

Quality assurance of elementary schools in Sintang regency

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Abstract: Quality assurance as a process to maintain and improve the quality of education. It is necessary to understand more deeply how schools develop and implement relevant programs so that quality education is created, especially at the primary school level in the district. The research took place in 8 primary schools spread across 7 sub-districts. This is a qualitative research using in-depth interviews, observation and document analysis. The results showed that, although some schools have succeeded in developing a quality assurance program with the stages of Identify, Reflect and Fix (IRB) with an education report card, there are still significant challenges such as limited facilities and human resources as well as the lack of socio-economic status of the parents of students so that they lack the role to encourage children to learn and be ethical. The commitment of the principal, quality assurance team, and competent teachers, as well as the involvement of parents can improve school quality, as well as the contribution of the Sintang education office with strategies in the form of forming learning communities, emphasizing principals to strengthen evaluation, and encouraging teachers to improve their competence to help the success of quality assurance in Sintang District which is far from the city center.

Keywords: Education quality, education strategy, primary school

Abstrak: Penjaminan mutu sebagai proses untuk mempertahankan dan meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. Perlu memahami lebih dalam bagaimana sekolah-sekolah menyusun dan melaksanakan program yang relevan sehingga pendidikan berkualitas tercipta khususnya tingkat sekolah dasar yang berada di daerah kabupaten. Penelitian berlangsung di 8 sekolah dasar yang tersebar di 7 kecamatan. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa, meskipun beberapa sekolah telah berhasil dalam menyusun program penjaminan mutu dengan tahapan Identifikasi, Refleksi, dan Benahi (IRB) dengan rapor pendidikan, masih terdapat tantangan yang signifikan seperti fasilitas dan SDM terbatas serta kurangnya sosial ekonomi dari orang tua siswa sehingga kurangnya peran untuk mendorong anak-anak belajar dan beretika. Adanya komitmen dari kepala sekolah, tim penjaminan mutu, dan guru yang berkompeten, serta keterlibatan orang tua mampu meningkatkan mutu sekolah, serta kontribusi dinas pendidikan Sintang dengan adanya strategi berupa pembentukan komunitas belajar, menekankan kepala sekolah untuk memperkuat evaluasi, dan mendorong guru untuk meningkatkan kompetensi diri untuk membantu keberhasilan penjaminan mutu di Kabupaten Sintang yang berada jauh dari pusat kota.

Kata kunci: Mutu pendidikan, strategi pendidikan, sekolah dasar

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in schools, especially elementary schools, must meet high standards and be competent, as this is the initial stage where every child receives formal education (Nasir et al., 2024; Simanjuntak et al., 2022). Schools' commitment to improving the quality of education is expected to influence children's success in advancing to the next level of education, as well as their successful socialization and ethical behavior in society (Ranisa et al., 2025).

To achieve and maintain high education quality, school management plays a crucial role in implementing educational quality management. A school's achievement of

educational standards depends on its management. The implementation of quality management in education has a significant impact on improving the desired quality of education (Maulidin & Lukitasari, 2024). Addressing weaknesses and maintaining strengths is an internal challenge for schools (Rahyu et al., 2025). Quality assurance is one solution to ensure that schools meet standards and identify their strengths and weaknesses (Zahrok, 2020).

One school management method is the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, popularized by Deming (1986). This cycle is often used in school quality assurance processes in Indonesia because it promotes continuous improvement in education. Plan, or planning, Do, or implementing the plan. Check, or verifying the results of all activities, and Act, or following up. A school's success in ensuring the quality of inputs, processes, and outputs can increase school accountability and public trust (Feijoo et al., 2020). The data collection and management process in this study refers to the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle, ensuring that the data gathered is more valid, measurable, and can be used for evaluation as well as continuous improvement in school quality management. Therefore, schools are expected to implement quality assurance effectively.

