

Implementation of A Quality Management System for Improving Work Process Efficiency in Student Activities

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Abstract

Background: In student organizations, effectiveness and efficiency are crucial factors to ensure the successful execution of work programs, resource management, and the achievement of organizational goals. However, various issues such as lack of coordination, delays in reporting, and inconsistencies in activity implementation still frequently occur. Therefore, the application of Quality Management System (QMS) can serve as an effective approach, providing a systematic framework for planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of student activities. **Objective:** This study aims to investigate in greater depth the implementation of a Quality Management System (QMS) to enhance the efficiency of work processes in student activities within higher education institutions. **Methods:** This research uses a qualitative descriptive method through non-participatory observation, document analysis, and literature review on student organizations at a higher education institution. **Results:** The implementation of QMS demonstrated significant positive impacts including improved coordination, reduced administrative errors, faster decision-making, and greater adherence to schedules and work targets in student organizational activities. **Conclusion:** QMS implementation effectively improves work process efficiency in student activities through standardization, systematic documentation, and continuous evaluation, fostering a disciplined, transparent, and results-oriented organizational culture.

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, where competition is becoming increasingly intense, the need for an efficient management system has become a critical aspect for every organization, including student organizations. Higher education institutions not only serve to expand knowledge but also play an important role in shaping students' character, leadership, and professionalism through various organizational activities on campus. The quality of student activities is closely tied to the institutional capacity to produce graduates who are not only academically competent, but also prepared for real-world professional challenges.

Student organizations at higher education institutions represent one of the most dynamic environments for developing soft skills, leadership capabilities, and collaborative competencies. Through participation in student bodies, student councils, and various interest-based organizations, students learn to manage resources, resolve conflicts, communicate effectively, and deliver results under pressure. However, despite the inherent potential of student organizations, their performance is often hampered by systemic organizational weaknesses that undermine the effective execution of planned activities.

Several challenges are still commonly encountered in the implementation of student activities, such as poor coordination, scheduling delays, inefficient use of resources, and inconsistent work procedures. These conditions indicate the need for a system capable of regulating, controlling, and continuously improving the quality of work processes. One approach that can be adopted is the Quality Management System (QMS). QMS consists of policies, procedures, and processes designed to ensure that every organizational activity is conducted in accordance with established quality standards. ISO 9001, one of the most widely recognized QMS frameworks globally, has been applied in various sectors including education.

The relevance of QMS in higher education contexts has gained increasing attention in recent years. Researchers and practitioners have explored how quality assurance principles can enhance educational outcomes, institutional effectiveness, and stakeholder satisfaction. In the context of student organizations specifically, QMS has the potential to address many of the structural deficiencies that undermine organizational performance. By establishing clear procedures, accountability mechanisms, and feedback loops, QMS can transform ad hoc organizational practices into systematic, repeatable, and improvable processes.

Through QMS implementation, organizations can minimize errors, improve communication effectiveness, and foster a more structured work culture focused on results. In the context of student activities, the implementation of QMS is expected to create more practical organizational governance so that activities carried out can have a greater impact on the development of students' competencies. The PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle, a cornerstone of QMS thinking, provides a practical methodology for continuous improvement that is highly applicable to student organizational settings, where activities are typically cyclical and recurring.

Despite the theoretical promise of QMS in student organizational contexts, empirical evidence of its implementation and impact in Indonesian higher education institutions remains limited. Most existing studies focus on QMS in formal academic or administrative settings, leaving student organizations as a relatively underexplored domain. This research therefore addresses a critical gap in the literature by examining how QMS principles can be practically implemented within student organizations and what measurable impacts can be observed on work process efficiency.

The urgency of addressing this research gap is underscored by several converging factors. First, higher education institutions face increasing pressure to demonstrate graduate competencies and employability outcomes, with student organizational involvement recognized as a significant contributor to these outcomes. Second, student organizations themselves invest substantial time and resources in activities that could be optimized through improved management practices. Third, the skills and orientations developed through participation in well-managed student organizations—including process thinking, documentation practices, and evidence-based evaluation—align closely with competencies valued in professional contexts. Fourth, the cyclical nature of student activities, with regular turnover in leadership and membership, creates particular challenges that systematic management approaches can potentially address.

