

Implementation of TQM Education in Increasing Interest in Learning Tetum as the National Language of Timor Leste

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to evaluate the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in schools, specifically focusing on Tetum language learning at Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School. The study used a descriptive qualitative method to conduct field research involving the development team, teachers, and principals as key informants. The research sheds light on the concerted efforts to implement TQM in educational settings and its implications. Key areas of investigation include TQM goals in schools, challenges encountered in TQM application, and the tools utilized to develop Tetum language learning within the TQM framework. The findings contribute valuable insights to the broader discourse on enhancing educational quality through TQM practices.

INTRODUCTION

Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School is approximately one and a half kilometers from the city's Maubisse District. This school was built on the private land of a community member who was also a teacher, so at the beginning, the school was built only with palm wood walls. Until now, the local school is in a deplorable condition, where some of the supporting wood is starting to become brittle. In such conditions, it cannot dampen the teachers' enthusiasm with the students in criticising education. With this worrying condition, we have now received assistance from donors so that 4 (four) classrooms are used to accommodate 275 students. Each class accommodates 30-40 children, so it is hoped that the government will pay more serious attention to increasing study rooms for students whose parents work as farmers.

Apart from the condition of the existing building, this school has 6 (six) permanent teaching staff, one contract teacher, 4 (four) honorary staff, and one school guard. Of the 6 (six) permanent teachers, they are almost at retirement age, so this school needs serious attention from the government to prepare teaching staff who will continue their duties when the teachers who have entered retirement are retired at any time by the government. This effort must receive serious attention because the students at this school are the next generation of the nation's future. Therefore, there are several hopes from school principals and teachers regarding the condition of existing schools so that the government can give serious attention to improving school buildings, teaching, and learning facilities such as desks and chairs, which, until now, some children have not had access to and are still sitting on the floor covered with tarpaulin and mats during the teaching and learning process, there is assistance from new teachers to replace teachers who will retire.

Looking at the existing conditions at the Damea Liquitei Maubisse City Elementary School, information and communication technology advances have significantly impacted every line of human life, which continues to face complex challenges. It is said that because both students and teachers are expected

to be able to implement Total Quality Management as a means of information that is centred on digitalisation because this has a vast impact on the field of education, schools are required to have Total Quality Management that is well planned, structured and directed. Apart from that, article 13 of the Constitution of Timor Leste states that there is a need to develop national officials and languages. One of which is the Tetum language itself. The program to educate the nation's life is also a highly prioritised government goal because education is essential and strategic. After all, it helps the rise and development of a nation's young generation (students). Thus, the Government and educational institutions that organise educational activities must make various efforts to improve Tetum language skills from an early age so that this can have implications for improving the quality of education in a school the Important Role of Language in Early Childhood Education (Muflihah, 2014).

According to Siswopranoto (2022), the PISA survey results, which evaluate reading, science, mathematics, and scientific abilities, are a benchmark for evaluating the quality of education worldwide. This shows the need to improve educational standards in Timor Leste. If the government's National Education Standards are implemented well, the quality of education will continue to improve. Therefore, guaranteeing the quality of education is essential in establishing and achieving high standards for providing higher education consistently and for a long time (Biedermann et al., 2023; Ibidunni et al., 2023).

Total Quality Education (TQE) is a better-known term for applying quality management in education. The idea of TQM, initially used in industry, became the basis of this management. From a philosophical standpoint, this idea emphasises constant improvement to meet client desires and satisfaction (Jaekel et al., 2023; Lucas et al., 2015; Tian et al., 2023).

Thus, the strategy created by utilising TQM globally is that education is an educational organisation that describes itself as a service organisation, or in other words, as a service sector that offers services according to customer demand (Donkoh et al., 2023; Garira, 2020). The main target of this integrated quality education management is the client (Gupta & Yadav, 2023).

