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Contextual Educational Management for Student Career Readiness In Jayapura through a Qualitative Comparison of a Senior High School and a Vocational High School

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Abstract

This article analyze the implementation of contextual educational management in strengthening students' career readiness. Program planning, educational activities, and educational experiences contribute significantly to supporting students' career readiness. This is a qualitative study employing a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. The Miles and Huberman analysis model—comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification—was used to analyze the findings. Data credibility was verified through triangulation and participant checks. The results indicate that four management functions—planning, organizing, instructional implementation, and program monitoring and evaluation—are utilized to implement contextual educational management in support of students' career readiness. Both schools employ various management techniques that link program planning with its implementation and evaluation. This study contributes to the development of an educational management model aimed at enhancing student career readiness by applying management functions tailored to the unique characteristics and orientations of each school, rather than merely replicating existing management practices. Educational programs are structured based on the interconnections among these managerial roles. Nevertheless, differences in decision-making procedures between the two schools suggest that organizational capabilities must be taken into account, and the division of tasks requires careful attention.

Keywords: *Contextual education management; Career readiness; Senior high school; Vocational high school; Jayapura*

1. INTRODUCTION

Upper secondary and vocational education function as a foundational stage for students moving toward tertiary education and employment, a transition that necessitates career preparedness. Throughout this change, individuals necessitate a robust base of information and skills to adjust proficiently. Individuals are expected to cultivate skills such as time management, effective communication, collaboration, and a willingness to pursue further education as they navigate this transitional phase (Negesso & Kenea, 2022). This indicates that the educational experiences acquired during upper secondary and vocational training are essential for enhancing an individual's preparedness for a job.

The interaction of societal trends, technology innovations, and the shifting expectations of the workforce creates substantial difficulties for schools in offering an applicable educational experience. It is inadequate for students to rely solely on academic knowledge; they are required to excel in communication, teamwork, critical analysis, technological skills, adaptability, and self-awareness regarding their capabilities and professional opportunities. This has grown more vital as the work environment transforms, compelling individuals to modify their approaches throughout their professional trajectories. Within this framework, professional preparation becomes a crucial factor that should be fostered by educational means.

Fostering career preparation is an intricate undertaking; it demands relentless skill development and a significant personal investment from the individual. The rising complexity of occupational skill prerequisites compels individuals to adjust to shifting environments (Hartini et al., 2026). This creates an obstacle for schools to guaranty that their curricula stay pertinent, thereby offering valuable educational experiences. Earlier investigations have uncovered an absence of learning awareness,

literacy, and motivation in students as they attempt to adapt to new skills (Jaedun et al., 2024). These situations distinctly obstruct the process of developing students who possess both capability and a pertinent professional direction.

Educational management, while considering the facilitation of students' career preparedness, is fundamentally intertwined with the essential roles of educational administration. Prior studies have shown a favorable relationship between resource management and educational productivity (Lemos et al., 2024). The effectiveness of a school in equipping pupils for their transitional period depends on meticulous planning, organization, execution, and oversight. These educational management functions are essential, interconnected elements of a cohesive system. In the absence of an effective management system, educational objectives cannot be fully realized (Mariyah et al., 2021).

Program design, resource allocation, the execution of educational strategies and student engagement initiatives, external collaborations, oversight mechanisms, and subsequent actions are all interrelated. When examined from this perspective, career preparedness can be perceived as a result of purposefully structured educational administration, rather than as a separate, ancillary endeavor. The necessity of linking education to the actual experiences of students intensifies in contexts marked by social and cultural variety. A student's familial history, cultural context, residential surroundings, geographical opportunities, and socioeconomic standing all shape their educational perceptions and future aspirations. Thus, education should offer learning opportunities that are intimately connected to the students' personal experiences.

Involvement in a work setting can offer students opportunity to refine practical skills and earn experience that is important to their vocational development (Ogba et al., 2022; Okolie, 2022). These observations propose that cultivating career preparedness must not be the singular obligation of guidance and counseling professionals or any one educational scheme. The development of career preparedness is determined by the numerous encounters students have during their academic tenure. The syllabus, instructional strategies, personal enhancement activities, career support, extracurricular programs, practical experience, teacher competency advancement, and the school's collaboration with the professional environment all contribute to this process. Additionally, a significant association between academic institutions and the business environment is imperative for aiding schools in recognizing the precise abilities that are authentically demanded in the workplace.

