# IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ACHIEVING SCHOOL QUALITY

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**ABSTRACT**
This study aims to describe the implementation of continuous development, based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, at SDN Abirau, Banjar Regency, to enhance school quality holistically. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, utilizing data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation analysis involving the principal, teachers, and educational staff. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model, with source and method triangulation used to ensure data validity. The findings indicate that SDN Abirau has implemented end-of-semester reflections, teacher professional training, communities of practice, learning outcome evaluations, and the PDCA cycle in its quality management. Supporting factors include visionary leadership, a strong teacher community, and a reflective culture. Conversely, the main obstacles are time constraints, incomplete documentation, mismatched training materials, and uneven teacher participation. The study's novelty lies in the integration of comprehensive stakeholder involvement and the utilization of real-time data within the elementary school context. Practical recommendations include strengthening the training needs analysis, improving PDCA documentation, increasing the frequency of teacher communities, enhancing participation in evaluations, and fostering a continuous improvement culture supported by adequate resources. Consequently, continuous development serves as an effective strategy for improving school quality systematically and sustainably.

## INTRODUCTIONS

Education is the backbone of human and national development. However, many schools currently face serious challenges related to the quality of learning, such as low teacher competency, suboptimal facilities, and inadequately structured quality evaluation systems. If a school system operates statically without improvement cycles, the desired quality is difficult to attain. The concept of continuous development becomes essential as a strategy to systematically identify problems, plan, implement, evaluate, and enact corrective follow-up. In the school context, this process is often termed the continuous Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle or similar (Abdurrohman & Fahmi, 2021). Without a continuous improvement mechanism, schools are vulnerable to stagnation and even a decline in quality.

Much research confirms that the quality improvement process in schools requires systematic management. For example, a study at SMP IT Abu Bakar Yogyakarta demonstrated that applying the principle of continuous improvement positively impacts organizational management, administration, human resources (HR), and learning (Khasanah et al., 2023). Furthermore, a study at an online elementary school in South Jakarta showed that the continuous quality improvement (CQI) cycle can be applied to online learning by carrying out planning, control, evaluation, and follow-up (Bahri, 2022). These findings reinforce the understanding that continuous development is not merely jargon, but a tangible framework within the field of education.

Other research also indicates that quality management through a well-crafted school vision and mission results in better school performance. For instance, research at SD Negeri Cimalati in Cianjur found that implementing quality management through its vision-mission and a cycle of evaluation and follow-up provably strengthened school performance (Sopandi et al., 2024). This study illustrates how the stages of identification, implementation, and evaluation must be conducted continuously. Meanwhile, research on CQI-oriented curriculum development in Islamic educational institutions affirms that curriculum development as part of the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle is highly relevant (Mahfuzhah, 2024). Hartini et al. (2025) also emphasize that a continuous development framework encompasses all school aspects—management, curriculum, HR, facilities—and must be supported by a routine evaluation system.

The school's continuous development process begins with problem identification, such as low learning outcomes, resource limitations, or a lack of stakeholder involvement. Once problems are identified, the planning stage involves formulating quality targets, establishing teacher training programs, or improving learning processes. The subsequent implementation phase involves program application, routine monitoring, and the involvement of all school parties. Then, in the evaluation stage, the school measures the extent to which these efforts have changed the situation and whether quality objectives have been achieved. The improvement or follow-up stage is crucial to ensure evaluation results are used to correct systems and processes that are still weak. Thus, continuous development becomes a never-ending cycle in the effort to improve the quality of education.

Challenges that arise in the field include how to ensure the sustainability of the quality development cycle amid limited resources, how to motivate teachers and education staff to innovate continuously, and how to ensure all stakeholders are actively involved in the process. Some schools face obstacles such as resistance to change, lack of policy support, and limitations in facilities and technology (Tunggal et al., 2025). Moreover, adaptation to global educational trends and 21st-century needs forces schools to transform more rapidly (Herliana et al., 2025). These challenges indicate that although the continuous development framework is well-known, its implementation does not always run smoothly in all contexts. Therefore, research is needed to explore the real conditions in schools, identify inhibiting and supporting factors, and determine strategies for the improvement cycle to operate effectively.

