



A Qualitative Study of Learning Environment Quality in Rural Public Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the quality of the learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara by analyzing the interaction between structural, pedagogical, and socio-economic factors within a rural public secondary school context. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through in-depth interviews and document analysis involving the school principal, teachers, and parents, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that limitations in educational infrastructure, uneven development of teachers' professional competencies, low parental engagement, and students' socio-economic constraints jointly shape the learning environment and hinder its optimal development. Rather than functioning as isolated issues, these factors form an interconnected system that influences teaching effectiveness and student learning experiences. This study highlights that improvements in learning environment quality require an integrated, multi-stakeholder approach that aligns school management practices, teacher capacity development, and community participation. The novelty of this research lies in its holistic analytical framework, which moves beyond single-factor explanations by demonstrating how multiple dimensions simultaneously affect learning environments in rural secondary schools. The study contributes to educational management and school improvement literature by providing empirical insights that support context-responsive and sustainable strategies for enhancing learning environments in under-resourced educational settings.

Keywords: learning environment; educational management; teacher competence; parental involvement; rural secondary school

ABSTRAK: Penelitian ini mengkaji kualitas lingkungan pembelajaran di SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara dengan menganalisis keterkaitan antara faktor struktural, pedagogik, dan sosial-ekonomi dalam konteks sekolah menengah negeri di wilayah pedesaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan analisis dokumen yang melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, dan orang tua siswa, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterbatasan infrastruktur pendidikan, ketimpangan pengembangan kompetensi profesional guru, rendahnya keterlibatan orang tua, serta kendala sosial-ekonomi siswa secara bersama-sama membentuk lingkungan pembelajaran dan

menghambat pengembangannya secara optimal. Faktor-faktor tersebut tidak berdiri sendiri, melainkan saling berinteraksi dalam suatu sistem yang memengaruhi efektivitas pembelajaran dan pengalaman belajar siswa. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa peningkatan kualitas lingkungan pembelajaran memerlukan pendekatan terpadu yang melibatkan berbagai pemangku kepentingan, dengan menyelaraskan praktik manajemen sekolah, penguatan kapasitas guru, dan partisipasi masyarakat. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada kerangka analisis holistik yang melampaui penjelasan satu faktor, dengan menunjukkan bagaimana berbagai dimensi secara simultan memengaruhi lingkungan pembelajaran di sekolah menengah pedesaan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian manajemen pendidikan dan pengembangan sekolah dengan memberikan bukti empiris yang mendukung strategi peningkatan lingkungan pembelajaran yang kontekstual dan berkelanjutan pada satuan pendidikan dengan keterbatasan sumber daya.

Kata kunci: lingkungan pembelajaran; manajemen pendidikan; kompetensi guru; keterlibatan orang tua; sekolah menengah pedesaan

INTRODUCTION

A quality learning environment is a fundamental component in achieving effective and sustainable educational outcomes. A conducive environment not only enhances students' academic achievement but also supports their motivation, character formation, and social-emotional development. Positive interactions among teachers, students, and parents, supported by adequate facilities and effective educational management, contribute significantly to creating learning conditions that foster creativity, engagement, and student well-being. Therefore, the quality of the learning environment has become a central concern in efforts to improve educational quality at the school level.

In practice, however, the realization of a quality learning environment remains a major challenge, particularly in public secondary schools located in non-urban or resource-limited areas. Previous studies have shown that limitations in infrastructure, insufficient integration of educational technology, low parental involvement, and inadequate teacher professional development often hinder schools from providing optimal learning conditions. These challenges highlight the need for context-based strategies that address not only physical aspects but also social, pedagogical, and managerial dimensions of the learning environment.

SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara represents one such case where the ideal conditions of a quality learning environment have not yet been fully achieved. Empirical data indicate several structural and social constraints faced by the school. A number of classrooms require renovation, and laboratory facilities are limited and underutilized due to insufficient equipment. Access to educational technology is also constrained, with a limited number of computers available for a large student population and unstable internet connectivity that restricts the implementation of digital-based learning. These conditions reduce opportunities for students to engage in interactive and technology-supported learning experiences.

In addition to infrastructure limitations, social and pedagogical challenges further affect the quality of the learning environment. Parental involvement in school activities and students' learning processes remains relatively low, which has implications for students' motivation, discipline, and academic performance. From a classroom perspective, teachers face difficulties in managing relatively large class sizes, limiting individualized attention for students with diverse learning needs. Furthermore, limited participation in recent technology-oriented training has led many teachers to rely predominantly on conventional instructional methods, which may be less effective in engaging students in contemporary

learning contexts.

Several studies conducted in rural or semi-rural educational settings report similar conditions, emphasizing that the quality of the learning environment is influenced by the interaction of multiple factors, including facilities, teacher competence, parental participation, and school management. However, existing research tends to examine these factors separately, with limited attention to a holistic analysis that integrates physical, social, psychological, and managerial aspects within a single school context. This indicates a research gap, particularly in understanding how these dimensions interact and how strategic efforts can be formulated to improve the learning environment in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze the learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara by examining its physical, social, and psychological dimensions, identifying key factors that influence its quality, and exploring the challenges faced in its implementation. Furthermore, the study seeks to formulate strategic efforts that can be undertaken by schools and stakeholders to improve and sustain a quality learning environment. The findings are expected to contribute practical insights for school management and policymakers in designing effective interventions to enhance learning environments, particularly in schools facing similar contextual challenges.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. This design was selected because it enables an in-depth examination of contextual conditions, stakeholder perspectives, and institutional practices related to the creation of a quality learning environment. The qualitative descriptive approach is appropriate for capturing real-world educational phenomena and generating practical insights grounded in participants' lived experiences.

Research Setting

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, a public junior high school located in Kolaka Utara Regency, Indonesia. The school was selected due to its relevance to the study objectives, particularly in representing a public secondary school facing infrastructural, pedagogical, and socio-environmental challenges. The learning environment examined in this study encompasses physical conditions, social interactions, and pedagogical practices within the school context.

Informants

Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure their relevance and direct involvement in the learning environment. The participants included the school principal, teachers, and students' parents. The principal was selected due to their role in policy formulation and school management. Teachers were selected based on a minimum of five years of teaching experience and active involvement in instructional activities, including participation in professional development programs. Parents were selected based on their engagement in school activities or regular communication with teachers and having children currently enrolled at the school. This selection strategy enabled the collection of diverse and comprehensive perspectives from key stakeholders.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected using two qualitative techniques: semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and parents to explore their experiences, perceptions, challenges, and strategies related to the learning environment. The interview protocol was designed to allow flexibility for probing while maintaining consistency across participants. Document analysis was conducted to complement and triangulate the interview data. The analyzed documents included syllabi, lesson plans, school activity reports, and records of teacher professional development. These documents provided additional insights into instructional planning and institutional efforts to support a quality learning environment.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis approach. Interview transcripts and documents were first reviewed to achieve data familiarization. Initial codes were then generated to capture meaningful segments relevant to the research focus. These codes were subsequently grouped into broader themes that represented recurring patterns across the data. The themes were reviewed, refined, and clearly defined to ensure analytical coherence. The final themes were presented in narrative form and interpreted in relation to existing literature and theoretical perspectives.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, several strategies were employed. Data triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from different data sources (interviews and documents) and participant groups. Prolonged engagement with the research context and careful documentation of the analysis process further supported the credibility and dependability of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the research process. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided voluntary consent prior to participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by using pseudonyms and excluding identifiable information. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Educational Dynamics: Opportunities, Challenges, and Efforts to Improve Learning Quality

