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Parental Participation Management for Improving School Quality in Elementary Schools with Limited Students Enrollment

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Abstract: This study aims to describe and analyze the management of parental participation in improving school quality in schools with limited student enrollment in Pugung District, Tanggamus Regency. The research focuses on the planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC) aspects of parental participation, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the school's efforts to enhance sustainable parental involvement. A qualitative approach with a descriptive design was employed. Research participants included principals, teachers, school committee members, and parents. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing techniques. The findings indicate that parental participation management has not been systematically implemented. In the planning stage, parental involvement remains limited to specific activities. The study highlights the necessity of structured and sustainable participation management to support quality improvement in schools with limited student enrollment.

Keywords: Parental Participation Management, School Quality, Limited Student Enrollment, Educational Management, Primary School

Introduction

Parental involvement in education is widely recognized as an essential factor in improving school quality. The success of educational processes is not solely determined by teachers and schools but also by the active participation of families as the primary educational environment for students. Collaboration between schools and parents plays a strategic role in creating a supportive learning environment and fostering both academic and character development among students. At the primary education level, parental involvement becomes particularly important because students at this stage still require strong guidance and support from their families.

Previous studies have shown that parental involvement contributes positively to students' learning motivation, attitudes toward learning, and academic achievement. Parental participation may take various forms, including communication with teachers, support for learning activities at home, involvement in school programs, and participation in school decision-making processes. However, most existing studies primarily focus on the forms and impacts of parental involvement on student outcomes. Research that examines parental involvement from a managerial perspective, particularly in terms of how schools systematically manage and organize such participation, remains relatively limited.

The issue of parental participation becomes more complex in schools with a limited number of students, particularly those located in rural areas. Schools with small student

populations often face challenges related to limited resources, sustainability of school programs, and low stakeholder engagement. Preliminary observations in several elementary schools in Pugung District, Tanggamus Regency, indicate that parental involvement in school activities has not been systematically managed. In many cases, parents' participation is limited to occasional activities such as attending report card meetings or participating in ceremonial school events. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the management of parental involvement in improving school quality in elementary schools with limited student populations. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the managerial processes used to engage parents, examine the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing parental participation, and analyze the strategies implemented by schools to enhance parental involvement in supporting school quality improvement.

Literature Review

Educational Management

Educational management is the process of managing all educational resources systematically in order to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently. In the context of educational organizations, management functions to coordinate various school components, such as human resources, educational programs, and facilities and infrastructure so that the learning process can run optimally. Wartini (2015) explains that management plays a central role in organizational activities because it integrates various resources so that organizational performance can function optimally. In line with this view, Jamrizal (2022) states that management is a process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling organizational resources to achieve predetermined objectives.

In the field of education, management has a strategic role in improving the quality of educational services. Haryani et al. (2021) emphasize that educational management functions to integrate all components of education so that the educational process can be carried out in a planned and systematic manner. Thus, educational management is not only related to administrative aspects but also includes efforts to improve the quality of learning and the continuous development of school organizations. Management functions in education generally include planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision (Anggraini et al., 2025). These four functions are interrelated and form the basis for managing educational organizations. Planning determines the objectives and strategic steps to be undertaken. Organizing regulates the distribution of tasks and responsibilities so that all school components can work in a coordinated manner. Implementation focuses on mobilizing human resources to carry out the planned programs, while supervision evaluates the alignment between plans and implementation and provides feedback for continuous improvement (Iswandi, 2021).

School-Based Management

School-Based Management (SBM) is an educational management approach that provides schools with greater authority to manage various aspects of education independently and participatively. This approach emerged as a response to overly centralized educational management systems, which limited schools' ability to develop their potential and respond to local needs.

Andiarini et al. (2018) explain that SBM is oriented toward improving educational quality through strengthening the roles of principals, teachers, and school communities in decision-making processes. Ashary (2023) also emphasizes that SBM grants schools autonomy to manage educational programs independently while maintaining principles of accountability and transparency. The implementation of SBM enables schools to optimize internal resources and establish collaboration with parents and communities as educational partners. The success of SBM implementation is strongly influenced by the leadership of school principals and the participation of all educational stakeholders. Suaeb (2022) states that SBM can improve educational quality when supported by effective leadership and active involvement from school members. Therefore, this approach highlights the importance of collaboration among schools, families, and communities in the educational process.

