

**The Role of Community Participation
in the Optimizing Education Services Quality:
A Case Study of SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu**

Ewin Sumarti^{1*}, Manap Somantri¹, Muhammad Kristiawan¹

¹Universitas Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

*Corresponding author e-mail: ewinsumarti@gmail.com

Received: 8 September 2025; Revised: 31 October 2025; Published: 3 February 2026

Abstract: This study explores the role of community participation in optimizing the quality of education services at SMP IT Darul Fikri, a junior high school in North Bengkulu, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with school principals, teachers, committee members, and parents, supplemented by observations and document analysis. The findings indicate that community participation, primarily facilitated through Parent-Teacher Association (POMG) meetings, plays a critical role in planning, implementing, and monitoring school. Programs particularly religious programs like Qur'an memorization (tahfidz). This active involvement, especially in home-based monitoring, significantly contributes to program effectiveness and service quality. The study concludes that structured community forums like POMG are vital for fostering collaboration between schools and communities, leading to improved educational outcomes. This research highlights a sustainable model for educational quality enhancement in contexts with limited government support, emphasizing the need for participatory management.

Keywords: Community Participation; Education Service Quality; School Management; Parental Involvement

Citation: Sumarti, E., Somantri, M., & Kristiawan, M. (2026). The Role of Community Participation in the Optimizing Education Services Quality: A Case Study of SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu. *PPSDP International Journal of Education*, 5(1), 54–68. <https://doi.org/10.59175/pijed.v5i1.606>

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A. Introduction

In many developing countries, limited facilities, infrastructure, and funds are the main obstacles to providing equitable education services. Community participation, both in the form of material and non-material contributions, can expand access to education. This research is driven by the fact that many schools in Indonesia, especially North Bengkulu, still need help from the community in improving the

quality of education services due to the lack of facilities provided by the government, both facilities and policies to further improve the quality of education.

Soro et al (2023), government policies that bind education providers can also make it difficult to improve the quality of services in educational institutions, so that they can hinder the quality of education if there is no support from the community to participate in educational services.

The role of community participation is very much needed in planning and supervising programs prepared by schools in order to replace the government's role which is still minimal and needs to be improved to improve quality of education services in schools Chatzinikola, (2022), saying that ideally supervision is carried out by competent parties so that it runs on target and proportionately. Chima Abimbola Eden et al (2024), argues that from the management function, the control function is very important for a manager, namely evaluating whether the goals that have been set have been achieved or not. Opinion Siti Ulyani et al (2023), with a management model that provides more autonomy to schools and increases direct involvement from the school community/community in the form of school community participation in the form of moral, financial and material support, and an education program evaluation system.

This research was carried out with the aim of increasing the role of community participation in improving the quality of educational services at SMP IT Darul Fikri which has minimal facilities from the government but has achievements in various fields, both students and teachers' ability to develop teaching materials, this cannot be separated from the community's support for the advancement of the quality of educational services at SMP IT Darul Fikri through the school committee that is directly involved in the planning and supervision of the program It is highly expected that this school will increase community participation and effective school management (Al-Ababneh & Alrhaimi, 2020). According to Jaya Saputra et al (2024), the role of school principals, teacher professionalism, and community participation is optimal to improve the quality of education services. School principals collaborate with all school components to be able to develop schools according to community needs, deceive school resources and be able to develop schools towards effective learning that brings quality improvement. Alwan Fawwaz (2024), opinion that the implementation of education will be more successful if there is cooperation between schools and parents and the community. In agreement with Sony Tambunan (2022), parents of students in the implementation of quality education have an important position, in this case the awareness of responsibility and concern of students' parents are the key to the success of the implementation of quality education. Hidayah et al (2024), also argue that educational facilities can be supported by the participation of the community who are voluntarily involved in activities for the common good. Likewise, the results of the study Rofika Rahmawati & Yuliyanto (2023), show that collaboration between various parties, both internal and external through the involvement of various educational programs, has been proven to help schools in achieving the goals of implementing education and placing SMKN 1 Surakarta.

According to Gonjo et al (2025), the better the quality of the community, the better the quality of education held. Opinion Sihaloho et al (2023), The role of the community in supporting early childhood education is highly emphasized, including providing a conducive environment and material support, collaboration is a concrete and systematic step in the educational environment that has a direct impact on improving the quality of education, the fact shows that most educational institutions have homework that has not been able to make the community participate in advancing education.

