



Strategic Management of Transformational Leadership of School Principals in Improving the Quality of Graduates

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze in depth the implementation of strategic management through the transformational leadership of school principals in improving the quality of graduates at SMA Negeri 1 Mataram and SMA Negeri 8 Mataram. This study uses a qualitative, multi-case design, allowing researchers to comprehensively understand leadership and strategic management through in-depth analysis of each case and cross-case analysis. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation studies with research subjects of principals, vice principals, teachers, and school planning documents. Data analysis was carried out thematically through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions, and cross-case analysis to identify patterns of similarity and uniqueness across schools. The results of the study indicate that improvements in graduates' quality in both schools are the result of the integration of systematically implemented strategic management and strong transformational leadership by school principals. In the environmental scanning stage, principals at both schools actively read internal and external conditions based on data, program reflections, and the dynamics of educational policies, resulting in a mapping of student needs, environmental characteristics, and opportunities for developing graduate quality. In the strategy formulation stage, the results of the environmental scan are translated into visionary and contextual strategic policies and programs, with graduate quality as the main objective, encompassing attitudes, knowledge, skills, and career paths. In the strategy implementation stage, transformational leadership is realized through teacher empowerment, proportional role distribution, school culture, and the implementation of academic and non-academic programs that have a direct impact on the learning process and student development. Furthermore, in the strategy evaluation stage, evaluation is carried out continuously and based on data through the use of Education Report Cards, internal reflection, and stakeholder involvement, thereby providing a basis for continuous improvement and strengthening strategies. Cross-case analysis shows that SMA Negeri 1 Mataram tends to optimize the advantages of input and strong institutional capital to strengthen the achievement of graduate quality, while SMA Negeri 8 Mataram emphasizes the ability to transform input limitations through adaptive and humanistic management of the educational process. This finding confirms that graduate quality is not solely determined by the quality of student input, but is highly dependent on the principal's transformational leadership in integrating all stages of strategic management consistently, reflectively, and continuously improving.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Strategic Management, Graduate Quality, Multi-Case Study, High School*

Introduction

The overall quality of education in Indonesia ideally reflects a 21st-century, equitable, participatory, and competency-based learning system, as today's technological and information advancements have developed rapidly, with both positive and negative impacts on educational development. As is well known, the world of education is currently being shaken by changes driven by society's demands and needs, as well as by the challenges of addressing local problems and global shifts. Lochmiller (in Raharjo, et, al 2018:133)) explains that quality has two dimensions, namely (a) Quality and customer satisfaction are the same thing, because if customers get quality goods or services, they will get satisfaction; (b) Quality is a broad concept that is not only the quality of the product, but also the quality of people, work processes, and every aspect of the organization. Improving the quality of education is certainly inseparable from the role of the leader of an educational organization, in this case, the head of the education office or the principal.

In the context of school-based management, the principal not only acts as an instructional leader, but also as a leader who brings about changes in organizational culture and motivation of school residents (Transformational leader) who is responsible for compiling program planning based on an analysis of the school's real needs to achieve the expected results. Planning is carried out by analyzing the environment both internally and externally, developing strategies to coordinate with the deputy heads of programs in each field to formulate school programs and conducting an analysis of the strengths of the principal's strategic planning Sedjati (2019).

Hidayat & Marthina (2022) also added that the best quality of education at the SMA/SMK/MA/equivalent level can be measured by the quality of graduates absorbed into higher education and the world of work, because the quality of graduates is the outcome of the educational unit produced by the performance of the principal in order to produce quality graduates and be able to compete at the next level of education. In addition, a quality school can be seen from stakeholder reviews. However, information from the Ekbis IPM NTB website in 2024 as we know that the West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Government's position in the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2024 was ranked 27th nationally out of 38 provinces (with a coefficient value of 73.10).

In general, Senior High School (SMA) in West Nusa Tenggara Province is seen as an important level of education to produce quality human resources amidst the demands of an increasingly free global world because the role of SMA as an intermediary in continuing education to a higher level is considered very appropriate, so that a synergistic process is needed between educational inputs to the educational process which will eventually produce good graduates in order to achieve educational goals.