This research aims to further examine how the implementation of a Quality Management System can enhance the efficiency of work processes in student activities at a higher education institution in Indonesia. Through empirical observation and document analysis, the study seeks

to provide actionable insights for student organization leaders, faculty advisors, and institutional administrators who are interested in improving the quality and impact of student activities.

The theoretical and empirical foundations underpinning this study draw from a substantial body of recent literature on quality management, organizational efficiency, and higher education governance. ISO 9001:2015, the internationally recognized quality management standard, provides a structured framework based on risk-based thinking, process approach, and continuous improvement that is directly applicable to organizational settings beyond manufacturing and services (International Organization for Standardization, 2015). Research on Total Quality Management (TQM) in educational institutions has consistently demonstrated that quality-oriented practices improve stakeholder satisfaction, administrative efficiency, and institutional reputation (Sahney, 2016). The Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle has been confirmed as an effective methodology for driving continuous improvement in diverse organizational environments, including non-profit and educational organizations, by creating structured feedback loops between planning and execution (Moen & Norman, 2016). Studies on student organizational management in higher education have identified coordination failures, documentation gaps, and accountability deficits as the primary barriers to effective activity implementation, all of which QMS is designed to address (Komives et al., 2017). The relationship between standardization and organizational efficiency has been well-established in management literature, with evidence showing that clearly documented procedures reduce decision ambiguity and operational errors (Davenport, 2015). Research on knowledge management in organizations with high member turnover highlights the critical role of systematic documentation in preserving institutional knowledge and maintaining performance consistency across leadership transitions (Andreeva & Kianto, 2017). The implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in student organizations has been associated with improved task completion rates, clearer role delineation, and reduced conflict arising from ambiguous responsibilities (Yukl, 2019). Evidence from quality assurance research in Asian higher education contexts demonstrates that QMS adoption leads to measurable improvements in administrative processes, resource utilization, and program delivery outcomes (Tari & Madeleine, 2015). Organizational learning theory suggests that structured evaluation mechanisms, such as those embedded in QMS, foster a culture of reflection and evidence-based decision-making that compounds in effectiveness over successive activity cycles (Senge, 2016). Studies examining change management challenges in the implementation of quality systems have identified training adequacy, leadership commitment, and member buy-in as the three most critical success factors for sustainable QMS adoption (Psomas et al., 2017). Research on extracurricular activities in higher education demonstrates that participation in well-managed student organizations significantly enhances graduate employability, professional competency, and civic engagement outcomes (Kuh, 2016). The application of process management principles to student affairs has been shown to reduce event planning lead times, improve budget adherence, and enhance post-activity evaluation quality in university settings (Schuh et al., 2016). Document management systems and standardized reporting formats have been identified as key enablers of organizational transparency and accountability in student governance bodies (Scott & Davis, 2016). Research on the relationship between organizational culture and QMS effectiveness underscores that the long-term success of quality

management initiatives depends on cultivating shared values around quality, discipline, and continuous improvement among all members (Cameron & Quinn, 2019). Empirical studies conducted in Indonesian higher education contexts have highlighted the particular relevance of QMS for improving coordination and accountability in institutions characterized by hierarchical organizational structures and limited administrative resources (Widodo, 2020). The role of faculty advisors and institutional support mechanisms in facilitating QMS implementation in student organizations has been found to be a significant moderating factor in determining the depth and sustainability of quality management practices (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2016). Finally, digital tools and information systems have emerged as important enablers of QMS implementation in resource-constrained organizational settings, facilitating real-time monitoring, automated documentation, and data-driven evaluation (vom Brocke & Rosemann, 2015).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to illustrate the implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) in improving work process efficiency in student activities conducted at a higher education institution in Indonesia. The qualitative approach was selected because it allows for a nuanced examination of organizational processes, member perceptions, and contextual factors that quantitative methods may not fully capture. The descriptive orientation reflects the study's goal of documenting and explaining current practices rather than testing causal hypotheses.

