# The Effective Quality Culture Models for the Internal Quality Assurance in Vocational Schools

Moh. Guntur Sayekti, Marji, Dwi Agus Sudjimat, Tri Kuncoro

Malang State University

mohguntursay@gmail.com, mardji.ft@um.ac.id, dwi.agus.ft@um.ac.id, tri.kuncoro.ft@um.ac.id

Abstract. The smooth implementation of internal quality assurance is challenging: it requires an effective quality culture. The purpose of this research was to explore models of quality culture that are effective enough to be implemented for internal quality assurance. The vice principal, the head of the skill competence programs, the head of the laboratory, technicians, teachers, administrative staff, students, student's parents, businesses, industries, and the workplace were all participating in this study project at Public Vocational School (SMKN) 8 Malang. Adopting the descriptive-qualitative research method, the research found that the role of the principal is influential in developing an effective quality culture by performing transformational and transactional functions. . It was also known that the development of models for quality culture consisted of the phase of optimization (the school principal's coordination with the internal quality assurance team, evaluation of the internal quality assurance implementation, identification of some problems, and preparation for the prioritized work plans) with the support of the development of quality culture at the school); the phase of the preparation for the internal quality assurance (self-analysis and SWOT analysis); the phase of the implementation of internal quality assurance (the establishment of standards, quality mapping, quality improvement planning, and evaluation/audit); and the phase of the evaluation of internal quality assurance performed throughout the processes which include planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Eventually, it can be said that models for implementing internal quality assurance at vocational school (SMK) can be integrally formed by the quality culture effectively implemented by the school components.

Key Words: Quality Culture, Internal Quality Assurance, Quality Evaluation, SMK.

## INTRODUCTION

As time progresses the demand for quality education continues to rise. Quality education is gauged by the capacity to produce skilled human resources capable of fulfilling the demands of educational service users, such as industries and specific employment sectors. In contrast to neighboring countries like Malaysia and Singapore in Southeast Asia, Indonesia is often reported to exhibit lower competency proficiency levels and human resource productivity. This is insinuated by weak competitiveness for in the international job market (Zahrok, 2020), the structure of quality culture (Bendermacher, et al., 2017), and the poor quality of education and its limited relevance to people's growing need in the era of industrialization and globalization. The poor quality of education results from the low quality of learning processes (Purnami, Mulyanto, & Utomo, 2021). The inferior quality of both inputs and outputs results in graduates with low levels of professional competencies, thus failing to satisfy industrial demand for human resources (Fitri, 2016). It suggests the need for an internal quality assurance system at vocational school (SMK).

An internal quality assurance system is deemed to be an individual assessment of all the programs and activities in an educational unit (Do, Le & Giang, 2020). Quality assurance needs to be made in an integrated way for quality control. Thus, it has to ensure that necessary conditions and prerequisites make it possible for students to achieve certain standards (Choiriyah et al., 2018). A quality assurance system is a systematic, integrated, and gradual mechanism regulated to confirm that all the implementation processes live up to the acceptable quality

International Journal of Multiphysics Volume 18, No. 3, 2024

ISSN: 1750-9548

standard (Gustini&Mauly, 2019). Internal quality assurance can be either be organized by governments or operated independently by individual schools and their components according to the regular cycle in each school's quality assurance system (Noda, et al., 2021). The internal quality assurance functions as a system giving an initial warning, meaning that the detailed, proper implementation of internal quality assurance will education provision processes, thereby maintaining internal quality assurance (Sarmono et al., 2020).

Quality culture is internalized through quality assurance and refers to all systematic, well-planned actions including policies, attitudes, actions, and procedures needed to build up great confidence It will ensure that quality is maintained and enhanced continuously to the extent that the products and services provided reach the required quality standard (Bello et al., 2015). School quality improvement should apply special approaches in order that all components of the school can embrace a quality culture. Quality culture is often defined as an instrument an organization uses to enhance and standardize its quality and the elements of its culture facilitating the improvement of the organization in all their its activities and closely related to those of other cultures (Do, Le & Giang (2020). The urgency of the effective implementation of internal quality assurance is also indicative of the need for good quality culture, given that quality culture is an organizational value that increases sustainability and creates a favorable environment for the continuity of quality improvement. Quality culture consists of values, traditions, procedures, and hopes for quality promotion (Amir, 2019).