The pillars of school quality assurance are leadership and governance, learning and curriculum, assessment and evaluation, human resources, and stakeholder participation (Jailani et al., 2024; Sunoto et al., 2023). These five pillars are interconnected because they fit into the school framework, where they support each other to create a holistic and sustainable educational ecosystem. The role of a principal is complex, encompassing administrative, academic, and operational responsibilities (Thorpe & Karamanidou, 2024). Principals must be able to motivate and inspire staff, improve performance, and strengthen internal communication (Darmansah et al., 2024; Suhaedin et al., 2024) to ensure proper delivery of learning and the curriculum. Furthermore, school evaluation is also significantly influenced by the principal's involvement of human resources and relevant stakeholders (Podgornik & Vogrinc, 2017). Stakeholder involvement in quality assurance is crucial because their participation during planning can help schools make informed decisions to ensure school goals align with government standards (Posri & Chansirisira, 2023).

The government has developed a new innovation in the form of a data-based evaluation instrument, the education report card, designed to assess and monitor school performance based on quality indicators, covering aspects of learning, school management, resource management, and community engagement. According to Suyadnya (2024), an education report card is a report containing the results of an evaluation of the education system in an educational unit based on various data collected from existing systems. The education report card provides a comprehensive overview of school achievements and areas for improvement. It is hoped that it will help schools identify problems, reflect on these results, and design relevant and effective improvement strategies (Herfiyanti et al., 2024; Kiriana & Wideasih, 2023; Shintia et al., 2023).

The low quality of primary education in Indonesia is reflected in the 2022 PISA results, in which Indonesia's scores in literacy, numeracy, and science remain far below the OECD average. This condition indicates that the quality of national education has not yet been optimal, even though the government has introduced various innovations, including the implementation of the education report card instrument. The education report card is intended to serve as a data-based evaluation tool to help schools identify weaknesses,

improve programs, and allocate resources more effectively. However, in practice, the implementation of the education report card still faces several challenges, including disparities in quality between urban and rural schools, limited infrastructure, and the low competence of teachers in certain areas.

One of the most affected regions is Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan, which is geographically located far from the provincial government center. This remoteness has implications for limited access to educational facilities, uneven distribution of qualified teachers, and the lack of student development programs. Based on the output from the 2023 education report card data, which focuses on academic achievement (literacy, numeracy, and character), many elementary schools in Sintang, both in urban and rural areas, have “low” learning achievement categories because they have not yet met quality standards, and “moderate” categories where schools have begun to align the quality of learning, management, and human resource competence with standards but still require further improvement and enhancement. This condition indicates a serious gap in the implementation of education quality assurance in the region.

The emerging problem is how schools in Sintang develop quality assurance programs, what factors influence their implementation, and how the local government and schools can collaborate to overcome the challenges in the quality of primary education. Therefore, this study is important to provide a comprehensive overview of the processes, obstacles, and strategic measures needed for primary schools in Sintang to meet education quality standards and produce a young generation that is both competitive and well-characterized.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach. The research was conducted at Public Elementary School 1 Kenukut, Public Elementary School 2 SPDE Mensiku, Public Elementary School 3 Makong, Public Elementary School 4 Pandan, Public Elementary School 5 Sintang, Public Elementary School 7 Sintang, Public Elementary School 14 Empaci, and Public Elementary School 27 Gernis.

This interview was conducted because the researcher intended to obtain more in-depth information regarding the quality assurance process in schools. The interviews were carried out with several informants, including: (1) the Sintang District Education Office, represented by the Head of Curriculum and Assessment for Elementary Schools, to gain insights into the development of programs, the programs implemented in elementary schools across Sintang District, and the measures taken to advance education in the region; (2) school supervisors, to understand the guidance provided in the preparation and implementation of quality assurance programs; (3) principals, as key informants due to their roles as instructional leaders and decision-makers, as well as their knowledge of the steps or policies taken to improve school quality; and (4) teachers, to understand the implementation of programs and the challenges encountered in carrying out existing programs or policies.

Steps taken during the interview: a) The interview guidelines were first provided to the informants, and an agreement was made regarding the interview schedule. b) The interviews were conducted according to the agreed schedule. c) Each interview was carried out separately with the respective informants. d) Then, the interviews were conducted directly with the informants. e) Before starting the interview, the researcher requested

permission from the informants to record the session. f) Finally, group photos were taken with each informant as documentation.