The research was conducted over a period of three months, focusing on one student organization within a university during a specific major activity cycle. This bounded timeframe allowed for in-depth examination of the full activity cycle from planning through evaluation, providing a comprehensive view of QMS implementation across all phases of organizational activity.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through three primary methods. First, non-participatory observation was conducted during organizational meetings, planning sessions, and activity execution. The researcher attended these events as an observer, taking detailed field notes on coordination practices, decision-making processes, and member interactions. This method provided first-hand insight into the practical realities of QMS implementation in student organizational settings.

Second, document analysis was conducted on organizational records including activity plans, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), meeting minutes, activity reports, evaluation notes, and accountability documents. These documents provided objective evidence of QMS implementation practices and their evolution over time. Document analysis also allowed for triangulation of observations with formal organizational records, enhancing the credibility of findings.

Third, an extensive literature review was conducted to situate findings within the broader theoretical and empirical context of QMS research. Sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, QMS standards documents, textbooks on quality management, and reports from

relevant educational and organizational contexts. The literature review informed both the conceptual framework and the interpretive lens applied to empirical findings.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out through a three-stage process: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, following the framework proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). In the data reduction stage, raw data from observations, documents, and literature were systematically coded and filtered according to key themes related to QMS implementation and organizational efficiency. In the data presentation stage, filtered data were organized into structured categories and narratives that illuminated patterns and relationships. Finally, in the conclusion-drawing stage, interpretive synthesis was conducted to derive meaningful insights and implications from the organized data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

QMS Implementation in the Student Organization

Based on observations and analysis of student organization activity documents, the implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) has shown positive impacts on work efficiency. The organization under study had introduced several key QMS elements including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for major activities, a structured documentation system for meeting records and activity reports, a performance monitoring framework with periodic evaluation checkpoints, and a feedback mechanism for post-activity assessment and improvement planning.

The SOPs developed by the organization covered seven key activity areas: event planning and proposal development, member recruitment and orientation, financial management and reporting, meeting facilitation and documentation, external partnership coordination, media communications and public relations, and post-activity evaluation and documentation. Each SOP specified the sequence of required steps, the responsible parties, the required documentation, and the quality indicators for each activity phase.

For instance, the presence of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) helped ensure that each stage of the activity — from planning to execution to evaluation — was carried out in a more organized manner. The SOP for event planning, for example, required committee members to complete a written project proposal at least four weeks before the event, obtain necessary approvals through a documented sign-off process, and submit a post-event accountability report within one week of completion. This formalized timeline significantly reduced the last-minute scrambling that had previously characterized event organization within the student body.

Impact on Work Process Efficiency

From the observed activities, it was found that more structured procedures made activity schedules easier to follow and reduced administrative errors. Specifically, the implementation of QMS resulted in measurable improvements across several efficiency dimensions. Schedule adherence improved significantly, with activities completing on time in 78% of cases during the QMS implementation period, compared to an estimated 45–50% adherence rate in prior periods based on retrospective accounts from long-serving members.

The use of standardized report formats and forms also facilitated documentation, resulting in more organized and traceable information. Committee members reported that

standardized forms reduced the time required to prepare activity reports by an estimated 30–40%, while simultaneously improving the completeness and accuracy of the information recorded. This dual improvement in efficiency and quality is consistent with the theoretical expectations of QMS implementation.

Coordination among members improved significantly following QMS implementation. The introduction of structured communication protocols — including standardized meeting agendas, decision logs, and task assignment records — reduced misunderstandings and duplication of effort. Members reported feeling clearer about their responsibilities and more confident in their ability to execute assigned tasks. Decision-making became faster as a result of improved information flow and clearer role definitions.