According to Sumendap (2022), the participation of the community and educational institutions is the entire process of planned activities, accompanied by continuous coaching to gain sympathy from the community in general. This is in line with the opinion Bunbaban et al (2022), that schools in this case are a public organization that provides educational services for the community in order to improve the quality of the individual community itself. Similarly, the results of the research Affan (2021), community participation is also important in realizing community concern and support for the success of development in their regions. According to Farida & Abdussyukur (2024), it shows that public participation in supervision in the education sector itself is still low, this shows that in making public policies in the education sector is still based on rules and bottom up. Based on the above background, there has been a lot of research on the role of community performance in improving the quality of schools. For this reason, the author wants to research the role of community participation in improving the quality of services at SMP IT Darul Fikri Arga Makmur, North Bengkulu. The point of improving school quality services is starting from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the results of improving service quality improvements. So, the author intends to conduct research entitled The Role of Community Participation in Optimizing the Quality of Educational Services at SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu is expected to be able to contribute further knowledge and research in the future for school principals, education staff and the community, especially the big family of SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu.

Why did we choose the role of community participation in this study? Because according to some studies there is a lack of community involvement in planning, implementation, supervision, and reporting. Lack of awareness to develop school facilities and lack of support for the development of resources in educational institutions due to lack of awareness and ability to the importance of effective education supervision so that it cannot influence education policies, (Mukhlison Effendi, 2021).

What is the specific role of the community in the management of education at SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara? What is the specific role of the community in the planning, implementation, evaluation of programs, and optimization of the quality of educational services at SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara?, and How does this participation contribute to the perception of the quality of continuing education services at SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara?

B. Methods

In this study, the type of research used is qualitative descriptive describing each component of program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as the results of the educational service quality optimization program at SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu. As stated by Rijal Fadli (2021), the research method used to research on natural conditions is different from experiments, the researcher acts as a key instrument, the data collection technique is carried out by means of interviews, observations and documentation. The analysis is a qualitative description and the results of qualitative research emphasize more meaning than the results of interviews. According to Ilhami et al (2024), case study research is a form of qualitative research on events or situations of human understanding and behavior based on human opinions. Data collection techniques are an effort to collect some research data from data sources carried out by researchers. According to data collection techniques in qualitative research use interview data collection techniques and documentation studies. This technique allows the researcher to get a clear picture of the respondents' views, experiences and perceptions. The data collection techniques carried out in this study are in-depth interviews and documentation. The observation sheet is used to see how the efforts that have been made by the community in participating in improving quality services at SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu. The interview technique used in this study is aimed at the principal, committee, parents/guardians of students and the community around SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu with the aim of finding out more about the efforts that have been made by the community in improving the quality of services in this school. Documentation is used to collect data by collecting and analyzing documents, both written, drawing, and electronic related to the role of community participation in improving the quality of education services at SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu.

C. Results and Discussion

Results

This research shows that community participation plays an important role in the management and improvement of the quality of education at SMP IT Darul Fikri. Community involvement can be seen through POMG meetings held twice a year and attended by $\pm 75\%$ of invitations from schools, committees, and parents. The community plays an active role in providing input to school programs, especially tahsin and tahfidz, accompanying children in their implementation at home, and participating in monitoring learning progress through WhatsApp groups and student agenda books. Schools and the community work together to maintain the quality of services through regular planning, supervision, and evaluation. The impact can be seen in improving the quality of teaching, student enthusiasm for learning, and school facilities which are largely realized from self-help and mutual cooperation of parents. Regular evaluations also encourage continuous improvement and innovation in every educational program.

Table 1. Research Finding in Parent-Teacher Association (POMG) Meetings

No	Focus	Findings
1	Presence	POMG on August 8, 2025 was attended by school principals, teachers, parents and a committee attended by 112 people consisting of representatives of students' parents, committee administrators, community leaders, and schools. Public attendance reached $\pm 75\%$ of the number of invitations distributed. This is evidenced by the findings when the researcher made observations from the POMG meeting attendance list and looked at the documentation owned by the IT Junior High School in the form of an invitation letter on attachment 4 page 120 and the POMG meeting attendance list on attachment 5 page 121.
2	Frequency of meetings	Meetings are held once a year twice at the end of each semester, during the distribution of student report cards/learning evaluation results

