Teklay, 2025). It is imperative to ensure that the graduates of an educational institution meet established standards and fulfill the expectations of stakeholders. Quality education is delineated by the comprehensive fulfillment of all elements encompassed within the National Education Standards (SNP). In line Freeman (as cited in Mahajan et. al, 2023) posited that the engagement of stakeholders constitutes a pivotal determinant of success. Collaborative efforts are imperative to attain a standard of educational excellence. The establishment of effective communication

alongside stakeholder engagement is anticipated to enhance institutional efficacy and elevate educational quality (Rahnuma, 2020).

Furthermore, it is essential to devise strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing educational quality. TQM practices, encompassing data-driven decision-making, continuous enhancement, and active employee participation, can establish the requisite structural and cultural frameworks (Fok et al., 2022). This study aimed to clarify the effectiveness of the implementation of TQM within Indonesia's National Education Quality Assurance System (SPMP), which ostensibly seeks to improve educational quality, or whether the incorporation of TQM is insufficient in educational standards' satisfaction.

Furthermore, it is crucial to formulate strategic initiatives focused on improving educational quality. The TQM methodology, which combines data-centered decision-making, continuous improvement, and employee engagement, can build an essential structural and cultural framework (Fok et al., 2022). This study is determining how the PDCAE (Plan, Do, Check, Act, Evaluate) model is implemented in Indonesia's SPMP. Furthermore, this study also explained the effectiveness of TQM implementation in improving educational quality in Indonesia, thereby meeting stakeholder needs and facilitating global competitiveness.

## **B. Methods**

This research employed a qualitative methodology underpinned by a conceptual analysis framework. This methodology presumed that we engaged in the interpretation of data presented in textual form rather than performing quantitative calculations. The data acquisition process was conducted by aggregating information from diverse sources, including books and academic journals, which examine the incorporation of TQM into the national educational quality assurance framework. Utilizing Google Scholar, the search term "integration of TQM into SPMP" was employed to retrieve data within the temporal scope of 2020-2025. A total of 42 pertinent journals and books were identified, from which 8 articles were selected that specifically align with the implementation of TQM within the SPMP context.

## C. Results and Discussions

### Results

**Table 1. Article Reviewed from Google Scholar**

Title	Researchers	Year	Results	Source
Analysis of the Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) and the External Quality Assurance System (SPME) in Senior High Schools	M. Shalahuddin, Muhammad Miqdad Arromy, Nurobiyanto, Solehuddin Syaf, Uus Ruswandi, Bambang Samsul Arifin	2025	The Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) and External Quality Assurance System (SPME) at SMA IT Nurul Fajri have significantly assisted the school in improving the quality of its continuing education. The implementation of the PPEPP cycle within SPMI and SPME represents a transformative step in data-driven decision-making to improve learning quality, optimize institutional governance, and enhance stakeholder satisfaction.	Google Scholar
Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) at SMK Negeri 3 Sampit	Febri Sugiyanto	2025	Quality mapping is conducted in accordance with national education standards. The data is then verified, analyzed, and processed by the School Quality Assurance Team. Based on the mapping results, a priority scale of needs is created, which serves as the basis for developing a quality improvement plan, taking into account the vision, mission, internal policies, and central and regional policies, ensuring the plan is effective and aligned with the school's objectives. The School Quality Assurance Team continuously monitors the implementation of quality assurance to ensure it is on target. Evaluations are conducted to analyse the effectiveness of TQM implementation and its compliance with the plan, ensuring continuous quality improvement.	Google Scholar
Quality Assurance Analysis at SMK Negeri 1 Tombariri	Lianda Sondey, Hizkia Kamang Manggopa, Rolly Oroh	2024	The study revealed several key challenges to improving the quality of education in schools, such as imbalances in learning quality due to limited teacher use of technology, inadequate facilities, and insufficient development of students' soft skills. Although the SPMP has been implemented, its implementation still requires improvement, particularly in coordination and systematic evaluation. Therefore, more integrated efforts are needed in terms of technology, facilities and	Google Scholar

