


Analysis of the Implementation of Educational Quality Management in Senior High School in Pekanbaru

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ABSTRACT

Educational quality plays a significant role in enhancing educational services and developing competent graduates. Nevertheless, schools often encounter challenges in sustaining quality improvement initiatives and ensuring compliance with educational standards. This study aims to examine the implementation of educational quality management at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through interviews involving two informants, namely the vice principal for curriculum affairs and a teacher, as well as the analysis of school documents. The findings reveal that quality management has been implemented through the Merdeka Curriculum, the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI), academic supervision and evaluation, and several flagship programs. These efforts are reinforced by the school's A accreditation status and Education Report results showing very good literacy and numeracy achievement. The findings emphasize the importance of integrating quality assurance, curriculum implementation, and school programs to achieve continuous educational quality improvement.

Keywords: *Educational Quality Management, SPML, School Quality*

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a key factor in developing high-quality human resources. The quality of education is determined not only by students' academic achievements but also by the effectiveness of school management in planning, implementing, evaluating, and continuously improving the entire educational process. Therefore, improving the quality of education is a primary focus of educational institution management to ensure that graduates are competent, possess strong character, and are prepared to face the challenges of the modern world (Harahap *et al.*, 2023).

Advances in information technology, globalization, and the demands of 21st-century competencies present schools with various challenges in delivering education. Educational institutions are expected to produce graduates who not only possess academic abilities but also critical thinking skills, creativity, communication skills, collaboration skills, and strong character (Aziziy *et al.*, 2025; Whindayati *et al.*, 2025). In addition, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum requires schools to provide more flexible, student-centered learning that effectively integrates technology into the learning process. These conditions necessitate effective school management to ensure that the quality of education can be continuously improved.

In addressing these challenges, schools need to implement a quality management system that ensures educational standards are met while fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Educational quality management plays a key role in optimizing all school resources, from the curriculum, teaching staff, and facilities to evaluation and quality control systems (Aprina *et al.*, 2025; Septyaningrum *et al.*, 2025). The implementation of effective

quality management can help schools improve the quality of their educational services and achieve their educational goals to the fullest extent possible (Wulandari *et al.*, 2024).

The quality of education is closely linked to the implementation of quality management in schools. Quality management refers to a series of systematic efforts undertaken by schools to ensure that all components of education operate in accordance with established standards and undergo continuous improvement. The effective implementation of quality management can help schools improve the quality of learning, teacher competence, the effectiveness of resource management, and compliance with the National Education Standards (Ranisa *et al.*, 2025).

One of the key tools for improving the quality of education in Indonesia is the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI). The SPMI encourages schools to conduct self-assessments, quality mapping, quality improvement planning, program implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and continuous follow-up on improvements (Zahrok, 2020). The implementation of the School-Based Management System (SPMI) has proven effective in fostering a culture of quality and improving the quality of school management through a cycle of setting, implementing, evaluating, controlling, and improving educational quality standards (Ranisa *et al.*, 2025).

In addition to the implementation of the SPMI, the rollout of the Merdeka Curriculum is also one of the government's efforts to improve the quality of education in schools (Rahayu *et al.*, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum provides educational institutions with the flexibility to develop student-centered learning, strengthen competencies, and foster character through various learning activities and projects designed to reinforce the Pancasila learner profile. Research shows that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has a positive impact on the quality of learning and promotes improved student learning outcomes (Savitri *et al.*, 2024).

Various studies indicate that the implementation of educational quality management has a positive impact on improving school quality. Ranisa *et al.*, (2025) found that the implementation of the School-based Quality Management System (SPMI) can strengthen a culture of quality and enhance the effectiveness of school management. Wulandari *et al.*, (2024) demonstrated that consistently applied quality management contributes to improving the quality of educational services and achieving school objectives. Furthermore, Savitri *et al.*, (2024) revealed that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum supports improvements in the quality of learning through the strengthening of students' competencies and character. These findings indicate that the success of educational quality improvement requires integration between quality assurance systems, learning management, and school program innovation.

