Effectiveness, Challenges, and Implications of Internal Quality Assurance System Implementation Before and After Covid-19 Pandemic

Isnada Waris Tasrim
Universitas Muhammadiyah Palu
isnadawt@uho.ac.id

ABSTRACT: *This study aims to evaluate the implementation of internal quality assurance system (IQAS) in schools before and after the COVID-19 pandemic that highlight its effectiveness, challenges and implications, using a qualitative approach with a case study design. The data was obtained through FGD, interviews, observations, and document studies and analyzed using qualitative-interactive analysis. The source of data was the IQAS team in the 8 schools studied. The findings show the implementation of internal quality assurance system (IQAS) before the COVID-19 pandemic ran quite effectively, although not all school members had the same understanding of the IQAS. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic, schools experienced many obstacles in adapting all school programs, both academic and non-academic, to emergency conditions. Because schools are required to switch to new patterns and learning processes very quickly, the implementation of IQAS cannot take place normally. The very significant change due to the COVID-19 Pandemic certainly raises many challenges faced by all schools to ensure that the learning process can continue even in very emergency conditions. One of the effective efforts made by schools is to strengthen cooperation through involving the community and parents to jointly participate actively in the implementation of learning during the COVID-19 period so that these challenges can be overcome*

in stages. The implication of implementing IQAS for the progress of schools is that parents and the community have more trust in school efforts in providing the best educational services for students and schools can easily solve their problems by implementing IQAS effectively.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi implementasi sistem penjaminan mutu internal (SPMI) di sekolah sebelum dan sesudah pandemi COVID-19 dengan menyoroti efektivitas, tantangan dan implikasinya, menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data diperoleh melalui FGD, wawancara, observasi, dan studi dokumen serta dianalisis dengan analisis kualitatif-interaktif. Sumber data adalah tim SPMI di 8 sekolah yang diteliti. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan penerapan sistem penjaminan mutu internal (SPMI) sebelum pandemi COVID-19 berjalan cukup efektif, meskipun tidak semua warga sekolah memiliki pemahaman yang sama tentang SPMI. Namun, pascapandemi COVID-19, sekolah mengalami banyak kendala dalam menyesuaikan semua program sekolah, baik akademik maupun non akademik, dengan kondisi darurat. Karena sekolah dituntut untuk beralih ke pola dan proses pembelajaran yang baru dengan sangat cepat, maka pelaksanaan SPMI tidak dapat berlangsung secara normal. Perubahan yang sangat signifikan akibat Pandemi COVID-19 ini menimbulkan banyak tantangan yang dihadapi oleh semua sekolah untuk memastikan proses pembelajaran dapat terus berjalan meskipun dalam kondisi yang sangat darurat. Salah satu upaya efektif yang dilakukan sekolah adalah memperkuat kerjasama melalui pelibatan masyarakat dan orang tua untuk bersama-sama berpartisipasi aktif dalam pelaksanaan pembelajaran di masa COVID-19 sehingga tantangan tersebut dapat diatasi secara bertahap. Implikasi penerapan SPMI bagi kemajuan sekolah adalah orang tua dan masyarakat lebih percaya terhadap upaya sekolah dalam memberikan pelayanan pendidikan yang terbaik bagi siswa dan sekolah dapat

dengan mudah menyelesaikan permasalahannya dengan mengimplementasikan SPMI secara efektif.

Keywords: *internal quality assurance system; effectiveness; challenges and implications*

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of the internal education quality assurance system (IQAS) by focusing on how effective IQAS is, its implications for school progress, and the challenges of its implementation, both before and after the COVID 19 pandemic in three levels of schooling namely kindergarten, elementary and middle schools in Palu city. The void of empirical data regarding the implementation of the internal education quality assurance system (IQAS) in schools that have been carried out, especially in Central Sulawesi Province, both pre and after the COVID 19 pandemic, it can be assumed that the implementation of IQAS in schools in Central Sulawesi, especially in the city of Palu also still not implemented effectively due to the low understanding of the principal and teachers of IQAS itself. Schools will certainly experience significant difficulties in implementing IQAS, especially if the concept of IQAS itself has not been properly understood.

