



# Optimizing Learning Quality through KAIZEN Principles in an Islamic Junior High School

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Improving learning quality in Islamic schools requires an approach oriented toward continuous improvement through simple, consistent, and structured habits. The Kaizen principle offers a quality enhancement framework that emphasizes continuous improvement through small, gradual, and sustainable refinements. **Objective:** This study aims to analyze the application of Kaizen principles in optimizing learning quality through student affairs programs at MTsN 4 Klaten. **Method:** The study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed through data reduction, descriptive data presentation, and drawing conclusions. **Results:** The improvement of learning quality was supported by habituation of discipline, cleanliness, religious activities, achievement development, and technology-based student progress monitoring. This implementation reflects Kaizen principles through process consistency, gradual improvement, data utilization, and continuous evaluation. However, program evaluation still needs strengthening, student involvement remains uneven, and program innovation needs to be developed to prevent stagnation. **Conclusion:** Kaizen principles can support the optimization of learning quality through systematic and sustainable management of student affairs programs. **Contribution:** This research contributes to strengthening the study of Islamic educational management and provides a practical overview of Kaizen application in improving learning quality in Islamic schools.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Educational quality management is one of the fundamental aspects of increasing the competitiveness and quality of educational institutions. In Islamic education within the era of disruption, institutions such as Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) are required not only to excel spiritually but also to be competitive in academic and managerial quality. In the midst of global dynamics, optimizing learning quality becomes even more crucial so that madrasah graduates possess high competitiveness (Silfana, 2025). Therefore, a comprehensive, flexible, and continuous improvement-oriented management approach is needed so that Islamic educational institutions can remain relevant and high-quality (Latif, 2024).

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One of the well-known principles from Japan is the Kaizen principle. This principle has inspired many circles around the world, especially in the academic field, to develop and expand the endeavors being pursued (Rusdiana & Soediantono, 2022). Kaizen management systems are widely applied in large companies. This makes the Kaizen principle a vehicle for enterprise expansion (Khonsa et al., 2025). In other words, the Kaizen principle is not magic that happens in the blink of an eye; rather, it requires stages to realize Kaizen principles and achieve success properly.

Educational gaps relate to equal discipline awareness, meaning supervision is still required in every stage of strengthening learning quality. Ideally, discipline will grow naturally within each individual from the habits applied by the school across every implementation of the programs being run (Hasan, 2022). However, reality in the field often shows stagnation in teaching methods, a lack of daily evaluations that impact instructional improvement, and resistance to meaningful small changes. The application of quality management serves as an answer to the challenge of optimizing quality in school management, including changing societal needs, technology, and global dynamics that require educational institutions to continuously innovate and adapt to the expectations of education users (Sirait, 2024). The main challenge lies in how to change the mindset of school members so they do not get trapped in routine formalities, but instead focus on improving learning quality every single day. Islamic education plays a very important role in shaping individual character and morality, as well as creating a society based on Islamic values. Theoretically, this study enriches the discourse on Islamic education management, incorporating Kaizen principles (Rizal & R, 2025). The Kaizen approach is relatively new, yet practically it also serves as a guideline for teachers to evaluate and innovate learning gradually and continuously, thereby contributing to improving student quality in academic, character, and social skills (Zuanda, 2024). Islamic educational institutions are expected not only to produce academically smart graduates, but also individuals with strong character and a deep understanding of Islamic principles.

Current research conditions show that most studies on educational quality improvement still focus on macro approaches, such as curriculum changes, infrastructure facility development, or large-scale institutional policies. This approach is indeed important, but it often overlooks the micro aspects that actually occur in daily classroom teaching practices (Ilham és mtsai, 2025). In the context of MTsN 4 Klaten, quality improvement does not rely solely on major policies, but can also begin with simple steps such as improving how lessons are opened, using ice-breaking activities, varying teaching methods, and conducting brief reflections after the learning process takes place. On the other hand, a research gap exists because studies specifically examining how small habits and continuously improvements carried out by teachers can consistently deliver a significant impact on learning quality remain limited. Previous research has tended to focus on outcomes or major programs, while the process of small, continuous improvement has not been explored in depth. Therefore, this study aims to fill that void by highlighting the importance of the Kaizen approach as a quality improvement strategy based on simple yet sustainable practices in the madrasah environment.