Discussing TQM inevitably involves addressing its foundation, which is the discussion of quality. Initially, the quality of a product was solely determined by the producer, regardless of the actual merits of the product. If the producer claimed it was of high quality, then it was considered as such (Patt et al., 2023). However, as a product evolves, its quality is said to be determined by the consumers. When customers purchase an item, the producer becomes aware of its perceived quality. Therefore, in order to effectively implement Total Quality Management (TQM) in schools, according to Rahim (2022), motivation is crucial. Motivation is described as the internal and external drive and support received by an individual to achieve life goals. Teachers and parents play a vital role as contributors to the development and expansion of a student's character, serving as the most significant sources of motivation within the family (Ng et al., 2023; Sosu & Pimenta, 2023). Parental support and encouragement for their children's efforts to excel become the motivation for students to learn the Tetum national language accurately.

According to Karageorgos et al. (2021), "TQM has an academic unit with a comprehensive system in maintaining social and professional relationships of all stakeholders." "Total Quality Management in the field of education is a seemingly new way to transfer and apply scientific thinking and management practices in the education sector." TQM has been utilized in education for 20 years in some industrialized countries, yielding encouraging results and significantly aiding progress in the field of education. Sustainable improvement and the participation of all school stakeholders (students, instructors, parents, and the local community) are crucial because contemporary schools are adapting to meet the needs of the new digital learning environment (Tilley, 2023).

Kamayuda Krismanda (2016) defines Total Quality Management as an approach in business that seeks to maximize competitiveness through continuous improvement of products, services, human

resources, processes, and the organizational environment. Furthermore, according to Rosyidah (2022), in the era of globalization, the foundation for growth and progress lies in high-quality education. To enhance quality, stakeholders in the field of education need to be organized and managed as a response to government regulations, making the application of a new paradigm necessary. Every educational institution, including elementary schools, should implement Total Quality Management (TQM) to fulfill management duties in the effort to improve the quality of education in the future.

Additionally, according to Anwar (2020) the information and technology era has caused a shift in the management capabilities of educational institutions toward modern management implementation, often referred to as "Total Quality Management" or TQM. Organizations in the 4.0 era must adopt TQM as a strategy to improve output, reduce production costs, and enhance productivity. Through TQM, educational institutions are expected to produce high-quality human resources that are competitive.

Based on the various perspectives presented, as of now, Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School has not effectively implemented Total Quality Management. Consequently, students in this school find it challenging to learn the Tetum language according to the established rules and spelling. If teachers possess the ability to utilize various learning resources through existing technological media, they can develop the potential of their students. Another challenge in implementing TQM in this school is the lack of teaching facilities, making students uncomfortable during the learning process (Mousa & Arslan, 2023). Additionally, students' limited financial capabilities, primarily based on agriculture, result in a lack of proficiency in using digital literacy to develop their learning skills at school and home.

Moreover, according to Anwar (2020) several essential steps must be taken by the school principal and the teaching staff to improve the quality of education, specifically in Tetum language proficiency: (1) Quality planning, which involves identifying customers to gauge product quality based on the understanding transferred to students through proper Tetum language instruction; (2) Quality control, ensuring that products are consistently and thoroughly inspected, and any potential issues, such as difficulties in learning Tetum, are promptly addressed by adjusting teaching methods; (3) Consistent methods for quality improvement, allocating resources, assigning human resources, and training stakeholders involved in quality education to uphold quality standards continually.

Referring to the TQM concepts in education outlined above, the school principal, teachers, and all stakeholders at Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School must be capable of planning efforts to change teaching methods through collaboration, employing various methods, and ensuring adequate supporting facilities. This approach will lead to increased student interest in learning. Therefore, when TQM is effectively applied in schools, there will be an improvement in Tetum language learning interest among students as it is the national language and can be learned effectively.

Referring to the view above, the principal and teaching staff totalling 6 (six) people at the Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School, which in this case is an educational agency that provides services to students, are expected to carry out their duties and responsibilities well and efficiently maximally. Even though the distance is quite far (one and a half kilometres) from the sub-district centre, educators at the school continue to make efforts to improve the quality of education continue to be made by educators at the school. One of the primary efforts made is that students are taught to learn the national language (Tetum language) with correct spelling because, through good and correct knowledge of the national language, students can have quality knowledge and interact in all fields of study.