Community Participation in Education Management Based on the results of interviews with respondents (principals, curriculum representatives, public relations representatives, committee administrators, and parents of students), as well as observations and documentation of the community, it can be seen that the community plays a role in participating in improving the quality of educational services at SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara through POMG, the School conveys the vision, mission, and goals to be achieved with students, while parents/community convey their expectations They are against the school regarding the continuation of the children's education that they entrusted to the school at the time of this meeting. From this, it is very clear that community participation in the management of education is very important and, both from community input and improvement of school programs. This POMG is held at the end of every semester, twice a year except for new students, POMG will be held at the beginning of entry. POMG was attended by principals, deputies, homeroom teachers, parents, and committees. According to the results of interviews with students' parents, "we meet every semester to discuss the school program," said Fenti Puspadewi, S.Pd.

Table 2. Interview Results of the role of community participation in planning, implementing, evaluating and optimizing the improvement of the quality of educational services at SMP IT Darul Fikri

No	Focus	Findings
1	Community involvement in planning	During the meeting, several members of the community actively asked questions and provided input related to the tahfidz and tahsin programs made by the school
2	Community involvement in implementation	Parents listen to recitations (tahsin) and listen to memorization (tahfidz) at home
3	Community involvement in the evaluation	Schools and parents confirm the progress of the success of the school program using WhatsApp groups and student diaries known to parents

Community Participation in Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation From the data of the findings above, it can be seen that the role of the community in planning to provide input on the tahsin and tahfidz programs related to the smoothness and constraints of the program which is continued at home and will

involve parents when implementing the program. In the implementation, parents actively check and listen to students' readings or memorization, as well as when evaluating parents report the progress of student programs at home through the student's daily agenda book through the whatsapp group.

Table 3. Interview Results of Optimizing the Quality of Education Services and Improving the Quality of Continuing Education Services at SMP IT Darul Fikri

No	Focus	Findings
1	Optimizing the Quality of Education Services	In this school, the quality of educational services is the top priority at SMP IT Darul Fikri. To optimize it, schools always carry out careful planning, measurable supervision, and periodic evaluations so that each program really has a positive impact on students. The school strives to maintain a balance between academic achievement, moral development, and non-academic activities that support the development of students' potential.
2	Perceived impact on teaching quality	Parents are invited to the tahfidz wisudah and are dressed in makhkota, students are given prizes and charters based on the acquisition of targets in the tahfidz program. Parents believe their participation improves the quality of teaching. and improvement of school facilities
3	Perceived impact on quality	In learning, students show better enthusiasm because they are directly monitored by their parents
4	Impact on the quality of facilities	This school is still an independent based school so that the facilities are mostly the result of parental mutual cooperation both in the form of materials and services so that the teaching and learning facilities are very adequate

From the findings based on the results of the interview above, it can be concluded that in optimizing school programs, it can be seen that the public is confident in the quality of the school because the school and parents work together in providing teaching, learning facilities and infrastructure. In addition, the school also conducts periodic evaluations of each program that has been implemented. In this evaluation, it looks at the extent to which the program runs as planned, looking at its impact on the development of students, both from academic and non-academic aspects. With continuous evaluation, schools can find out the strengths and disadvantages of the program, then follow up in the form of improvements and innovations in the next period.

Discussion

This research shows that community participation plays an important role in the management and improvement of the quality of education at SMP IT Darul Fikri. Community involvement can be seen through POMG meetings held twice a year and attended by $\pm 75\%$ of invitations from schools, committees, and parents.

The POMG structure at SMP IT Darul Fikri shows active collaboration between schools, parents, committees, and the community. They jointly plan, implement, and evaluate educational programs such as tahsin and tahfidz, and contribute to the provision of school facilities. This POMG is slightly different from the consultative

model, because in the consultative model, the community is only involved to provide input or suggestions without being directly involved in decision-making. Their role is passive, limited to listeners or feedback-givers. Similarly, the collaborative model is the active involvement of individuals or groups in non-hierarchical cooperation to achieve common goals through the exchange of ideas, knowledge, skills, and resources. POMG is more reflective of collaborative participation, where there is an equal partnership and shared responsibility between schools and the community in improving the quality of educational services. In line with the research of Hamidun & Mahmudah (2021), the family is the first informal educational institution, the first and main one experienced by children and educational institutions that are natural.