Although several previous studies have discussed the implementation of educational quality management, SPMI, and the Merdeka Curriculum as efforts to improve school quality, most of these studies tend to examine these aspects separately and are primarily conducted in public schools. Studies that comprehensively analyse the implementation of quality management by integrating aspects of the curriculum, quality assurance systems, school resources, and flagship programs in private schools remain relatively limited. In fact, the integration of these various aspects is crucial for providing a comprehensive understanding of educational quality management practices at the school level. Therefore, this study was conducted to address this gap by analysing the implementation of educational quality management at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru, a private school that has adopted the Merdeka Curriculum and offers various flagship programs supporting educational quality.

In the context of implementing quality management in schools, the roles of the principal and educators are key factors in ensuring that all programs run in accordance with established standards. The principal serves as a managerial leader who directs the planning, implementation, and evaluation of various quality improvement programs, while teachers serve as the primary implementers of the learning process in the classroom. Synergy between the two is crucial to the school's success in implementing a quality assurance system effectively and sustainably (Sutisna *et al.*, 2023).

In addition to internal school factors, the success of quality management implementation is also influenced by support from national education policies and schools' readiness to adapt to change. Educational policy transformations, such as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the strengthening of educational digitalization, require schools to be more adaptive in managing learning and evaluating learning outcomes (Rahayu *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, schools are required not only to be reactive to policies but also proactive in developing innovations that align with students' needs and the times (Safira, 2024).

On the other hand, the implementation of educational quality management also faces various challenges, such as educators' limited competence in adapting learning technologies, variations in students' abilities, and consistency in the implementation of school programs. These challenges can affect the effectiveness of the quality assurance system if not properly addressed through training, mentoring, and continuous evaluation (Nurjanah *et al.*, 2025; Rahayu *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, appropriate management strategies are needed to ensure that all components of education function optimally.

Given these conditions, a study on the implementation of educational quality management is crucial to provide a more comprehensive understanding of real-world practices in the field. In-depth analysis not only helps understand how schools manage educational quality but also contributes to formulating more effective and contextually appropriate quality improvement strategies. Thus, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for the development of policies and educational quality management practices in other educational institutions (Ranisa *et al.*, 2025; Zahrok, 2020).

Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru is one of the private schools that has been accredited with an A rating and implements the Merdeka Curriculum. Additionally, the school offers various flagship programs that support the improvement of educational quality and student development. These conditions make Dharma Loka High School Pekanbaru an attractive subject for study from the perspective of educational quality management. This study of the school's quality management is expected to provide an overview of the implementation of quality assurance, learning management, and various programs that support the improvement of educational quality at the high school level.

The purpose of this article is to analyse the implementation of educational quality management at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru, covering aspects such as the curriculum, the learning process, human resources, facilities and infrastructure, the school's flagship programs, and the quality assurance system, in an effort to improve the quality of education.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using descriptive methods. This approach was chosen to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of educational quality management at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru. The research focuses on the curriculum, the learning process, human resources, facilities and infrastructure, the school's flagship programs, and the quality assurance system implemented to improve the quality of education.

Research data were obtained through document analysis and interviews. Document analysis served as the primary data source by analysing various school documents, such as the school profile, teacher and student data, accreditation documents, educational reports, the school's flagship programs, and documents related to the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI). Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two informants selected through purposive sampling: the vice principal in charge of curriculum and a teacher. The interviews were used to confirm, deepen, and supplement the information obtained from school documents.