The objective of this study is to optimize programs for strengthening the quality of learning in schools using Kaizen principles and modern management methods gradually within the Islamic education environment. This research also aims to contribute to the development of Islamic educational theory by focusing on the relevance of Islamic education in the digital and globalization era. In addition, this research is expected to provide new insights regarding consistent and orderly policy systems.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive design, which aims to understand phenomena deeply based on actual conditions in the field. This approach was chosen because it can systematically describe the research process and results without using complex statistical calculations. The research focuses on collecting narrative data through various relevant sources. This study deeply understands the phenomena occurring in the field related to the implementation of programs or activities in educational institutions. Data were collected through direct observation techniques, interviews, and documentation in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of the actual conditions occurring at the research site.

### 2.2 Research Object

The research subjects in this study lean more toward the institutional implementation programs being applied; the subject of this study is the vice principal of student affairs, who is directly involved in program implementation at the school. The selection of research subjects was carried out purposively with specific considerations according to the feasible situation, as they are part of the party knowledgeable about every progress in the institution. Thus,

the research scope encompasses how continuous program improvement takes place through Kaizen principles while focusing on student discipline in participating in the running programs. Literature selection was conducted comprehensively according to field conditions, understanding data factually, and conducting direct observations.

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection in this study was carried out through interviews and observation techniques. In-depth interviews were conducted with parties involved in program implementation at the madrasah to obtain information regarding the processes, obstacles, and impacts of applying Kaizen principles in learning. In addition, direct observation was conducted in the environment of MTsN 4 Klaten, Central Java, Indonesia, to observe learning activities and habituation programs taking place daily. Through this observation, the researcher could obtain factual data regarding real conditions in the field. The instruments used in this study include interview guidelines and observation sheets prepared in accordance with the research focus, so that the obtained data can support the validity and trustworthiness of the research results.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out by systematically processing data from observations and interviews. Data from observations were used to determine the situation and process of activity implementation directly in the field. In contrast, data from interviews were used to strengthen information related to the experiences, opinions, and roles of the research subjects. The data were then reduced, presented in descriptive narrative form, and drawn into conclusions in accordance with the research focus.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The research results show that the implementation of learning activities at MTs Negeri 4 Klaten has proceeded quite well, evaluated from the aspects of learning planning, implementation, and evaluation. Based on observation results, teachers have systematically prepared learning tools and carried out the learning process according to the plans made. In addition, interview results show that students respond to learning quite actively and demonstrate an increase in learning engagement. Research data are also strengthened by documentation showing an improvement in learning quality over time. Data presentation is conducted descriptively with an emphasis on key findings relevant to the research focus, so that the presented data are easily understood and interpreted

Table 1. Implementation of Kaizen Principles in Improving Learning Quality at MTsN 4 Klaten

| No | Focus of Findings               | Research Findings                                                                                                                                                                                            | Alignment with Kaizen Principles                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Learning Quality Improvement    | Student habituation is carried out through discipline activities, cleanliness, attitude coaching, and religious activities (dhuha prayer, Asmaul Husna, memorization of short chapters).                     | Habituation is conducted consistently, gradually, and sustainably to shape positive student character, demonstrating continuous improvement.                                                                                             |
| 2. | Achievement Improvement Program | Creating special teams, accelerated classes, and maximizing achievements that serve as the school icon, namely robotics.                                                                                     | Continuous development and waste reduction while the school actively facilitates students.                                                                                                                                               |
| 3. | Learning Implementation         | Religious habituation such as dhuha prayer, congregational prayer, memorization of short chapters, and prayer recitations conducted routinely to strengthen religious values and student learning readiness. | Habituation activities reflect the principles of focusing on the process and work standardization. They demonstrate the presence of discipline and consistency in carrying out the learning process, which is part of Kaizen principles. |
| 4. | Student Learning Monitoring     | Student attendance uses a barcode system connected to parents, enabling real time monitoring of student presence.                                                                                            | Monitoring student progress through the barcode system and periodic data collection demonstrates the application of data and fact based principles in Kaizen.                                                                            |

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that efforts to improve the quality of learning in the madrasah have been carried out through various structured and sustainable habituation activities. Activities such as habituation of discipline, cleanliness, attitude coaching, and religious activities (dhuha prayer, recitation of Asmaul Husna, and memorization of short chapters) demonstrate a student character building process that is carried out consistently from the beginning to the end of learning activities. In addition, learning implementation that begins with religious activities before proceeding to core materials also supports the mental and spiritual readiness of students in taking part in the learning process. This reflects that habituation activities serve not only as a routine, but also as part of a targeted and continuous strategy for improving learning quality.