Table 1. Interview guidelines

Variable	Aspect	Indicator	Source of Information
School Quality Assurance Program	Quality Mapping	Condition of school quality	Education Office, Supervisors, Principals, Quality Assurance Team/Teachers
	Planning	• Stakeholder involvement • Assistance	
	Implementation of Quality Assurance Program	–	
	Evaluation and Follow-up	• Supervision • Assistance	
	Supporting and Inhibiting Factors	Supporting Factors: • Evaluation of quality assurance program • Learning process Inhibiting Factors: • Utilization of educational resources • Barriers to school quality assurance	
Quality Strategy	Quality Improvement	• School quality improvement • School accreditation • Utilization of educational resources	

Additionally, observations and analysis of educational report cards, school work programs, and school evaluation reports were conducted to understand the extent to which educational report cards are utilized.

Table 2. Observation guidelines

No.	Observed Aspect	Indicator
1	Learning Process	1. Accuracy of teaching methods 2. Alignment of the curriculum used 3. Student-centered learning 4. Monitoring and assessment system 5. Utilization of educational resources
2	Organization	1. School organizational structure 2. Implementation of school activities 3. Existence of policies and planning 4. Clarity of roles and responsibilities 5. Community and school partner involvement
3	Leadership	1. Having a vision and commitment to realize it 2. Carrying out responsibilities properly 3. Concern for subordinates and students 4. Strong perseverance in improving school quality 5. Instilling trust in subordinates 6. Inspiring subordinates to innovate and create continuously
4	School Environment	1. Availability of vision, mission, and school regulations 2. A safe and comfortable learning climate 3. Mutual support among school members
5	Monitoring and Evaluation	1. Supervision of teacher performance 2. Evaluation of school programs 3. Educational Report Cards 4. School Accreditation

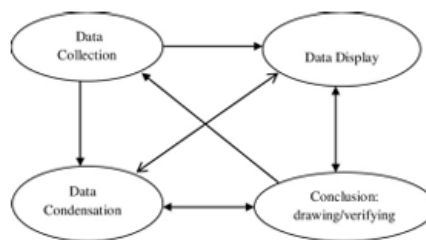


Fig. 1. Data analysis

The data analysis used in this study employed a descriptive method by illustrating and describing the actual conditions that occurred in the research object. The Miles, Huberman, & Saldana model (in Sugiyono, 2015) was applied, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming raw data obtained from interview transcripts with informants. Subsequently, summaries of the field data were

created, followed by coding and formulating the data to assist the researcher in drawing valid research conclusions. Finally, the results obtained during the research were narrated.

Table 3. Research subjects

Category	Education Office	Supervisor	Principal	Teacher	Total
Number	1	4	8	18	31
Age 27–40	1	–	2	12	15
Age 41–50	–	–	2	4	6
Age > 50	–	4	4	2	10

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Development of quality assurance programs in Sintang Regency

Sintang Regency's vast territory means that education quality remains unevenly distributed. Despite this, the local government, along with the Education Office, strives to continuously meet educational needs in remote areas and assist schools in achieving quality standards. The Sintang Regency Education Office and supervisors collaborate to guide and supervise each elementary school in Sintang Regency, reflecting on the education report card to ensure the quality of their schools. Schools should not only focus on final results, but also use the education report card as a pillar of quality assurance in developing programs for the following year. This report card reflects the school's performance based on the program's implementation in the previous year. It serves as a means for schools to improve their quality. The education report card plays a crucial role in ensuring whether a school's quality meets national education standards. A school's skill level in developing targeted programs directly impacts school quality (Leithwood, 2021).

Quality assurance is essential in determining the effectiveness of educational programs, as program development skills directly influence school quality. Successful quality assurance is indicated by continuous improvement. Therefore, proper collaboration between the Department of Education and schools in designing relevant programs is crucial. An interview with the Head of Curriculum and Assessment for Primary Schools in Sintang Regency highlighted this perspective:

“...the focus is on three aspects. The first is, of course, literacy skills, followed by numeracy skills, and the third is character dimension...”. (Interview with head of curriculum and assessment for primary schools in education office on Maret 19, 2024).

These three aspects have become the quality targets for Sintang Regency that need to be improved. In the 2024 education report card, Sintang Regency was categorized as moderate. IR and KW, as supervisors, stated that the quality condition in Sintang Regency is:

“...quite challenging...” and “...still below the standard...”. (Interview with supervisor IR and KW for primary schools in education office on Maret 20, 2024).

This is in line with the statements of three school principals who considered their schools had not yet achieved the expected quality, while four other schools believed their

schools had already met the expected quality and would continue to improve. Based on field findings, these are the education report card achievements of the eight schools.