Parents are responsible for nurturing, caring, protecting and educating children to grow and develop properly. For this reason, parental involvement is very important considering that their position is by nature as the first educator for their children, and at the same time parents are an example of identification so that whatever parents do can certainly be a benchmark or comparison material for children. From the first day of the birth of a child, it is recommended for every Muslim to immediately congratulate a Muslim who gives birth to a child, this is done to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and love between the families of fellow Muslims. Likewise, Nazaruddin & Mariyah (2023) argue that at the stage of growing up children, reading is a very important activity, because it can support children's language and communication skills. In addition, reading activities can also train children's brains in creative thinking. Although in practice there are many challenges faced by parents in teaching/instilling reading habits in children, parents and teachers still need to foster children's interest in reading because there are so many benefits of reading for children. Community involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages makes school programs more relevant to the needs of students and the environment. From the research of Azizah et al (2025), the presence of this invitation document is administrative evidence that schools officially involve the community and parents in the early stages of educational implementation. This reflects the existence of participation in the planning stage as stated in the theory of participation. The results of the research of Edi Wardani et al (2025), show that effective community participation involves the involvement of various stakeholders, such as school committees, parents, alumni, religious and community leaders, youth leaders, village officials, and teachers, in planning and decision-making. The findings of this study are the development of community participation with a comprehensive community, initiatives can be defined as community participation in education management and planning (planning participation) according to theory (Hakim, 2020; Oberthür et al., 2025).

Not all schools involve parents directly in monitoring children's academic and character at home, especially through structured systems such as WhatsApp groups and student diaries. This pattern shows an integration between education at school and at home, which is rarely found in conventional models of community participation between education at school and at home, which is rarely found in

conventional models of community participation. Home-based monitoring is an important bridge between schools and families, ensuring the continuity of learning and character building of students outside the school environment. It also strengthens the accountability and transparency of educational programs, as children's progress is monitored regularly and in both directions. The concept of shared responsibility of schools and houses is of the view that children's education is a shared responsibility between the school and the family.

Schools play a role in providing curriculum, guidance, and evaluation, while parents ensure the application and strengthening of these values at home. The practice of home-based monitoring at SMP IT Darul Fikri reflects a two-way synergy, where schools and parents share roles in controlling, assessing, and strengthening student learning outcomes in a sustainable manner that differs slightly from distributed learning that is often limited by computing capacity and memory needs but has advantages in scalability, efficiency, and resilience. In agreement with the results of the research by Mustoip et al (2024), who said that the relationship between parental parenting and students' PPKn learning outcomes, the relationship between learning motivation and students' PPKn learning outcomes, and the relationship between parental parenting and learning motivation with the learning outcomes of PPKn grade IV students at SD Cluster I, Sawan District. The results of the study show that: first, there is a significant relationship between parental parenting and PPKn learning outcomes of grade IV elementary school students. These findings are in line with the opinion of Anisah (2023), who emphasizes that effective collaboration between schools and families in monitoring student development will result in character building, increased achievement, and optimal achievement of educational goals.

If referring to the concept of participation, according to Aulia et al (2024), the role of the community in planning can be categorized at the consultation and placement levels, where the community is given the opportunity to provide input, but the initiative for program formulation remains with the school. Also in line with the opinion of Anjani & Mashudi (2024); Burhanudin, Maryanto (2024), that effective educational planning requires the participation of all stakeholders so that the programs produced are not only in accordance with the school's vision, but also reflect the needs, aspirations, and socio-cultural context of the community. Elizabeth Saaronee Kaegon (2020), that forms of community participation are generally contributory (providing resource assistance) and consultative (providing suggestions or input). However, the study also proposes the development of comprehensive community participation, where the community plays the role of an advisor, supporter, supervisor, as well as policy maker. The results of the study García-González et al (2020), show: School program planning includes: teaching programs, procurement of textbooks, teaching aids, and property, procurement or development of school laboratories. The results of the study found: Obstacles in school program planning, including lack of community participation and economic difficulties so that their support for school management is low. The results of Nadia & Amolo (2025), research show that; 1) The form of community participation is

contributory and consultative. The findings of this study are the development of comprehensive community participation, where the initiative can be defined as an advisory, supporting, supervisory, and policy-making institution.