The educational condition at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara continues to evolve in line with changing times. Various positive aspects and challenges are evident in the implementation of education at the school, ranging from technological integration to efforts to strengthen student character. Diverse perspectives from teachers, the principal, and parents provide a rich picture of the school's educational landscape, while also highlighting both the potential and the barriers that need to be addressed to achieve more optimal results. One significant development has been the use of technology in the learning process. "Education digitalization is increasingly being utilized in learning processes. Technology-based media make it easier for teachers to access teaching materials, such as through online learning platforms," (Statement from the Indonesian language teacher). Technology offers great opportunities to improve learning

effectiveness, particularly in this digital era. However, despite its integration into education, teachers still face administrative challenges. “Teachers are overwhelmed with performance reports, which hinders the teaching process because more time is spent preparing reports than teaching,” the teacher added. This challenge highlights the importance of efficient administrative management so teachers can focus more on instructional activities.

Teacher Professionalism: A Pillar of Quality Education

Professional teachers play a critical role in education. Besides teaching subject content, they serve as mentors, motivators, and sources of inspiration for students. This perspective is echoed by informants from various backgrounds at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. The principal emphasized that professional teachers are a key pillar of education who can make a significant impact on students. Similarly, the Civics (PKn) teacher stated that teacher professionalism is not only measured by academic competence but also by integrity and dedication in shaping students’ character in line with Pancasila values. Teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara act as role models, inspirers, and agents of change in character building and educational quality improvement. The Islamic Religion teacher highlighted that professionalism also involves nurturing noble character. The Indonesian teacher added that professional teachers must be able to plan, implement, and evaluate lessons effectively.

Mathematics and Science teachers emphasized the importance of pedagogy and subject-matter expertise, while the English teacher stressed the need for continuous training. Although most teachers meet professional standards, challenges persist, such as high administrative workloads and limited facilities. The school has organized training programs to enhance teacher competence, and some teachers have achieved certification or pursued master’s degrees (S2). Parents appreciate the teachers’ dedication but hope for more innovative, technology-based teaching methods. The researcher concludes that teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara have demonstrated many indicators of professionalism, especially in terms of dedication and commitment to students. However, to reach the ideal standard, further improvements are needed through ongoing training, technological proficiency, and instructional innovation. Support from the school, government, and the community is essential to produce not only competent but also inspiring teachers who can positively impact students’ futures. With strong collaboration, the quality of education at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara is expected to continue progressing in line with the demands of the times.

Teaching Strategies and Methods to Improve Student Learning

At SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, various teaching techniques and methods are applied to enhance student learning. The principal stated: “Combining varied teaching methods and maintaining the quality of both the physical and social learning environments” is the main focus for creating a conducive learning atmosphere. A good physical environment, supported by adequate facilities, along with healthy social relationships between teachers, students, and parents, forms a solid foundation for a positive learning climate. The principal emphasized that quality learning depends not only on the instructional methods used but also on the surrounding environment that supports students’ academic and social development. The Indonesian language teacher at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara mentioned using a “project-based learning approach,” which engages students in real-life activities. Activities such as producing a school magazine, compiling a poetry anthology, or writing and performing drama scripts are part of the implemented strategies. This approach helps students not only learn proper and

effective Indonesian language usage but also develop teamwork, communication, and creative problem-solving skills. Project-based learning allows students to learn through creation and to produce tangible outcomes, boosting their confidence and critical-analytical thinking abilities.

The instructional methods at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara include project-based learning, technology integration, and interactive communication techniques. All of this aim to create a learning experience that is academically deep and equips students with essential practical and social skills for the future. A positive learning environment and parental support are critical factors for effective learning. With these various methods in place, SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara continues to strive to improve the quality of education, preparing students not only academically but also for the increasingly complex challenges of life.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Creating a Quality Learning Environment

This study aims to identify the factors that either support or hinder the creation of a quality learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. Through interviews with the principal, teachers, and parents, various factors influencing the school's learning process were revealed. Key supporting factors include dedicated teachers, a relevant curriculum, and strong collaboration between the school, parents, and the community. However, several obstacles also exist in achieving an optimal learning environment. One of the main supporting factors found is the presence of dedicated and committed teachers. The principal explained that teachers with a strong sense of responsibility and passion for teaching can have a major positive impact on students. Such teachers can create a joyful and motivating learning atmosphere, fostering stronger relationships with students who feel more valued and driven to achieve their academic goals. These teachers also tend to seek innovative and creative teaching methods to make learning more engaging.