This assumption is reinforced by the findings of a preliminary study conducted by the researchers in several public and private elementary, middle and high schools in early 2021. First, in these schools, an internal education quality assurance team has been formed, but according to the team leader, that board/team was only formed to meet the needs of the accreditation process, but no quality assurance activities have ever been carried out, this was due to a lack of understanding on what schools must do in implementing internal education quality assurance. Second, in some schools, there is already an Internal Quality Assurance Team, but quality assurance activities in these schools are not carried out continuously due to the incompetent managerial ability of the principal as the person in charge of IQAS activities; and third, in several other schools information was found from teachers that they did not fully understand IQAS so that the school did not have an education quality assurance team and did not carry out any activities related to internal quality assurance. In other words, these schools do not yet have a good quality assurance system in accordance with applicable standards and regulations. This will have an impact on the quality of graduates who cannot meet the SNP. Thus, an evaluation study is needed related to the IQAS in these

schools so that they can gradually meet the SNP or even exceed it. In addition, the ranking of Central Sulawesi Province in the field of education is position 29 out of 34 provinces in Indonesia (Sulteng Raya, 2017), this strengthens the assumption that the implementation of IQAS in education units in Central Sulawesi Province still does not meet the desired expectations, namely schools have followed the National Education Standards in the implementation of educational process entirely in schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education quality assurance activities are an effort to control and maintain the effectiveness and excellence of the implementation of educational programs so that they are always conducted in accordance with predetermined quality standards and indicators. To improve the education quality, the government in this case the Ministry of Education and Culture encourages every education unit to implement the Education Quality Assurance System to achieve the National Education Standards. Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 28 of 2016 which regulates about Quality Assurance of Primary and Secondary Education. The issuance of the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 28 of 2016 is to respond to the attitudes and demands of today's society towards the quality of education as well as to show the high commitment of the government to improve the education quality. The government also completes it with IQAS guidelines so that it can be used as a reference for all educational units to carry out IQAS activities in their respective institutions. However, the implementation of IQAS in schools still faces various obstacles. Sridana et al (2018) found that the level of knowledge of school residents related to IQAS is still at a low level which still needs to be developed before establishing an internal quality assurance system for education units. In addition, the comprehension of educators concerning national education standards that are closely related to their duties is still at a sufficient level so it is still necessary to increase teachers' understanding so that they can carry out processes and evaluations according to standards. It is necessary to develop educators and education staff in terms of knowledge and skills in implementing the IQAS through a special team from external education units until the school is ready to implement the IQAS.

Research conducted by Darman et al. (2017) on the implications of the implementation of IQAS on the accreditation ratings of senior high schools in the Riau Islands Province found that the