Based on the results of interviews with three school principals and one accompanying supervisor in Mataram and West Lombok, it was found that the principals prioritized the "Renstra" program of the West Nusa Tenggara Provincial Education Office rather than the program that was characteristic of the school, resulting in the low quality of graduates being closely related to the leadership of the principal who did not have a vision and progressive programs that were oriented towards the needs of students and the demands of the times because they were trapped in an administrative leadership pattern that only followed the existing system without presenting innovation or superior programs that were able to answer the challenges of the world of education today.

SMA Negeri 1 Mataram is the oldest school in Mataram City, geographically located in the center of Mataram City, with many academic and non-academic achievements. In addition, this school has superior accreditation and is the most popular, attracting the most applicants year after year during admissions for new students. However, based on the results of an interview with one of the teachers at the school, it was found that there was a decrease in the number of graduates through the achievement path or

what is often called SNBP, that students passed SNBP (Achievement-Based National Selection) or selection based on report card scores in 2025, as many as 45 students. Previously, data from 2024 showed that graduates who passed the SNBP path to higher education were 85 students, while data from 2023 were 84 students, so this figure became a benchmark for the quality of graduates at SMAN 1 Mataram, there were fluctuations not in a constant condition and increased, the comparison from 2024 to 2025 is very attention-grabbing because there was a drastic decline.

As Rosdianah (2022) stated in her research, "The implementation of transformational leadership by the principals of SMAN 1 Mataram and SMAN 5 Mataram to maintain excellent schools is not only based on the four dimensions of idealistic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual simulation, and individual consideration, but there is another dimension that is far more influential, namely the transformational dimension of religious values applied in every activity." Therefore, it is necessary to study transformational leadership more deeply, either as a system or as the leadership model of the principal itself.

Meanwhile, SMA Negeri 8 Mataram is located on the outskirts of the city, at the border between Mataram City and West Lombok Regency. Since 2019, it has received an A (superior) accreditation. However, the hope of graduates to continue their higher education is not as easy as turning the palm of the hand, because many students choose to work in the MSME sector and other industrial sectors due to economic demands. The results of the initial observations by researchers found that in 2024, as many as 29 students entered universities through the National Achievement-Based Selection (SNBP) achievement pathway. Overall, based on tracer study data, 120 students entered universities and civil service schools out of 337; it is estimated that around 36% entered college, and the rest worked in the MSME sector. In 2025, as many as 7 students entered universities through the achievement pathway (SNBP), but the 2025 tracer study data indicate that, to date, students have not fully reported continuing their studies at state, private, or civil service universities or choosing to work. This condition is a concern for school administrators so that graduates can be absorbed optimally, of course, through healthy leadership management.

In addition, based on the last three years of educational report data, literacy skills at SMAN 8 Mataram have fluctuated, where in 2023 it was 80.00%, down 2.70% from the previous year, which was 82.22%, while in 2024 the literacy education report data was 75.56% compared to the previous year, there was a decrease of 4.44% so that in 2025 the literacy score was 86.67%, thus categorizing it as an increase of 11.11% from the previous year. Fluctuating conditions are a challenge for SMAN 8 Mataram in advancing the quality of education.

Thus, it is necessary to conduct more in-depth research to present the differences and similarities in the strategic management used by school principals based on transformational leadership, which has been proven to foster a different atmosphere that improves the quality of graduates in the two schools.

Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of taking an in-depth, natural, and natural approach to more than one object. Qualitative research is defined as collecting data in a natural setting with the intention of interpreting phenomena, with the researcher as the key instrument (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The data used in this study are from primary and secondary sources. Primary data sources are data generated from sources that describe the source material closest to the person, information, period, or idea being studied. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are useful for taking a foothold in existing sources of varying capacities (Mustari, 2025).