Past investigations have explored professional preparedness from an array of angles. (Moore & Thaller, 2023) contend that vocational preparedness consists of a range of abilities that should be fostered during the course of education. Points out the vital contribution of work placement assignments in easing the movement from academia into professional environments. Other research endeavors have investigated the associations between practical abilities, self-efficacy, and the emergence of career-preparation activities (Ogba et al., 2022; Okolie, 2022). Studies examining the gap between student qualifications and employer standards show that educational programs must deliver experiences that are more in harmony with the expectations of the job market (Doherty-Restrepo et al., 1 2023). Despite these studies establishing a firm basis for the significance of competencies, experiential learning, and connections to the professional domain, there exists potential for further inquiry into career readiness through the perspective of how educational institutions navigate these various processes within specific sociocultural environments.

The sociocultural attributes of a community, the heterogeneous backgrounds of pupils, geographical circumstances, local resources, and the necessities of the professional landscape suggest that educational administration in each school must not adhere to a strictly standardized method. Academic establishments want the capacity to modify their curricula to suit the particular needs of their pupils and the local context. Within this setting, contextual education functions as a basis for aligning community needs with the dynamic demands of the educational sphere and professional sectors.

Jayapura City and Jayapura Regency exhibit comparatively elevated unemployment rates within Papua Province. The count of jobless persons in Jayapura City is 14,436, whereas Jayapura Regency has 6,301 (BPS of Papua Province, 2026) This unemployment issue is especially troubling as it predominantly affects graduates from senior high schools and technical high schools. This prompts an inquiry: what accounts for the elevated unemployment rates among the working-age demographic? This

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circumstance necessitates additional research to design strategies for enhancing the capabilities of the youth. In this context, the function of educational institutions is vital. Schools, in collaboration with pertinent stakeholders, should engage in formulating strategies, executing initiatives, and proactively identifying opportunities to guaranty that students are prepared for their careers (Bhat & Stevens, 2021).

In light of these factors, this analysis contends that the fortification of career readiness should be seen as an integrated procedure. A study of the students' conditions and their milieu serves as the foundation for program design. This plan is then put into action through the arrangement of resources, the execution of instructional and student development programs, the fortification of partnerships with the professional sector, and persistent monitoring and assessment. The findings from these evaluations later influence further measures and advancements in the program. This study seeks to analyze the execution of contextual educational management in bolstering students' preparation for professional endeavors.

2. METHODS

This study is based on a qualitative methodology and uses a case study approach. This was done as the researcher wanted to understand how contextual educational management is provided so as to promote students' career preparedness as per their individual circumstances. The research was conducted at one of the senior high schools (School A) and one of the vocational high schools (School B) located in Jayapura Regency and Jayapura City. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their relationship with and knowledge of the particular elements under investigation. The informants are two principals of the schools, two vise principals for curriculum and four teachers.

Data was collected through extensive interviewing, observation and document analysis between May and July 2026. Interviews were semi-structured and extensive, based on a methodology developed to suit the research focus. The observations included direct observation of activities concerning educational management, teaching and learning process, interactions between educators and students, personal development initiatives, career counseling, and the school's interactions with the wider community. Document analysis was used to complement the insights gained from interviews and observations . Documents reviewed included educational strategies and operational programs, instructional initiatives, student development activities, partnership agreements and other records related to student career progression. Owing to the qualitative nature of the study, the research instruments were flexible and evolved throughout the investigation. Further inquiries were conducted whenever the investigator encountered unclear data or uncovered relevant information. This kind of flexibility is important to be able to fully analyse the experiences and perspectives of the informants.

The obtained data were analyzed interactively during the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion development/verification (Miles et al., 2014). The data condensation stage involved transcribing interviews, performing several readings, and analyzing the results from observations and documents. The data presentation was required to show the three types of data and then integrate and analyze to derive the significance. Ultimately, the stage of drawing conclusions entails formulating inferences derived from the previously synthesized data.

Credibility of data was assessed using triangulation and member check. Besides technique triangulation, we used source triangulation to compare the results obtained from interviews, observation, and documentation. Member verification was executed by cross-referencing the researcher's interpretations with the informants to guaranty the correctness of the meanings obtained.