implementation of the IQAS has not had implications for the ranking of school accreditation, so they recommended that IQAS be carried out continuously and well planned to start with the initiative of the school's principal. in carrying out training to improve teacher competence, especially in mastering technology and its learning application. Aris (2019) also in his study which focused on implementing IQAS for SMP Model Schools in Jombang produced several inhibiting factors for the implementation of IQAS in schools, namely related to budget unpreparedness, multiple positions, and non-routine assistance, as well as less intense coordination and communication. In general, the findings of the problems of quality assurance in education described above are found almost evenly throughout Indonesia, this makes quality improvement still the main topic of discussion on educational issues. Although in fact to face these obstacles, the Indonesian government has made various efforts to improve the quality of Indonesian education, including increasing the education budget, certifying teachers, and providing various facilities. However, all of these efforts are felt to be not optimal because they tend to be external. This means that efforts to improve the quality of education come from outside the school, not from the school. It is realized that quality improvement efforts will be more effective if carried out internally. In other words, the school concerned is doing conscious efforts to ensure the quality of education internally (Simarmata, 2015). Admittedly or not, many schools in Indonesia still have learning systems that do not meet the National Education Standards (Zahro, 2018; Sasmito et al., 2020; Liu, 2020; Dakir et al., 2020). Of course, to have superior human resources, schools need to improve both internally and externally. The quality education will produce quality output if schools implement quality assurance (Sameena, 2020; Kuswanto & Anderson, 2021). The importance of quality assurance for educational institutions to produce quality output in achieving the National Education Standards (Fransiska, 2018; Yuliyati, 2020; Suradnya, 2021). Juran (1998) argues that a product or service must meet the needs or expectations of users. The low quality of education can be caused by the non-fulfillment of several conditions. Poor curriculum design, buildings that do not meet the criteria, poor working environment, ineffective procedures and processes, work schedules are unpredictable, insufficient resources, and poor quality of education are just a few of them. Furthermore, lack of personnel development (Hadi, 2020) and the low quality of education are among of the problems faced by schools (Amir, 2019; Andriesgo et al., 2020; Singgih, 2020). This can be seen from the

achievements achieved by each school which has not been encouraging. This is generally faced by private schools that do not get direct attention from the government (Purnomo, 2021).

The quality of graduate results that do not match the graduate standards becomes the main cause of the low competitiveness of school education graduates so that graduates are still a challenge to work since the requirements for prospective employees in an agency or business world are increasing day by day, this is a challenge for schools to improve the quality of graduates (Fauzi, 2021; Musaddad, 2021; Arifin et al., 2023). Each academic unit must provide the quality of education to survive and win the competition among educational institutions. Given the importance of quality assurance (Ríos, 2015), then schools should struggle to implement a planned and systematic quality even amid the COVID 19 pandemic. The reality show that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the activities of quality assurance that had been previously programmed by many schools did not go according to plan, considering that several conditions required a re-planning of the quality assurance system. This is due to government policies that require studying from home, working from home, and physical distancing, so there needs to be a redesign in quality assurance activities in every school institution. According to Hakim and Herlina (2018), the quality education is characterized by several factors; first, the number of students studying at the school; second, the number of achievements; third, the competition of graduates with the educational institution goals. According to Sulaiman and Wibowo (2016), quality assurance is the process of planning, fulfilling, controlling, and developing higher education standards that must be performed by institutions consistently and continuously. Lailina and Zahrok (2020) said that the quality of education can be assessed through five aspects, namely processes, outputs, services, human resources (educating and educational staff), and environmental elements. Fadhli (2020) said that a quality assurance system needs to be conducted so that educational institutions can know the current position of the quality of their institution and for further improvement. Athiyah (2017) asserted that efforts to develop a quality culture in academic units are non-negotiable requirements to achieve a superior education. Education quality assurance must be carried out freely and continuously by the education unit.

According to Devi (2020), quality assurance makes all areas of teaching and learning available online in schools during the epidemic. Quality Assurance of Education in High Schools (SMA) during the COVID-19 Pandemic, resources, the main movers in regulating life,

must be increasingly competent in their lives as the times develop. In addition, Salamah (2018) stated that the academic units should carry out assessment of learning outcomes, as part of the quality assurance system, has two main standards that must be considered: the standard for determining grades and the standard for graduation assessment. Astuti et al. (2020) added that the model of quality assurance in online learning achievement during the COVID-19 pandemic was carried out through preparation, implementation, and quality control. Meanwhile, Muhajarah & Riskha Fabriar (2020) said to maintain the quality of education amid the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers use the internet and e-learning platforms that can streamline learning.