This study also identified several barriers that affect the quality of learning at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. One major obstacle is students' excessive use of mobile phones. The Indonesian teacher pointed out that many students are more interested in their phones than in the classroom lessons. Mobile phones often distract students from the learning materials. Although technology can be a useful educational tool, uncontrolled phone usage poses a significant disruption. Thus, teachers must be more creative in managing technology use in the classroom to keep students focused on learning.

Collaboration and Quality: Realizing a Quality Learning Environment

Establishing a quality learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara requires active involvement from all parties, including the school, teachers, students, and parents. This aligns with the principal's view, who emphasized the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders. According to him, a quality learning environment depends not only on adequate facilities but also on a supportive atmosphere and the application of effective teaching methods. A comfortable and nurturing atmosphere plays a vital role in students' development, enabling them to learn optimally. Moreover, effective teaching methods help ensure that learning materials are well understood, making the learning process more engaging, less monotonous, and encouraging active participation in every session.

There are various hopes and aspirations in developing the educational landscape at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. The principal hopes that students will grow into individuals of good character, supported by enjoyable and effective

learning processes. The Indonesian teacher envisions future generations who are independent, resilient, and view education as a path to realizing their dreams. Meanwhile, the English teacher hopes Indonesian education can compete globally through improved student character and adequate learning facilities. The Math teacher expressed a hope to continually motivate students to study hard for a better future.

A quality learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara can be achieved through strong collaboration among teachers, students, parents, and the school. Other important factors such as adequate infrastructure, continuous teacher training, and attention to teacher welfare also play crucial roles in creating conditions that support effective learning. With support from all parties, the learning process can proceed optimally, enabling students to achieve their dreams more successfully (Table 1).

Table 1. Key Themes, Influencing Factors, Impacts, and Recommended Solutions for Enhancing the Learning Environment

Research Theme	Influencing Factors	Impact	Recommended Solutions
Condition of Facilities and Infrastructure	Inadequate classrooms, lack of science and computer laboratories	Unfavorable learning environment, decreased student motivation	Renovation of classrooms, provision of laboratories and computers, improvement of school facilities
Teacher Competence and Training	Lack of regular training in innovative teaching methods	Ineffective teaching, low student achievement	Continuous training, teacher internship/exchange programs with model schools
Parental Involvement	Low participation in school activities and children's education	Lack of learning support at home, low student discipline	School-parent communication forums, parenting education programs
Socio-Economic Factors	Many students come from underprivileged families	Limited access to learning resources, risk of dropping out	Educational scholarships, learning tool subsidies, CSR program support from companies
School Management and Policy	Lack of coordination with government and external stakeholders	Suboptimal policy and funding support	Synergy with local government, collaboration with the private sector

Educational Dynamics: Opportunities and Challenges

At SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, the presence of competent educators is one of the greatest assets in creating a positive learning environment. Professional teachers are able to provide attention tailored to each student's learning needs, motivate them to actively engage in learning, and create a conducive atmosphere for growth. Good teacher-student interaction can strengthen students' desire to

learn and achieve. However, the success of education cannot be fully realized without parental support. In many cases at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, parental involvement in their children's education remains limited, especially among students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Parental involvement is essential for providing emotional and material support to students both at home and at school. Therefore, efforts are needed to raise awareness and increase parental participation through school programs that actively involve them, such as parenting activities and parent training programs.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Learning Environment