Parental Participation in Education

Lestari and Sirozi (2025) explain that participation refers to the involvement of stakeholders in decision-making processes and program implementation that influence the achievement of educational goals. Putri Mutiara Jwinarti et al. (2024) add that parental participation reflects cooperation between schools and families in shaping students' character and development. Parental involvement can create a conducive learning environment both at school and at home (Mardianti, 2025). Parental participation can take various forms, such as involvement in school activities, assisting children with learning at home, and supporting educational programs organized by schools (Maulinah, 2024). Ziliwu et al. (2025) state that parental support may also include providing learning motivation, monitoring children's academic progress, and providing adequate learning facilities.

Management of Parental Participation

The management of parental participation refers to the process of organizing parents' involvement in educational activities through systematic stages of planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation. This management aims to ensure that parental involvement aligns with educational objectives and school needs. Rahmawati and Masyithoh (2024) emphasize that parental participation plays an important role in supporting quality education through involvement in decision-making, learning assistance, and support for school programs. Kustanti et al. (2024) also explain that parental involvement contributes to improving educational quality through moral, material, and supervisory support for students' learning processes.

The management of parental participation has become increasingly important in the digital era, where communication between schools and families can be facilitated through various technological media. Suhartono and Cahyono (2024) state that the use of communication technology can expand parental involvement and strengthen collaboration between schools and families in supporting children's education.

Schools with Limited Student Enrollment

Schools with limited student enrollment are educational institutions that provide learning services with a number of students below the ideal class size standard. This condition generally occurs in rural areas or regions with low population mobility. Buro (2022) states

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that the number of students reflects the level of public trust in a school. Schools with limited student enrollment often face challenges such as low community interest and competition with other schools. Supranoto (2017) adds that schools with fewer students frequently encounter limitations in resources, including funding, facilities, and learning dynamics.

However, this condition also provides opportunities for schools to implement more personalized and contextual learning approaches. Alamsyah et al. (2023) explain that a smaller number of students allows teachers to provide more intensive attention to each student's development. Therefore, schools with limited student enrollment require adaptive management strategies as well as support from various stakeholders, especially parents and the community.

School Quality

School quality refers to the level of achievement of educational goals reflected in the quality of learning processes, teacher performance, and student learning outcomes. The concept of school quality is not only related to academic achievement but also includes the quality of school management and overall educational services. Syifauzzuhrah (2022) states that school quality is influenced by the leadership of the principal, teacher performance, and effective school management systems. From the perspective of educational quality management, improving school quality requires continuous improvement in all aspects of educational management (Waruwu, 2021).

School quality is generally measured through several main dimensions: input, process, output, and outcome. Input includes the quality of students, teachers, and educational facilities. Process relates to the implementation of learning and school management. Output refers to student learning outcomes, while outcome relates to the impact of graduates in social life and further education (Wijayanti et al., 2022). Therefore, improving school quality requires the involvement of various parties, including parents and communities as partners in education.

Method

This study employed a qualitative research method using a case study approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because the research aims to understand in depth the process of managing parental participation in educational activities in elementary schools with limited student enrollment. This approach enables researchers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of planning, organizing, implementing, and supervising parental participation in school activities. This research was conducted at SD Negeri 1 Banjar Agung Ilir and SD Negeri Banjar Agung Udik, located in Pugung District, Tanggamus Regency. These schools were selected because they are public elementary schools with limited student enrollment and therefore require optimal management of parental participation to support educational programs. The research was conducted during the 2025/2026 academic year, aligning with the school's academic schedule. Data collection was carried out during normal school activities so that researchers could directly observe the practices of parental participation in school activities.

The research subjects were determined using purposive sampling, which involves selecting informants based on their knowledge and direct involvement in the research focus.

1. The research subjects included:
2. School principals
3. Teachers or homeroom teachers
4. School committee members
5. Parents of students

These four groups of informants were selected because they have different but interconnected roles in the management of parental participation in schools.

Research Instruments

Research instruments are tools used to obtain data relevant to the research focus. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument, while supporting instruments assist in the data collection process. The instruments used in this study included: Observation guidelines to observe school activities related to parental participation. Interview guidelines to collect in-depth information from principals, teachers, school committees, and parents. Documentation in the form of school documents such as school work plans, meeting minutes, parent attendance lists, and documentation of school activities..