Apart from the fact that the quality assurance conditions in the field have been produced, there is a previous study conducted by Baharun et al (2021) who examined education quality assurance during the COVID 19 period at SMA Nurul Jadid Probolinggo, East Java. Their research found a quality assurance condition that can be said to be stable that even during a pandemic, SMA Nurul Jadid created a quality assurance system to survive and win the competition between educational institutions. The quality assurance system of SMA Nurul Jadid is implemented and evaluated through systematic planning. This study has implications for the importance of educational institutions maintaining excellence to maintain the public trust that has been built over the years even in a situation that does not fully support school quality assurance at this time. In contrast to the research of Baharun et al, this study explored the effectiveness, implications, and challenges of implementing quality assurance in three different schools, with the hope of obtaining a complete picture of IQAS implementation as well as comparing the practice of IQAS from the three schools in the pre and post-school years, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic so that an IQAS model can be produced and used as a reference for other schools.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study research design (multi-case) because it is carried out at three different levels of education. According to many qualitative research experts, the appropriate design used for research in different settings is a case study where the analysis is qualitative-interpretive (Miles & Huberman, 2014). Through qualitative interpretation, it can be described the actual conditions of the implementation of the internal education quality assurance system in schools (Sugiyono, 2014; Creswell, 2013).

There were 8 schools studied related to this internal quality assurance problem, namely 2 public junior high schools and 2 public elementary schools, as well as 4 private schools; 2 Islamic kindergartens, 1 Muhammadiyah junior high school, 1 Islamic elementary school. The selection of informants was not carried out purposively, but was carried out randomly (Sugiyono, 2014) with the assumption that the impact of COVID 19 was experienced by all educational institutions without exception, so that it is very possible to obtain data related to internal quality assurance from all schools. The informants were teachers and principals from the 8 schools. In qualitative research, the key instrument is the research team itself which will conduct interviews, observations, and document studies related to the focus of the problem being studied. To facilitate data collection at the research site, the research team prepared interview guides, observation sheets, and study documents, as well as cameras, recording devices, and notepads to record field notes.

Data Collection

Data collection techniques used FGD (focus group discussion), interviews, observations, and document studies. Focus group discussions were carried out to obtain general and comprehensive data on the conditions of IQAS implementation in the schools studied. The activity will begin with the strengthening of IQAS by quality assurance experts and the research team, then continuing with presentations on IQAS practices by the quality assurance team of the schools studied, and continue with focused discussions to explore further the effectiveness, implications, and challenges of IQAS. In-depth data collection is carried out through interviews, observations, and direct document studies at the schools concerned, both online and offline.

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique was carried out with interactive analysis techniques which included three steps, namely data reduction, data presentation, and data verification/conclusion (Miles and Huberman, 2014). By using interactive data analysis, it is expected to produce findings that truly reflect the conditions of the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in the three research settings and these findings can be used as a reference in proposing recommendations and solutions to problems found in the implementation of the internal quality assurance system in Indonesia.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Effectiveness of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) before and after COVID 19

Regarding the effectiveness of IQAS implementation before the COVID 19 pandemic, all schools agreed that IQAS activities were running effectively. However, when COVID 19 hit, quality assurance activities were severely disrupted. As described by several informants that "The Internal Quality Assurance System before COVID was running effectively in accordance with the school's planning, vision and mission, but during COVID, the Internal Quality Assurance System sometimes did not work effectively due to changes in conditions from normal to a state that could be called an emergency, so that some programs do not run as expected by the school. The same statement was made by teachers and school principals: "...after the COVID pandemic broke out, the effectiveness of internal quality assurance was severely hampered. These obstacles are related to teacher human resources who are not ready for drastic changes in the learning process and infrastructure that is not fully supportive even though supervision and assessment are still carried out centrally as an effort to maintain the quality of learning carried out during the COVID 19 pandemic. In detail, several things were found that caused the Internal Quality Assurance System to not work effectively, namely the weak commitment of the educational institution authorities, less than optimal leadership style, limited number and competence of human resources in schools who understood the Quality Assurance System completely and correctly, indifference from internal stakeholders regarding the importance of a quality culture in the implementation of education, weaknesses in formulating the contents of internal quality policies, standards and manuals, including weaknesses in the formulation of measurable success target indicators and the unpreparedness of facilities and infrastructure in the field of information technology. Even though there were many obstacles faced in implementing the Internal Quality Assurance System during COVID, teachers and school principals were still able to make efforts because they were supported by all school members starting from the principal, teachers, education staff, school committee and members of the surrounding community, especially student's parents.

