

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC QUALITY MANAGEMENT THROUGH THE PDCA CYCLE AT SD NEGERI PRINGAPUS 02 SEMARANG REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of academic quality management at SD Negeri Pringapus 02, Pringapus District, Semarang Regency, using a qualitative case study approach. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation with principals, teachers, committees, and supervisors. The findings show that quality management is applied consistently through the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Action) cycle. Planning is conducted in annual meetings involving stakeholders to design programs on teacher recruitment, curriculum evaluation, student admission, and infrastructure development. Implementation includes the Merdeka Curriculum, balanced teacher–student ratio, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, and continuous improvement of facilities. Monitoring is carried out through academic supervision by the principal, while corrective actions include coaching, in-house training, workshops, and teacher professional development. The study concludes that PDCA enhances teacher competence, school performance, and student achievement. It emphasizes participatory leadership and a quality-oriented culture while recommending future studies across diverse school contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and systematic effort to create a learning environment that enables students to develop their potential optimally, as mandated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. Students are positioned as subjects entitled to quality educational services, while the community has the right to participate in planning, implementation, and evaluation of education (Utami, Murniati, & Abdullah, 2022). In the context of national development, education is regarded as a strategic instrument to improve the quality of human resources. This is

consistent with Tjalla (2022), who emphasized that education not only prepares learners for life but also actualizes affective, cognitive, and psychomotor potentials in a balanced manner. Efforts to enhance educational quality have become a government priority agenda, both in short-term and long-term programs, to ensure continuous improvement in national education (Syukri & Alfattah, 2024).

Educational quality is understood as an indicator of success in producing students who excel not only academically but also in 21st-century competencies. From the perspective of quality management, schools are required to manage resources, build teacher capacity, and strengthen community engagement to create an inclusive and adaptive learning environment (Pratiwi, 2024). This underscores the importance of effective educational management, in which planning, organizing, monitoring, and school leadership play central roles in achieving educational goals (Rohman & Amri, 2022).

The application of academic quality management demands that schools recognize the needs of educational stakeholders. Internal stakeholders include teachers, students, and parents, while external stakeholders comprise the wider community and the business and industrial sectors. The satisfaction of both groups determines the success of educational quality (Sallis, 2021). Academic quality can be observed through students' academic achievements, competition results, and comprehensive evaluations of teaching and learning (Astuti, 2023; Aliyyah, 2021). Evaluation is not only focused on quantitative outcomes but also on non-academic achievements as part of character development.

Previous studies confirm that effective academic quality management improves the quality of primary education services. Purnomo, Murniati, and Miyono (2022) found that the implementation of quality management in elementary schools positively contributes to the quality of learning services. Similarly, Hadliroh, Maryanto, and Miyono (2024) highlighted the role of principals in strengthening academic quality through effective managerial functions. Furthermore, Aziz (2024) revealed that quality management strategies in Islamic schools successfully enhance education quality by involving all school components.

The local context of this study refers to SD Negeri Pringapus 02, Pringapus District, Semarang Regency. The school has consistently increased its student enrollment each year, achieved various academic and non-academic accomplishments, and obtained an "A" accreditation status. Based on the 2022–2024 Education Report, the school has shown significant progress in numeracy, character development, school climate, and quality of learning. These achievements reflect the consistent and structured implementation of academic quality management. SD Negeri Pringapus 02 currently serves approximately 185 students with a total of 9 teachers and staff. The school is supported by adequate facilities, including 6 classrooms, a library, teachers office, school health unit, small prayer room, and storage room. Academic outcomes have shown improvement in the past three years, as indicated by increasing national assessment results and student participation in district- and provincial-level competitions. These contextual indicators not only strengthen the school's profile but also demonstrate the relevance of examining its academic quality management practices.

Accordingly, this study focuses on the implementation of academic quality management to comprehensively describe the planning, implementation, monitoring, and corrective actions at SD Negeri Pringapus 02, Pringapus District, Semarang Regency. This study is important since academic quality serves as a primary benchmark for society in evaluating school performance. Moreover, strong academic achievement builds a positive school image and a solid foundation for student success at the next level of education.

In the educational domain, Total Quality Management (TQM) is positioned as both a philosophy and a methodology for continuous improvement, enabling schools to manage change, set quality agendas, and ensure stakeholder satisfaction (Sallis, 2021; Vincent, 2021). This approach requires the involvement of all organizational members, evidence-based decision-making, and a collaborative culture aligned with institutional quality objectives.

