THE EFFECT OF INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP BY THE PRINCIPAL AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TQM ON INCREASING PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN PRESCHOOL

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the influence of innovative principal leadership and the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) on increasing parental involvement in kindergarten. This study employs a qualitative approach through a literature review method by examining various contemporary theories and empirical studies related to educational leadership, quality management, and school–family partnerships. The analysis indicates that innovative leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a collaborative culture, effective communication, and participatory programs that encourage active parental involvement. Meanwhile, the implementation of TQM strengthens quality management systems through principles of customer focus, continuous improvement, and data-driven decision-making. The integration of these two approaches results in a systematic and sustainable partnership-based management model. It is concluded that enhancing parental involvement in early childhood education requires synergy between innovative leadership and an integrated quality management system

Keywords: Innovative Leadership; Total Quality Management; Parent Involvement; Early Childhood Education; Educational Quality Management.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education serves as a strategic foundation for the development of human resources. During this phase, rapid development occurs in cognitive, social-emotional, language, moral, and motor skills—aspects that will determine a child's readiness to enter the next level of education. Therefore, the delivery of education in kindergartens cannot be viewed merely as an initial academic learning process, but rather as a comprehensive, quality-oriented educational service system. In this context, the quality of early childhood education institutions is measured not only by children's developmental achievements but also by the quality of governance, leadership, and partnerships with parents.

Various studies confirm that parental involvement is a key factor in supporting the success of early childhood education. This involvement includes active communication with teachers, participation in school activities, support for learning at home, and contributions to the decision-making process. Children who receive consistent support between home and school environments tend to demonstrate more optimal development, both academically and socio-emotionally. However, the reality on the ground shows that parental involvement is often still limited to attendance at specific activities or fulfilling administrative obligations, rather than being an integral part of the school management system.

This situation highlights the need for school leadership capable of fostering a participatory and collaborative culture. From a contemporary educational management perspective, leadership is no longer viewed merely as an administrative function but as a strategic capability to drive change, build a shared vision, and empower all stakeholders. Innovative leadership is relevant because it emphasizes creativity, adaptability, and courage in responding to the ever-evolving dynamics of the educational environment. Innovative school

principals are able to design partnership programs responsive to parents' needs and leverage information technology to strengthen communication and transparency.

In addition to leadership factors, a quality management approach also plays a crucial role in optimizing parental involvement. Total Quality Management (TQM), as a modern management paradigm, offers principles of continuous improvement, a customer-focused approach, total organizational involvement, and data-driven decision-making. In the educational context, parents are positioned as both external customers and strategic partners, whose satisfaction serves as an indicator of service success. The implementation of TQM enables schools to establish systematic evaluation mechanisms, clear service standards, and structured feedback systems to ensure consistent parental participation.

Theoretically, there is a synergistic relationship between innovative leadership and the implementation of TQM in enhancing parental involvement. Innovative leadership provides direction for change and fosters collective commitment, while TQM provides managerial tools that ensure the sustainability and accountability of the process. Without visionary leadership, the application of TQM risks becoming merely procedural and administrative. Conversely, without a structured quality system, leadership innovation may become unsustainable.

Based on this background, this study aims to conceptually analyze the influence of innovative leadership by school principals and the implementation of TQM on increasing parental involvement in kindergartens.

This study is expected to enrich the discourse on quality management in early childhood education and provide a conceptual foundation for the development of a school–family partnership model that is more systematic, participatory, and oriented toward continuous quality improvement.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Innovative leadership by school principals in the context of early childhood education is a response to the demands of an increasingly complex educational environment. Changes in the curriculum, social dynamics within the community, advances in information technology, and rising parental expectations regarding educational services require school principals to act not only as administrators but also as change leaders. Innovative leadership evolves from transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and the empowerment of organizational members. However, innovative leadership goes a step further by emphasizing creativity in problem-solving, the courage to take calculated risks, and the ability to build adaptive systems.

In kindergarten practice, innovative leadership is reflected in the principal's ability to build a participatory ecosystem. Innovative principals tend to open channels of dialogue with parents through regular communication forums, utilize digital platforms for reporting on children's progress, and develop needs-based parenting programs. This approach fosters a sense of belonging among parents toward the educational institution. Psychologically, when parents feel valued and involved, their trust in the school increases, ultimately strengthening their commitment to active participation.

