

Integration of Four Pillars of Schools of Quality into Accreditation as a Reference for Improving the Quality of Early Childhood Education

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Abstract: This article aims to analyze the implementation of the concept and principle of Total Quality Management (TQM) and try to integrating *Four Pillars of Schools of Quality* (FPSQ) into playgroup/kindergarten's system, which used the accreditation standard as the standard to improving school's of quality. The method used in this article is a literature review based on observation and interview results in this school. The analysis results show that unconsciously this playgroup/kindergarten has implemented concept and principle in achieving its accreditation, and from FPSQ indicators can be said that these schools have applied the first step in total quality improvement. Based on the results, it can be assumed that integration FPSQ into the school's system would form a quality school culture that not only refers to the achievement of accreditation's score.

Keywords: accreditation standard, quality improvement, Total Quality Management's concept, Four Pillars of Schools of Quality

INTRODUCTION

As is known, the quality of education is still one of the problems of education in Indonesia. Speaking of quality in the field of education, it is often guaranteed by the existence of certain standards, for example by accreditation. In accreditation, schools are required to meet eight National Education Standards (SNP) that have been determined by the government, where the eight standards are translated into points that must be met by schools, if schools want

to get a good accreditation title. Therefore, it is not surprising that some schools use accreditation standards as a reference for improving school quality, seeing that the role of accreditation is indeed focused as an external parameter regarding achieving school quality.

According to Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 1 Paragraph 22 states that, accreditation is carried out to determine the feasibility of educational programs and units on formal and non-formal education pathways at every level and type of education. The definition of school/madrasah accreditation is a comprehensive assessment process of the eligibility of an educational unit or program, the results of which are manifested in the form of recognition and eligibility ratings issued by an independent and professional institution (Mu'ti, et al., 2015). Accreditation as a reference for quality improvement is intended so that schools do not just stop when schools have received a good predicate. but on the contrary, schools must continue to make improvements whose purpose is not only to meet a score that is less than accreditation, but also to improve the quality of the school. Accreditation does not only apply to formal education levels, but also to non-formal education levels (hereinafter referred to as PNF), one of which is under the umbrella of Early Childhood Education (hereinafter referred to as PAUD).

According to Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Article 28 Paragraph 1-4 it is explained that, PAUD is education that is held before the level of basic education, and can be held through formal, non-formal, and informal education channels. The formal education path is in the form of Kindergarten (TK), Raudhatul Athfal (RA), or other equivalent forms. As for the PNF pathway, it can take the form of Play Groups (KB), Child Care Centers (TPA), or other equivalent forms. As an educational institution that covers two educational pathways, namely the formal education pathway and the PNF pathway, PAUD is required to be able to improve its quality like other levels of education.

KB/TK X is an educational institution located in Y district, City Z, East Java Province which incidentally is still rural. This KB/TK is predicted to be the first Islamic-based school to be established in the area, seeing that in the City Z area itself several other Islamic-based schools have already been established. Even though KB/TK X is one of the schools that does not have specific standards to improve its quality (other than accreditation standards), this school is able to become a reference for other schools that wish to carry out comparative studies (the majority are from outside Java).

Of course, in improving the quality of KB/TK X, meeting accreditation standards alone is not enough. Schools are required to continue to develop themselves to actually achieve the desired quality level. One strategy that can be carried out by schools is the Total Quality

Management approach (hereinafter referred to as TQM). TQM relates to the integrated involvement of people within the organization in an effort to continuously improve (Sallis, 2006). In education, TQM can be called "The Improvement School Program", where the idea of the word "improvement" itself refers to a process that takes a long time, not just an activity. (Reynolds et al., 1996).

One of the paradigms in improving quality, especially in the scope of schools is the Four Pillars of Schools of Quality. This paradigm develops based on Deming's 14 Points, and is linked to the world of education. According to Bonstingl (1992), schools in improving their quality must move from the framework of teaching and tests given to continuous improvement involving the entire school community, including students, principals, educators and education staff, parents, and the community.

Based on this explanation, the purpose of writing this article is to analyze whether in addition to the accreditation standards used as a reference for quality improvement in KB/Kindergarten X, this school has implemented TQM principles in improving quality. In addition, this article will also explain how the Four Pillars of Schools of Quality paradigm (hereinafter referred to as FPSQ) is integrated into accreditation which is a reference for quality improvement in this school.