This research uses a multi-case study method. Multi-case studies are a form of case study design. Mustari (2025) explains that case studies provide a broad and in-depth overview of a particular social unit. The research procedure is carried out in several stages: 1) preparation, 2) implementation, and 3) research report preparation.

The primary data sources in this study are all parties at SMAN 1 Mataram and SMAN 8 Mataram who are considered to have in-depth, relevant information, and in accordance with the focus of this study, namely the Principal, Vice Principal (curriculum, student affairs, infrastructure, public relations), teachers, BK, Administrative Staff, students who are directly involved in the planning process, implementation, and evaluation of strategic management of the principal's transformational leadership in improving the quality of education. Meanwhile, secondary data sources or supporting evidence in this study include government statistics in the form of long- and short-term program implementation reports, educational report charts at each school, archives of program implementation activities and meeting minutes, and others.

In qualitative research, data collection is carried out in natural settings, namely, natural conditions or as they are without engineering (Sugiyono, 2019). Data collection techniques in this study include observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique in this study is an interactive model analysis from Miles and Huberman (Asmony, 2015), namely data reduction, comparison between cases, data presentation, and cross-case synthesis. Meanwhile, to check the validity of the data using credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability tests (Sugiyono, 2019).

Results and Discussion

A. Implementation of Transformational Leadership Strategic Management in Improving Graduate Quality at Mataram State Senior High School 1 and Mataram State Senior High School 8

1. Mataram 1 Senior High School

The implementation of strategic management of transformational leadership to improve the quality of graduates at SMA Negeri 1 Mataram is a systematic, ongoing, and context-specific process. As one of the leading high schools in Mataram City, SMA Negeri 1 Mataram faces demands for graduate quality that are not only oriented towards academic achievement but also towards character building, mastery of 21st-century skills, and student readiness to continue their education at a higher level.

The implementation of strategic management at SMAN 1 Mataram is inseparable from the principal's leadership role, which employs a transformational leadership model. The principal acts not only as an administrator but also as an agent of change, capable of understanding the context, mobilizing resources, and transforming visions into actions that directly impact the quality of graduates. The entire strategic management process, from environmental scanning and strategy formulation to implementation and evaluation, is carried out systematically and participatively, focusing on the dynamics of educational policy and students' needs.

a) *Environmental Scanning*: read the strategic environment comprehensively

In this initial stage, the principal with his intellectual stimulation ability not only carries out administrative routines, but challenges old patterns by encouraging the use of national data, as well as building a culture of reflective thinking and solutions in the school environment so that he is able to stimulate subordinates to think innovatively and rationally so that mapping is carried out by analyzing the beginning since the acceptance of new students and mapping the character and potential of

students shows the principal's ability to encourage systematic, data-based and anticipatory thinking and reflect on the shortcomings of the previous year based on educational reports so that this confirms that the practice of critical evaluation and learning for the organization and is able to adapt to developments and obstacles by showing openness to change and the courage to revise strategies.

The results of the Environmental Scanning are reflected in the school's focus on developing students' attitudinal competencies. The principal, with his character, understands that students are in a transitional phase toward adulthood, thus requiring strengthening of character, ethics, and social values as a foundation for the future. Based on these findings, they are internalized in value-instilling policies such as Spiritual Camps, routine imtaq (faithfulness to God), 6S culture, and community service activities. These programs are born from an understanding of students' diverse internal environments, both in terms of social background, emotional readiness, and potential for deviant behavior, so that attitude formation becomes a top priority in the direction of developing graduate quality.

In addition to the internal environment, environmental scanning also includes examining the external environment, particularly the expectations of the community and parents regarding the quality of graduates. The high level of parental participation in all school activities and the strong enthusiasm among applicants for the New Student Admissions System (SPMB) demonstrate that the principal can perceive signals of public trust, a strategic strength of the school.

b) Strategy Formulation: formulate strategies based on real opportunities and needs.