The data were analysed using the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles *et al.*, (2014), which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. During the data reduction stage, information from documents and interview

results was selected and grouped according to the research focus. Subsequently, the data was presented descriptively to facilitate interpretation, and conclusions were drawn based on the relationships and patterns identified across various data sources.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Brief Profile of Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru

Dharma Loka High School is a private high school located in the city of Pekanbaru, Riau Province. The school has received an A accreditation and implements the Merdeka Curriculum as the foundation for its educational programs. According to school data, Dharma Loka High School has 441 students divided into 12 classes, supported by 28 teaching staff and 8 administrative staff. Additionally, the school is equipped with various educational facilities and infrastructure, such as classrooms, laboratories, a library, and other supporting facilities that enhance the learning process.

The vision of Dharma Loka High School is “To realize SMA Dharma Loka as a trusted, top-choice educational institution that is always progressive in consciously fostering students’ motivation, achievements, and positive character.” To realize this vision, the school has developed various missions focused on character building, the development of professional and competitive human resources, the implementation of active learning that keeps pace with advancements in science and technology, and the implementation of school quality control management. These vision and missions demonstrate the school’s commitment to developing holistic educational quality that is not only oriented toward academic achievement but also toward strengthening students’ character, competencies, and readiness to face global challenges.

Based on an analysis of school documents, efforts to improve the quality of education at Dharma Loka High School are supported by the availability of adequate human resources. Most teachers hold bachelor’s degrees, and some have earned master’s degrees and hold teaching certificates. These conditions serve as a key asset in delivering quality education, as teacher competence is one of the primary factors influencing the success of the learning process and the school’s quality outcomes.

These conditions indicate that Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has relatively adequate resources to support its educational programs. The balanced availability of students, teachers, and support staff provides the school with the opportunity to conduct the learning process more effectively and in a more organized manner. Furthermore, the available facilities and infrastructure also play a crucial role in creating a conducive learning environment and supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes active and experience-based learning.

Additionally, the school’s profile indicates that Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru possesses a sufficiently strong institutional foundation for enhancing educational quality. The combination of a clear vision and mission, competent human resources, and adequate educational facilities serves as the primary support for implementing various school quality improvement programs. This demonstrates that the school is well-prepared to implement various educational policies and continuously develop learning innovations.

Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Improving the Quality of Education

Dharma Loka High School implements the Merdeka Curriculum as a guideline for its educational programs. The implementation of this curriculum aims to provide a more flexible, student-centered learning experience and to foster the development of competencies and character in line with the needs of the 21st century. In its implementation, the school does not focus solely on academic achievement but also provides opportunities for students to develop their potential, creativity, critical thinking skills, communication, and collaboration through various learning activities.

The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Dharma Loka High School is also realized through the execution of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). This

program serves as a means for students to develop character, Pancasila values, social awareness, teamwork skills, and problem-solving abilities relevant to real-life situations. The presence of P5 demonstrates that the learning process is not only oriented toward mastering subject matter but also toward the holistic development of students' character and competencies. This aligns with the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which places students as the primary agents in the learning process and their own personal development (Hamzah *et al.*, 2022; Kurniawan, 2023).

In addition to classroom instruction and P5 activities, Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has also developed various innovative teaching strategies to align with the requirements of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to use varied learning approaches such as project-based learning, group discussions, case studies, and the use of digital technology in the teaching and learning process. This aims to ensure that students are not merely recipients of information but are also active in exploring, analysing, and constructing knowledge both independently and collaboratively. Thus, the learning process becomes more meaningful and relevant to students' real lives.

Furthermore, the role of teachers as facilitators is increasingly emphasized in the implementation of this curriculum. Teachers are no longer the sole source of knowledge but play a role in guiding, directing, and facilitating students so they can achieve learning objectives optimally. In practice, teachers also differentiate instruction to accommodate differences in students' abilities, interests, and learning styles. These efforts demonstrate that SMA Dharma Loka Pekanbaru is committed to creating a learning environment that is inclusive, adaptive, and oriented toward the holistic development of each student.