METHOD

Writing this article is intended to analyze the implementation of TQM in the management of PAUD which is accredited A and tries to integrate FPSQ into schools to be side by side with accreditation as a quality improvement standard in KB/Kindergarten X. This article is also written based on the results of interviews and observations carried out in KB/ TK X, to then be analyzed using a literature review.

RESULT

Based on the interviews and observations that have been carried out, the results are described in two parts. First, indicators of the application of TQM in KB/TK X can be seen from the definition of the concept of relative quality, namely (1) compliance with established standards, and (2) being able to meet customer needs. Second, a description of the FPSQ indicators, which consist of (1) a primary focus on suppliers and customers, (2) constant dedication to continuous improvement, (3) a systems/process orientation, and (4) strong and consistent Total Quality leadership from top management.

If it is related to KB/Kindergarten X which uses accreditation standards as quality improvement standards, then this school can be said to be of high quality when viewed from the concept of relative quality. Accreditation has eight SNPs that must be met by each educational institution that takes part in the accreditation process, where KB/Kindergarten X already meets these standards well, with the A predicate it gets. This is relevant to the concept of relative quality which refers to the conformity of products or services with established standards.

The next indicator of TQM implementation in the concept of relative quality is being able to meet customer needs. Being able to meet customer needs refers to customer satisfaction, which in this KB/Kindergarten, is seen from the increase in student input every year, although not in a significant amount. The assumption is that meeting the needs of school customers will increase the school's input (one of which can be seen from the number of students), both needs in the form of services and needs in the form of output. One of the things that schools carry out related to customer satisfaction is to conduct a customer satisfaction survey through a Student Parents Association (POM) meeting which is held once every semester. In this meeting, parents of students are free to convey criticism and suggestions for the school.

The results of the subsequent analysis are based on the four pillars of the FPSQ, the first of which is "A primary focus on suppliers and customers". Customers in the education environment are divided into two, namely internal customers and external customers. However, in general, the main customers of schools are students and parents of students. The first indicator, focus on customers in KB/Kindergarten X is seen from school analysis (internal and external analysis) which is carried out periodically to determine the needs of the school's main customers. The results will be directed to the preparation of future school programs.

The second FPSQ indicator, namely "Constant dedication to continuous improvement". The dedication of the KB/TK system and environment in continuous improvement, the majority are still visible from the school side, not including the environment outside the school system. One of the real strategies carried out by schools in an effort to continuously improve is to carry out routine coordination and coaching (Islamic deepening, teacher competency deepening) once a week. This routine coordination is carried out to evaluate programs, solve problems if there are obstacles in the program, to then be used as feedback in preparing the next program. As for continuous improvements made by students, it is limited to increasing the competence of KB/TK students referring to child development.

Next, the third FPSQ indicator, "A systems/process orientation". This indicator refers to students as the outcome of a school, where the responsibilities of one role affect the

responsibilities of another role. For example, in the learning of students in KB/Kindergarten X. KB/Kindergarten is an educational institution that cannot be separated from play centers and educational game tools (APE) used in their learning methods. APE here functions as scaffolding which can facilitate children in developing themselves through play centers (Rahayu, 2015). In this regard, teachers in KB/Kindergarten X are required to be as creative as possible in making APE. The role of the school principal in terms of spurring teacher creativity or solving problems in learning is through the implementation of coaching, where one of its functions is to improve teacher competence. In this illustration, it is clear that the success of a lesson in KB/Kindergarten X is a relationship of responsibilities that influence each other between the principal, teacher, and students.

The last indicator in FPSQ is "Strong and consistent Total Quality Leadership (TQL) from top management". Within the scope of the school, the top level management is played by the leader, namely the principal. The principal as the top-level manager is responsible for the ongoing quality improvement process, school system and outcomes. This last indicator, in KB/Kindergarten X, can still be seen from the commitment and strategy undertaken by the school principal in improving school quality. Some of the strategies used include: (1) Conducting routine coordination and coaching once a week; (2) Include teachers with inappropriate qualifications to attend PAUD Basic Education (Diksar); and (3) Include teachers in relevant seminars or training.