In formulating strategies, principals not only focus on internal strengthening but also actively identify and capitalize on external opportunities. One concrete example of this opportunity-based strategy is establishing collaborations with leading universities through memorandums of understanding (MoUs). This finding confirms the research findings of Latifah et al. (2021) and Tanur (2021), which stated that principals who prioritize graduate quality tend to design strategies based on external partnerships. Nurdin (2022) and Nirva (2022) stated that graduate quality must be understood holistically, not solely in terms of cognitive achievement. The quality of graduates of SMA Negeri 1 Mataram, in terms of competency in attitudes, knowledge, and skills, demonstrates strong alignment with the principal's strategic management at the strategy formulation stage. At this stage, strategies are not simply formulated as formal documents; they are born from a deep understanding of students' real needs and the demands of the external environment. The principal, through his transformational leadership character, which emphasizes interpersonal motivation, intellectual stimulation, and charisma, successfully formulated a strategic direction that prioritizes graduate quality as the primary long-term goal. The vision for improving graduate quality is translated comprehensively by balancing character building, academic achievement, and career readiness, as reflected in the school's various flagship programs, namely:

1. Academic consists of: English Debate (NSDC: National Schools Debating Championship), Indonesian Debate, OSN (SMtk, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth Sciences)
2. Sports (volleyball, futsal, martial arts)
3. Non-Academic (Choir, Percussion)

In terms of attitude competency, the formulation strategy appears to align with the school's policy, which prioritizes character building as the primary foundation for graduates. The formulation of the "Spiritual Camp" program, the "Imtaq" habituation program, the 6S culture program, and community service activities are not reactive policies but rather the result of a strategy developed to address students' psychosocial development needs.

c) Strategy Implementation: transform plans into real action

The principal acts as a Coach and Developer, not just a manager, by placing individual development as the foundation for improving the quality of graduates, because the most prominent criteria in the implementation of the strategy by improving teacher competency as the main target shows the principal's attention to the need for continuous teacher professional development. The principal not only acts as an administrative manager but also as a learning leader (instructional leader) who facilitates the transformation of school culture to align with curriculum objectives (Fahrudin, 2025). In addition, the principal encourages a culture of learning and adaptive thinking, so that the implementation of the strategy is not rigid, but dynamic and contextual, demonstrating leadership with an intellectual stimulation dimension capable of maintaining the relevance and adaptability of strategy implementation through program adjustments to the latest regulations according to critical thinking skills and responsiveness to changes in educational policy. As well as strengthening literacy and numeracy reflects an orientation towards improving the quality of learning based on essential competencies.

The implementation of strategic management demonstrates strong alignment with graduate quality outcomes, particularly in the competencies of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and career readiness. In the knowledge aspect, the principal encourages the implementation of quality teaching and learning through academic enrichment, material reinforcement, and additional study time, including the Academic Ability Test (TKA). In the skills competency, the principal encourages the implementation of technology-based learning strategies, using e-learning and digital networks as a learning ecosystem. The most strategic alignment is seen in graduate career paths, where strategic management is truly oriented towards students' future. The principal implements a strategy for mapping potential and career directions by strengthening the role of guidance counselors and homeroom teachers, as well as the use of information technology such as multiple intelligence tests and digital-based data collection for further study plans.

d) Strategy Evaluation: data-based evaluation and continuous improvement

Strategy evaluation is carried out using data from educational reports, involving various stakeholders, and is followed by modifications and improvements to the program. This approach emphasizes that evaluation does not stop at measurement, but becomes an instrument for organizational learning and continuous improvement of graduate quality.

In this context, graduate quality is positioned not merely as a final assessment of program achievement but as a reflective mechanism that directly influences graduates' attitudes, knowledge, skills, and career readiness. In this context, evaluation becomes the primary instrument for ensuring that all implemented programs truly contribute to sustainable improvement in graduate quality.