METHODS

In conducting research at the Damea Liquitei Maubisse City Elementary School, researchers used descriptive qualitative methods while using field studies supported by literature, expressing the findings

verbally and linguistically. Then, the data is collected in descriptions or words instead of numerical data so that the processed data is described coherently according to the events recorded in the journal that the researcher has reviewed. Researchers also function as the primary media that organises, executes, collects data, analyses data, develops conclusions, and culminates in making a report.

This research aimed to observe and investigate a symptom of an actual phenomenon at the Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School. A case study was chosen as the appropriate research style to be applied. Information is collected through data collection procedures, such as observation and interviews. An interactive analysis model based on Milles and Huberman in was used to analyse the data (Dull & Reinhardt, 2014).

RESULTS

The effectiveness of implementing "Total Quality Management" has not been carried out as expected. According to the researchers' findings through interviews, observations, and documentation, this can be seen from various things directly related to "Total Quality Management" as implemented at Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School. That TQM has not been implemented, include:

Channel (Access)

Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School still needs to establish good communication with various educational stakeholders, making it difficult for the attention of various education observers to support the smooth development of facilities and infrastructure to support learning at the school. Among the access provided by the school is that there needs to be more precise information so that all community members can pay attention to the development of facilities and infrastructure. They do not have operator staff who master information and communication technology, so Total Quality Management is challenging to implement. Apart from that, there are no guidelines. Explicit learning to make it easier for students to access any information related to learning Tetum in class. Bintari et al. (2022) Quality Management states, "Through good management, fostering cooperation to be harmonious and harmonious as well as mutual respect and love between workers so that optimal goals will be achieved in the end."

In addition, with teachers needing help implementing TQM in schools, teaching strategies in the classroom are not adapted to students' needs, making it very challenging for them to learn Tetum, the state language of Timor Leste, as the national language. This access is critical when individuals want to find a school in location. Besides difficulties accessing various learning media, teachers must also create good teaching patterns to arouse students' interest in learning the Tetum language at school. Thus, school principals, teachers, and existing stakeholders must develop their abilities through various training activities to create learning methods. Quality.

This is supported by the views of Syafitrie et al. (2016). One effort to improve and develop human resources is through training. Training is part of education. Education that is more philosophical and theoretical." Just like education, training has the same goal, namely, learning, where someone is enabled to become an innovator, initiative taker, and grand creative problem solver, and it makes someone effective and efficient in doing their work. Yang said that every week, school principals, teachers, and staff receive provision or training to offer them the tools and learning methods they need to become more competent, such as instruction in using technology with mastery of the Tetum language. According to the research findings, school administrators must be able to help instructors become more adept at handling 21st-century learning, especially in terms of facilitating Tetum language and utilising technology in the classroom.

Lack of Support from Stakeholders

Because there are still many shortcomings that need to be addressed by the current government, Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School has not yet concentrated on providing services to stakeholders, such as providing excellent and precise instructions during pre-admission for students and universal access to student welfare or providing good learning facilities to improve the ability to learn the Tetum language well.

Only now has Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School yet to offer a complete library that meets curriculum requirements. There is no open access to learning resources for Tetum as a national language for all students, no open access to computer facilities for all students, and no number of other infrastructure recommendations that have been made. Very limited.

Thus, students at this school still need to improve in learning Tetum, the national language. Another thing that influences students is that students understand the Mambae language better, which is their mother tongue, so after they have finished learning the Tetum language in class, when they are outside of class, they return to using the Mambae language, giving the impression that the Tetum language, which is the national language, is being ignored.

Therefore, to change the way students learn, school principals must play an active role and collaborate with the government so that there is serious attention from the government to prepare supporting facilities and infrastructure to improve the quality of student learning, more specifically in studying the Tetum language which is the national language of Timor Leste. The explanation above is reinforced by Ahmad (2020), who said that the position of the school principal is vital in outlining macro education strategies with priority programs in each school so that intense communication is needed with stakeholders to improve the quality of education with Tetum language lessons which can be regulated in regular regulations. Firm so that it becomes a guide for every student at school. Apart from that, they are part of a microsystem that must be made a priority program and component of the school's identity as a provider of national language education. Apart from that, to achieve high-quality education, a common goal, educational institutions must change the macro system into a local program or curriculum centred on Tetum language education as the national language.

