



The Role of Self-Efficacy and Soft Skills in Improving Academic Quality at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills in improving the academic quality of students at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu. This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The research participants consisted of teachers and students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through online interviews conducted via WhatsApp to explore the experiences and perspectives of the participants. The data were analyzed descriptively to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing learning process. The findings indicate that the implementation of self-efficacy is carried out through the provision of motivation, positive feedback, and opportunities for students to actively participate in learning activities. These practices enhance students' self-confidence, perseverance, and ability to face learning challenges. Soft skills development is promoted through collaborative learning activities, such as group discussions, presentations, and teamwork assignments, which contribute to improving communication skills, responsibility, and student engagement in the learning process. A conducive school environment also supports the improvement of academic quality through a comfortable learning atmosphere, positive interactions, and well-directed learning activities. Therefore, the implementation of self-efficacy, the development of soft skills, and a supportive school environment are interconnected factors that contribute significantly to improving students' academic quality.

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Introduction

Educational success can be measured by academic quality. Students' academic quality is influenced by various factors, both internal to the students themselves and stemming from the school learning environment, including a learning climate and organizational structure that support the learning process (Abdullah, 2018). Teachers play

a role in providing educational services to students and are also a factor that determines educational success (Silitonga et al., 2025). They are also a key element in the direct learning process with students, helping to create high-achieving students (Rozak et al., 2021). Widespread and equitable access is an essential prerequisite for improving the quality of education, as without adequate access, students' academic potential cannot be fully developed (Gu et al., 2025).

Academic quality is an assessment of the quality of the learning process and outcomes, encompassing various aspects such as student abilities, teacher competencies, curriculum, facilities, and educational evaluation results (Hirst et al., 2018). However, according to Khairul Azan, academic quality is a crucial component in achieving high-quality educational management (Xie & Zhou, 2025). As service providers, higher education institutions are required to provide the best possible service in all educational offerings (Azan et al., 2017). Meanwhile, in the research by Nadira Martasubrata and Suwatno, academic quality is the result of the quality of educational processes, such as teaching, instructional materials, tools, curriculum, and facilities. All of these are assessed through how teachers or lecturers teach, the content of their instructional materials, and students' learning outcomes, which ultimately shape their abilities (Martasubrata & Suwatno, 2016).

One of the internal factors that plays a role in improving academic quality is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy relates to an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks and face academic challenges (Kumar & Shukla, 2022). Students with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident, do not give up easily, and have better learning motivation. In addition, soft skills are non-technical abilities that include intrapersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, empathy, time management, and adaptability, which are important in both social and academic life (Ofori-Manteaw et al., 2025). Meanwhile, according to Ricchiardi, soft skills are an individual's abilities to demonstrate high-quality performance and contribute to perceived well-being (Ricchiardi & Emanuel, 2018). The social environment encompasses all social conditions surrounding an individual, including interactions with family, peers, teachers, and the community, which can influence the development of one's attitudes, behaviors, and academic achievements, as well as their emotional support in daily life (José María et al., 2025). Teachers and school administrators also play a crucial role in fostering this motivation through recognition, meaningful learning, and a school culture that supports a spirit of achievement. However, in reality, many students still study merely to meet academic requirements without having the intrinsic drive to achieve the best possible results (Al Hakim et al., 2021).

According to Peter Senge, a learning organization is one that continuously develops individuals' capacity to create the outcomes they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, collective aspirations are unleashed, and people continually learn to see the whole picture together (CANNAVÒ et al., 2025). A learning organization is an organization in which every individual continuously develops

their own capabilities to achieve truly desired outcomes, where broad and innovative mindsets are constantly nurtured, shared aspirations are honed, and everyone continually learns to view the whole picture in an integrated manner. The underlying rationale for such an organization is that in a situation of rapid change, only organizations capable of being flexible, adaptive, and productive will be able to survive and excel (Triana & Sahertian, 2020). Numerous studies on academic quality have been conducted using the self-efficacy and soft skills approaches (Cantoni et al., 2024). For example, several previous studies have focused on the direct influence of self-efficacy on students' academic achievement, as well as the development of soft skills in collaborative learning (Wang et al., 2024). While previous studies have emphasized the importance of individual internal factors in academic achievement, the approach in this study adds a social dimension as a determining factor for learning success (Buayai et al., 2025).

The development of students' soft skills also continues to face various challenges. Soft skills such as communication, collaboration, emotional regulation, and academic responsibility have not yet been fully developed to their full potential. This is evident from the lack of active student participation in effective collaborative learning within the school environment (Qeadan et al., 2025). Another factor is students' motivation to achieve; there are still students with low learning motivation, who study merely to meet academic requirements, and who lack strong internal goals and drive to achieve their best. Such low motivation has the potential to weaken students' perseverance, discipline, and consistency in the learning process, thereby leading to suboptimal learning outcomes (Imjai et al., 2025).