The results of this study reinforce the findings of previous studies that the internal quality assurance system in every educational unit, both public and private, is a quality assurance system that involves all components in the education unit. To achieve the quality of education in schools according to standards, all components must understand and be involved in implementing quality assurance as a system that is interrelated with one another so that the quality of the educational process can run effectively and the results can meet or even exceed the standards set (Sudirman et al, 2020). This is in line with Kayatarno et al (2020) which states that the way to improve the quality of education is to implement (Internal Quality Assurance System) and Implementation of IQAS according to the Dirjendikdasmen (2016: 5) with the aim that all elements, namely the organization, policies and processes related to with educational units running with predetermined standards to ensure the creation of a culture of quality.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, in general schools had implemented IQAS in improving school quality, specifically: (1) Mapping, by conducting school self-evaluations and school report cards. (2) Planning, schools carry out planning with planning references and formats. (3) Implementation, schools have implemented IQAS from the initial stage, the core stage, and the final stage. (4) The school has carried out an IQAS evaluation by the monitoring and evaluation team for each activity. (5) Schools have developed IQAS quality strategies by teams using formulation formats, (6) Schools have shown optimal learning outcomes through implementing IQAS with the satisfaction of various parties (Idris et al, 2022). Watini et al (2019) also identified that the implementation of school internal quality assurance had been carried out quite well. The school principal as manager is able to manage the school in a more conducive manner, teachers carry out the learning process more interesting and fun, school facilities and infrastructure are well maintained, libraries are complete and varied, schools are child-friendly, extracurricular programs are varied and educative, health service units are clean and healthy, school canteens that prioritize healthy and inexpensive traditional food culture, as well as friendly and free education (Watini et al, 2019).

However, after the COVID-19 outbreak, the implementation of IQAS in all schools did not take place as effectively as before the COVID-19 pandemic. Cirlan et al (2021) in their report responding to the COVID-19 crisis, educational institutions around the world adapted their activities to an emergency online learning mode in the first half of 2020. As educational institutions have primary responsibility for quality assurance of their provision, this sudden change raises questions regarding the effectiveness, relevance and flexibility of internal quality assurance arrangements. In line with that, quality assurance in open and distance learning is a universal concern of stakeholders. The quality of open and distance learning is faced with challenges in terms of diversity of inputs, processes, complex management of PJJ learning, and the recent paradigm shift to online learning. During the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring the quality of distance learning has become a daunting task at the individual level, especially principals and teachers, and institutions as a system (Aminuddin et al, 2020). Suciani et al's study (2019) to measure the effectiveness of implementing IQAS in model schools found that even before the COVID-19 period there were still pilot schools that had not been able to implement IQAS effectively, so you can imagine that in the midst of the raging COVID-19 IQAS implementation would have experienced many quality uncertainties are caused by learning that changes abruptly and abruptly. One of the ways taken to overcome the ineffectiveness of the implementation of IQAS is to implement appropriate mentoring strategies according to the weaknesses of each school. The results of the final evaluation after mentoring show the effectiveness of the components of context, input, process mapping, quality planning, and implementation of quality compliance as well as monitoring and evaluation. The results component also shows the average achievement in the effective category. Based on the results of their research, they recommended the need to develop appropriate mentoring strategies according to the needs of each school based on the results of the initial school evaluation, and the need to measure the results of the final evaluation after being given assistance (Suciani et al, 2019). The recommendations of this research can be used as a reference for

schools to overcome the ineffectiveness of implementing IQAS after the COVID-19 Pandemic.