Furthermore, the achievement improvement program through the formation of a special team, the implementation of accelerated classes, and the strengthening of robotics achievements as the school icon demonstrates the commitment of the institution to developing student potential optimally. Support for the learning process is also evident in the use of a barcode-based attendance system integrated with parents as a form of real time and data-based monitoring of student progress. Overall, these findings indicate that program implementation in the madrasah reflects the application of Kaizen principles, namely continuous improvement through process consistency, data utilization, and the involvement of various school elements in supporting educational quality improvement in a gradual and systematic manner.

These findings indicate that the success of improving learning quality at MTsN 4 Klaten is inseparable from the existence of a structured, technology based, and collaboratively implemented monitoring system. The integration among technology, the role of the school, and parental involvement is a key factor in creating an effective and sustainable supervision system. Therefore, the student progress monitoring system can be seen as one of the important innovations in implementing Kaizen principles in the madrasah environment that directly contributes to improving student discipline, responsibility, and learning quality.

**Table 2.** Analysis of Program Implementation Based on Kaizen Principles and Previous Studies

| No. | Focus of Findings                                        | Research Findings                                          | Alignment with Kaizen Principles                 | Relevant Previous Studies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Discipline Habituation (School Gate)                     | Uniform Inspection, Nail and Neatness Checks Every Morning | Appropriate (Small but Routine Improvements)     | According to Soleh (2020), discipline implemented consistently through daily supervision is able to improve the regularity of student behavior and support the success of the learning process.                                                                                                                          |
| 2.  | Attendance Monitoring (Barcode)                          | Students Scan Barcodes, Parents Can Monitor                | Highly Appropriate (Efficiency and Transparency) | The use of a technology-based attendance system aligns with the concept of data driven decision making in educational management. According to Warisno (2019), a technology-based monitoring system is able to increase data accuracy and transparency, as well as strengthen collaboration between schools and parents. |
| 3.  | Worship Habituation (Dhuha and Zuhr Prayers)             | Implemented Every Day on Schedule                          | Appropriate (Gradual Character Building)         | Research by Zuanda & Mawar (2024) states that religious activities conducted routinely can shape the spiritual character of students and increase learning readiness.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4.  | Religious Learning (Memorization and Prayer Recitations) | Conducted Routinely Every Week                             | Moderately Appropriate (Continuous Improvement)  | According to Suryana (2019), habituation-based learning carried out repeatedly will form strong learning habits and improve the quality of student comprehension.                                                                                                                                                        |
| 5.  | Achievement Development                                  | Facilitation of Academic and Non-Academic Competitions     | Appropriate (Continuous Support)                 | Research by Hasanah Uswatun (2022) shows that achievement coaching programs through mentoring, competitions, and rewarding can increase student learning motivation.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 6.  | Student Evaluation and Data Collection                   | Competition and Attendance Data Recapped Every Month       | Less Optimal                                     | According to Wekke (2019), evaluation conducted periodically is an important part of educational management to determine the effectiveness of running programs.                                                                                                                                                          |

| No. | Focus of Findings   | Research Findings                                | Alignment with Kaizen Principles | Relevant Previous Studies                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.  | Student Involvement | Presence of Both Active and Less Active Students | Not Yet Evenly Distributed       | A study by Khasanah Daniatun (2023) mentions that student involvement in school activities greatly influences learning success.                                                                                                          |
| 8.  | Program Innovation  | Program Runs Routinely                           | Needs Development                | According to Laila (2021), innovation in education must be carried out continuously so that programs do not become stagnant. Programs that run routinely without development tend to be less effective in improving educational quality. |

The comparison between research findings and previous studies shows that most student affairs programs at MTsN 4 Klaten align with Kaizen principles, particularly in the aspects of discipline habituation, religious activities, achievement development, and the use of technology in student monitoring. However, there are still several aspects that require improvement, such as program evaluation that has not been conducted comprehensively, student involvement that remains uneven, and program innovation that needs to be continuously developed to avoid stagnation. Thus, the implementation of Kaizen in the madrasah demonstrates a continuous improvement process, yet it still requires continuous evaluation and innovation so that the optimization of learning quality can take place effectively.

