



## Extended Abstract

### Designing a Model for Improving the Educational and Developmental Quality of Public Secondary Schools in Mazandaran Province

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#### Introduction

Improving the quality of education and training at the secondary level is a cornerstone for individual and social development and is one of the key objectives of the Fundamental Transformation Document of Education in Iran (2011). Monfared (2023) believes that educational quality is a key factor in the hidden competition between countries. Ogrinc et al. (2015) found that attention to quality in schools is fundamental and significantly impacts the fate of societies. Ghaffaari Esmaa'eeli et al. (2023) emphasized that Mazandaran province needs to revise

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many programs and enhance educational indicators to achieve equality in access to educational opportunities. Zebaei et al. (2024) demonstrated that the dimensions of management and leadership; belief in collective wisdom; the level of health, safety, and hygiene in schools; the empowerment of human resources; the establishment of a teaching-learning system; and extracurricular activities are among the most important dimensions of quality enhancement in high schools in Tehran. Moqsimi (2020) identified environmental factors, teacher and student characteristics, facilities and equipment, school administration, family human relations, educational goals, teaching content, resources, and teaching methods as the most significant factors affecting school quality. Syamsiyah (2024) showed that the use of technology, especially web-based and mobile applications, facilitates communication and engagement with local communities and enhances the quality of educational services. Isa et al. (2024) concluded that the quality of educational materials is directly related to the professionalism of teachers and the implementation of educational strategies.

Given the above points, research on the educational and training quality of secondary schools in Mazandaran is one of the important issues that provides appropriate feedback for analyzing educational problems, fundamental decision-making, and strategic planning for education officials in the province. On the other hand, teachers, by being aware of their performance quality in the classroom, can reform their teaching methods and enhance their teaching quality. Additionally, it contributes to increased educational equity and serves as a foundation for reducing social and economic inequalities in Mazandaran province. Therefore, this study could be beneficial for the future success of the province's youth. Considering the emphasis of higher-level documents, such as the Fundamental Transformation Document, on educational quality in schools, the research addresses the question of what the ideal model for improving the educational and training quality of public and regular secondary schools in Mazandaran province is.

## Methodology

This research was qualitative and exploratory in nature, utilizing a grounded theory methodology with a systematic approach based on Strauss and Corbin. It aimed to identify and develop a paradigmatic model for improving the educational and training quality of public secondary schools in Mazandaran province through open, axial, and selective coding of documents, previous studies, and semi-structured interviews. The statistical population was selected through theoretical (judgmental) and purposeful sampling, which included 12 research documents and 23 experts in both academic and practical fields, comprising researchers, university professors, and educational managers and deputies from selected counties in Mazandaran province. The inductive method continued until theoretical saturation was reached to identify the main and central phenomenon, causal conditions,

contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and outcomes related to enhancing the educational and training quality of secondary schools over more than three rounds of interviews.

After reaching theoretical saturation, qualitative data analysis and consensus were conducted. To ensure the validity of the research data, methods such as member checking, auditing, participatory research, and pluralism were employed. For reliability, a structured framework for interviews was developed and utilized, monitored by calculating the inter-coder agreement using Cohen's Kappa coefficient. Specifically, four interviews were randomly coded according to the researcher's coding sheets by two experienced coders (PhD graduates in educational management), and their agreement coefficient was calculated to be 0.90.

## Findings

After consulting with university professors and experts, the research group reached a consensus. The data were categorized into 34 categories, 139 conceptual codes, and 501 items within the framework of six constructs of the paradigmatic model. These constructs are organized as follows: causal conditions (6 categories, 26 items, and 95 concepts), the central phenomenon of the research (3 categories, 48 items, and 11 concepts), strategies (3 categories, 167 items, and 24 concepts), contextual conditions (8 categories, 99 items, and 31 concepts), intervening or mediating conditions (7 categories, 48 items, and 24 concepts), and outcomes (7 categories, 44 items, and 23 concepts) (see Figure 2).

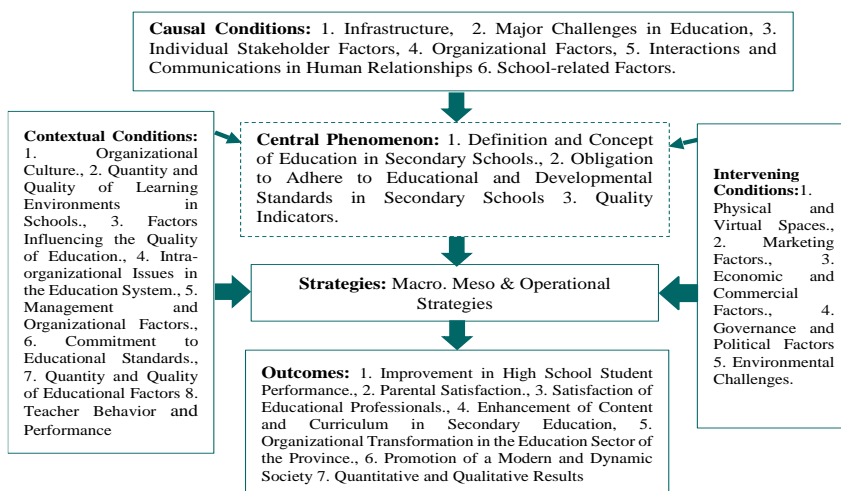


Figure 1: The Paradigmatic Model for Optimal Improvement of Educational and Developmental Quality in Regular Public Secondary Schools in Mazandaran Province

## Conclusion

The results of the research align with the findings of Moqsimi (2020) regarding facilities and equipment as part of the main phenomenon, human relationships within families as causal conditions, and the characteristics of teachers, school administrators, and students as strategies. Additionally, they correspond with environmental factors as intervening conditions. Similarly, the findings resonate with those of Syamsiyah (2024) concerning the use of technology as a strategy, communication and collaboration among educational team members as contextual conditions, and the enhancement of effective collaboration within schools as outcomes. Furthermore, the results are consistent with those of Isa et al. (2024) regarding the professional development of teachers with quality materials and educational resources as strategies, the quality of educational materials, school trainers (teachers), and parental involvement as contextual conditions, and the professional development of teachers as outcomes.

In conclusion, this research recommends that policymakers and educational administrators design and develop their educational and developmental programs based on current needs and challenges, taking into account the importance of organizational culture and effective management as key factors for the success of these programs. It is also suggested that administrators take the following steps to implement quality improvement projects in educational and developmental settings:

- Establish a quality improvement project team within the school.
- Assess and set objectives by collecting data and identifying problems, transforming them into research issues.
- Prepare for implementation and raise awareness.
- Execute the project with the commitment of school management.
- Continuously monitor progress, challenges, and issues.
- Sustain and institutionalize continuous improvement and successful quality in educational and developmental practices.
- Establish a tracking system and support services for addressing lost learning and continuously inform students and parents to compensate for any gaps.
- Among the recommendations for the education system in Mazandaran is the organization of school management through the design and development of criteria for managerial positions, along with up-to-date and periodic certification for school leadership in the province.

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