In addition, the school conducts academic supervision, classroom observations, learning monitoring, and periodic learning evaluations as part of its efforts to maintain the quality of the learning process. These activities enable the school to identify various challenges that arise during the learning process and to implement continuous improvements. Through these mechanisms, the quality of learning can be continuously improved so that the educational goals set by the school can be optimally achieved (Diyanti *et al.*, 2024; Lesthari, 2024).

Based on these findings, it can be seen that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru is demonstrated not only through the use of the current national curriculum but also through various efforts to strengthen character, develop student competencies, and maintain a continuous learning monitoring system. This reflects the school's commitment to maintaining and improving educational quality through the management of a focused and sustainable learning process.

These findings are consistent with the research by Savitri *et al.*, (2024), which shows that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is capable of improving the quality of learning by strengthening students' competencies and character. Furthermore, the application of P5 and student-centered learning also supports the Merdeka Belajar concept, which positions students as the primary agents in the learning process (Rahayu *et al.*, 2022). Thus, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru not only meets the requirements of national education policy but also serves as part of a strategy for the continuous improvement of educational quality.

Flagship Programs as a Strategy for School Quality Improvement

Dharma Loka High School's efforts to improve the quality of education involve developing several flagship programs that focus not only on academic achievement but also on character development, personal potential, and the psychological well-being of students. These programs include the PTM Report Card, Exclusive Guidance, One Student One Achievement, and Mindfulness.

PTM Report

A program used by the school to monitor student progress more comprehensively. Monitoring is not limited to academic achievements but also encompasses character development, attitude, discipline, and student competencies. Through this program, the school can identify students' needs and developmental progress early on, ensuring that

educational services provided are more targeted. A continuous monitoring system also helps schools make data-driven decisions to support improvements in the quality of learning.

Exclusive Tutoring

A specialized mentoring program provided to students to improve academic performance, prepare for college admissions, and develop their potential. This program demonstrates the school's commitment to providing personalized educational services tailored to each student's needs. Through intensive mentoring, students receive academic support and learning motivation that can enhance their readiness to achieve future educational and career goals.

One Student One Achievement

A program that encourages every student to achieve at least one accomplishment aligned with their interests, talents, and potential. This program provides students with opportunities to develop skills in various fields, both academic and non-academic. In addition to boosting students' self-confidence, this program also fosters a culture of excellence within the school environment. Students' success in various fields serves as a key indicator of the school's success in optimally developing students' potential.

Mindfulness

A program focused on students' mental health, emotional regulation, increased self-awareness, and psychological well-being. This program is crucial given that the challenges faced by today's youth extend beyond academic aspects to include social and emotional pressures, as well as technological advancements. Through mindfulness activities, the school strives to create a learning environment that is more comfortable, conducive, and supportive of students' positive character development.

In addition to these four programs, Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru also integrates the use of monitoring data to support decision-making in learning management. Data obtained from in-person learning reports, student achievement progress, and teacher observations are used as a basis for designing more appropriate follow-up learning strategies. Through this data-driven approach, the school can identify students requiring special support as well as those needing enrichment, ensuring that interventions are more effective and targeted in improving learning outcomes.

All these programs demonstrate that SMA Dharma Loka Pekanbaru focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the holistic development of students across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The integration of academic programs, character building, individual support, and attention to students' mental health reflects the school's efforts to build a holistic and sustainable educational ecosystem. This reinforces the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered learning and the optimal development of potential.

Based on these findings, it is evident that the flagship programs at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru reflect a holistic educational approach. The school is not only focused on improving academic achievement but also prioritizes character development, mental health, self-potential, and students' readiness to face future challenges.

The existence of these programs is one of the school's strategies in achieving sustainable educational quality centered on students' needs. These findings support the results of the study by Hayudiyani et al., (2020), which states that school flagship programs play a role in improving the quality of education through the development of services tailored to students' needs. The existence of the PTM Report Card, Exclusive Guidance, One Student One Achievement, and Mindfulness programs demonstrates that Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru implements an educational approach that focuses not only on academic achievement but also on the holistic development of students' character, potential, and well-being.