### 3.2. Discussion

#### 3.2.1 The Role of the Student Affairs Department in Improving Student Learning Quality at MTsN 4 Klaten

Based on interview and observation results at MTsN 4 Klaten, the student affairs department plays a highly strategic role in improving student learning quality through various forms of planned and sustainable coaching. The student affairs team not only focus on non-academic activities, but also supports students' academic success by creating a conducive learning environment. This is evident in efforts toward discipline enforcement, providing learning motivation, and fostering students' habit of taking responsibility for instructional assignments. Additionally, student affairs actively bridge communication among teachers, homeroom teachers, and parents to monitor student learning progress (Ikroom, 2025).

Observation results show that the implementation of school rules at MTsN 4 Klaten proceeds consistently, such as monitoring attendance, punctuality, and compliance with dress codes and conduct within the school environment. Such discipline becomes an essential factor in establishing more orderly and responsible student learning habits. Furthermore, coaching activities such as routine briefings, religious activities, and character building also support the creation of a conducive learning atmosphere.

These findings align with theoretical literature stating that student affairs management is a comprehensive student management process ranging from planning and implementation to evaluation to support optimal student development in both academic and non-academic aspects (Putri, 2024). In practice, student affairs management at MTsN 4 Klaten reflects this function through the execution of structured coaching programs, supervision, and the management of student activities.

Furthermore, based on previous research results, effective student affairs management includes planning, organizing, executing, and evaluating programs such as guidance and counseling, discipline coaching, and developing student interests and talents (Purwanto, 2018). This was also found at MTsN 4 Klaten, where various student affairs programs are designed to enhance student learning motivation, thereby positively affecting their academic achievement. Additionally, the role of student affairs in organizing student activities to run orderly and purposefully is crucial in supporting the smooth flow of the learning process. At MTsN 4 Klaten, this is realized through a discipline development system, the provision of sanctions and rewards (reward and punishment), and periodic monitoring of student progress. With this system, students become more controlled in their behavior and learning activities.

Thus, the student affairs department at MTsN 4 Klaten has a comprehensive role in enhancing student learning quality. This role extends beyond mere administrative management to include serving as mentors, motivators, and supervisors who contribute to creating a conducive learning environment. The synergy among interview results, observations, and theoretical literature demonstrates that structured and sustainable student affairs management is an essential factor in improving the quality and achievement of student learning.

### 3.2.2 Student Affairs Programs in Improving Academic Achievement at MTsN 4 Klaten

Based on interview and observation results at MTsN 4 Klaten, the student affairs department organizes various programs designed to improve student academic achievement in a targeted and sustainable manner. These programs focus not only on academic aspects alone, but also encompass character building, learning motivation, and holistic student potential development. This indicates that improving academic achievement cannot be separated from non-academic coaching conducted systematically (Fauzi, 2022).

One program implemented is the provision of tutoring and study assistance for students experiencing academic difficulties. This program is carried out through coordination among the student affairs department, subject teachers, and homeroom teachers so that students receive special attention tailored to their needs. Additionally, student affairs grants awards to high-achieving students as a form of motivation to encourage other students to enhance their learning outcomes. Providing rewards has proven effective in fostering a healthy competitive spirit among students (Al Huda, 2020).

Observation results also indicate the presence of a discipline coaching program that influences student academic achievement. Discipline regarding attendance, punctuality, and adherence to school regulations serves as a supporting factor in creating effective learning conditions. Moreover, religious activities and positive habituation, such as joint prayer, literacy sessions, and morning activities, help shape students' learning readiness before engaging in the classroom learning process. These findings are reinforced by research stating that effective student affairs management encompasses planning, organizing, executing, and evaluating programs supporting both academic and non-academic student activities. Programs such as guidance and counseling, discipline coaching, and interest and talent development have been proven to enhance student learning motivation, leading to improved academic achievement (Nurjanah & Syakilah, 2025).

In addition, other studies show that student affairs programs have an essential function in organizing student activities to support the learning process so that it runs in an orderly, smooth, and purposeful manner. With good management, students can develop optimally in intellectual, social, and spiritual aspects. Furthermore, literature affirms that improving educational quality must not focus solely on academic dimensions, but must also be supported by non-academic activities through systematic and sustainable programs. This is relevant to the condition at MTsN 4 Klaten, where extracurricular activities and character development indirectly support the improvement of student academic achievement.