3. RESULT

Implementation of Contextual Educational Management in Strengthening Career Readiness

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Table 1. Implementation of Contextual Educational Management in Both Schools

Aspects	School A	School B
Planning	School programs are established through analysis and planning gatherings that include relevant parties, according with the program's objectives. Long-term plans are dictated by the outcomes of a five-year evaluation, medium-term plans are shaped by a three-year evaluation, and short-term plans are informed by an annual evaluation. Sessions designed to outline long-term and medium-term programs are attended by the school committee, teaching personnel, and other educational staff, while those for short-term programs are limited to the teaching staff alone.	The School Program Development Team is responsible for the creation of all educational programs, whether they are long-term, medium-term, or short-term. These schemes are constructed using the monitoring and assessment documentation of previously executed projects, as prepared by the Internal Quality Assurance Team.
Organizing	The head administrator assigns the duty of executing and advancing each educational program to vice-principals, instructors, and additional educational personnel, grounded in the tenets of empowerment, proficiency, and efficacy.	Responsibility for the initiation and enhancement of each program is determined by the corresponding primary duties and functions, with a focus on the responsibilities of the school vice-principals.
Implementation of Instruction	Intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular learning are implemented in an integrated manner.	Focus on intracurricular learning, reinforced by cocurricular learning that engages external parties to provide practical experience.
Educational Orientation	Instruction is to enable learners to make astute choices related to their future studies or the professions they intend to follow.	Instruction is crafted to equip students for exploration in their selected domain of specialization.
Program Monitoring/Evaluation	The monitoring of school programs is managed by the appropriate program heads, who communicate directly with the school principal. The evaluation of programs occurs within a set timeframe to assess the success of school initiatives.	The Internal Quality Assurance Team of the institution performs regular assessments and evaluations of programs to ascertain their efficacy.

3.1 Planning

At School A, all stakeholders is integral to the evaluation and creation of academic programs. Stakeholders in these processes—reflecting the program's objectives—have a uniform capacity to deliver opinions and critiques on the administration of present initiatives and the design of future endeavors. The conclusions of these analyzes and program structures are later included in the school's long-range, intermediate, and immediate operational plans. At School B, the Internal Quality Assurance Team significantly contributes to the monitoring and appraisal of programs, laying the groundwork for the School Program Development Team to design long-term, medium-term, and short-term strategies. As a result, both schools employ evaluation outcomes for planning; nevertheless, they diverge in their procedures for making decisions. Institution A implements a consultative decision-making framework, allowing stakeholders extensive involvement in the appraisal and creation of programs. Alternatively,

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School B adopts a methodical decision-making approach facilitated by its Internal Quality Assurance Team and School Program Development Team.

3.2 Organizing

At School A, the head administrator allocates program duties to vice-principals, educators, and other academic personnel according to their respective skills and achievements—this strategy fosters substantial career advancement chances. At School B, educational initiatives are executed in alignment with the fundamental responsibilities, operational capabilities, and jurisdiction of each participant, particularly highlighting the functions of the vice-principals. While both schools use the principle of dividing responsibilities, School A focuses more on empowerment, whereas School B places greater emphasis on well defined structures and authority.

3.3 Implementation of Instruction

School A employs a cohesive strategy for intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular engagements. These three categories of activities constitute an integral component of the educational process. Intracurricular activities provide the foundation of the curriculum, occurring during designated instructional periods. Cocurricular activities are intended to meet particular educational requirements, with the goal of enhancing and enriching students' experiences. Simultaneously, extracurricular pursuits provide a venue for students to articulate their identities and investigate their individual passions and abilities.

School B emphasizes structured intracurricular education, augmented by cocurricular engagements with external collaborators who offer mentorship and practical experience pertinent to students' selected disciplines. Both institutions have cultivated synergistic educational experiences, united by the objective of providing superior education, yet each prioritizes distinct aspects according to its unique focus. School A, as a conventional high school, adopts a certain instructional strategy, whereas School B, a vocational institution, implements a specialized methodology aligned with its educational objectives.

3.4 Educational Orientation

Both institutions evaluate students' preferences and foundational skills, but, they vary in the educational objectives they seek to accomplish. At School A, educational resources are categorized according to student specializations, established upon initial enrollment. Alongside evaluating student preferences, the institution utilizes academic transcripts from the students' prior educational stage to allocate them to designated tracks. The educational program at School A aims to assist students in recognizing their own skills and abilities, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and experience to make educated choices regarding their future academic pursuits or to seek direct work after graduation. This method enables learners to investigate the relationships between their present education and their prospective aspirations. At School B, incoming students choose a specialization pathway from the available possibilities. Every program is designed to equip graduates for employment; thus, the syllabus emphasizes hands-on instruction to enhance proficiency in a particular discipline. Consequently, experiential learning is an essential element in fulfilling the educational goals of the institution.