Collaboration between teachers, students, parents, and the community is a key factor in creating a quality learning environment. Educational institutions need to implement a rigorous selection process to recruit qualified and competent teacher candidates. This will help establish a conducive and quality learning environment that positively impacts the overall quality of education (Hesti Kusumaningrum et al., 2024). Furthermore, the theory of family involvement emphasizes the importance of close relationships between schools and parents. It states that parental involvement in children's education can significantly improve student academic performance. When parents actively participate in school activities, such as attending parent meetings, supporting extracurricular activities, or providing motivational support at home, students feel supported and valued, which contributes to greater learning enthusiasm. Therefore, building a strong partnership between schools and families is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment that supports students' academic success.

In the effort to create a quality learning environment, several challenges must be addressed. Problems in the education system include the gap between the curriculum and industry needs, the lack of adequate educational facilities, and the low quality of teaching at various levels. Addressing these issues requires efforts to enhance the quality of education and better prepare graduates to be competitive and ready for the workforce. One of the main obstacles is the inadequate facilities and infrastructure in schools (Susianita & Riani, 2024). The input-output theory in education explains that improving the quality of Islamic educational institutions requires enhancing inputs, processes, and outputs in a continuous cycle. This involves the engagement of all educational stakeholders. An institution's educational input is considered high-quality if it is ready for effective processes; a quality process actively creates an innovative, effective, creative, and enjoyable learning environment; and the output is considered high-quality if it produces strong academic and non-academic student outcomes.

It can be concluded that cooperation between teachers, students, parents, and the community plays a crucial role in building a quality learning environment. Parental and community support can reinforce the educational process, while attention to infrastructure and teacher training can enhance learning quality. By focusing on these aspects, SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara can create an environment that maximally supports students' academic and character development.

Collaboration for a Quality Learning Environment

Collaboration is central to discussions on improving educational quality at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. According to the theory of learning communities (Baehaqi et al., 2024), a professional learning community is a group of individuals united by an inclusive, shared learning vision who support and work with one another. They explore ways—both within and beyond their community—to learn from practice and collectively discover new and better approaches to improve student learning. Learning communities are expected to enhance teacher

competencies through activities that encourage educators to share ideas, learn, and work together to solve instructional challenges, ultimately aiming to improve student outcomes.

In learning communities, members (teachers, students, parents, and the community) collaborate to achieve a shared goal: improving education and learning quality. This principle can be implemented at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara through various initiatives involving school-community partnerships and progressive government support in educational policies.

At SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, collaboration between the school and the community has begun but still needs to be strengthened. School-community cooperation can take the form of engaging parents in the learning process, holding regular meetings with teachers to discuss student development, and organizing enrichment activities outside the classroom that involve local community participation. Additionally, the community can contribute resources, time, and labor to enrich students' learning experiences. Such partnerships not only broaden students' horizons but also strengthen school-community ties, ultimately improving educational quality.

Collaboration is the key to creating a quality learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara. Strengthening partnerships among schools, communities, and parents—alongside full support from the government through progressive educational policies—will enable the school to overcome challenges and achieve better educational outcomes. This collaboration will foster synergy for more effective learning, build inclusive learning communities, and ultimately enhance the overall educational quality at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara.

Professional Development Strategies to Improve Teaching Quality

This research highlights the lack of teacher training and professional development at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara as one of the main barriers to improving learning quality. Despite strong teacher commitment to improving education quality, limited access to training focused on pedagogical skills and digital literacy makes it difficult for teachers to adapt to modern and effective teaching methods.

To address this issue (Figure 2), a comprehensive and sustainable approach is needed. The first step is to conduct a thorough training needs analysis to identify key areas that require improvement. This can be done using surveys, teacher interviews, and classroom observations. Through these methods, specific pedagogical and technological challenges faced by teachers can be identified. For instance, if most teachers struggle with classroom management or implementing technology-based instruction, those should be training priorities. Classroom observations also provide real-world insights into how teachers apply learning theories and the challenges they encounter.