For graduates' attitude competency, strategic evaluation is conducted through continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of character and spiritual development programs. Spiritual camps, Imtaq (Islamic values), 6S culture, and community service programs are assessed not only for their implementation but also for their impact on student behavior. For knowledge competency, strategic evaluation is realized through the use of learning achievement data as a basis for decision-making. Semester-by-semester report card recapitulations, school assessment results, and reflections on the implementation of TKA serve as the primary evaluation instruments. The principal positions educational report cards as the national standard for assessing the effectiveness of learning and enrichment strategies.

2. SMAN 8 MATARAM

The strategic management of the principal of SMA Negeri 8 Mataram is implemented as a systematic, ongoing process, and is oriented towards solving real problems faced by the school. Strategic management practices are not understood solely as the preparation of planning documents, but rather as a series of leadership decisions that begin with mapping environmental conditions, formulating data-based strategies, implementing targeted programs, and conducting ongoing evaluations to ensure the achievement of school goals.

a) *Environmental Scanning*

The principal's initial steps of reviewing the previous year's meeting minutes, reflecting on program achievements and challenges, and conducting direct observations of the school community's activities demonstrate that the environmental literacy process is being carried out seriously and responsibly. The decision to address findings on the physical environment, such as inadequate classroom lighting, with concrete policies, such as cutting down trees that obstruct light and procuring standard lighting, reflects the consistency between data, decisions, and actions.

The successful implementation of strategic management at SMAN 8 Mataram cannot be separated from the principal's transformational leadership. The principal's leadership is not only carried out within an administrative framework, but also one that transforms the school's vision into strategic policies that directly improve the quality of graduates. In the Environmental Scanning stage, the principal's transformational leadership at SMAN 8 Mataram is most strongly reflected through the charismatic dimension (idealized influence) and intellectual stimulation. Environmental scanning requires the leader's sensitivity to honestly, objectively, and responsibly read the reality of the school environment.

These findings form the basis for establishing a direction for graduate quality, emphasizing strengthening attitudes and character, along with the development of contextualized skills and basic knowledge. Thus, environmental scanning yields a strategic orientation that emphasises building the quality of SMAN 8 Mataram graduates through a transformation process, rather than on students' initial strengths.

b) *Strategy formulation*

During the strategy formulation stage, the principal's transformational leadership is evident through his ability to build inspirational motivation. The school's vision and mission are not merely normative documents but are translated into mutually agreed-upon policy directions and strategic programs. The principal involves various stakeholders in the planning process, aligns strategies with the school's actual capacity, and uses Education Report Card data to inform decision-making. Through clear and meaningful communication of the vision, the principal fosters optimism and collective commitment among the school community, contributing to improved graduate quality by strengthening students' character and skills.

From this strategy formulation stage, several main strategic program directions were produced, including: 1. Strategy for strengthening religious culture and character as the foundation of graduates' attitudes, 2. Contextual and project-based learning strategies for strengthening skills, 3. Guidance and counselling service strategies as support for self-knowledge and career planning, 4. Collaboration strategies with universities as part of strengthening graduates' career paths.

c) Strategy Implementation

At the strategy implementation stage, the most relevant dimension of transformational leadership is individual consideration. Strategy implementation requires leaders to empower human resources and ensure strategic programs are implemented effectively at the operational level. Research findings indicate that the principal of SMAN 8 Mataram pays significant attention to strengthening teachers' roles as agents of change and to developing strategic student services and counselling. Leadership strategies at this stage are realized through teacher empowerment, strengthening the role of activity supervisors, and creating a supportive school climate. The strategic programs implemented and their contribution to graduate quality include: a) attitudes, b) knowledge, c) skills, and d) career paths.

d) Strategy Evaluation

In the strategy evaluation stage, the most prominent dimension of transformational leadership is intellectual stimulation, reinforced by charismatic aspects, such as moral accountability. Strategy evaluation requires leaders to assess school performance objectively, reflectively, and based on data. The principal of SMAN 8 Mataram utilized internal and external indicators, including the Education Report Card, as a basis for a credible and standardized evaluation.