IQAS Challenges

The challenges faced by schools related to the implementation of IQAS during the COVID 19 pandemic were generally similar in all the schools studied. These challenges are presented in the table as follows.

Table 1. The IQAS Challenges

No	Challenges
1	A solid full day lesson for several schools that conducted full-day program (7 am to 4 pm)
2	There are social restrictions and new things in conducting learning with students as well as limited facilities and infrastructure in improving the quality of education. Some teachers have not mastered electronic devices, especially when conducting distance learning (PJJ).
3	Learning becomes ineffective, because the teacher does not directly interact with students
4	Some teachers have not mastered electronic devices (Online Learning Media)
5	Instilling character values in the learning process is less effective, meaning that the learning process is running but coaching, guidance to students is less effective.
6	Assessment of learning outcomes has not been effective
7	Not all students have electronic devices (laptops, Android cellphones, networks, data pulses) which are obstacles for teachers.
8	Infrastructure constraints and meeting student learning needs.
9	The lack of availability of facilities and infrastructure to support online teaching and learning activities during the COVID19 pandemic, both at schools and parents of students.
10	Teaching and learning activities during the COVID 19 Pandemic did not go well and professionally both in terms of students and infrastructure.
11	There are still teachers who still need direction and guidance from teachers and principals in terms of increasing IQAS both independently and in congregation.
12	There are still teachers who do not understand and do not support the implementation of SKI in schools.
13	There are parents who are difficult to work with in improving IQAS.
14	Completeness of administration that is still not perfect
15	There are social restrictions that result in changes to teaching and learning activities which are usually carried out face-to-face, with the existence of government policies to support efforts to prevent the COVID-19 virus, with these policies impacting limited facilities and

No	Challenges
	infrastructure in improving the quality of education.
16	Challenges faced as school principals in managing all aspects of school and teacher activities in carrying out learning during the COVID-19 pandemic where some teachers did not understand IT to access and create learning videos, there were social restrictions and new things in carrying out teaching and learning activities and facilities and limited infrastructure such as students not having Android phones to improve the quality of education.

The many challenges faced by educational units in maintaining the quality of education implementation in schools during the COVID-19 pandemic forced various parties to take various steps to solve one of them by examining the main challenges faced by schools related to the role of internal quality assurance in ensuring that quality standards are maintained and how quality assurance practices support the educational institution community in carrying out their work (Cirlan et al, 2021). Sudirman et al (2020) stated that teaching staff and educational units as a whole do not fully understand IQAS, especially in secondary education units. The IQAS program is not well organized to meet national education standards. All school members do not have a good understanding of IQAS nor a good quality assurance team. As a result, school programs do not lead to gradual quality improvement to reach or even exceed national education standards. To overcome these challenges, Aminuddin et al (2020) revealed that quality starts from within and is multidimensional. Quality assurance is principally seen as continuous improvement, as a mechanism and assessment and as an effort to exceed student and stakeholder expectations. A recent challenge for quality assurance is the process of transforming distance learning into an online digital system. The recent COVID-19 outbreak has further implications and challenges the implementation of quality assurance especially in the highly complex implementation of online distance learning. Another strategy that can be implemented to maintain the effective implementation of IQAS during the COVID-19 period is through systematic planning involving all school members and the community, implementing quality assurance, and evaluating quality assurance (Baharun et al, 2021). Involvement of the community, parents and all school members who work together in the continuity of the