Thus, student affairs programs play an important role in improving student academic achievement at MTsN 4 Klaten. Planned, structured, and sustainable programs create a conducive learning environment while enhancing student motivation and discipline. This demonstrates that student academic success is determined not only by the classroom learning process, but also by the effectiveness of the student affairs programs conducted at the school. The discussion is intended to provide interpretation and meaning to research results in accordance with the theories and references used. The discussion does not merely present findings; rather, the interpretation should be enriched by citing, comparing, or contrasting with previous research published in reputable journals rather than predatory journals. Integrating findings into the body of existing theory or knowledge, developing new theories, or modifying existing theories is highly recommended.

### 3.2.3 Student Activities in Shaping Student Study Habits

Learning activities at MTsN 4 Klaten play a significant role in shaping student study habits through a series of structured, consistent, and sustainable programs. Based on observations with school authorities, shaping student study habits is not only achieved through formal learning processes in the classroom, but is reinforced through habituation activities integrated into students' daily routines within the madrasah environment. Indirectly, these habits belong to the Kaizen program, which represents continuous improvement efforts to become better than the current condition (Alditama, 2024). The running programs consist of religious habituation activities such as practicing morning dhuha prayer, reciting Asmaul Husna, memorizing short Quranic chapters, and holding morning literacy sessions before academic learning commences.

These habituation activities shape students' mindset to be prepared for core classroom learning. From an educational management perspective, establishing study habits is conducted repetitively and purposefully to enhance overall discipline and the learning process continuously. This occurs through a systematized routine at MTsN 4 Klaten on Mondays and Tuesdays for reciting short Quranic chapters, Wednesdays and Thursdays for prayer recitations, Fridays and Saturdays for funeral prayer recitations (for grade 9), alongside the requirement for each class to deliver a Friday Islamic short sermon. Therefore, this shows that student activities serve not merely as a supple-

ment to academic activities, but as an integral part of building a positive learning culture within the madrasah environment.

These findings indicate that the development of student study habits at MTsN 4 Klaten is carried out using a systematic approach oriented toward continuous improvement, consistent with Kaizen principles that emphasize small changes conducted consistently over the long term. In executing programs, minor evaluations are constantly conducted for every small progress made to determine whether established goals have been achieved or to serve as feedback for refining determined strategies (Sarassang & Wibawanta, 2023). Consequently, student affairs activities hold a strategic role in establishing a disciplined, independent, and sustainable culture as part of efforts to improve learning quality in the madrasah.

### 3.2.4 Student Progress Monitoring System by the Student Affairs Department

The student progress monitoring system at MTsN 4 Klaten is an instrument managed by the student affairs department to ensure the continuation of an effective and systematically controlled learning process. Based on observation and interview results with student affairs personnel at MTsN 4 Klaten, the programs implemented focus not only on student attendance, but also cover behavior, discipline, and student involvement in various academic and non-academic activities. This demonstrates that the function of the student affairs department has evolved from simple administration into a comprehensive supervisory system oriented toward systematic and quality student development.

One form of implementation applied within the monitoring system is the use of barcode-based attendance integrated with parents. This system enables the attendance recording process to be conducted in real time and with transparency, allowing parents to directly know their children's status at school. The existence of this system improves attendance data accuracy while strengthening collaboration between the school and parents in monitoring student progress. Therefore, supervision over students is not only internal, but also involves external control supporting the optimal formation of disciplined attitudes (Jaya et al., 2024).

This monitoring system program is also supported by periodic evaluation activities carried out by the student affairs department through coordination with homeroom teachers and subject teachers. Information regarding student progress in both academic and behavioral aspects is gathered and analyzed as a foundation for decision-making regarding student coaching (Zai, 2026). This approach demonstrates the application of data-based management principles, where every policy and coaching action is grounded in factual and measurable information.

From the perspective of Kaizen principles, the monitoring system implemented at MTsN 4 Klaten demonstrates continuous improvement efforts through consistent strengthening of control and evaluation processes. Continuous monitoring enables the school to identify student issues early, allowing immediate corrective action before problems develop into more complex issues (Widyastuti, 2024). In other words, this system functions not only as a supervisory tool, but also as a preventive control mechanism in maintaining the quality of the learning process.