However, not all schools effectively cultivate a strong quality culture. Often, quality culture is emphasized primarily for accreditation purposes; once accreditation is achieved, the Quality Assurance Center tends to provide limited further feedback, leading to less impactful internal quality assurance implementation. In the context of vocational schools (SMK), a report indicates there are 2137 SMKs in East Java Province, with 56 situated in Malang City. Among these 56 SMKs, 23 hold A-level accreditation, 20 have B-level accreditation, 10 have C-level accreditation, and 3 SMKs are yet to be accredited (Direktorat SMK, 2018). Based on this data, it can be concluded that less than 50 percent of SMKs in Malang meet the National Education Standards (SNP). Currently, schools often focus on quality assurance merely to prepare and present the necessary office files and tangible evidence mandated by the Educational Quality Assurance Council (LPMP).

However, a more balanced approach is required, encompassing both externally oriented quality assurance and an internally-focused orientation that promotes an environment conducive to effective internal quality assurance implementation. This environment is an integral part of cultivating a quality culture. While education quality assurance guidelines underscore the importance of fostering a quality culture in schools, they do not precisely define its essence. Consequently, nurturing quality culture in vocational schools involves unveiling the core nature of quality culture itself.

The aforementioned facts suggest the need for exploring models for internal quality assurance effective enough to be implemented in SMK and to allow schools to develop internal quality assurance. For this reason, this research aims to explore models for quality culture in the implementation of internal quality assurance in SMKN 8 Malang to give other SMK strategies and effective models for quality culture in the implementation of internal quality assurance.

# RESEARCH METHOD

Adopting the qualititative-descriptive research method, this research collected information in a narrative way. The information was gained through interviews. The research was done at SMKN 8 Malang, which was chosen because it is an education unit accredited A which has implemented internal quality assurance, not ISO or other quality assurance systems. In this regard, SMKN 8 Malang has deemed to conduct research related to internal quality assurance. It used the purposive sampling technique and the triangulation of sources and techniques. The triangulation of data sources was performed by holding interviews with different informants to gain the same information, while the triangulation of techniques was performed to check data for the same informants by using different techniques, namely observation and interviews. The informants involved in this research included the vice principal, the chief of skill competency programs, the laboratory chief, technicians, teachers, administrative staff, students, students' parents, business, industry, and the world of work. The data was collected through such techniques as interviews, observation, and documentation. The interviews were held in accordance with the interview questions and procedures which had been shown to the informants. The interview questions relate to 1) the role of principals in the implementation of internal quality assurance at SMK, 2) the

Volume 18, No. 3, 2024

ISSN: 1750-9548

models for quality culture in internal quality assurance at SMK, and 3) the evaluation of the implementation of internal quality assurance at SMK. The observation was made personally visiting SMKN 8 Malang to understand the real situation of implementing the internal quality assurance system at the school. The research documentation included some official school documents and photographs depicting some activities in the implementation of the internal quality assurance system. The data collected was then analyzed using the interactive analysis technique of Miles and Huberman, which analyzes qualitative data in four stages.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

## A. The Role of the Principal in Developing Quality Culture

A principal supreme authority to agree on and implement programs at a school, Therefore he/she plays vital role in building quality culture, one of whose methods is by implementing internal quality assurance at the school. In this regard, he/she must perform the transformational and transactional leadership role.

As leaders, school principals have to inspire the human resources of their schools to perform effective and efficient school management. The role of transformational leadership is so powerful that it can greatly influence staff to a maximum extent. It can foster teamwork, trust, collective self-improvement, and team learning and encourages team members to give organizational interests over their own interests. This is in line with the statement of Sandiasa (2017) that transformational leaders can positively influence people around them, and encourage their team members to be creative and innovative in making positive changes in an easy, instant, and elegant way, and transform into future leaders.

In the era of globalization, leaders are required to be more flexible and dynamic, and they have to be able to adapt easily to any condition and place they are. Transformational leadership is one of the most crucial factors in developing an effective culture in educational institutions (Owusu-agyeman, 2019; Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2018). Liu, et al. (2020) stated that transformational leadership is necessary for school change, given that it significantly influences an organization's capacity. Transformational leadership will increase confidence, welcome any idea, appreciate differences among individuals, appreciate individual differences, offer advice and rewards, and suggest effective solutions to problems (Al-Husseini, 2021).