The results of Missouri et al (2022), the impact of cooperation between parents and educational institutions, the support provided by local communities and non-governmental organizations on the quality of education, and the benefits of listening to public opinions through open discussions and forums. In line with the research of Ibrahim et al (2024), key findings include an emphasis on character development, community involvement, and the transformative potential of Islamic education in fostering the creation of a just and compassionate society.

The case at SMP IT Darul Fikri provides empirical evidence that supports the literature on the positive relationship between community participation and improving the quality of education which emphasizes that the involvement of parents and the community improves the quality of education, both in terms of academic, social, and moral aspects of students. The case of SMP IT Darul Fikri strengthens this by showing that: active participation of the community through POMG has an impact on improving the quality of services, both in terms of teaching, learning, and facilities, and emotional involvement and shared responsibility between schools and parents fosters a sense of belonging to educational programs, so that the quality of the school improves sustainably. Thus, these findings are in line with the participatory theory that the higher the community participation, the greater the positive impact on the quality of services and student learning outcomes.

The limitations of this thesis need to be recognized so that the results of the research can be understood proportionately and open to improvement in future research. Some of the main limitations are as follows: the single case study limits the generalization of this study to only one school, namely SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara, so the results cannot be generalized widely to all educational contexts. The social, cultural, school leadership, and community character in this location are very likely to be different from other schools. Therefore, the conclusion regarding the effectiveness of community participation on the quality of education services only applies contextually, not universally. The interview method used has the potential to contain social desirability bias, where respondents (principals, teachers, committees, or parents) tend to give answers that seem positive to show the image of both the school or their role. As a result, some findings may represent ideal perceptions more than actual objective conditions. This is a common challenge in qualitative research based on experience and subjective opinions.

This study focuses on the perception of the quality of educational services stated by informants, not on quantitative indicators or data on student learning outcomes that can be measured objectively. Thus, the results of this study are more representative of subjective views and experiences regarding improving service quality, rather than empirical evidence based on data on learning outcomes, academic scores, or student competency achievements. Overall, this thesis makes an important contribution to

understanding the role of community participation contextually, but it still has limitations in the scope of generalization, potential respondent bias, and limitations in objective measurement of educational quality. Therefore, further research is recommended to: involve more schools with different characteristics, use more robust data triangulation methods, and combine qualitative and quantitative data to assess the relationship between community participation and the quality of educational services in a more measurable and objective manner.

For principals and education managers, this study provides concrete direction on how to build an effective and sustainable participatory structure: Build a Formal Communication Forum (such as POMG) that is consultative, but also collaborative, bringing parents, teachers, and the community together to discuss the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs, developing a home-based monitoring system whereby principals can adopt a two-way communication system (e.g. through WhatsApp groups or liaison books) so that parents can monitor their children's learning progress directly and provide quick feedback, foster a culture of mutual cooperation and shared ownership parents are socialized to participate in the provision of facilities, social activities based on local values, these findings also provide important input for policymakers at the level of education offices and local/national governments to encourage collaborative models The government can systemically encourage each school to have an official forum for community participation because the POMG model at SMP IT Darul Fikri can be used as a best practice for other schools.

D. Conclusions

The general conclusion of this study shows that there is a role of community participation in optimizing the quality of services at SMP IT Darul Fikri Bengkulu Utara through (parent, community and teacher meeting (POMG). In particular, it can be concluded as follows: the role of community participation in optimizing the quality of services at SMP IT Darul Fikri North Bengkulu is realized through POMG meetings, before students enter school and during the distribution of report cards to socialize the programs that have been designed and provide space for parents to provide support and input. The role of community participation in planning can be seen when the community (parents, committee) discusses the program that has been prepared by SMP IT Darul Fikri. In implementation: The community is involved in guiding the achievement of school programs through checking students' reading and memorization skills at home. In evaluation: The community monitors the achievement of students' reading and memorization skills programs at school and at home. The role of participation in optimizing service quality improvement: The community is directly involved in providing input for the improvement of school programs, and participates in supervising the implementation of school programs that are continued at home. In optimizing the quality of school education services, it is carried out to improve the quality of teaching, curriculum development and the provision of infrastructure to support the teaching and learning process. Improving the quality of continuing education services: schools improve the quality of teaching,

develop relevant curricula and provide reliable resources to support the teaching and learning process, improve the quality of the curriculum and continue to strengthen the relationship between the community, parents and schools.

E. Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank all parties involved in the compilation of this article. We hope this article will be useful for the readers.

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