DISCUSSION

KB/TK X uses accreditation standards as reference standards in improving their quality. This means that one of the school management is intended to meet the standards contained in accreditation, which includes eight National Education Standards. Accreditation results serve as a description of school performance, in which each of the standards contained in it must provide results or products that are able to meet customer needs. Internal and external customers have their own criteria regarding the products or outputs produced by the school. One of the most prominent things that can be used as a benchmark for the quality of a school is graduates. As long as the output produced is able to meet customer needs, during that time the school can be said to be of good quality. Besides that,

Accreditation carried out in Indonesia is aimed at improving quality. Thus, indirectly, many people assume that a quality school is of course an accredited school, especially if it holds an A predicate. This cannot be blamed, considering that we are in a social environment

that has that perspective.(Bonstingl, 1992). Schools use accreditation, see a positive impact from the accreditation implementation. Especially the impact on the environment in schools. Apart from being a prestige, on the other hand with the implementation of accreditation, the administration system in schools is also neater, more organized because it refers to the completeness of the files and the fulfillment of the indicators specified in the accreditation form. Although, indirectly there may still be many schools that use accreditation only as prestige.

When accreditation is used as a reference for improving the quality of schools, what will probably happen is how schools deal with problems that impede the achievement of accreditation. That is, schools can use any strategy for problem solving, regardless of how to do it so that schools do not always have the same problem. In short, when schools are still referring to fulfilling the SNP indicators, school improvement will solely refer to fulfilling these indicators.

In fact, quality improvement does not only refer to meeting accreditation standards, not only quality improvement carried out by the school principal and management team(Rahayu, 2015). Improving the quality of schools must be seen as a continuous system, which involves the role of all people in the system. If the school is willing, there is an approach that can make the school directly address the problem as a whole, there are keys that can get the school accredited with its own plus value for the school. The quality improvement approach that schools can adopt other than accreditation is the TQM approach. Although at first TQM was widely used in organizations in general, manufacturing companies, but as the era progressed TQM slowly began to be adapted to the world of education. One of the paradigms used for TQM adapted to schools is FPSQ.

When viewed from the results of the analysis, actually in general management and follow-up for school improvement based on accreditation results, KB/Kindergarten X has implemented several concepts and principles from TQM. In addition, the results of the analysis show that from the results of the interviews, it turned out that without realizing it what the school was doing had more or less led to the indicators in the FPSQ. For example, schools that carry out external analysis and internal analysis to find out customer needs, empowerment from the educator side, the role of the Head of KB/Kindergarten X as a trigger for improvements in schools, and so on. This is in accordance with what was stated byRahayu (2015)that, there are several factors that can make PAUD improve quality, including: (1) Focus on objectives; (2) the role of the principal as a leader; (3) Qualifications of educators or teachers; (4) Students who act as both input and output of the school; (5) Other resources that support schools, such

as curriculum, finance, facilities and infrastructure; and (6) A conducive school environment, the relationship between school members and the community and other agencies. In addition, the strategy implemented by the Head of KB/TK X in school improvement already includes three of the overall supporting components for TQM implementation described by Supriyanto (2011) namely: (1) Leadership; (2) Training; and (3) Communication.

If KB/Kindergarten X is able to integrate this FPSQ into the school's process of achieving accreditation, and it will be better if it is used as a quality culture, then it is assumed that KB/Kindergarten X will be able to improve quality with even better achievements. It does not only refer to improvements to achieve a high accreditation score, but actually to improve the school system. In short, it can be seen in Figure 1.

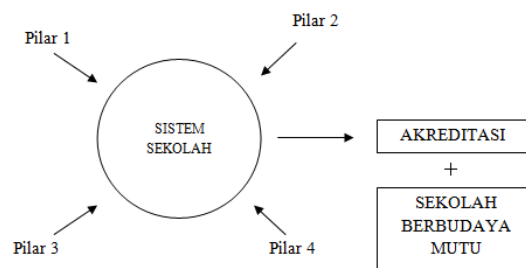


Figure 1. Illustration of FPSQ Integration into the School System

Talking about the school system in improving school quality, we are not only talking about how the school system can be improved, but we are also talking linearly about the involvement of the elements in the school system in improving it. As it is known that, as an open organization, schools automatically have interactions with their environment (which includes the school's internal and external customers). School quality is not only the responsibility of the principal, not only the responsibility of the teacher, but also the responsibility of all elements involved in the school system. (Andriani, 2014).