The researcher presents the findings from the field study as follows: The BPMP (Educational Quality Assurance Agency) instructed the education office to accelerate the achievement of its programs. Therefore, the Sintang Regency Education Office formed a team responsible for each priority program. The education office disseminated these programs to schools, particularly related to the Education Report Card. The education office expects improvements in the results reflected in the Education Report Card.

Accordingly, schools must design appropriate programs to achieve better results in the Education Report Card. The development of quality assurance programs in schools is carried out by relevant stakeholders, including principals, teachers, and school committees, with supervision from school inspectors. The Head of the Curriculum Division stated that the current program development emphasized by the education office is based on three stages, namely Identification, Reflection, and Improvement (IRB). He said:

“... regional planning today should be based on the regional education report; that is, we analyze from the education report. From there, we make the planning. What we usually call this process consists of three stages: identification, reflection, and improvement. So, IRB: identify, then reflect on what the root cause is, and only then we design improvement programs.” (Interview with head of curriculum and assessment for primary schools in education office on Maret 19, 2024).

The principal, with the initials RM, stated that the first stage carried out in quality assurance is:

“The first step is to form a good working team ...”. (Interview with principal RM in principal’s office on Maret 27, 2024).

SK expressed the same:

“... we form a quality assurance team ...”. (Interview with principal SK in principal’s office on April 4, 2024).

IB and AN also conveyed the same, that a quality assurance team had already been established. The formation of a quality assurance team was carried out in 4 schools, while the other 4 schools had not yet formed such a team. When interviewed about the quality assurance team, ST said:

“There isn’t one yet, nothing organized has been formed.” (Interview with principal ST in principal’s office on Maret 26, 2024).

KT also said the same:

“For the time being, it has not been established.” (Interview with principal KT in principal’s office on April 22, 2024).

Likewise, two other principals confirmed the same thing: they had not yet formed a quality assurance team. The establishment of the team is proven by the official decree (SK) issued by the school. Nevertheless, the schools continued to prepare programs through

discussions or deliberations with teachers. After forming the team, the planning stage carried out by schools is quality mapping. AN said that the first step is:

“... mapping first through the results of the education report ... the evaluation results from fellow teachers ...” (Interview with principal AN in principal’s office on April 30, 2024).

SK also conveyed the same:

“... preparing for existing competency weaknesses ...” (Interview with principal SK in principal’s office on April 4, 2024).

Similarly, IB stated,

“... analyzing how many students still have low levels of learning ...” (Interview with principal IB in principal’s office on April 3, 2024).

Mr. IN as the principal also added that in making the program, the school must set priority scales. After schools identify the root causes, weaknesses, and strengths, the next stage is designing suitable programs for improving school quality. On average, schools take about one month from the planning stage to the creation of programs. One of the reasons for this lengthy planning process was explained by IB, the principal:

“In planning, we must ensure that our observations are not left behind, because we need to see how the children are progressing, which children are capable and which are not ... then our teachers carry out what we call supervision, and that is my opportunity to observe how the teacher is teaching in the classroom ...” (Interview with principal IB in principal’s office on April 3, 2024).

Programs come from both the Sintang District Education Office and school initiatives. The district focuses on improving teacher competence and preventing violence in schools, issuing directives to form *learning communities* (Kombel) and *Bullying and Violence Prevention Teams* (TPPK). Interviews and document reviews show that all schools have established these. Programs are divided into two: (1) teacher competence development and (2) student competence development. For teachers, programs include learning communities, *KIAT Guru* for remote areas, and *Guru Penggerak*. Teachers reported joining learning communities, while *KIAT Guru* was implemented in isolated 3T (remote, frontier, underdeveloped) regions due to geographical challenges and limited supervision. The Head of Curriculum also noted the role of *Guru Penggerak*:

“...we are trying to encourage guru penggerak (teacher leaders) to become principals...” (Interview with head of curriculum and assessment for primary schools in education office on Maret 19, 2024).