Implementation of Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI)

The Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI) is implemented through various activities, including academic supervision, classroom observations, learning monitoring, and periodic learning evaluations. These activities are conducted to ensure that all educational processes are carried out in accordance with established standards and to support continuous quality improvement.

The implementation of the IQA can be seen in the school's efforts to conduct evaluations and follow-up actions based on various educational quality indicators. One of the evaluation tools used is the Education Report Card. According to the 2025 Education Report Card, Dharma Loka High School achieved excellent results in literacy with a score of 91.16 and in numeracy with a score of 82.22, placing it in the top percentile group (1–20%). Additionally, 97.78% of students have met the minimum literacy competency, and 100% of students have met the minimum numeracy competency. These findings indicate that the learning processes implemented by the school have effectively supported students' achievement of core competencies in an optimal manner.

The high levels of literacy and numeracy achievement demonstrate that the learning process implemented at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has been effective in developing students' core competencies. These achievements are closely tied to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, supported by various learning programs, academic supervision, learning monitoring, and periodic evaluations conducted by the school. These results also indicate that the school has successfully created a learning environment that fosters students' ability to understand, process, and apply knowledge in various real-life contexts.

Nevertheless, the Education Report Card results also highlight several areas that still require attention. The character indicator scored 58.00, falling into the upper-middle ranking category (21–40%), while teacher and educational staff training experience scored 43.9, and teacher participation in the Merdeka Mengajar Platform stood at 31.4, placing it in the lower ranking group (81–100%). These findings indicate that schools still have opportunities to improve teacher professional development and strengthen character education for students.

In terms of character development, the Education Report Card results indicate that there is still room for further improvement. These findings suggest that the school can continue to strengthen various programs that support the development of students' character. These efforts have been implemented through the Mindfulness and One Student One Achievement programs, which focus on developing self-awareness, responsibility, and the optimal development of students' potential.

Overall, the Education Report Card results show that Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has achieved good results in student learning outcomes, particularly in literacy and numeracy. On the other hand, the data also provides insight into several areas that can still be improved as part of a continuous improvement process. This situation demonstrates that the school has implemented quality management principles that are not only results-oriented but also emphasize evaluation and continuous development based on objective data.

Thus, the Education Report serves as a vital tool in supporting decision-making and the development of school quality improvement programs. In addition to serving as an evaluation tool, the results of the Education Report Card are also used by schools as a basis for developing follow-up plans to improve quality. Findings from indicators that remain in the middle and lower categories receive special attention during school evaluation meetings, after which more targeted improvement strategies are formulated. These follow-up efforts may include enhancing teacher competencies through training, optimizing the use of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, and strengthening student character development programs in a more systematic and sustainable manner.

In addition, the implementation of SPMI at Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru is supported by the involvement of the entire school community in quality improvement efforts. Teachers, educational staff, and school administrators each play a role in ensuring that every quality indicator is optimally achieved. This involvement reflects a culture of collaboration in

educational management, where every component of the school functions not only as an implementer but also as part of a system of continuous quality evaluation and improvement.

Furthermore, the use of educational data in the SPMI also indicates that decision-making at the school has begun to be data-driven. The use of the Education Report Card as one of the primary sources of evaluation allows schools to conduct a more objective analysis of achievements and improvement needs. This aligns with the principles of modern quality management, which emphasize the importance of data as the foundation for designing strategies to improve the quality of education in a more targeted and sustainable manner.

Furthermore, the implementation of SPMI at Dharma Loka High School demonstrates a continuous quality assurance cycle, ranging from planning, implementation, evaluation, to follow-up improvements. This cycle reflects that the school not only conducts administrative oversight but is also oriented toward tangible quality improvement based on data and field findings. Thus, SPMI serves as an internal mechanism ensuring that all educational processes continue to undergo improvement and adjustment in accordance with students' needs and the requirements of the current curriculum.