School customers who feel they need to be responsible for improving school quality as discussed from the start, consist of internal customers and external customers. However, in some literatures, these school customers are divided into different categories. These categories include: (1) Primary customers; (2) secondary customers; and (3) Tertiary customers. Primary customers are defined as people who receive educational services directly, namely students or students. Secondary customers are defined as individuals or institutions that directly influence educational services, for example parents, families and employers. As for tertiary customers, it is defined as parties who have a minor but important role for education, such as the government and society as a whole (Sallis, 2006; Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012).

However, according to Bonstingl (1992) the customer categorization can shift along with the growth and development of the student and the level of education being taken. Bonstingl makes an analogy as follows. If the child is in the pre-school education level, the parents who are in the secondary customer will exchange positions with the student as the school's primary customer, so that the parents become the school's primary customer, while the student becomes the school's secondary customer. This is because at the age of PAUD, children still do not know and are not able to personally control what they want from learning.

This statement was found to be in line with what was in KB/Kindergarten X, where schools really considered what students' parents wanted. Although, it cannot be denied that, what the parents want in the end also leads to the needs of students. The wishes of the parents can be known by the school from the results of interviews when there is a New Student Admission (PSB) in KB/Kindergarten X. In addition, the school periodically conducts customer satisfaction surveys in which parents are free to submit criticism and suggestions to the school.

Based on the diagram above, the existence of the four FPSQ pillars that support the improvement of the school system in KB/Kindergarten X, is assumed to have an impact on the process of forming quality-cultured schools, not just schools that are accredited A. FPSQ integration needs to be carried out considering that schools use accreditation standards as a reference quality improvement, while schools should be able to see that quality is not only limited to accreditation. In addition, based on the results of the analysis it can be said that the school has implemented the FPSQ as the first step in integrated quality improvement. Therefore, schools need to carry out development and habituation related to the initial steps that have been implemented.

This habituation can be said as a culture of quality. When a school has achieved the highest accreditation score, and the quality view of the school is only fixated on the accreditation score, it is very likely that there will be elements of the system that feel sufficient and do not need to make continuous improvements. Unlike the case when quality has become a school culture, then the accreditation score can be said to be the second goal of the school, because the school's reference is to form a school with a quality culture.

If it is related to quality, quality culture is a culture within the organization that is formed to then be directed at quality development. Thus, a school with a quality culture can be said to be a school that develops a culture within it to be directed at improving the quality of the school. Schools feel the need to analyze the status of the existing school culture before developing or improving school culture to a better stage. Analysis of the cultural status of

schools can use the School Culture Triage which consists of three points which will be developed into indicators to determine the cultural status of schools. These three points include: (1) Professional collaboration, with the question "do educators and educational staff work together in solving problems?"; (2) Affiliation and collegial relations, with the question "are people in the school working together, supporting one another, and feeling involved?"; and (3) Self-efficacy, with the question "are the teaching and educational staff in the school because of their wishes? Are they working to improve their skills as professionals". Later, the indicators of the three points will be given a score of 1-5 like the Likert scale. The results of calculating the score will be used to identify school status indicators of the three points will be given a score of 1-5 as a Likert scale. The results of calculating the score will be used to identify school status indicators of the three points will be given a score of 1-5 as a Likert scale. The results of calculating the score will be used to identify school status(Wagner, 2006).

CONCLUSION

KB/TK X is one of the schools in the City Z area that uses accreditation standards as a reference in improving the quality of its schools. However, based on the results of an analysis using the FPSQ benchmark, which already contains the principles and concepts of TQM, this school has actually implemented FPSQ in its school management which aims to achieve accreditation. It's just that KB/Kindergarten X itself doesn't realize that when it comes to improving quality, schools have implemented the pillars of the FPSQ.

If schools are willing to observe and follow up on the FPSQ in order to achieve accreditation, then it is assumed that schools not only achieve accreditation as a quality benchmark from the national level, but can also use these pillars to form a quality culture in KB/Kindergarten X. Things that need to be underlined in the implementation of FPSQ in this school is the need for involvement, responsibility, and cooperation from elements in the existing school system in a comprehensive and continuous manner, so that improving school quality is expected to have a good impact on all elements in the school system .

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