Research findings indicate that the principal's transformational leadership at SMAN 8 Mataram is a key factor in integrating all stages of strategic management into a coherent, meaningful whole. Strategic management does not operate as an administrative procedure, but rather as a living, reflective, and adaptive leadership process that adapts to the realities of the school. The quality of graduates, particularly in attitude, character, and skills, is a direct result of transformational leadership that operates consistently through planned, sustainable strategic management.

Research findings indicate that the quality of graduates at SMAN 8 Mataram is determined more by the transformation process during their studies than by the quality of initial student input. This situation encourages the principal to emphasize empowering teachers as agents of change, strengthening student services and counselling, and creating a supportive and humanistic school climate. The principal pays attention to the individual needs of teachers and students while ensuring that each strategic program is implemented in a coordinated manner and is oriented toward developing students' attitudes, character, and soft skills.

Thus, the improvement of graduate quality at SMA Negeri 8 Mataram is the result of strategic management that is carried out systematically and continuously through the transformational leadership of the principal, which starts from the environmental scanning stage based on reflection and real school data, both the heterogeneous conditions of students, limited initial academic readiness, the dynamics of the physical environment, as well as changes in educational policies, resulting in strategic awareness that the quality of graduates must be built through a transformation process during the learning period; the findings of the environmental scanning are then formulated at the strategy formulation stage into participatory and visionary strategic policy and program directions by emphasizing the strengthening of religious character and attitudes, contextual learning for skills development, counseling and career guidance services, and collaboration with universities as the main strategic products that are mutually agreed upon; then at the strategy implementation stage, transformational leadership is realized through individual considerations by empowering teachers as agents of change, creating a supportive school climate, and implementing programs in real terms in the areas of attitudes (religious culture and character), knowledge (adaptive learning and contextual academic achievement), skills (project-based learning and superior extracurricular activities), and career paths (BK services and external networks), so that the strategy does not stop at the administrative level but has a direct impact on the formation of

graduate profiles; The strategy evaluation stage is carried out reflectively and based on data through the use of Education Reports, internal evaluations, and feedback forums from school residents to assess program achievement, improve weaknesses, and develop further strategies, so that the entire strategic management cycle driven by transformational leadership consistently leads to improving the quality of SMAN 8 Mataram graduates who have character, relevant skills, contextual knowledge, and are ready to continue their education and social life adaptively.

B. The Impact of Principals' Transformational Leadership Strategic Management in Improving Graduate Quality at SMAN 1 Mataram and SMAN 8 Mataram

1. SMAN 1 MATARAM

The impact of the principal's strategic management leadership in improving the quality of graduates at SMA Negeri 1 Mataram can be understood as the final result (outcome) of a series of planned managerial processes, implemented consistently, and evaluated continuously. As a relatively established and high-achieving school, SMA Negeri 1 Mataram demonstrates a strategic management pattern oriented towards strengthening and optimizing the quality of graduates. The principal utilizes impactful transformational leadership to maintain the sustainability of quality and graduate competitiveness. This can be seen in the impact on the attitude aspect through a culture of discipline and academic ethos (discipline, responsibility, learning ethos, student integration).

This doesn't happen instantly; rather, it occurs through a complex managerial process, from planning to evaluation. This can be demonstrated by:

- a. Environmental scanning: "identification of initial conditions of student behavior and culture",
- b. Formulation strategy: Establishing a culture of discipline and academic ethos as quality priorities,
- c. Strategy implementation: habituation, role modelling, and strengthening the role of teachers.

2. SMAN 8 MATARAM

The impact of the principal's transformational leadership on school management on the quality of graduates at SMA Negeri 8 Mataram can be seen from the scanning process, determining the vision and continuing with the actions of the programs that have been designed so that they are then evaluated as a form of measuring the program's success indicators. In this context, the principal not only functions as a policy administrator but also as an agent of change, able to translate visions, values, and strategies into concrete programs that directly impact the quality of graduates. If seen carefully, the undeniable data can be seen from the following forms of significant impact;