These results are consistent with the SPMI concept proposed by Zahrok (2020), namely the establishment, implementation, evaluation, control, and continuous improvement of quality. These findings also support the research by Ranisa et al., (2025), which shows that the implementation of SPMI can strengthen a school's quality culture through data-driven evaluation and systematic follow-up.

School Quality Outcomes

School quality outcomes are indicators that can be used to assess the effectiveness of various quality improvement programs and strategies that have been implemented (Adam *et al.*, 2020). Based on the data obtained, Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has demonstrated various positive achievements, as reflected in the school's accreditation status, its Education Report Card results, and the various accomplishments of its students.

One indicator of the school's quality is the attainment of an A accreditation. This designation indicates that the school has met most of the standards established within the educational quality assurance system. An A accreditation also reflects strong school management, encompassing curriculum, teaching processes, faculty, facilities, and overall school administration.

In addition to accreditation, school quality can also be assessed through the 2025 Education Report Card results. According to the data, Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru achieved excellent results in literacy with a score of 91.16 and in numeracy with a score of 82.22, placing it in the top-tier category. Furthermore, 97.78% of students have met the minimum literacy competency standards, and 100% of students have met the minimum numeracy competency standards. These results indicate that the learning processes implemented by the school have effectively supported students in achieving their core competencies to the fullest extent.

These achievements are the result of various quality improvement efforts undertaken by the school, such as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), academic supervision, and various school flagship programs. The Exclusive Guidance Program, for example, provides support that helps students improve their academic performance and prepare to continue their education at higher levels. Meanwhile, the PTM Report Card program helps the school monitor student progress more comprehensively so that students' learning needs can be better identified.

Overall, the quality achievements of Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru demonstrate that the various programs and quality assurance systems implemented have made a positive contribution to the quality of education at the school. This is evident from the school's A accreditation, positive Education Report results, and various ongoing student development initiatives. These findings indicate that the school's quality management system has been sufficiently effective in supporting improvements in educational quality.

Furthermore, the school's strong academic performance also demonstrates consistency between program planning, activity implementation, and the results achieved by the school. The integration of various components, such as the curriculum, the learning process, the internal quality assurance system, and the school's flagship programs is a key factor in achieving optimal results. This indicates that Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru has successfully established an integrated quality management system where components support one another in efforts to enhance educational quality.

Beyond academic achievements, the school's success is also reflected in its ability to holistically develop students' potential through various character-building programs, talent development initiatives, and individualized support. This situation demonstrates that school quality is not measured solely by cognitive aspects but also by success in shaping students' character, skills, and readiness to face future challenges. Thus, the quality achievements of Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru can be said to reflect a balanced educational approach that integrates academic excellence with non-academic development.

These findings indicate that a school's success in achieving educational quality is determined not only by student learning outcomes but also by the overall effectiveness of school management. This aligns with educational quality management theory, which emphasizes the importance of integration between planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement in achieving educational goals (Wulandari et al., 2024). In other words, the quality achievements attained by Dharma Loka High School in Pekanbaru are the result of the systematic integration of various quality management components.

CONCLUSIONS

This study found that the implementation of educational quality management at a senior high school in Pekanbaru requires systematic, sustainable practices involving all school stakeholders. Through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, the Internal Quality Assurance System (SPMI), and various flagship programs supporting students' academic achievement, character development, and well-being, the school created a student-centered learning environment. The achievement of an A accreditation and positive Education Report results reflected the effectiveness of these quality management strategies. Although improvements are still needed in strengthening student character and enhancing teachers' professional competencies, the findings indicate that continuous quality improvement has become an integral part of school management. These findings provide practical guidance for school leaders and education administrators in designing integrated quality improvement strategies that combine curriculum implementation, quality assurance, and student development programs. However, the study was limited to a single school with a small number of informants, restricting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include more schools and diverse data sources to provide broader evidence on educational quality management practices.

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