Academic quality in primary education can be examined through three domains: (1) Input: the readiness of human resources, software, facilities, and the institution's vision and mission. Input-level standards are prerequisites for effective processes (Depdiknas, 2020; Syafaruddin, 2022). (2) Process: student-centered learning, principal leadership, teamwork, quality culture, participation of school stakeholders, and continuous evaluation (Depdiknas,

2020; Mulyasa, 2022; Syafaruddin, 2022). (3) Output: academic and non-academic achievements reflecting quality, effectiveness, efficiency, innovation, and school work ethics (Depdiknas, 2020).

The principles of quality stress customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, total involvement, and fact-based management. In schools, these principles are translated into a focus on students and parents, evidence reinforcement, and a documented cycle of improvement (Sallis, 2021). Quality management also requires school leaders' commitment and alignment of policies, programs, and procedures (Syafaruddin, 2022).

Academic quality is typically supported by the PDCA cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act): (1) Plan formulating quality policies, indicators, and action plans; (2) Do implementing the plan; (3) Check monitoring, measuring, and analyzing deviations; and (4) Act standardizing successful practices and conducting continuous improvement. This cycle drives efficiency and sustainability at both classroom and school levels (Depdiknas, 2020; Mulyasa, 2022; Syafaruddin, 2022).

Academic quality dimensions are operationalized through indicators of input, process, and output that align with the National Education Standards (BNSP, 2021; Kemdikbud, 2022). These standards encompass graduate competencies, content, processes, teachers and staff, facilities, management, financing, and assessment. The principal acts as a key driver of quality through managerial and instructional functions, such as resource coordination, teacher supervision, quality culture reinforcement, and collaboration across the school community. Recent studies indicate that effective leadership correlates with improved teaching quality and academic achievement (Astuti, 2023; Hadliroh, Maryanto, & Miyono, 2024).

Research in elementary schools shows that the implementation of academic quality management contributes positively when planning is consistent, monitoring and evaluation are periodic, teacher training is systematic, and facilities are adequate (Purnomo, Murniati, & Miyono, 2022; Pratiwi, Miyono, & Prayito, 2024). In Islamic schools, quality management strategies emphasize the involvement of all components and alignment with contemporary student needs (Aziz, 2024). Strategic marketing approaches may also strengthen stakeholder trust (Purnama, 2022).

Academic quality is therefore understood as the quality of educational services encompassing both processes and outcomes. Post-pandemic, strengthening quality management requires responsiveness, reliability, empathy, and adequate service evidence (Sopamena & Kaliky, 2020; Zaini, 2020). Drawing from TQM (Sallis, 2021; Vincent, 2021), the IPO framework (Depdiknas, 2020), national standards (BNSP, 2021; Kemdikbud, 2022), and best practices in elementary schools (Purnomo et al., 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Aziz, 2024), this study examines the implementation of academic quality management through the four PDCA stages: planning, implementation, monitoring, and corrective actions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of academic quality management implementation at SD Negeri Pringapus 02, Pringapus District, Semarang Regency (Murdiyanto, 2020; Roosinda, 2021). The case study design was selected because it allows exploration of phenomena within clear boundaries using multiple data sources. The research was conducted from January to June 2025, covering the stages of proposal preparation, supervision, proposal seminar, revision, data collection, analysis, results seminar, final revision, and scientific publication. The research subjects included the school principal, teachers, school committee members, students, and the school supervisor. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in academic quality management and willingness to provide relevant information.

Three main data collection techniques were employed. First, observation was conducted systematically in classrooms, administrative offices, and school activities to examine the implementation of academic quality management. An observation checklist guided the researcher to focus on teaching processes, leadership practices, student engagement, and the use of school facilities. Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, students, and stakeholders. Each interview lasted 40–60 minutes, was recorded with consent, and focused on planning, monitoring, and evaluation practices, as well as challenges and improvement strategies. Third,

documentation involved reviewing school archives, activity reports, meeting minutes, student achievement data, and other official records to support observation and interview findings.

The researcher served as the primary instrument, supported by observation sheets, interview guides, and documentation checklists to ensure systematic and comprehensive data collection. Data validity was ensured using triangulation of sources, methods, and time (Trianto, 2021), while data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model (Sugiyono, 2020), consisting of three stages: (1) Data Reduction: selecting essential information, focusing on key aspects, and identifying patterns or themes; (2) Data Display: presenting findings in narrative, tabular, and chart forms to facilitate understanding; and (3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification: developing and continuously verifying conclusions until findings are credible and accountable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of academic quality management at SD Negeri Pringapus 02 demonstrates systematic application of the PDCA cycle across planning, implementation, monitoring, and corrective actions. The study observed 185 students across six classes, supported by nine certified teachers and educational staff, with facilities including classrooms with LCD projectors, a computer laboratory, library, and sports and worship areas. These resources were actively utilized in teaching, learning, and extracurricular activities.