- a. Transformational Leadership as the main driver of strategic management
The principal's transformational leadership serves as the driving force, initiating, directing, and controlling all stages of the school's strategic management. The principal serves not only as a decision-maker but also as a visionary leader capable of building commitment, motivating the school community, and creating a collaborative work climate. Environmental scanning serves as the basis for the accuracy of school policies.
- b. Strategic vision as a guide for all quality improvement programs
The impact of this vision stage is the creation of harmony among school goals, program planning, and the implementation of student development activities, ensuring that all school activities are aligned in improving the quality of graduates.
- c. Strategic action as a form of leadership implementation
The impact of this strategic action is seen in the implementation of character-strengthening programs, the development of academic knowledge, skills improvement, and mentoring for graduates' further studies and careers.

- d. Strategic evaluation as a mechanism for quality control and improvement.
The principal regularly monitors and reflects on program achievements and graduate quality. Consequently, evaluation results serve as a basis for strategy improvements and adjustments, ensuring a sustainable, adaptive quality improvement process.
- e. Graduate quality as a strategic outcome
The impact of transformational leadership is reflected in the holistic improvement of graduate quality, including strengthening religious and social character, enhancing academic knowledge and achievement, developing artistic and non-academic skills, and providing clarity about further study and career paths. Thus, graduate quality serves as a concrete indicator of a principal's success in strategically managing a school through transformational leadership.
- f. Integration between stages is the key to sustainable impact
This integration ensures that improving the quality of graduates is not a one-time event, but a continuous process that is continuously improved through strategic evaluation and reflection.

C. Similarities and Comparison of Strategic Management at SMAN 1 Mataram and SMAN 8 Mataram

1. EQUALITY

In general, SMA Negeri 1 Mataram and SMA Negeri 8 Mataram share fundamental similarities in their approach to improving graduate quality. They both implement comprehensive strategic management through four main stages: environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation, driven by the principal's transformational leadership. In both schools, environmental scanning is conducted using data and reflection on the school's internal and external conditions, so that the formulated strategy is not normative but contextual. Strategy formulation in both schools is carried out in a participatory manner, involving internal stakeholders and using the school's vision as a policy reference. Strategy implementation in both schools demonstrates the principal's role as a driver of change, empowering teachers, strengthening school culture, and ensuring programs have a direct impact on students. Meanwhile, strategy evaluation in both schools is conducted continuously, based on the Education Report Card and internal evaluations, and serves as a basis for continuous program improvement. Thus, the main similarities between the two schools lie in the strategic management framework, transformational leadership style, process orientation, and the ultimate goal of comprehensively improving graduate quality.

2. Comparison of Strategic Management at SMAN 1 Mataram and SMAN 8 Mataram

a) Strategic Management

The fundamental differences between strategic management and leadership can be seen in the following table;

Table 1. Strategic Management Comparison Table

Aspect	Mataram 1 Senior High School	SMAN 8 Mataram
School Context	Favourite School, high input	Suburban schools, heterogeneous input
Environmental scanning	Optimizing potential and excellence, and involving alumni strengths	Identify limitations and needs of educational reports
Strategy formulation	Strengthening Excellence & Differentiation	Adaptive and contextual strategies
Strategy Implementation	Structured, strong resources	Flexible, humanistic and adaptive
Strategy Evaluation	Focus on foreign power and achievements	Focus on process improvement
Impact on the quality of graduates	Academic excellence and competitiveness	Strong and adaptive character