implementation of quality education during the COVID-19 era has been carried out by the schools studied to overcome these challenges. Kayatarno et al (2020) also found that school programs had not been implemented according to standards, so they suggested that in the aspect of quality mapping, teachers need to increase competence in preparing lesson plans, curriculum development, media use and authentic assessment and in aspects of quality planning and implementation, workshops on the preparation of lesson plans, curriculum, media and authentic assessment were held. Due to the many obstacles during the COVID-19 period, the monitoring and evaluation aspects of curriculum workshops have not been implemented and the new quality standards have not been implemented by schools. They concluded that schools were not disciplined and had not been optimal in implementing the Internal Quality Assurance System. Nonetheless, amidst the many challenges faced, all schools are trying to maintain the implementation of the internal quality assurance system with all its limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, Cirlan et al (2021) identified several key success factors for extraordinary resilience and capacity to act quickly in a COVID-19 pandemic crisis situation, namely: institutional autonomy, which allows institutions to make decisions and act quickly, accompanied by an adequate institutional strategy , leadership and capacity to manage change; institutional decision-making flexibility to facilitate local adaptation, for example between Teacher Working Groups or Subject Teacher Councils; a quality culture, based on ownership and commitment to quality shared by all members of the institutional community; staff willingness to innovate and experiment to find solutions and adapt; cross-agency and inter-agency collaboration and experience sharing to find solutions to the challenges faced; efficient communication between the management of the institution, staff and students.

IQAS Implications for School Excellence

The implications of IQAS for school progress show that schools are free to carry out according to the school's internal vision and mission, especially moral or character learning. With the IQAS, the

quality of education in each educational unit can be maintained and continuously improved internally. According to the teachers, becoming a quality school is the hope of educational units, both primary and secondary education. The impact of quality schools is that parents make them the first choice for their sons and daughters in studying. A good IQAS will also produce a good output. A good IQAS will be a guarantee that can fulfill the quality promised and expected by society. Build trust by fulfilling all requirements or minimum standards as expected by parents or society. Thus, a good and effective IQAS will be an advantage for the school itself. IQAS is very useful for the progress and improvement of school quality in the future. Where schools can maintain and improve school quality by continuing to improve the National Education Standards in their respective institutions. With IQAS, the quality of education in each educational unit can be maintained and continuously improved internally. The IQAS activity itself refers to the National Education Standards in accordance with Law number 20 of 2003, which includes the educational quality mapping is a step to find out the weaknesses and strengths of schools in achieving National Education Standards through self-evaluation, Compilation of Quality Compliance Plans, Implementation of Quality Fulfillment, and Quality Evaluation/Audit.

Regarding the implications of IQAS for school excellence, Idris et al (2022) said that the application of IQAS in schools is very helpful in improving school quality, both academically and non-academically. Schools will be able to solve every problem through implementing the right IQAS solution. In addition, when a school has effectively implemented internal quality assurance, it is certain that the school culture will be well developed by achieving the 8 National Education Standards as a reference for school quality assurance (Watini et al, 2019). The implication of the importance of educational institutions in maintaining quality is as a form of maintaining well-built public trust in the existence of schools (Baharun et al, 2021)

CONCLUSION

The implementation of internal quality assurance system (IQAS) before the COVID-19 pandemic ran quite effectively, although not all

school members had the same understanding of the internal quality assurance system. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic, schools experienced many obstacles in adapting all school programs, both academic and non-academic, to emergency conditions. Because schools are required to switch to new patterns and learning processes very quickly, the implementation of IQAS cannot take place normally. The condition of a very significant change due to the COVID-19 Pandemic certainly raises many challenges faced by all schools to ensure that the learning process can continue even in very emergency conditions. One of the effective efforts made by schools is to strengthen cooperation through involving the community and parents to jointly participate actively in the implementation of learning during the COVID-19 period so that these challenges can be overcome in stages. The implication of implementing IQAS for the progress of schools is that parents and the community have more confidence in school efforts in providing the best educational services for students because they - parents and the community - are directly involved in the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic period even after the school adjusts to the process of learning in the new normal era to ensure the quality of learning remains effective. It is undeniable that there are still some limitations in implementing IQAS in accordance with applicable standards, so it is advisable to optimize assistance to schools in implementing the internal quality assurance system perfectly, either through collaboration between groups of teachers/school principals, IQAS inter-school teams and from related education supervisors, also the synergy between schools, parents and the community must be maintained to achieve the expected quality of education.

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