After identifying these needs, the next step is to design a sustainable training program integrating key components such as pedagogical development and digital literacy. The training can take two forms: internal and external. Internal training may involve inviting experienced speakers or engaging senior teachers to share their expertise. External training could involve partnerships with educational institutions or professional training providers that offer insights into modern teaching methods and the latest educational technologies. Specifically for digital literacy, training should focus on understanding educational technology basics, mastering educational software, and becoming familiar with online and blended learning. These programs will help teachers integrate technology into teaching and address the digital divide.

To reinforce the training outcomes, schools need to develop mentoring and

coaching systems that provide ongoing support. Mentoring involves experienced teachers guiding others in applying what they learned from training. Mentors can give constructive feedback and share strategies for handling classroom issues. Coaching can also be carried out by school principals or education supervisors to ensure teachers effectively implement the training content. Professional learning groups can also be formed to facilitate regular discussions among teachers, share challenges, and encourage peer learning.

The use of technology in online training should be maximized. Online platforms allow teachers to participate in training flexibly, on their own time. Platforms such as Google Classroom or Moodle can host training modules accessible anytime. These platforms can offer modules on using digital tools for online teaching, managing virtual classrooms, and applying instructional strategies for distance learning. After training is delivered, regular evaluation is crucial to assess its impact. This can be done through classroom performance observations, student feedback, and teacher surveys. Such evaluations help determine how well the training improved teacher competencies and what areas need further development in future programs.

To sustain teacher motivation for change, providing incentives and recognition is essential. Rewards can be given to teachers who show significant improvement in their teaching post-training, whether in financial or non-financial forms. For example, certificates or public recognition during school events can boost appreciation and motivate others to improve.

By implementing this training model continuously, teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara are expected to advance in both pedagogical competence and digital literacy. Ultimately, this will positively impact learning quality, benefiting students and the broader educational community.