Planning (Plan)

Academic quality planning involved participatory work meetings with the principal, teachers, staff, and school committee. Data from interviews and observations indicate that stakeholders collaboratively set annual priorities, including curriculum development, student support strategies, teacher training schedules, and allocation of resources in the school activity and budget plan (RKAS). Teachers reported that the planning meetings provided clarity on expected learning outcomes and facilitated alignment with students' learning needs.

Implementation (Do)

Field observations revealed that teachers actively applied the Merdeka Curriculum with student-centered methods, integrating digital and hands-on learning approaches. Professional development programs, including in-house training and workshops, were consistently implemented. Interviews highlighted that teachers perceive these initiatives as directly enhancing instructional quality. Extracurricular programs were observed to reinforce both academic and character development, contributing to improved student engagement and achievement.

Monitoring (Check)

Supervision conducted by the principal occurred on a regular schedule, focusing on lesson observations, assessment practices, and utilization of learning resources. Data collected from supervision records and interviews indicate that monitoring identified both strengths and areas for improvement, such as the need for differentiated instruction and more effective integration of technology in classrooms. Teachers noted that feedback from supervision directly informed adjustments to lesson planning and classroom strategies.

Corrective Actions (Act)

Follow-up actions based on monitoring included teacher coaching sessions, peer mentoring, participation in teacher working groups (KKG), and targeted professional workshops. Observations and teacher interviews confirmed that these measures led to measurable improvements in teaching methods, classroom management, and student learning outcomes. School leaders reported that regular review and adjustment of strategies enhanced overall academic performance and responsiveness to student needs.

Key Findings

Analysis of field data indicates that the effectiveness of academic quality management is supported by: (1) Participatory and transformational leadership of the principal, fostering teacher motivation and stakeholder engagement. (2) Stakeholder support, including active involvement of teachers, staff, and the school committee in planning and program evaluation. (3) Resource utilization, with facilities systematically applied to support teaching, learning, and extracurricular programs. (4) Structured supervision and follow-up, ensuring continuous improvement

through coaching and professional development. (5) Curriculum integration, aligning national standards with local content and character-building activities such as the Profil Pelajar Pancasila.

Challenges identified during fieldwork included limited mechanisms for rewarding outstanding teacher performance and the need to expand stakeholder involvement in budgeting decisions. These findings suggest that while PDCA-based management has strengthened academic quality, further optimization of incentive systems and participatory budgeting could enhance sustainability and teacher motivation.

Discussion

Academic Quality Planning

The study findings reveal that academic quality planning at SD Negeri Pringapus 02, while formally structured through annual work meetings, faces practical constraints in implementation. Although all stakeholders principal, teachers, staff, and school committee participate in planning, interviews indicated that time constraints and varying levels of data literacy among teachers sometimes limit the effectiveness of data-driven decision-making. For instance, teacher input on curriculum adaptation and resource allocation was occasionally underrepresented in the final plan, despite the participatory intention. This highlights a gap between the ideal PDCA “Plan” stage, where problem identification and improvement plans should be fully informed by evidence (Deming, as cited in Cahyo, 2018; Fattah, 2018), and the realities of stakeholder engagement. Nevertheless, the participatory planning framework contributed positively to aligning curriculum adjustments with local student needs, supporting Mutohar’s (2020) argument that stakeholder involvement fosters a quality culture, and Utami, Murniati, and Abdullah’s (2022) findings on data-informed planning.

Academic Quality Implementation

Implementation demonstrates strengths and challenges. Field observations and teacher interviews show that the school maintains the recommended teacher–student ratio (1:28) and assigns teachers according to qualifications, facilitating effective learning environments (Hasibuan, 2022). However, constraints such as limited ICT resources and inconsistent access to learning materials occasionally impede the full application of the Merdeka Curriculum. While teachers generally demonstrate competence in module preparation and integration of morning literacy and co-curricular activities, observation data revealed variability in lesson delivery and student engagement across classrooms. Extracurricular activities are actively promoted, but participation depends on student interest and available supervision, indicating that implementation effectiveness varies in practice. These realities nuance the normative view that quality management automatically guarantees uniform curriculum application, reinforcing the relevance of Candra (2023) and Amrazi (2023) regarding the importance of teacher training and curriculum flexibility.