This initiative emerged because, in the previous year, many schools were still led by acting principals (*PLT*). Furthermore, programs aimed at improving students’ knowledge and character are directed towards enhancing literacy, numeracy, and moral values. Some examples include: *GARIS* (Literacy Movement), Mass Literacy and Numeracy Programs, IMTAQ (Faith and Piety Program), *Operasi Semut* (Community Clean-Up Movement), *LISA*

BERLIANI (School Cleanliness Campaign to Reduce Waste), and involving students as members of the Violence Prevention and Handling Team (*TPPK*).

After programs are designed and implemented, schools then conduct reflection or evaluation of these programs. Evaluations are carried out by principals, teachers, and if necessary assisted by school supervisors to help with improvements. Evaluations are held at least once every semester to assess the continuity and effectiveness of the programs. For instance, RD stated during an evaluation:

“...when implementing the program there are obstacles, perhaps I have solutions to help my colleagues...” (Interview with principal RD in principal’s office on Maret 23, 2024).

Similarly, ST mentioned:

“We conduct evaluations together once per semester. We ask, is it still effective, is it still functioning?” (Interview with principal ST in principal’s office on Maret 26, 2024).

Meanwhile, IB explained that his school conducts evaluations weekly through learning community meetings with teachers. The policy of Mr. IN and Mr. SK regarding evaluation is not only carried out internally within the school but also externally.

“To improve the quality of education through the empowerment of educational staff and students, of course, accompanied by a good learning environment and a good school environment. Then, we focus more on involving stakeholders such as the committee and the community, gradually integrating them in synergy and good cooperation.” (Interview with principal IN in principal’s office on April 24, 2024).

“Every month there are several meetings with the committee and teachers. At least every six months, we invite parents, primarily as an evaluation for the parents.” (Interview with principal SK in principal’s office on April 4, 2024).

After evaluations, the next step is program improvement. AN remarked:

“Programs may weaken over time. I make sure they do not lose momentum—we discuss them continuously, we evaluate, we reflect.” (Interview with principal AN in principal’s office on April 30, 2024).

Improvements are made through meetings between the principal and teachers to either continue, modify, or renew existing programs.

“In the short term, we are focusing on improving learning leadership, particularly the school principals. In the medium term, we aim to enhance teachers’ competencies, encouraging those who have not yet obtained their teaching certification to pursue it, so that they can become more professional. In the long term, we are committed to providing educational services for children who have dropped out of school, ensuring that they still have access to education.” (Interview with head of curriculum and assessment for primary schools in education office on Maret 19, 2024).

The Sintang District Government, together with the Department of Education, has established *filial schools* or remote schools for grades 1–3 in areas close to local communities. The purpose is to minimize dropout rates caused by the long distance to the nearest educational institution. This reflects the strategy of the Department of Education.

Meanwhile, the school at the research site also conveyed several strategies they implemented to improve education quality. SK stated that their strategy includes participating in the *KKG* (Teacher Working Group) and *K3S* (School Principal Working Group) programs. In addition, school principals are appointed from among the “*guru penggerak*” (teacher mobilizers). RD, a teacher appointed as principal from the *guru penggerak* program for one month, expressed:

“...the knowledge I gained from the *guru penggerak* program, I will use to facilitate and support my fellow teachers...” (Interview with principal RD in principal’s office on Maret 23, 2024).

Furthermore, several principals stated that they evaluate school programs based on learning outcomes, followed by reflection and subsequent follow-up actions. AN remarked:

“...when we implement a program, it should not lose momentum. For example, after two weeks we review it, then we evaluate and reflect ...” (Interview with principal AN in principal’s office on April 30, 2024).

Similarly, IN expressed the same opinion, emphasizing that the first step in a school’s strategy is to evaluate learning activities. He further added that through learning communities (*komunitas belajar / kombel*), it is expected that teachers’ competencies can be improved. This aligns with the directive from the Sintang District Education Office to establish learning communities (*kombel*).

Program development and implementation are directly supervised by the principal or a designated team. However, of the eight schools studied, only four schools established a quality assurance team to assist the principal in overseeing program implementation. Good performance and communication from the quality assurance team will positively impact the improvement of the teaching and learning process (Ezenwaji et al., 2019; Kosia & Okendo, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial for schools to establish a quality assurance team. Nevertheless, program development is still carried out by each school within the school work plan (RKS), involving teachers and the committee.