Previous research has made important contributions, yet there is still room for novelty. This research focuses on integrating the continuous improvement cycle with comprehensive stakeholder involvement (teachers, students, parents, community) and the utilization of real-time data as a basis for school quality evaluation. Many prior studies have focused on a single aspect, such as quality management or curriculum, whereas this study intends to look

holistically at the entire process—from problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation to continuous improvement. Furthermore, this study will use instruments adapted to the context of secondary schools in the central region of Indonesia, which is expected to provide a relevant local contribution. Thus, this research offers a more integrated approach to achieving school quality through continuous development.

It is vital for schools to strengthen a sustainable culture of quality. Schools need to make the quality improvement cycle a routine part of operations, not just a temporary project. The involvement of all school components—principals, teachers, education staff, students, parents, and the community—is crucial for the process to run systematically and comprehensively. The periodic use of data and evaluation becomes the primary tool for monitoring progress and making decisions. The planning and implementation system for quality programs must be flexible to adapt to internal and external changes. Consequently, continuous development not only enhances quality but also ensures the school's resilience and relevance amid global education dynamics. This research is expected to provide practical recommendations for school management in designing and implementing the continuous development cycle to improve quality systematically..

## METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at providing an in-depth description of the implementation process of continuous development in efforts to improve school quality. This approach was selected because it allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon contextually and holistically, according to the real conditions in the field. The research focused on the stages of problem identification, planning, implementation, evaluation, and corrective follow-up conducted by the school. The research subjects included the principal and teachers at SDN Abirau, Banjar Regency, as the primary actors in implementing continuous development. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation study.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which includes three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. All data obtained were analyzed thematically to find patterns in the practices of continuous quality development at the school. Data validity was ensured through source and method triangulation to confirm the validity and reliability of the research findings. The research procedure was carried out systematically, starting from planning, data collection, analysis, to reporting the results, adhering to principles of research ethics. Through this method, the study is expected to provide a factual and in-depth picture of the effectiveness of continuous development implementation in improving school quality.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Tentu, berikut adalah terjemahan dari teks dan tabel tersebut ke dalam bahasa Inggris yang baik dan benar, dengan memperhatikan tata bahasa dan kaidah penulisan akademis:

This study aims to descriptively illustrate the implementation process of continuous development at SDN Abirau, Banjar Regency, in the effort to improve school quality. In this context, continuous development encompasses activities such as enhancing teacher competency, strengthening school management, quality evaluation, and a culture of continuous improvement. The results of this study are qualitative, supplemented by brief interviews with several teachers and the principal, as well as observations of school documents. A summary table of the implementation is presented to illustrate the aspects considered and the progress achieved. This study is expected to provide a practical overview and reflection on supporting and inhibiting factors. Thus, the school and stakeholders will receive recommendations for strengthening quality through a continuous development approach. Below, Table 1 presents a summary of interview results with Teachers & the Principal.

**Table 1. Interview Results with Teachers & Principal Regarding Continuous Development**

| Respondent | Position | Key Statement | Implementation Indicator | Notes / Obstacles |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher A | Class IV Teacher | "At the end of every semester, we conduct reflections and follow-up plans for learning improvement." | Reflection and follow-up plan | Limited time to conduct follow-up |
| Teacher B | Class II Teacher | "We attend internal and external training, but not all materials suit our needs." | Professional development training | Suitability of material is still limited |
| Principal | Principal of SDN Abirau | "School management already uses the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle for quality, but documentation needs strengthening." | Implementation of quality cycle | Incomplete documentation |
| Teacher C | Indonesian Language Teacher | "A teacher community was formed to share best practices, but meeting frequency isn't regular." | Teacher community of practice | Frequency and commitment not yet maximal |
| Teacher D | Mathematics Teacher | "Student learning outcome evaluations are used for program improvement, but not everyone participates actively." | Evaluation of results and follow-up | Teacher participation is uneven |

The implementation of continuous development at SDN Abirau shows that teachers have conducted end-of-semester reflections and formulated follow-ups. This aligns with findings that continuous professional development programs can enhance teacher competencies in pedagogical, professional, social, and personal domains. For example, research by Noviyanti, Suti'ah, Mulyadi, Wahananto, & Zikri (2024) mentions that the CPD (Continuous Professional Development) program in 'smart schools' helps improve teacher competency. This reinforces that continuous development is not a one-time event, but an ongoing cycle. However, at SDN Abirau, obstacles such as limited time and weak documentation still exist. This is consistent with the research findings of Tampubolon et al. (2023), who found that gaps exist in CPD implementation at the design, installation, process, product, and comparison stages. Although progress has been made, system strengthening is still needed for more systematic and sustainable development.