The most effective and impactful leadership style in the field of education today is transformational leadership (Berkovich, 2018; Bush, 2014). Another leadership model is the transactional leadership. Further, transactional leaders can exemplify good behaviors so that other school components can mimic those behaviors, produce insights about purpose and objectives in a simple way, provide rewards for the team members' roles and achievements of the objectives, and widen the member's intellectual horizon, so that teachers are more motivated to enhance the quality of their work they are responsible for (Jufrizen & Lubis, 2020). In other words, transactional leaders make a transaction to motivate school components to put in satisfactory performances, namely by rewarding them for those performances (Yapentra& Herman, 2020). We can imagine how effective transactional leadership is for the creation of quality culture at SMK.

### **B.** Models for Quality Culture in the Internal Quality Assurance

Because it fosters a positive environment and results in continuous school quality improvement, quality culture is crucial in the field of education. Values, goals, and devotion are only a few significant organizational components that make up a quality culture (Hidesheim& Sonntag, 2020). Quality culture can be developed by implementationimplementing internal quality assurance at schools. It has to be continuously developed to yield positive results. The development of quality culture in the implementation of internal quality assurance at schools is depicted in Figure 1.

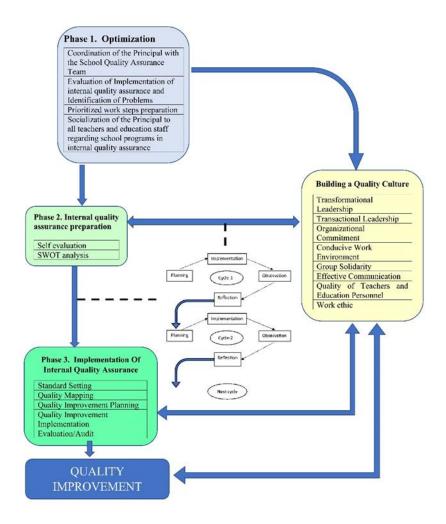


Figure 1. The Model for Quality Culture in Internal Quality Assurance

Based on Figure 1, the implementation of quality culture in support of the educational system of SMKN 8 Malang followed the following steps:

Stage 1 was optimizing roles. The optimization was done by the school principal. It was aimed at strengthening the defined roles of each staff. The first step was for the school principal to develop coordination with the school's quality assurance team. The coordination was developed gradually with the related units. The coordination was important for the principal to develop to dispel misconceptions and to achieve the desired objectives (Murniati et al., 2018). Each educational institution, i.e., each school, was given the authority to establish its own quality assurance team in accordance with the following basic requirements: team members must have experience in quality assurance, have worked at the institution for more than five years, refrain from holding down dual employment, possess strong communication abilities, and have strong internal and external networks. The second step was to make evaluations to identify problems or obstacles in the way of the implementation of internal quality assurance. Those evaluations can also help the principal adopt a performance achievement approach effectively and efficiently (Raharjo et al, 2019). Evaluations are instrumental in making an assessment of how successfully the target of the program is achieved (Wanzer, 2021). The third step was to plan some moves to optimize the school's quality assurance. The fourth step was to provide the dissemination of information about internal quality assurance for Teachers and Education Personnel (TEP) so that all the school components could be actively involved in the implementation of internal quality assurance, thereby bringing about a positive improvement.

The responsibility for developing a quality culture falls on the school principal, the school quality assurance team, the school management, and the chief of skill competency programs, and in this process, the

school principal plays a pivotal role. The role of the school principal is a decisive factor behind the school's quality improvement and the accomplishment of its academic achievement since he/she is the one responsible for all programs of the school components under his/her leadership (Raharjo et al.1, 2019). At SMKN 8 Malang, the first and second actions of the school principal were to perform both transformational and transactional roles. He/she performed the former by providing GTK with advice and inspiration and the latter by summoning the school management to a meeting, measuring the annual target achievement and getting an agreement on the next action plans, and optimizing school information by craeating and launching an application called Learning Management System (LMS) Moodle. LMS Moodle is an e-learning application developed to help students learn everywhere and anytime (Quansah, 2021). This application allows learning activities online and gives students free access to learning materials (Jebari et al., 2017). LMS Moodle of SMKN 8 Malang was developed to support students' online learning. The display of the LMS Moodle application of SMKN 8 Malang can be seen in Figure 2.

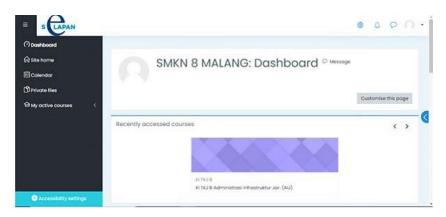


Figure 2 shows the application used at SMKN 8 Malang. The application is also called Sistem E-learning SMKN 8 Malang (SELAPAN). The SELAPAN is used to support the role of transactional leadership and enables students' parents to monitor learning activities at the school.