Local education offices regularly disseminate information to principals through Principal Working Groups (K3S) to design programs through identification, reflection, and improvement (IRB) to ensure that programs are aligned with the facts on the ground. This cycle aims to help schools better understand the root causes of their problems and enable them to plan wise and relevant programs.

In the identification stage, the school conducts a quality mapping process, where it analyzes its educational report card. The school selects and identifies issues that require immediate improvement within the report card. After identifying the root cause and prioritizing the areas for improvement, the school conducts a reflection. The identification results are discussed with the quality assurance team, teachers, the school committee, and other stakeholders to design a more comprehensive program. Finally, the improvement stage occurs. At this stage, the school implements an improvement program to increase

indicator achievement. After making improvements, the program results are continuously evaluated and reanalyzed to ensure the program's sustainability until the school's goals are achieved.

Based on interviews and field data, most school principals have implemented the Identification, Reflection, and Improvement (IRB) model as recommended by the local education office. This model reflects the same principles as Deming's theory, namely the Plan-Do-Check-Action (PDCA) cycle, which is a system for continuous improvement of an implemented program. Both share the same goal: to ensure quality through systematic evaluation and continuous improvement.

In general, elementary schools in Sintang Regency have seen improvements in their educational report card performance compared to the previous year. There are six regional priority indicators for elementary schools: literacy skills, numeracy skills, character, a safe climate for educational units, a climate of diversity, and learning quality. The Head of Elementary School Curriculum and Assessment in Sintang Regency stated that the Sintang Regency Education Office's current priority program focuses on three indicators: literacy skills, numeracy skills, and character. These three indicators serve as benchmarks for researchers to assess the extent to which schools utilize the educational report card. The results of the 2023-2024 educational report card performance at the research site are as follows.

Table 4. Educational report achievements in literacy, numeracy, and character skills

School Name	Sub-district	Literacy		Numeracy		Character Skills	
		2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
SDN 1 Kenukut	Kelam Permai	Fair	Fair	Poor	Fair	Good	Fair
SDN 2 SPDE Mensiku	Binjai Hulu	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Good	Good
SDN 3 Makong	Tempunak	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
SDN 4 Pandan	Sungai Tebelian	Fair	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Good
SDN 5 Sintang	Sintang	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Good
SDN 7 Sintang	Sintang	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
SDN 14 Empaci	Dedai	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good
SDN 27 Gernis	Sepauk	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Good

Based on Table 4, schools with significant improvements are SDN 4 Pandan and SDN 27 Gernis. Schools that stagnated or remained in the same condition were SDN 2 SPDE Mensiku, SDN 3 Makong, SDN 7 Sintang, and SDN 14 Empaci, which showed no significant changes in any sector. Schools experiencing a decline in one category were SDN 1 Kenukut and SDN 5 Sintang

Many schools still have not experienced significant improvement from the previous year. Some schools did not show significant changes and even experienced declines in the numeracy and character categories. However, schools that experienced declines in certain categories, such as SDN 5 Sintang, are not considered to be of poor quality because, apart from being in the moderate category, the school's achievements are good. Nevertheless, the stagnation and decline remain a concern, indicating the need for new learning approaches to improve student abilities. Based on interviews with teachers and classroom observations, some teachers still use the lecture method exclusively. Clearly, this method needs to be

updated immediately to make learning more student-centered. Lecture method makes students bored and reduces their achievement (Mustofa et al., 2024; Nasir et al., 2023).

Schools experiencing decline and not yet achieving the "good" category reported that their principals are currently focusing on a single indicator: school climate and character, as evidenced by several programs, including instilling values of respect, courtesy, and camaraderie among students and teachers. This policy naturally raises speculation that the school is lacking follow-up after the report card results are received. If improvement programs lack specificity or measurable efforts to address weaknesses, this indicates that the program is not running well and is not relevant, requiring further improvement. Meanwhile, research at schools experiencing significant improvement found that the schools implemented the "IRB" model effectively.

The principal, along with the quality assurance team, developed a program aligned with the education report card data. Furthermore, the principal and the quality assurance team continuously monitored the program and encouraged teachers to consistently create practical teaching videos integrated with the "Merdeka Belajar" (PMM) platform. The principal and the school's quality assurance team stated that the program should not simply be delivered to students but should also instill meaningful understanding.