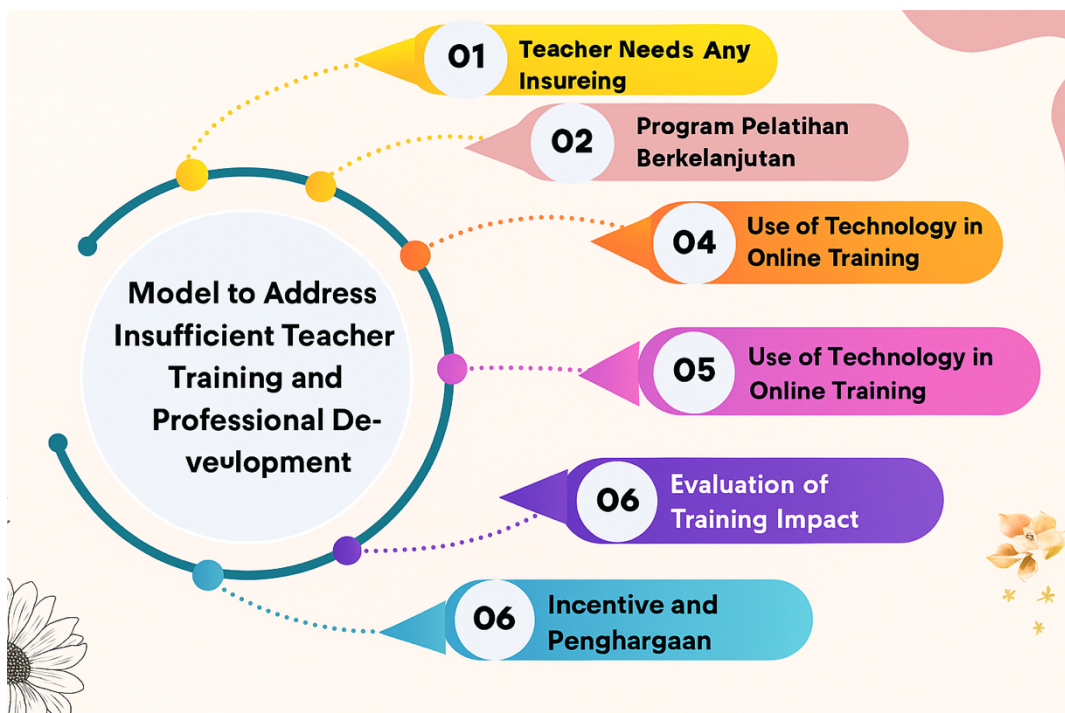


Figure 1. Model for Addressing the Issue of Inadequate Teacher Training and Professional Development

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara demonstrates a good level of commitment but still faces significant challenges in achieving optimal education quality. Limitations in infrastructure—such as four inadequate classrooms, a science laboratory with minimal equipment, and only 20 computers available for 190 students—are major obstacles in supporting effective learning. In terms of teaching staff, only 30% of the 19 teachers have received recent training in utilizing technology, which has resulted in a continued reliance on conventional lecture-based teaching methods. Additionally, the student-to-teacher ratio, ranging from 23 to 33 students per class, hampers optimal teacher-student interaction. Parental involvement is also low, with only 40% actively participating in school activities, while the majority of parents work as farmers or laborers. Economic factors further compound the issue, as 50% of students come from low-income families, limiting their access to additional learning resources. To address these challenges, improvements in facilities, teacher training, and parental engagement are necessary. Collaboration among the school, government, and community is essential to creating a high-quality learning environment that supports students' development effectively.

To improve the quality of the learning environment at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara, several urgent steps must be taken. First, improving the school's infrastructure should be a top priority. The four inadequate classrooms need to be renovated to provide a more comfortable and conducive learning environment. Additionally, the provision of science laboratory equipment should be enhanced to support experiment-based learning methods, and more computers should be added to improve students' digital literacy. Second, teacher competency must be strengthened through regular training on innovative, technology-based teaching methods. Teachers also need ongoing mentoring and supervision to become more effective in classroom instruction and management. Third, parental involvement in their children's education must be reinforced. This can be achieved by increasing parental participation through quarterly parenting programs. Lastly, optimizing school management is a critical factor in creating a quality learning environment. School principals should collaborate with government and private sectors to obtain support and develop data-driven policies to ensure effective quality improvement strategies. With these steps, the school is expected to deliver better-quality education to its students.

Local government and the education department need to implement strategic and sustainable policies. The education budget allocation should be increased, particularly for renovating inadequate classrooms, procuring laboratory equipment, and adding technology facilities such as computers and internet access. Additionally, the government could provide special grants or additional funding to support improvements in educational infrastructure. Regarding teaching staff, periodic training programs should be reinforced, especially on the application of innovative, technology-based teaching methods and effective classroom management strategies. The education department could also implement teacher exchange programs with top-performing schools to improve teaching competencies. Parental involvement should be encouraged by forming communication forums between schools and guardians and holding parenting education programs so that parents are more actively involved in supporting their children's learning at home.

The proposed solutions can improve the quality of education at SMP Negeri 2 Kolaka Utara in the long term. Regular teacher training on innovative teaching methods will enhance instructional effectiveness, make learning materials easier to understand, and improve student learning outcomes. With more interactive,

technology-based methods, students will be more motivated to learn, thus improving academic performance. Furthermore, infrastructure improvements such as classroom renovations, the provision of science labs, and the addition of computers will create a more conducive learning environment. Better facilities enable students to have more optimal learning experiences, increase their interest in learning, and support deeper exploration of knowledge. Increasing parental involvement in education also has a positive impact. Through communication forums and parenting education programs, parents will become more engaged in supporting their children's learning at home, helping to build discipline and boost students' learning motivation.

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