The third action was to strengthen organizational commitment by reaching an agreement with the school staff to ensure that the quality of the school does not go down by urging all units of the school to draw up checklists. The fourth was to create a conducive working environment by visiting each unit and giving formal and nonformal dissemination. The fifth was to emphasize great teamwork by evaluating and analyzing activities done collectively in each team. The sixth was to enhance effective communication by making pleasant conversation and focusing discussion only on the progress of the work and the next actions.

The seventh was to enhance the quality of Teachers and Education Personnel (TEP) by giving them inhouse training. Puspitasari and Budiningsih (2019) stated that training in-house is a kind of internal training that can help improve teachers' competence by optimizing the existing potentials. In this training, teachers were free to choose any subject they deemed to be important according to their needs. The training helped overcome teachers' difficulties in their teaching activities.

Besides, SMKN 8 Malang also provided external training by inviting an academician from the industry and attending seminars. The external training was also provided to enable teachers to polish and update their competence and skills. The improvement of TEP's quality and competence will improve students' competence, thus supporting the development of a quality culture at the school. The training was also expected to improve teachers' teaching skills, because teachers with various teaching skills and techniques were considered to support students' academic achievement (Ulla, 2018). Fadil and Aryani (2021) stated that in order to get satisfactory results in training, schools have to take steps of management and consider crucial factors contributing to the success of the training by analyzing the need for trainers; therefore, training for teachers is necessary (Oliveira et al., 2019), and the training can help solve problems education (Schütze et al., 2017). Based on the aforementioned exploration, the eight work ethos of SMKN 8 Malang can be seen in Figure 3.

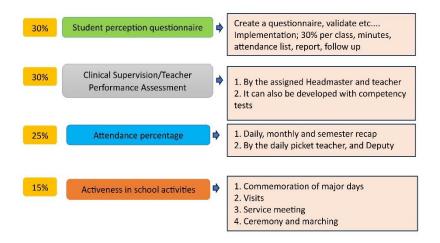


Figure 3. Tthe Work Ethos of Teachers

Figure 3 above shows indicators of teachers' work ethos in the teacher report, namely: (a) questionnaire on students' perception, which was assessed from 30% of class activities. The questionnaire was distributed after it was validated beforehand. This also included a news event, list of attendees, report, and feedback; (b) clinical supervision, 30% of which was performed by the school principal and the appointed teachers. The supervision can be developed through competency tests; (c) attendance percentage of 25%, which can be seen from daily, monthly, and half-yearly recapitulation, performed by teachers on duty and the vice principal of curriculum; (d) percentage of activeness at school of 15%, which can be seen from the assessment of the learning outcomes, commemoration of major days, friendship, official meetings, and ceremonies. The recapitulation of the teacher evaluation can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Recapitulation of the Result of the Teacher Evaluation

Variables	Value	Weight	N x Weight	Description
The Supervision of	90	15%	12	
the				
Attendance	98	30%	29	
Active Involvement	98	15%	15	
in				
The Result of	90	40%	36	
the				
Questionaire				
The Number				
of				
The Total		100%	80	

Note:

The accumulated value of each teacher is at a minimum>= 75.00

The average value of teachers = 76,56

Table 1 shows the recapitulation of the evaluation result, which consists of such variables as: (a) the supervision of the school principal with a value weight of 15%, (b) the attendance percentage with a value weight of 30%, (c) active involvement in school activities with the value weight of 15%, and (d) the result of the questionnaire on students' perception with the value weight of 40%. Each of the variables was scored, and the value was then multiplied by the given weight. The accumulated value of each teacher was at a minimum >=75, and the average value of teachers was 76,56. (Appendix 1)

The second phase was the preparation for internal quality assurance. The first step in preparation for internal quality assurance was self analysis by evaluating components of some units, including: (a) input, consisting of students, human resources, curriculum, facilities and infrastructure, finance, event organizers, and business, industry and the world of work; (b) process, consisting of curriculum review, the provision of learning activities, the provision of Teching Factory the development of the school's human resources, the empowerment of the partnership with business, industry and the world of work, the implementation of quality culture and student certification; (c) output, consisting of the quality of graduates according to passing standard, the need of business, industry and the world of work, and graduates' certificate according to the level of Indonesian National Qualifications Framework/KKNI (II/III); (d) outcome, consisting of graduate absorption and independence, the development of graduates' self-development skills, the institutional development of SMK (Teaching Factory/UP, human Resources, schools, and support gains);and (e) impact, consisting of the increase in public trust in SMK and the independence of schools.