Previous research on quality improvement at SMP Negeri 1 Petungkriyono that implemented the IRB model emphasized the data-based planning and evaluation process conducted internally only as a step in formulating improvements (Hidayah et al., 2025). In this study, the Sintang Education Office emphasized to the school the implementation of the IRB model in the data-based planning and evaluation process using an educational report card. Planning and evaluation involve not only internal school parties but also external parties such as parents, the community, and supervisors. The principal conveyed that the key to the continuity of the program lies in school evaluation. Therefore, programs that have been developed must be regularly evaluated by all parties to assess the success of the programs.

Factors influencing quality assurance implementation in Sintang Regency

The use of education report cards as quality assurance materials requires support from the education office, assisted by school supervisors, to ensure that school programs are implemented on target and each indicator is achieved. However, limited support from supervisors due to the suboptimal ratio of supervisors to elementary schools presents a major challenge. This results in less than optimal support for schools in developing report card-based programs. Consequently, some schools still fail to utilize them effectively as a basis for developing quality improvement programs. While all principals in the schools studied were aware of the report cards, some teachers still lacked a comprehensive understanding of them. This lack of understanding among teachers impacts program implementation. Therefore, a lack of understanding of existing human resources is a challenge for elementary schools in Sintang Regency in utilizing the report cards.

Not only are human resources constraints limited, but the geographical conditions of Sintang Regency also pose challenges. Natural disasters such as floods annually pose significant obstacles to school operations, especially in disaster-prone areas. SDN 2 SPDE Mensiku is an area frequently hit by flooding. During heavy flooding, teachers and students cannot get to school because road access is blocked, temporarily delaying learning.

Furthermore, many schools in the 3T (Frontier, Remote, and Underdeveloped) areas face basic infrastructure issues, such as inadequate internet access. Blank spots in some areas force schools to travel long distances to the city to access the internet, for example, to download school reports or participate in online training. One school facing a similar situation is SDN 14 Empaci. During the National Computer-Based Test (ANBK), the school must be affiliated with a school with a good network connection. This certainly impacts students' ability to complete the ANBK questions, as the lack of internet makes them unfamiliar with using computers. Technology-based learning is also rarely used because teachers cannot directly provide examples of images or videos online if needed; they must download them first and then show them the next day. This certainly hinders the digital-based learning process.

Damaged roads often lengthen travel times, reducing the time available for teachers and students to engage in teaching and learning activities. The availability of infrastructure remains a serious issue in many schools. The inadequate number of classrooms, coupled with the dilapidated condition of some classrooms, makes it difficult to conduct comfortable and effective learning. A shortage of teachers is also a crucial issue, especially in rural schools. Existing teachers are often required to handle many subjects outside their area of expertise, impacting the quality of learning. Training to improve teacher competency is often conducted online. Limited internet access in many areas requires teachers to travel long distances, but not all teachers can travel to areas with stable internet connections, which is not only time-consuming but also expensive.

Besides geographic and infrastructure constraints, quality assurance is also hampered by the socioeconomic conditions of students' parents. Most parents in rural areas are farmers with limited education. As a result, awareness of encouraging their children to learn at home remains low. Parents tend to hand over educational responsibilities entirely to schools without providing additional guidance or support at home. This results in low student motivation, especially in families where education is not a priority. Many students lack access to additional learning resources at home, such as books or technology devices, making them highly dependent on the learning process at school. When learning at school is disrupted, they miss valuable learning opportunities.

These conditions pose challenges and obstacles for schools in implementing quality assurance. Implemented quality assurance programs often fail to run as expected and are not optimal. The Education Office consistently directs elementary school principals in Sintang Regency, during the Principal Working Group (K3S), to use education report cards as a reference in developing quality assurance programs. This allows each school to identify weaknesses that require further improvement, ensuring that the program is designed effectively.

School principals need to optimize existing human resources by forming a quality assurance team consisting of competent teachers. It is crucial for each school to establish a quality assurance team to ensure more organized and focused program planning and implementation, and to optimize the use of educational report cards. However, some schools still underutilize their human resources by not establishing a quality assurance team. Program development involves several stages: identification, reflection, and improvement, or IRB. This pattern is integrated into the PDCA quality assurance method, which is also oriented towards continuous improvement. Programs must be relevant to

educational report card outcomes and must be regularly evaluated and monitored by the local education office, assisted by elementary school supervisors.