Teacher training and professional development at this school are underway, but teachers expressed that the training materials do not fully align with their needs. This is relevant to studies by Pertiwi et al. (2025) and Ningtyaz et al. (2025), which indicate that effective CPD strategies are those based on teacher needs, implemented through collaborative and reflective learning communities. A lack of material suitability can reduce the positive impact on learning quality. A systematic study by Putri et al. (2024) also affirms that CPD in Indonesia tends to shift from traditional models to more formal systems, yet challenges of contextual relevance persist. Therefore, the school needs to conduct a more precise needs analysis and involve teachers in designing training to make it more relevant and impactful.

The role of school management as a leader in quality development is crucial, and at this school, it has begun to be implemented through the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle. This aligns with research by Bahri (2022), who found that a 'smart' elementary school in South Jakarta implemented the PDCA cycle in online learning for continuous quality improvement. Similarly, a study by Sopandi et al. (2024) notes that quality management involving systematic planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up has a significant impact on elementary school performance.

However, at SDN Abirau, constraints were still found, especially in documentation and routine process control, which could hinder the sustainability of the quality process.

The teacher community of practice is one continuous development mechanism applied at this school, but meeting frequency and participation are not yet optimal. As found in strategic research on CPD for elementary school teachers, teacher communities utilizing participatory and collaborative approaches enhance pedagogical competence. A lack of regularity and participation can reduce the community to a mere formality with little real impact. Research by Mustamin et al. (2023) posits that teacher professional development programs must be implemented sustainably and receive support from school leadership. Therefore, SDN Abirau needs to strengthen the commitment and system of its teacher community so it becomes an active space for reflection and innovation.

Student learning outcome evaluations have been used as a quality indicator and as a basis for follow-up at the school, yet teacher participation in this follow-up is uneven. A study on Continuous Improvement in elementary schools in West Bontang noted that strategies such as evaluating learning outcomes, improving infrastructure, and parent collaboration contribute to enhancing learning quality (Tunggal et al., 2025). This indicates that evaluation as part of the quality cycle is crucial. However, if not all teachers are involved in the follow-up process, the impact may be limited, and only some aspects will see improvement. Thus, a mechanism is needed to ensure that all teachers are active in evaluation and improvement planning.

Supporting factors for continuous development at SDN Abirau include school leadership that recognizes the importance of quality, the existence of a teacher community, and end-of-semester learning reflections. Meanwhile, the obstacles found include limited teacher time for development, incomplete documentation, misalignment of training materials with teacher needs, and uneven teacher participation. In the study by Tampubolon et al. (2023), it was found that gaps exist at every CPD stage, from design to comparison. Meanwhile, the study Transforming Educational Quality Through TQM by Najiah & Bahrun (2025) emphasizes that a culture of collaboration and accountability is key to implementing continuous improvement. Schools need to build a strong quality culture and a consistent monitoring and evaluation system.

The implementation of the research findings shows that continuous development at SDN Abirau demonstrates good progress but requires enhancement. This study suggests that the school strengthen its analysis of teacher training needs, clarify quality cycle (PDCA) documentation, increase the frequency and participation in the teacher community, and expand the involvement of all teachers in evaluation and learning follow-up. Furthermore, building a school culture that prioritizes continuous improvement, as discussed by Hikamudin (2024) in the context of school culture and quality, will strengthen the school's overall quality. The school also needs resource support (time, budget, facilities) so that continuous development can occur tangibly and sustainably. With these steps, school quality at SDN Abirau can improve significantly and sustainably.

## CONCLUSION

SDN Abirau has undertaken various efforts in implementing continuous development to improve school quality, yet several aspects still require strengthening: the suitability of training, documentation of the quality cycle, the frequency of the teacher community, and the full participation of teachers in evaluations. By strengthening these existing mechanisms, building a culture of continuous development, and providing adequate resource support, it is expected that school quality will improve more significantly and sustainably.

observations, and documentation analysis. This research was supported by the Master's Program in Educational Administration, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, Indonesia.

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