However, innovative leadership alone is insufficient without a structured quality management system. This is where the relevance of Total Quality Management (TQM) becomes significant. TQM in education is not merely the adoption of industrial concepts into the school setting, but a strategic approach to ensure that all educational service processes operate in accordance with established quality standards. The customer-focus principle in TQM positions parents as key stakeholders whose voices must be accommodated in the planning and evaluation of school programs. Thus, parental involvement is not treated as an afterthought but as an integral part of the institution's quality performance indicators.

The principle of continuous improvement in TQM also has direct implications for the school–family partnership model. Schools that conduct routine evaluations of parent engagement programs, carry out satisfaction surveys, and systematically follow up on evaluation results will foster a culture of reflection. This culture enables schools to identify barriers to parental participation, such as time constraints, a lack of effective communication, or unclear roles. Through a data-driven approach (fact-based decision making), policies to enhance participation can be designed with greater precision.

The integration of innovative leadership and TQM forms a complementary relationship. Innovative leadership acts as a catalyst driving organizational cultural transformation toward openness and collaboration. Meanwhile, TQM provides an operational framework that ensures the consistency and sustainability of these changes. Without strong leadership, the implementation of TQM risks becoming merely an administrative procedure with no significant impact on increasing parental participation. Conversely, without a clear quality system, innovations initiated by the principal may lose direction and fail to be systematically documented.

From a stakeholder theory perspective, a school is an organization whose success is determined by the satisfaction and support of its stakeholders. As external stakeholders, parents have a significant influence on the reputation and sustainability of the preschool institution. Therefore, increasing parental involvement impacts not only children's development but also the institution's sustainability. Schools that build strong partnerships with parents tend to have a positive image, high student retention rates, and more stable moral and material support.

Furthermore, structured parental involvement has a systemic impact on the quality of learning. When communication between teachers and parents is effective, there is continuity in educational strategies between home and school. This consistency strengthens character development, reinforces discipline, and fosters children's social skills. Thus, parental involvement is not merely relational but also directly impacts educational outcomes.

Conceptually, the relationship between innovative leadership, TQM implementation, and parental involvement can be understood as an integrative model for quality improvement. Innovative leadership creates a vision and a participatory culture; TQM provides evaluation systems and mechanisms; while parental involvement serves as both an indicator and an outcome of the implementation of these two variables. This model emphasizes that quality improvement in kindergartens requires a holistic approach, not a piecemeal one.

Thus, strengthening the leadership capacity of school principals in the areas of innovation and quality management is a strategic priority in early childhood education development. Innovation-based leadership training, enhancing quality management literacy, and fostering an evaluative culture at the school level are steps that can support the effective and sustainable implementation of this model.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the innovative leadership of school principals and the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) are two strategic determinants in increasing parental involvement in kindergartens. Innovative leadership serves as a driving force for change that fosters an open, collaborative, and adaptive organizational culture. Visionary and responsive school principals are able to establish effective two-way communication, create participatory programs, and encourage parental involvement not only at the level of ceremonial activities but also in the school's planning, evaluation, and decision-making processes.

On the other hand, the implementation of TQM provides a systematic framework that ensures parental involvement occurs in a structured and sustainable manner. Through the principles

of customer focus, continuous improvement, total involvement, and data-driven decision-making, schools can integrate parental participation into the quality management cycle. Thus, parental involvement is not incidental or personal but becomes an integral part of the institution's management system.

The integration of innovative leadership and TQM creates a synergy that strengthens the quality of early childhood education services. Innovative leadership provides direction and inspiration for change, while TQM provides managerial tools to maintain consistency and sustainability in quality. The combination of both forms a partnership-based management model capable of enhancing parental trust, strengthening support for school programs, and creating a more conducive learning environment for children's development.

Conceptually, these findings position parental involvement as a quality performance indicator for early childhood education institutions that is inseparable from leadership quality and management systems. Therefore, efforts to improve kindergarten quality should focus on strengthening the innovative leadership capacity of school principals and the consistent implementation of TQM based on continuous evaluation. This approach is not only relevant for increasing parental participation but also contributes to the overall strengthening of early childhood education institution governance, oriented toward sustainable quality.

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