The second step was to make SWOT analyses. The SWOT analysis is an instrument used to analyze strategic things. It can help streamline the process of formulating strategies and clearly illustrate how to make internal factors operate to the extent possible (Sodikin & Gumiandri, 2021). SWOT analyses can also help identify external factors, which can influence the process under investigation, evaluate, and positively affect quality management within an organization (Leiber et al., 2018). The SWOT analysis used at SMKN 8 Malang was carried out by vice principals responsible for different affairs by designing instruments to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all units of the school. A SWOT Analysis takes into consideration some elements, including: (a) leadership, (b) management, (c) programs, (d) human resources, which include students, teachers, and students's parents, (e) learning activities, which include the standard of contents and graduation, (f) Standard of facilities and infrastructure, (g) public relations which include special employment exchange, working groups of field practice at the third and fourth grades, MoU with business, industry and the world of work, and MoU with higher education institutions, (g) finance, and (h) layout. Self-analyses resemble SWOT analyses in that both help to map out strategies to be executed after those analyses.

The third phase was the implementation of internal quality assurance. The first step in this phase was to establish the standard derived from the eight quality standards. The second step was to develop quality mapping by mapping activities to be conducted every year. The third was to do quality improvement planning by conducting such programs as: (a) the creation of work plans for internal quality assurance, (b) the dissemination of the work plans for internal quality assurance, (c) the calculation of the pure participation rate (APM), (d) the collection of the preliminary data of the work plans from all management ranks for quality control, (e) monthly monitoring within a semester (from month 1 to month 6, (f) the analysis at the end of the semester, (g) the update calculation of APM, (h) the collection of the data of the work plans of all management ranks, (i) monthly monitoring within a semester (from month 7 to month 12) (j) the analysis at the end of the year, (k) the update calculation of APM, (l) and incidental activities like the dissemination to all school components, and accreditation assistance among others. The fourth was to implement internal quality assurance by achieving monthly targets. The fifth was to conduct an evaluation or audit conducted every three months according to the achievement of the set target. Moreover, the evaluation was made by the school principal and the quality assurance team. (Appendix 2)

The phases above will lead to quality improvement in internal quality assurance. The quality improvement can be seen in the quality report. The score for the school's quality report is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Score for the School's Quality Report by Components

No.			Categories
1	Input	77,56	Good
2	Proses	86,66	Good
3	Output	90,00	Good
4	Outcome	65,53	Fairly Good
5	Impact	54,00	Poorly Good

Table 2 represents the score for the school's quality report assessed from its components. It shows that (a) input has a score of 77,56 and is in a good category, (b) process has a score of 86,66 and is in a good category,

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ISSN: 1750-9548

(c) output has a score of 90,00 and is in a good category, (d) outcome has a score of 65,53 and is in a fairly good category, and (e) impact has a score of 54,00 and is in a poorly good category.

There are eight standards for quality reports, including: (a) the content standards, which includes the scope of the subjet matters relating to the curriculum implementation and development, (b) the process standards, which are related to the active learning processes, (c) the standards for educational assessment, which refer to a continual assessment system developed by the curriculum committee, (d) the standards for educators and acedemic staff, which are related to teachers' qualification and competencies, (e) the standards for educational facilities and infrastructure, like practicum tools, learning media, books and other learning sources, consumables and other equipment for learning processes, (f) the standards for educational management, which relate to all school components, (g) the financial standards, which relate to schools' budget allocated by the school management which consists of the investment cost of education assistance and the personal cost of educational operational fund, and (h) the standards for graduates' competencies which are related to the learning outcome of students. The detailded exploration of the eight standards can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Indicators of Education Quality Standards

No.	Quality Standards	The Indicators of Quality Standards
1	The Standards for	Graduates have competencies in the dimension
	Graduates' Competencies	of
		Graduates have competencies in the dimension
		of
		Graduates have competencies in the dimension
		of skills
2	The Content Standards	Learning tools are in accordance with the
		formulation
		The curriculum of an education unit is
		based on the procedure
		The school implements the curriculum in
		with the provisions
3	The Process Standards	The school regulates the learning processes accordance with the provisions
		The learning processes are facilitated correctly
		The supervision is given during the learning
4	The Assessment Standards	The aspects of the assessment are considered
		accordance with the areas of competencies
		The assessment techniques are objective
		accountable
		The educational assessment is given a feedback
		The assessment instruments are used in
		with aspects
5	The Standards for	The availability and competency of teachers are
	Educators and Academic	accordance with the provisions
	Staff	The availability and competency of the
		principals are in accordance with the provisions
		The availability and competency of academic staff
		in accordance with the provisions, and The
		and competency of laboratory workers are
		accordance with the provisions
		The availability and competency of librarians are
	TI 0 1 1 0	accordance with the provisions
6	The Standards for	The capacity of the school is high
	Educational Facilities and	The school has adequate educational facilities
	Infrastructure	and
		The school has adequate supporting facilities
		infrastructure