Limited human resources, infrastructure, geographic conditions, and socioeconomic conditions present challenges and obstacles for schools in implementing quality assurance based on educational report card data. Several government strategies are being implemented, including continuous dissemination of the IRB model, encouraging the implementation of learning communities, the teacher-led program, and the PPG program, as well as improving facilities and partner collaboration. Further research is recommended to explore more deeply the effectiveness of strategies implemented to optimize the use of educational report cards.

Strategy for optimizing quality assurance in Sintang Regency

The various challenges previously outlined have drawn attention from the local education office. Efforts are being made to optimize the use of education report cards by continuously encouraging schools to develop quality assurance programs using the identification, reflection, and improvement (IRB) model. Understanding the root causes of problems in education report cards enables schools to design thoughtful follow-up programs that can improve school quality in accordance with national education standards. Research findings by Damanik et al. (2023) indicate that leadership commitment to the implementation of quality assurance policies significantly influences their implementation. Commitment from the principal is not limited to the principal; participation from stakeholders (teachers, committees, and the surrounding community) is essential in the planning, decision-making, and monitoring processes. This approach is considered effective in helping schools with limited resources achieve quality standards (Posri & Chansirisira, 2023).

Furthermore, a well-structured school organization is essential, not only in terms of autonomy but also in collaboration, professional development, and local involvement to achieve equitable and student-centered teaching (Mincu, 2024). A strong organization must support local community involvement. This strategy can be implemented in schools implementing quality assurance that face limited resources. One school that has implemented this strategy is SDN 27 Gernis. This elementary school has 10 teachers but utilizes community involvement in implementing school programs.

In Sintang Regency, a persistent problem remains the limited number of teachers and supervisors. Encouraging learning communities as a strategy for developing limited human resources is crucial. It is also important for teachers to understand the education report card, as it provides a comprehensive overview of the quality of learning and educational achievements, enabling them to better understand its contents and discuss more relevant and focused teaching strategies to improve the quality of learning. Furthermore, increasing the number of competent teachers by encouraging them to participate in the Teacher Leader and PPG programs can improve their teaching competencies. Equally important is the active role of supervisors in assisting schools, both online and offline, to conduct regular evaluations based on the results of the education report card, although the limited number of supervisors impacts the implementation of quality assurance in schools.

Quality assurance programs in schools aim to improve educational report card outcomes. One of the data items in the education report card is based on the ANBK results.

Current government support for ANBK implementation in regions includes providing technological devices such as Chromebooks and collaborating with partners, such as the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, to provide internet services in the 3T (third-third) regions through the Bakti Aksi internet program. This program is expected to facilitate school access to education report cards and ANBK implementation, allowing teachers and schools to conduct monitoring and improvement more efficiently, without having to travel long distances to the city to obtain this information. Thus, the strategy focuses not only on improving teacher competency but also on strengthening educational infrastructure so that evaluation and improvement processes can be carried out more quickly and equitably.

CONCLUSION

The Education Office consistently directs elementary school principals in Sintang Regency, during the Principal Working Group (K3S), to use the education report card as a reference in developing quality assurance programs. This allows each school to identify weaknesses that require further improvement, ensuring that the program is designed effectively. Principals need to optimize existing human resources by establishing a quality assurance team consisting of competent teachers. It is crucial for each school to establish a quality assurance team to ensure more organized and focused program planning and implementation, and to optimize the use of the education report card. However, some schools still fail to utilize their human resources by not establishing a quality assurance team. Program development involves several stages: identification, reflection, and improvement (IRB). This pattern is integrated into the PDCA quality assurance method, which also focuses on continuous improvement. Program must be relevant to the educational report card results and be regularly evaluated and monitored by the local education office, with assistance from elementary school supervisors, as well as involving the school committee or parents in the planning and evaluation of the program to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of educational quality improvement. Limited human resources, infrastructure, geographic conditions, and socioeconomic conditions pose challenges and obstacles for schools in implementing quality assurance based on educational report card data. Several government strategies are being implemented, including continuous dissemination of the IRB model, encouraging the implementation of learning communities, the teacher leader program, and the PPG program, as well as improving facilities and partner collaboration. Further research is recommended to further explore the effectiveness of strategies implemented to optimize the use of educational report cards.

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