- b) **Differences in School Context and Input**
SMAN 1 Mataram has a contextual advantage, being the oldest and most popular school in West Nusa Tenggara Province, with relatively high student participation, strong educational support, and strong alumni ties. In contrast, SMAN 8 Mataram is located in the outskirts of Mataram City, with heterogeneous student input characteristics in academic, social, and learning motivation aspects, thus facing more complex challenges in managing the educational process.
- c) **Differences in Environmental Scanning Focus**
At SMAN 1 Mataram, environmental scanning focused more on optimizing potential and strengthening the school's existing strengths, such as academic achievement, student achievement, and high community expectations. Meanwhile, at SMAN 8 Mataram, environmental scanning focused more on identifying students' limitations and basic needs. The results confirmed that graduate quality must be built through a transformational process throughout the learning process.
- d) **Differences in Strategy Formulation**
Strategy formulation at SMAN 1 Mataram is aimed at strengthening and differentiating the school's strengths, including the National Science Olympiad (OSN) program, TKA preparation, specific skills development, and strategic collaboration with leading universities. In contrast, strategy formulation at SMAN 8 Mataram emphasizes adaptive and realistic strategies, focusing on character building, contextual learning, career guidance and counselling services, and external collaborations that support the gradual development of student potential.
- e) **Differences in Strategy Implementation**
In the implementation phase, SMAN 1 Mataram emphasizes systematic and structured program management with relatively strong resource support, ensuring stable and measurable strategy implementation. Meanwhile, SMAN 8 Mataram emphasizes flexibility and a humanistic approach to strategy implementation, empowering teachers as agents of change and adapting programs to the diverse needs of students.
- f) **Difference between Strategy Evaluation and Impact**
The strategy evaluation at SMAN 1 Mataram focused more on improving graduate achievement and competitiveness by strengthening academic and non-academic performance indicators. Meanwhile, at SMAN 8 Mataram, the strategy evaluation focused more on process improvement, character development, and adaptive skills. Consequently, SMAN 1 Mataram graduates tended to excel academically and were better prepared to continue their education at a higher level, while SMAN 8 Mataram graduates demonstrated stronger character, social skills, and adaptive readiness developed through the educational process.

It can be concluded that the improvement in the quality of graduates at SMA Negeri 1 Mataram and SMAN Negeri 8 Mataram is the result of the holistic integration of strategic management with the transformational leadership of the principal, who works consistently, contextually, and sustainably. Strategic management in both schools is not understood as an administrative procedure, but rather as a living and reflective leadership process through four main stages, namely environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation, so that all of them are directed at achieving the quality of graduates as the main strategic goal of the school.

During the environmental scanning phase, both schools demonstrated the principals' ability to analyze internal and external conditions based on data and critical reflection. At SMA Negeri 1 Mataram, the environmental scanning focused on optimizing institutional potential and the relatively high quality of student input, as well as strong community expectations for graduate quality. Meanwhile, at SMA Negeri 8 Mataram, the environmental scanning emphasized the heterogeneous nature of student input and limited initial student readiness, resulting in a strategic awareness that graduate quality must be built through a transformational process throughout the learning process. The primary product of this phase at both schools was a map of student needs, potential, and challenges, which served as the basis for strategic decision-making.

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion of the research results above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Based on the presentation of research data, SMA Negeri 1 Mataram is the oldest and most popular senior high school in West Nusa Tenggara Province, with strong strategic environmental support, adequate human resources, and student input with relatively high academic quality. Institutional data shows the continuity of leadership of the principal, who has long managerial experience and a deep understanding of the school's organizational culture, thus enabling the implementation of strategic management in a stable and sustainable manner. The research findings confirm that the improvement in the quality of graduates at SMAN 1 Mataram is the result of the integration of strong institutional capital, strategic management implemented holistically, and consistent, down-to-earth transformational leadership.
2. Based on the research data presentation, SMA Negeri 8 Mataram is a senior high school located in the outskirts of Mataram City with heterogeneous student characteristics in terms of academic, social, and learning motivation. This condition demands the implementation of adaptive school management and is oriented toward improving the quality of graduates. The research findings indicate that improving the quality of graduates at SMAN 8 Mataram does not rely on the superiority of student input, but rather on the quality of the principal's transformational leadership, which is able to turn limitations into opportunities through reflective, contextually strategic management.
3. The quality of graduates is not solely determined by the quality of student input, but is also strongly influenced by the principal's transformational leadership in holistically and contextually managing strategic management. Therefore, strategic management driven by transformational leadership is the key to achieving graduates with character, knowledge, relevant skills, and the readiness to continue their education and social life adaptively.

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