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ISSN: 1750-9548

7	The Standards for the	The school has designed management plans
	Education Management	The management program is carried out in with the provisions
		The school principal serves well.
		The school manages the system of information
8	The Financials Standards	The school practices cross subsidization
		School operational costs are in accordance with provisions
		The school performs good financial management

Source: (Ditjen Dikdasmen LPMP, 2017)

# C. The Evaluation of Internal Quality Assurance

The evaluation of internal quality assurance was performed throughout the aforementioned phases or the purpose of future reference to the maintenance and improvement of the quality of the next implementation of internal quality assurance. The procedure for the evaluation of internal quality assurance can be seen in Figure 4.

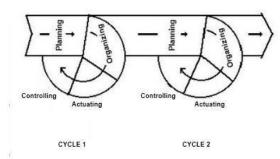


Figure 4. The Steps in the Evaluation of Internal Quality Assurance

Figure 4 shows the procedures for the evaluation of internal quality assurance, including: (a) planning, which is to set a goal by finding out how to accomplish the purpose (Akbar et all., 2021). Planning can be done by having a work plan, the success of which can be measured and adjusted to the competencies of the existing resources and has a finite time limit to make the work plan easier to achieve and evaluated; (b) organizing, which is a process in which to identify the need to fulfill the given purpose (Dakhi, 2016). Organizing can be done by giving all members involved a good explanation about the purpose of the program and providing them with a clear job description; (c) actuating, which is a role in directing workers to work towards the given purpose (Nurindriani & Prakoso, 2021). Actuating can be done by giving easy-to-follow directions to the members involved by putting best-laid plans into actions; and (d) controlling, which is an effort to make sure that the performance is in accordance with the plan. Controlling will also help determine whether the initial plan needs to be revised after it is implemented throughout the processes (Dakhi, 2016). Controlling can be done by establishing a standard by which to exercise basic control, measuring the results that have been obtained, comparing the results with the standard, comparing a program's result with its original objective to assess its level of success, and performing success actions. If any errors are made, a correction will be required, and if a change is required, the process will be repeated from the planning process.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings and results of the discussion, it can be concluded that implementing internal quality assurance is not simple. The success of of implementing internal quality assurance needs the effective development of a quality culture. The purpose of this research is to explore effective models for quality culture that are effective enough to be implemented internal quality assurance. The research was conducted at SMKN 8 Malang for the internal quality assurance. The research was conducted at SMKN 8 Malang and. It involved the school principal, the chief of skill competency programs, the laboratory chief, technicians, teachers, administrative staff, students, students' parents business, and industry and the world of work. The research

adopted the descriptive-qualitative research method. It found that the school principal plays a key role in developing a quality culture effectively by performing the role of transformational and transactional leadership. The findings in this research are: (1) A quality culture needs to be built to support the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance. Quality culture includes aspects of (a) transformational leadership; (b) Transactional leadership; (c) Organizational commitment; (d) Conducive work environment; (e) Group cohesiveness; (f) Effective communication; (g) Quality of Gutu and Education Personnel; Work ethic. (2) A Quality Culture that continues to be built in schools will support the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance, and vice versa, the implementation of Internal Quality Assurance which is gradually implemented also provides real experience which in turn provides continuous strengthening in building a quality culture.

Besides, the development of models for quality culture consisted of the phase of optimization (the school principal's coordination with the internal quality assurance team, evaluation of the internal quality assurance implementation, identification of some problems, and preparation for the prioritized work plans) with the support of the development of quality culture at the school); the phase of the preparation for internal quality assurance (self-analysis and SWOT analysis); the phase of the implementation of internal quality assurance (the establishment of standards, quality mapping, quality improvement planning, and evaluation/audit); and the phase of the evaluation of internal quality assurance performed throughout the processes which include planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. Eventually, it can be said that models for implementing internal quality assurance at SMK can be integrally formed by the quality culture effectively implemented by the school components.

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