Challenges in QMS Implementation

Despite the positive outcomes observed, QMS implementation in student activities still faces several significant challenges. One major challenge is the low initial understanding of QMS principles among members. Many student organization members had no prior exposure to quality management concepts, requiring an investment in training and orientation before QMS elements could be effectively implemented. This challenge is compounded by the fact that student organization membership cycles are typically one to two years, meaning the organization must continuously invest in onboarding new members into the QMS framework.

Frequent leadership changes represent another significant barrier to consistent QMS implementation. Each new leadership cohort brings different priorities, working styles, and levels of familiarity with established procedures. Without strong institutional mechanisms for knowledge transfer, there is a risk that QMS practices will deteriorate or be abandoned with each leadership transition. Some organizations addressed this by creating comprehensive handover documentation and establishing mentoring relationships between outgoing and incoming leaders.

Resistance to change was also identified as a challenge, particularly among members who perceived QMS-related documentation requirements as excessive or bureaucratic. Some members felt that the additional documentation burden slowed down workflow and detracted from the more engaging aspects of organizational work. Addressing this perception required deliberate efforts to communicate the value of QMS practices and to demonstrate how the initial investment in documentation pays off through improved coordination and reduced errors over time.

Resource constraints, including limited time, personnel, and organizational infrastructure, further complicated QMS implementation. Student organizations typically operate with volunteers who balance organizational responsibilities against academic commitments. The additional time required for QMS-related activities — such as conducting formal evaluations, maintaining documentation systems, and participating in training — must be carefully managed to avoid overwhelming members.

Discussion: QMS as an Organizational Development Tool

The results of this study show that the implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) provides several positive impacts on the efficiency of work processes in student activities. This aligns with the fundamental concept of QMS, which emphasizes the importance of standardization, control, and continuous improvement to achieve consistent quality in organizational processes. In student organizations, QMS functions not only as a monitoring

tool but also as guidance for establishing systematic, measurable, and results-oriented work processes.

QMS implementation is particularly relevant to student organizations because many student-led activities face administrative and coordination challenges. Organizational dynamics, frequent leadership turnovers, and limited resources often lead to irregularities in activity execution. In such situations, QMS serves as a systematic framework that helps organizations carry out activities in a more planned, documented, and measurable manner. With clear guidelines and documentation, student activities can be conducted more efficiently and with fewer errors.

The application of the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle in QMS turns every activity into a process of continuous improvement. Activity assessments are used as a basis for improving future activities, fostering a culture of awareness and quality orientation within the organization. This developmental function of QMS is perhaps its most significant long-term contribution to student organizational performance, as it creates a self-reinforcing cycle of improvement that compounds over successive activity cycles.

Beyond operational efficiency, QMS implementation has broader implications for student development. The experience of working within a QMS framework develops students' understanding of quality management principles, process thinking, documentation practices, and evidence-based evaluation — skills that are highly valued in professional contexts. In this sense, QMS implementation in student organizations serves a dual purpose: improving organizational performance in the short term while building students' professional competencies for the long term.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) has proven effective in improving work process efficiency in student activities through the application of standard procedures, documentation systems, and continuous evaluation. QMS helps student organizations work in a more structured manner, reduces administrative errors, and enhances collaboration and responsibility among members. The PDCA cycle embedded within the QMS framework transforms each activity cycle into an opportunity for organizational learning and continuous improvement.

Although some challenges remain — such as limited member understanding, resource constraints, frequent leadership transitions, and initial resistance to change — the benefits of QMS in improving work quality and professionalism are significant. The study demonstrates that with appropriate investment in training, institutional support, and change management, student organizations can successfully implement QMS and realize substantial improvements in organizational effectiveness.

Therefore, QMS implementation needs to be further developed and integrated into the culture of student organizations to achieve optimal and sustainable performance. Institutional stakeholders, including faculty advisors, student affairs offices, and university leadership, have important roles to play in supporting QMS implementation through policy frameworks, resource allocation, and recognition of quality improvement initiatives. Future research should explore longitudinal outcomes of QMS implementation in student organizations and

investigate how digital tools can facilitate QMS adoption in resource-constrained student organizational contexts.

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