Principal Leadership Style

At the Damea Liquitei Maubisse school, the principal needs to perform a strategic role in implementing TQM properly. Suppose this strategic role is carried out based on a strategic and competitive school operational plan that prioritises the principles of Total Quality Management and ensures that the school can master quality Tetum language. In that case, students will be fluent in the Tetum language. Additionally, school principals have yet to explicitly emphasise quality management of the Tetum language while prioritising innovation and originality among teachers. The school principal has not collaborated closely with related organisations, so the school needs to develop its vision and mission properly.

Building Resources and Classroom Physical Environment

Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School currently has four classrooms obtained from donors to accommodate 275 students. This condition is very worrying because building resources do not support the classroom's learning process. Thus, classroom equipment, among other things, does not meet standards, but teachers and students continue to care for and maintain the cleanliness of the school building. Apart from that, this includes maintaining school buildings. Even though some are still fragile, they continue to be well maintained. Apart from that, there are limited facilities for learning because many students whose parents work as farmers impact learning and the maintenance of existing school buildings. If TQM is well understood by school principals, teachers, and other stakeholders, it will have implications for a quality learning process; classrooms can be equipped with teaching aids to support students in learning, programs that require regular health and safety checks, and accountability—responsibility and commitment to

ensure school comfort. Then, appropriate delegation of authority to teachers in sustainably improving Tetum language learning abilities, effective control of resources from educational stakeholders, and school principals with a clear understanding of funding sources and resources to prevent failure to improve the quality of ongoing Tetum language learning. This is taught.

Efficient Teaching and Learning

The learning and teaching carried out by Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School are not yet effective because teaching and learning strategies are not yet available by the basic skills and measures of teacher ability, the supporting facilities and infrastructure for learning are not yet met, the teaching and learning methods are not yet competent for students in general and In particular, the Tetum language as the national language of Timor Leste has not been seen significantly so that students do not dare to show their abilities in what they are learning, the inadequate school environment and classrooms have a significant impact on students' learning at school. The curriculum used is not suitable for the target students, neither the content nor the program meets the needs of the millennial generation, and there is no new training on developing digital literacy programs quickly, so TQM is not implemented well, which has implications for monitoring and assessment carried out in schools with the system—the latest now.

Referring to the explanation above, according to Sonia (2021), TQM influences how traditional and elementary school management can be changed. To implement TQM ideas in the field of education, six main problems must be examined and controlled strategically, especially those related to quality aspects, emphasis on users, leaders, increasing sustainability, education providers, and the leadership of school principals, which are only carried out according to specified conditions at school.

Thus, school principals and teachers must work together with education stakeholders in Timor Leste to provide training related to Total Quality Management to change learning strategies and school management so that it can have implications for improving the quality of students' education.

CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis, the main conclusion that can be drawn is the need to implement Total Quality Management (TQM) at Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School, Timor Leste, with a focus on educational efficiency. This effort is directed at improving the learning process in general, especially in teaching Tetum as the national language of Timor Leste, to improve the quality of education. Thus, SD Damea Liquitei Maubisse is expected to succeed, compete effectively in the highly competitive and gain profits through the sustainable implementation of TQM.

Overcoming the challenges that Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School has long faced requires implementing good TQM so that the school's graduates can master the Tetum language, enabling them to compete in the global job market. The utilisation of student resources through effective implementation of TQM is expected to become an asset nationally, encourage significant development in Timor Leste, and increase competitiveness at national, regional, and global levels through knowledge that can be applied in industrial systems and mastery of the national language.

Apart from that, Damea Liquitei Maubisse Elementary School graduates also need to be equipped with various skills, including self-control, collaboration, involvement with other people, communication skills, logical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to make judgments. Overall, implementing TQM in this school aims not only to improve academic aspects but also to form qualified individuals ready to face the demands of the dynamic world of work.

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