3.5 Program Monitoring/Evaluation

At School A, the assessment and oversight of educational initiatives are conducted by personnel appointed by the school principal. Every individual responsible for a program communicates directly with the principal with the progress of its execution. Assessments are performed regularly to ascertain the efficacy of the initiatives. These sessions engage pertinent stakeholders, contingent upon the characteristics and length of the particular program. At School B, the oversight and assessment of educational programs are conducted by an Internal School Quality Assurance Team. This group was formed to guaranty the excellence of each educational initiative. Consequently, whereas both institutions do monitoring and evaluation to gage program efficacy—utilizing the results for subsequent program development—they adopt divergent organizational frameworks for executing these activities.

Results of the study suggest that the implementation of contextual educational management, designed to enhance students' career readiness, is executed in every school via a network of interrelated activities. These initiatives are evident in the manner schools strategize, allocate duties, execute teaching aimed at fostering student capabilities, and do assessments and evaluations of educational programs. Every educational institution cultivates its resources in alignment with its unique requirements. Despite differing educational philosophies among schools, the execution of learning experiences is invariably associated with the skills that graduates would need in their future careers.

These results indicate that the educational administration in each institution is organized as an interrelated framework that includes planning, organizing, executing focused instruction, and conducting monitoring and assessment. Strategic planning establishes the program's trajectory; organization assigns duties; the execution of focused teaching converts educational objectives into learning encounters; and assessment and evaluation yield insights for program enhancement. Nevertheless, the efficacy of the interrelations among these elements cannot be conclusively determined at this time. Additional proof is necessary about the caliber of stakeholder engagement, the use of evaluation findings in decision-making processes, and the influence of these programs on instructional quality and student performance.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Evaluation-Based Planning

In both schools, evaluation results serve as a foundation for planning school programs. The value of evaluation lies in assessing the quality of a program and the performance of the human resources involved, which in turn informs the design of improved development initiatives (Hina et al., 2024). Although the decision-making mechanisms for program planning differ between the two schools, this demonstrates that contextual educational management can be realized through approaches tailored to each school's unique characteristics.

The participatory approach employed by School A allows all stakeholders to contribute to shaping the institution's development trajectory. This fosters a constructive governance system, where collaboration among the principal, the school committee, educational staff, and other stakeholders plays a vital role in developing school programs aimed at enhancing quality (Prasetyo, 2022). Conversely, the structured approach used by School B—which assigns specific teams to handle decision-making and program planning—cultivates a culture of order within the institution. These teams work in a structured manner, utilizing data and criteria to gauge the necessary scope of institutional development, thereby ensuring that decision-making outcomes are optimal and aligned with organizational goals (Fathoni et al., 2025).

These differences illustrate that contextual educational management can be effectively implemented through either participatory or structured approaches. These findings offer educational institutions the opportunity to manage their operations in a way that aligns with their specific characteristics. Schools must ensure that their planning is genuinely responsive to the needs of their students. This requires going beyond a mere focus on the roles of specific stakeholders; schools should also leverage research data and other field-based information to design programs that effectively address the needs of their students.

4.2 Integration of Learning Experiences and Student Career Readiness

Differences in learning orientation between School A and School B do not necessarily suggest a mismatch in the quality of instruction; rather, they highlight how a school’s learning orientation impacts the design of the learning experiences delivered to students. This fits with prior studies, which imply that contextual learning experiences should be founded in an institution’s essential commitments (Mansyur & Mirza, 2026). Every institution possesses its own particular perspective regarding the desirable traits of its graduates. Through a combination of intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities, School A develops profession preparedness by concentrating on interest exploration, the mastering of general competencies, and future planning. In contrast, School B fosters

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career preparedness by giving students with opportunities to enhance their skills and receive practical, field-based experience in their areas of interest.

These diverse learning approaches benefit students as they prepare for higher education or the transfer into the workforce. Indeed, each learning experience helps foster problem-solving techniques, creativity, cooperation, and other competencies required for professional life. Creativity has been demonstrated to increase the development of soft skills, foster innovation, and facilitate effective problem-solving (Rua & Maia, 2023). In the present era, collaboration is a precondition for high-level performance, making it a vital competence for any professional. An individual who can communicate effectively, develop meaningful connections, and constructively resolve disputes exhibits excellent collaborative competence (Wynda & Hufad, 2025). It is consequently vital for schools to combine varied learning experiences to build students' soft skills and bolster their professional preparation.