## 4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

### 4.1 Research Implication

This study provides broad implications from various perspectives. Theoretically, the research findings reinforce the concept of educational quality management based on continuous improvement by demonstrating that enhancing learning quality can be built through small habits carried out consistently, thereby enriching perspectives within the study of Islamic education. From a practical standpoint, the results of this study confirm that simple programs such as discipline habituation, religious activities, and the utilization of technology in student monitoring can serve as effective strategies that are easy for schools to implement. Managerially, this research demonstrates the importance of structured, data based, and collaborative student affairs management in supporting sustainable decision making for educational quality improvement. Meanwhile, from a methodological viewpoint, the use of a descriptive qualitative approach has proven effective in revealing the dynamics of program implementation in depth, thereby providing a foundation for developing future, more comprehensive research.

### 4.2 Research Contribution

This study contributes to the development of Islamic educational management studies by introducing the application of Kaizen principles as an approach to sustainable learning quality improvement. The research results show that quality improvement does not have to occur through large scale programs, but can begin with simple habits practiced consistently. Additionally, this study provides practical insights for schools in managing student

affairs programs, technology-based student monitoring, and character building integrated with the learning process. Thus, this study can serve as a reference for developing educational quality improvement models that are more effective, adaptive, and aligned with practical needs in the field.

## 5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

### 5.1 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be noted. The focus of the study was conducted at only one institution, namely MTsN 4 Klaten, so the findings cannot yet be generalized to all contexts of madrasahs or other schools with different characteristics. In terms of the data collection process, this study relied on observations, interviews, and documentation over a limited period, and was therefore not fully able to capture the long-term dynamics of program changes. Furthermore, the research subjects involved were limited to internal school parties, meaning perspectives from external parties such as parents or policy makers have not been explored in depth. Another limitation lies in the methodological aspect, where this research employed a descriptive qualitative approach without the support of quantitative data, so the level of program effectiveness cannot be demonstrated statistically. Therefore, the results of this study must be understood within the boundaries of the context and methods used.

### 5.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the research conducted, several recommendations can be considered for future research. Subsequent studies are advised to expand the geographic scope by involving more than one educational institution to obtain a more comprehensive comparison regarding the implementation of Kaizen principles in improving learning quality. In addition, future research could develop a mixed methods approach by incorporating quantitative data to measure the degree of program effectiveness more measurably. Subsequent researchers are also expected to involve a broader range of research subjects, including parents and policy makers, to gain a wider perspective on the impact of the programs implemented. Furthermore, research focusing on developing adaptive technology-based student affairs program innovations is needed to enhance student involvement evenly. Thus, future research is expected to strengthen existing findings and provide broader contributions to the development of educational quality.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to optimize learning quality through the application of Kaizen principles at MTsN 4 Klaten, as formulated in the introduction section. Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that improving learning quality has been realized through various habit forming, structured, and sustainable programs, such as discipline enforcement, religious activities, achievement enhancement, and technology-based student monitoring. The implementation of these programs demonstrates alignment with Kaizen principles, specifically continuous improvement carried out gradually, consistently, and based on processes. Moreover, the role of the student affairs department has proven to be a crucial factor in managing, supervising, and developing programs that support the creation of a conducive learning environment.

The results of this study confirm that improving learning quality does not solely rely on major policies, but can also be built through small habits practiced continuously. These findings open opportunities for developing Kaizen based educational quality management models that are more adaptive and contextual across various educational institutions. Therefore, future research is expected to broaden the study scope and develop more diverse program innovations so that efforts to improve educational quality can proceed more optimally and sustainably.

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### Author Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Fachril Bachtiar Firmansyah: Conceptualization and Design, Writing - Original Draft, Methodology, Formal analysis. NurLita Dwi Putri Destriana; Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing. Fetty Ernawati: Conceptualization, Writing - Review & Editing.

### Declaration of Generative AI (GenAI) Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence technology, namely ChatGPT (OpenAI), in the preparation of this manuscript. The use of AI was limited to assisting with writing structure organization, enhancing academic language, and refining grammar and sentence clarity. All generated content was subsequently reviewed, adjusted, and further developed by the authors to ensure alignment with the research context and applicable scientific standards. The authors assume full responsibility for the final contents of this manuscript. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the [IJITL GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the research, writing, or publication of this article

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