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study used the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages:

1. Data reduction, which involves selecting and simplifying data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation so that they focus on the research problem.
2. Data display, which involves organizing data into narrative descriptions, tables, or matrices to facilitate understanding of relationships among the data.
3. Conclusion drawing and verification, which involves interpreting the analyzed data to identify patterns and meanings related to the management of parental participation.

The data analysis process was conducted continuously throughout the research until valid and scientifically accountable conclusions were obtained.

Data Validity

Data validity in this study was ensured through several techniques:

1. Credibility, achieved through prolonged and in-depth observation in the field.
2. Source triangulation, by comparing information obtained from principals, teachers, school committees, and parents.
3. Technique triangulation, by comparing data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation.
4. Transferability, by presenting detailed research descriptions so that the findings can be applied to similar contexts.
5. Dependability, by documenting the entire research process systematically.
6. Confirmability, by ensuring that the conclusions are based on empirical data obtained from the field.

Results and Discussion

Planning of Parental Participation

The findings of this study indicate that the planning of parental participation at SD Negeri 1 Banjar Agung Udik and SD Negeri 1 Banjar Agung Ilir is conducted through an initial meeting at the beginning of the academic year involving the school principal, teachers, and the school committee. This planning process results in activity programs designed to enhance parental involvement in supporting students' educational processes. The research findings show that schools with a limited number of students tend to implement participatory planning. This condition allows for more intensive communication between the school and parents, enabling joint decision-making processes. Parental involvement from the planning stage also increases parents' sense of ownership toward school programs, which facilitates the implementation of agreed-upon activities. These results are consistent with previous studies indicating that involving parents in the planning of educational programs can improve the effectiveness of school activities and strengthen partnerships between schools and families.

Strategies for Increasing Parental Participation

The strategy employed by the schools to increase parental participation is carried out through a dialogic and persuasive communication approach. Schools establish family-like relationships with parents through direct communication between teachers and parents. The findings reveal that the quality of communication between schools and parents is an important factor in increasing family involvement in children's education. Open communication allows parents to obtain information about students' learning progress while also providing opportunities for parents to contribute suggestions regarding school programs. These findings are in line with other research showing that effective communication between schools and parents can enhance family involvement in educational activities and positively influence students' learning development.

Forms of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in school activities is manifested in two main forms: involvement in academic and non-academic activities. In academic activities, parents play a role in monitoring students' learning progress and providing learning assistance at home. Meanwhile, in non-academic activities, parents participate in school events such as national holiday commemorations, community service activities, and other social events. The research results indicate that parental involvement in academic activities contributes to increased student learning motivation. Support provided by parents can create a conducive learning environment, encouraging students to be more motivated in participating in the learning process. These findings support previous research stating that parental participation in children's education has a positive relationship with students' learning motivation and academic achievement.

Supervision and Evaluation of Parental Participation

Supervision of parental participation is conducted through periodic evaluation meetings and communication between teachers and parents regarding students' learning development. Evaluation is carried out not only to assess parents' attendance in school activities but also to

determine the impact of such involvement on students' development. The findings indicate that evaluations oriented toward student development are more effective in assessing the success of parental involvement programs. This is because the success of parental participation can be directly observed through changes in students' motivation and learning attitudes.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Parental Participation

Parental participation in school activities is influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include good communication between schools and parents, parents' awareness of the importance of their children's education, and strong social relationships between schools and the surrounding community. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors identified in this study include parents' limited time due to work commitments and differences in parents' educational backgrounds. However, the strong social relationships within the community help reduce these obstacles through more informal communication between schools and parents.

Conclusion

This study shows that the management of parental participation in elementary schools with limited student enrollment in Pugung District has not been optimally implemented across all functions of educational management. Parental involvement is still more dominant during the implementation stage of school activities, while involvement in planning, organizing, and evaluating school programs has not yet been conducted systematically. This condition causes parental participation to be more responsive to school activities rather than fully developing into a strategic partnership for improving educational quality. The findings also indicate that schools with limited student enrollment have the potential to develop participatory management based on close social relationships between schools and communities. However, optimizing this potential requires strengthening a well-planned and structured participation management system, supported by continuous communication between schools and parents so that family involvement can contribute more significantly to improving the quality of learning.

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