4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation as a Mechanism for Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

The differing procedures for implementing monitoring and assessment at the two schools provide as evidence of the implementation of contextual educational management. These structural changes should not govern the quality of the monitoring and evaluation outputs. Monitoring and evaluation play a significant role in making continual changes; consequently, the structures and procedures adopted can—and should—be adapted to the individual demands of each school. The key focus should be on how the information acquired is utilized to detect gaps between plans and implementation, and how it serves as a basis for designing programs with the potential to enhance quality (Gustiani et al., 2023). It is necessary for schools to have success indicators integrated into their programs to monitor everything from processes to end outcomes. Such indicators improve monitoring and strengthen data-driven decision-making (Zulkarnain et al., 2025). The authors suggest that the growth of students' competences and career preparation should be a main focus when developing these indicators, guaranteeing that the outcomes of monitoring and assessment can successfully drive policies for ongoing improvement.

4.4 Synthesis of Contextual Education Management Models in Supporting Career Readiness

Contextual educational management in support of student career readiness acts as a cycle that incorporates planning, the delegation of responsibilities, learning experiences, and supervision. The implementation of these management functions cannot occur in isolation; rather, they are interconnected and must operate successfully in unison to achieve desired outcomes. Consequently, to encourage student career readiness, every management function performed by a school must be guided by a consistent set of principles.

Planning must cover the interpretation of the school’s vision and goal, the formulation of policies, and the assessment of the quality of resources available to support program implementation. The delegation of duties gives the essential scope for skilled human resources to contribute to the program's success. Learning experiences for students become high-quality when all school resources are mobilized to carry out their individual roles and responsibilities optimally, in conformity with the school’s pedagogical perspective. Supervision—comprising both monitoring and evaluation—should be undertaken using explicit instruments that are directly linked to the program's specified objectives. This guarantees that the outputs of such supervision guide future planning. Ultimately, the cycle established by these management activities develops a culture of excellence, which in turn enhances the overall quality of the institution.

A contextual educational management model—developed by schools through the use of a management function cycle—holds tremendous potential for boosting students' career preparedness. Through this model, schools can adjust their approaches to the features of their pupils, the socio-cultural demands of the community, and the specific circumstances of the labor market, notably in Papua. Educational, personal, and environmental factors all influence an individual's preparation for work (Kirani & Chusairi, 2022). This indicates that learning must provide authentic and meaningful experiences; that the development of positive individual character is crucial; and that the ever-changing environmental context must be taken into account when creating policies.

Contextual educational management acts as a system that links organizational decision-making with students' learning experiences. The exact tactics a school employs to implement this constitute an achievement that can be further fostered, along with the school's unique features and capabilities. Consistency across goals, programs, the distribution of duties, learning experiences, and the effective use of monitoring outcomes is vital to a school's capacity to nurture students' career preparedness.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of contextual educational management in supporting students' career readiness is realized through the interplay of four management functions: planning, organizing responsibilities, executing instruction, and monitoring and evaluating programs. Both schools utilize evaluation outcomes as a foundation for planning, adjusting their program management to their distinct educational qualities and orientations. School A employs a participatory decision-making process and empowers resources based on competence and performance, whereas School B stresses a structured approach through school teams, with responsibilities divided according to specified duties, roles, capacities, and authority. Thus, the adoption of contextual educational management in both schools is represented in separate management systems that systematically link program design with execution and evaluation.

Regarding career readiness, School A blends intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular programs to assist interest exploration, the mastering of general competences, and planning for further education or work. Meanwhile, School B emphasizes the deepening of specific skills and practical experience, engaging external stakeholders to prepare students for entry into the workforce. These findings demonstrate that contextual educational management encourages profession preparedness by providing learning experiences adapted to each school's educational orientation and the future capabilities expected by students. However, given the managerial and instructional methods seen, this support remains a matter of potential; its actual usefulness in boosting career readiness cannot yet be definitely verified. Further inquiry is required, specifically addressing the quality of stakeholder participation, the application of evaluation outcomes in decision-making, and the influence of these programs on the quality of instruction and student accomplishment

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