Academic Quality Monitoring (Supervision)

Monitoring through principal-led academic supervision is conducted systematically each semester. Data from observation sheets and interviews indicate that supervision effectively identifies gaps in teaching performance and classroom management. However, challenges emerged in translating supervision findings into timely corrective actions for all teachers. Some teachers reported delays in receiving feedback or uncertainty about follow-up expectations. This reflects the practical limitations of supervisory capacity and coordination, despite alignment with Permendiknas No. 13 of 2007 and the literature on the benefits of regular supervision (Hadliroh, Maryanto, & Miyono, 2024; Sari & Puspitasari, 2021). These findings suggest that while supervision contributes to academic quality, its impact is mediated by logistical and communication factors in real-world school settings.

Corrective Actions

Corrective measures, including monthly evaluation meetings, in-house training, and participation in KKG and seminars, have generally improved teacher competence and learning outcomes. Nevertheless, field data reveal that not all teachers consistently engage with these programs due to workload, scheduling conflicts, or limited motivation, highlighting gaps between ideal PDCA “Act” strategies (Sallis, 2020, 2021) and actual implementation. Observations also suggest that follow-up actions are more effective when directly linked to specific supervision findings, rather than

being conducted as routine activities, corroborating Pratiwi, Miyono, and Prayito (2024) and Purnomo, Murniati, and Miyono (2022) on the need for concrete and targeted follow-up to evaluation results.

Improvement of Academic and Non-Academic Achievements

The school's academic and non-academic accomplishments indicate that quality management positively influences student outcomes. Competitions, arts, sports, and religious activities show measurable success, while programs such as 5S, morning literacy, and collective worship reinforce character development. However, observations and interviews reveal that student engagement in some programs varies based on teacher facilitation and available resources. Zaini (2020) emphasized that adaptive quality management maintains learning outcomes post-pandemic, yet the SD Negeri Pringapus 02 case shows that achieving consistent impact requires careful attention to implementation fidelity and equitable access to opportunities.

Overall Analysis

In summary, while SD Negeri Pringapus 02 has successfully applied the PDCA cycle, the field data indicate gaps between theoretical ideals and practical realities. Planning is participatory but constrained by data capacity and time; implementation is generally effective but varies across classrooms; supervision identifies issues but follow-up actions are uneven; and achievements are significant yet contingent on teacher facilitation and resource availability. These insights underscore that academic quality management is not automatically self-realizing but requires continuous attention to context-specific constraints, stakeholder capacity, and resource allocation, thereby reinforcing quality management theory while critically situating it within the realities of primary school practice (Cahyo, 2018; Fattah, 2018; Mutohar, 2020; Utami et al., 2022; Sallis, 2020, 2021; Purnomo et al., 2022; Pratiwi et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to describe the implementation of academic quality management at SD Negeri Pringapus 02, Pringapus District, Semarang Regency. The findings reveal that academic quality planning is systematically carried out through annual work meetings involving the principal, teachers, education staff, and the school committee. The planning agenda includes teacher and staff recruitment, student admission (PPDB), curriculum and learning evaluation, provision of infrastructure, and programs to enhance both academic and non-academic achievements. The implementation of academic quality is realized through teacher recruitment with attention to the ideal teacher student ratio, PPDB in accordance with technical guidelines, the implementation of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, and the provision of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to develop students' interests, talents, and competencies. The school also carries out continuous improvements to facilities and infrastructure. The management of academic and non-academic achievements is the responsibility of teachers in their respective fields, supported by a positive school culture. Academic quality monitoring is conducted by the principal through scheduled academic supervision, which includes evaluating teacher performance, curriculum implementation, and learning quality. The results of supervision serve as the basis for decision-making in quality improvement. Corrective actions are implemented through follow-ups such as teacher coaching, in-house training (IHT), participation in teacher working groups (KKG), training, and workshops. These efforts have proven effective in improving teacher competence, strengthening the quality culture, and enhancing student learning outcomes. Overall, the implementation of academic quality management at SD Negeri Pringapus 02 has been carried out effectively through the consistent application of the PDCA (plan, do, check, action) cycle. The school has successfully established participatory planning, effectively implemented academic and non-academic programs, conducted continuous supervision, and executed concrete follow-ups for quality improvement. Consequently, SD Negeri Pringapus 02 can be categorized as one of the leading schools favored by the community and serves as a model of good practice for other elementary schools in Semarang Regency.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the implementation of academic quality management based on the PDCA cycle within the context of the *Merdeka Curriculum* at a public elementary school in a semi-urban area. This research demonstrates how the integration of participatory planning, school leadership, and a quality-oriented culture can enhance teaching quality and student achievement. However, the limitation of this study is its scope, which only covers a single school, thus restricting the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended

to be conducted on a broader scale across schools with different characteristics, incorporating quantitative variables to measure the impact of academic quality management more precisely, and paying attention to the digitalization of quality management in supporting 21st-century learning.

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