Analysis of Mapping the Quality of Education of SMP N 3 Singorojo Kendal Regency	Dewi Ratnawati, Titik Haryati	2024	infrastructure, parental involvement, and strengthening the education quality assurance system at the vocational school. The primary objective of quality mapping is to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of education quality in schools, which can serve as a basis for development planning. This mapping also aims to identify key issues affecting the achievement of educational quality, including teaching, school management, and student participation. Furthermore, the quality mapping facilitated more information decision-making at both the school and government levels to improve education quality. This mapping also optimized resource utilization, particularly for schools requiring intervention based on the results of the Education Report Card evaluation.	Google Scholar
Implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System in Improving the Quality of Basic Education	Ani Mabruroh	2024	Quality mapping at Al Fadllu Middle School was conducted through an analysis of the school's quality report card, known as the School Self-Evaluation (EDS), to measure the school's progress before the implementation of SPMI. The quality improvement planning was prepared by the entire School Quality Development Team (TPMS) with guidance from the Education Quality Assurance Institute (LPMP). The planning process involved several stages, starting from the reaffirmation of the school's TPMS as SPMI TPMS, EDS analysis, and SWOT analysis. Implementation of quality improvement at Al Fadllu Middle School followed the EDS results, with a focus on improving the four National Education Standards included in the academic standards: Content Standards, Process Standards, then Assessment Standards, and Graduate Competency Standards. Monitoring and evaluation of quality improvement was carried out by the Monev Team, which oversaw each implementation of internal quality improvement activities and highlighted aspects that needed improvement.	Google Scholar
The Implementation of Education Quality Assurance	Melindawati Ayuba, Arwildayanto, Besse Marhawati	2021	The implementation of educational quality assurance in SMP Negeri 1 and 6 Gorontalo City, it can be concluded that both of schools have implemented the system information communication technology (ICT), but it is not yet fully optimal because the available learning media is not yet complete and the existing IT devices are still limited in the teaching	Google Scholar

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Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) in Vocational High Schools (SMK)	Asnaul Lailina Nikmatuz Zahrok	2020	<p>and learning process. In addition, SMP Negeri 1 and 6 Gorontalo City developed an educational quality assurance program through seminar activities, considering that not all educators and education staff in these two schools have adequate training and qualifications. The purpose of these activities is so that the existing educational potential and human resources continue to develop and are able to carry out their functions professionally.</p> <p>Quality mapping is based on a priority scale of needs. When designing the plan, the School Education Quality Assurance Team will consider various aspects such as the school's vision and mission, internal policies, and central and regional government policies to ensure effective implementation. The developed quality assurance plan is outlined in a quality planning document or School Work Plan (RKS) to be approved by the principal and then disseminated to all school components. The Education Quality Assurance Team continuously monitors the implementation of quality assurance at SMK Negeri 35 Tulungagung. Furthermore, school self-evaluations are conducted to assess implementation effectiveness and adherence to the plan, ensuring continuous quality improvement. All quality assurance activities at SMK Negeri 35 Tulungagung produce satisfactory Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) reports.</p>	Google Scholar
Implementation of Integrated Quality Management in the Internal Education Quality Assurance System	Anne Sarvitri Achmad Supriyanto Agus Timan	2020	<p>The implementation of TQM in the Education Quality Assurance System at SMKS Kartika IV-1 Malang has been carried out, but it is not optimal due to limited human resources and funds. The organization has also positioned students as the main customers, although student motivation still requires more serious attention. Then the implementation of internal customers and internal marketing is not optimal due to the lack of SOPs and clear consequence mechanisms. Professionalism and quality of learning have been improved through the fulfillment of teacher qualifications, the provision of facilities, and a relevant curriculum, but the aspect of student learning motivation has not been unaddressed effectively.</p>	Google Scholar

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## **Discussion**

### **The Importance of Quality Management Integration in Education**

In education, quality management is a synergy between educational institutions and all educational resources to produce educational services that meet or even exceed customer needs. The legal basis for the education quality assurance system is regulated in Article 57, Paragraph 1 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which states that national quality control is a form of evaluation and accountability of education providers to authorized parties. This means that quality assurance activities are not merely evaluations but also efforts to build user trust in educational institutions, ensuring that they meet expectations and meet established minimum standards. Barnawi and Arifin (2017, cited in Ristianah and Ma'sum (2022)) explained that a quality assurance system needs to be developed with these following objectives: 1) to serve as a reference for mapping the quality of education management at the national, provincial, district, and city levels, as well as at the school and learning levels; 2) to ensure that the process and products of the SPMP (Education Quality Assurance System) ensure that efforts to continuously improve the quality of education and learning are carried out to satisfy students, parents, the community, educational resources, and stakeholders in the education sector; and 3) to determine a model for improving school performance, including a school-based management learning system and empowering the educational community and the wider community in managing education at school.

Research findings indicated that providing quality education is a shared responsibility, not solely the responsibility of individual educational institutions. Policymakers understand that their involvement is crucial in accelerating the achievement of high-quality education. Furthermore, strengthening the institution's vision, mission, and goals fosters a shared commitment to achieving quality education. It shown the active participation of teachers, staff, parents, and the community further strengthens the culture of quality (Ayuba et. al, 2021; Lailina & Zahrok, 2020). Effective communication and stakeholder engagement can improve institutional effectiveness and educational quality (Rahnuma, 2020). Therefore, the implementation of TQM in the SPMP not only meets formal standards but also builds an adaptive, transparent, and continuous improvement-oriented education management system to produce superior and competent graduates. The implementation of integrated quality management in education means positioning the institution as a service provider and students as service users.

The implementation of integrated quality management is expected to ensure all stakeholders have a shared understanding and commitment to the school's vision, mission, and goals. Ismail and Umar (2020, cited in Subekti et al. (2023)) explained that quality assurance is achieved through quality control efforts, which involve holding regular meetings to evaluate the implementation of quality improvement programs.

Therefore, schools must have a principal capable of coordinating all school components to support the implementation of quality education. Through a participatory leadership approach, the principal will more easily coordinate all school components (teachers, staff, students, and parents) to improve the quality of education. The support of school components led by a participatory principal will foster a strong commitment and culture of collaboration to accelerate quality education (Maulana, 2025).

### **Implementation of Total Quality Management into National Education Quality Assurance (SPMP)**

Neliwati et al. (2024) explained that there were two main components in an education quality assurance system: the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) and the External Quality Assurance System (SPME). The Internal Quality Assurance System is defined as a quality assurance system that implemented within an educational institution and then implemented by all components of the educational unit. Rosdiana and Soedarmo (2019) explained that the internal quality assurance system cycle consists of: 1) mapping educational quality implemented by educational units based on National Education Standards; 2) developing a quality improvement plan outlined in the School Work Plan; 3) implementing quality assurance both in educational unit management and the learning process; 4) monitoring and evaluation of the quality assurance process; and 5) establishing new standards and developing quality improvement strategies based on monitoring and evaluation results.

The External Quality Assurance System represented a framework for quality assurance instituted by governmental bodies, local authorities, accreditation agencies, and organizations dedicated to educational standardization. In its execution, the quality assurance framework for primary and secondary education adheres to a cyclical sequence of activities that corresponds to each component. Through innovative practices, the enhancement of high-quality education will be realized, thereby addressing the diverse needs of all individuals (Rahnuma, 2020; Yılmaz & Temizkan, 2022). A viable model for the implementation of educational quality is the TQM model, which utilizes the PDCAE (Plan, Do, Check, Act, Evaluate) cyclical approach. Khoiri et al. (2025) delineate the procedural steps involved in the implementation of this cycle as follows:





The results indicated that educational management units have incorporated TQM into the Education Quality Assurance System (SPMP). The Education Quality Assurance Report (PMP Report) is the result of the educational unit's School results from the school's Self-Evaluation (EDS) once a year. The EDS assessment components have been adjusted and aligned with the SNP. Knowing the EDS score makes it easier for schools to develop an Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI). The EDS score is considered very helpful in analyzing the needs to accelerate improvements for identifying needs to improve the quality of education in an educational unit (Ratnawati & Haryati, 2024; Mabruroh, 2024; Lailina & Zahrok, 2020).

The PDCAE (Plan, Do, Check, Act, Evaluate) model has also been implemented in the development of the SPMI. As previously stated, the EDS score significantly fosters schools in enhancing educational quality. Needs analysis not only accelerates improvements in the quality of education but also helps satisfy customers (Khasanah et. al, 2023). With the EDS score, the quality assurance team will more easily map what is truly needed to improve school quality. After mapping, the quality assurance team can develop instruments based on the National Standards (SNP) aligned with the school's vision and mission. These instruments can then be submitted to the principal for review and approval. After receiving approval, the instruments are then disseminated to all school components for joint implementation. Finally, schools should also conduct an evaluation through an assessment conducted by the Education Quality Assurance Institute (LPMP) or the National Accreditation Board (BAN). The evaluation conducted by SPME will help schools to investigate their strengths and weaknesses, which will help them with continuous quality improvement.

## **Challenges of TQM Integration into SPMP**

The study showed that TQM has been integrated into the SPMP, but its effectiveness is still not optimal. Schools face several obstacles, including limited funding and resources, and an unsupportive environment (Sonday et al., 2024; Ayuba et al., 2021; Sarvitri et al., 2020). These obstacles often occur in other developing countries. Inadequate infrastructure, incompetent teaching staff, and a less-than-conducive learning environment are the causes of delays in quality education in developing countries (Rahman & Nasrin, 2024; Ibiduni et al., 2023). Whereas the quality of education is formed based on the perceptions of students and teachers based on classroom experiences, teaching methods, and academic atmosphere (Schweder & Raufelder, 2024). In line with Hajovsky et.al (2020) that explained the relationships between teachers and students, enough funding, and relevant curricula as a good combination of an effective educational system.

In fact, institutions that consistently implement TQM showed significant improvements in learning efficacy, student satisfaction, and resource management efficiency (Fahrudin, 2020). Teklay and Bobe (2023) also underlined the importance of aligning management control systems with TQM to realize its overall benefits. Implementing principles centered on continuous improvement, active participation of all stakeholders, and a customer-centered focus will encourage the creation of a quality culture within educational institutions (Sahri et. al. 2023). The necessity of quality management within educational institutions is paramount to guarantee that graduates attain specific standards and fulfill the expectations of stakeholders. Through innovative practices, the enhancement of high-quality education will be realized, thereby addressing the diverse needs of all individuals (Rahnuma, 2020; Yilmaz & Temizkan, 2022). The implementation of TQM in SPMP is not only a strategy to achieve quality education, but also an effort to ensure the existence of schools in the community (Zubair, 2025).

## **D. Conclusions**

The integration of TQM into the SPMP has been implemented in Indonesia but it has not yet become a culture. Research results showed that schools have implemented the PDCAE steps commonly used in TQM. Schools have also implemented TQM principles such as continuous improvement, customer focus, and involvement of all institutional components but the results have not been optimal. This occurs due to limited funds, resources, and a less-than-supportive environment. This study also has limitations in explaining how TQM is implemented in SPMP. In the future, we recommend that other researchers use a mixed approach to gather more in-depth information on TQM implementation in SPMP. Furthermore, other researchers can also conduct national-scale research involving several schools from the five major islands in Indonesia. This will give new result, more contextual findings on the

implementation of TQM in SPMP in Indonesia compared to other developing countries.

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