Academic quality is influenced by many factors, both within the students themselves and in their environment. Belief in one's own abilities encourages students to face academic challenges, maintain learning motivation, and persist in achieving academic success (Imjai et al., 2025). Strong soft skills support collaboration and communication in learning. However, while students possess internal potential, success in achieving academic quality remains heavily influenced by the quality of a supportive social environment (Gong et al., 2020). Effective teaching creates a collaborative learning environment in which teachers and students support one another in the process of self-development. Through interactive teaching approaches and a positive learning atmosphere, students are encouraged to be more active, express their opinions confidently, and continuously develop their skills throughout the learning process (Huang, 2025). Conversely, an ineffective learning process can hinder the optimal development of students' potential (Mardiyah et al., 2020). Therefore, students' academic success depends not only on personal ability but is also influenced by the quality of instruction provided by teachers, such as the use of appropriate methods, a conducive learning environment, and positive interactions during the learning process (Annajah & Falah, 2017). Thus, students' academic quality can be improved through synergy between

psychological (self-efficacy), social (soft skills), and contextual (learning organization) factors (Gunadi, 2017).

Students' academic performance is influenced by various factors, both internal and external to the learning environment. However, in practice, there are still students who have low self-confidence and underdeveloped social skills. This situation results in a lack of participation in learning, a reluctance to express opinions, and an inability to collaborate with peers. Additionally, there are still students who easily give up when facing learning difficulties, which affects their academic outcomes (Qeadan et al., 2025). Therefore, appropriate efforts are needed to develop self-efficacy and soft skills as key factors in improving students' academic performance (Smith, 2022).

This study is of particular interest because it specifically examines the role of the school learning environment a factor that has received limited attention in previous research. Furthermore, this study is designed within the context of secondary education, where students are expected not only to possess cognitive and creative abilities but also to be able to adapt to the learning environment (Lei et al., 2022). Thus, this study makes a theoretical and practical contribution by comprehensively integrating individual and contextual variables to predict students' academic quality, and proposes a new framework that is adaptable to modern educational challenges. The identification of problems within educational institutions specifically, student academic quality remains a critical issue in the implementation of secondary education. Although various efforts to improve the quality of learning have been undertaken, the reality is that there are still students who have not achieved optimal learning outcomes (Haase et al., 2018).

Thus, this situation indicates that academic quality is not solely influenced by cognitive aspects but is also shaped by psychological and social factors, as well as the school's learning environment, which significantly supports students' learning processes (Qeadan et al., 2025). SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu was selected as the research site because the school demonstrates a supportive learning environment, active teacher involvement, and various student development activities that are relevant to the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills. In addition, the school provides a suitable context for examining how psychological and social factors contribute to the improvement of students' academic quality. This study is expected to provide a broad overview of how to comprehensively improve academic quality in schools. This study aims to complement previous research by examining the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills on students' academic quality at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the school's efforts in designing more effective learning strategies, as well as serve as a basis for educators in developing students' psychological aspects and skills to enhance academic quality.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the application of self-efficacy and soft skills in improving

academic quality. This approach was chosen because the study focuses on the processes, meanings, and practices that occur within the specific context of the school environment. This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu, which was selected through purposive sampling because the school provides a learning environment that supports students' academic development and demonstrates practices related to the development of self-efficacy and soft skills. The school was deemed relevant to the objectives of this study. The research subjects were identified through purposive sampling and included teachers and students directly involved in the learning process. The informants consisted of three participants one teacher and two students selected based on their involvement and understanding of the application of self-efficacy, soft skills, and the improvement of academic quality at the school. Data were collected through online interviews conducted via WhatsApp to explore the participants' experiences and perspectives. WhatsApp was chosen because it offers time efficiency, ease of communication, and flexibility for participants to respond according to their availability without disrupting their daily activities. The data were analyzed descriptively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from teachers and students to identify similarities and differences in their perspectives regarding the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills in improving academic quality.

Result

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks and overcome challenges. In the learning process, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in encouraging students to be more confident, active, and resilient during classroom instruction. Students with high self-efficacy tend to have better learning motivation and are able to achieve optimal academic results. Some students realize that difficulties in the learning process are not merely a test of academic ability, but rather part of a broader and meaningful learning process. These difficulties are viewed as experiences that can build resilience in learning and enhance understanding of the material being studied.

Students who possess this awareness tend to demonstrate a more positive attitude when facing academic challenges. Furthermore, students who emphasize the importance of motivation and self-development recognize that the learning experience at school is not solely focused on achieving grades but also serves as a means to develop critical thinking skills, independence, and a more adaptive mindset. They understand that every process including failures and difficulties is an essential part of building stronger personal capabilities. Soft skills are non-technical abilities related to personality, social aspects, and how individuals interact with others. Soft skills also include communication, collaboration, responsibility, and self-management skills.

The research findings indicate that students found the learning process to be quite comfortable and supportive. This was evident in the teachers' clear delivery of the material and the conducive classroom atmosphere, which made it easier for students to

understand the lessons. In addition, teaching methods that included practice exercises also helped improve students' academic understanding.

"During class, I felt quite comfortable because the teacher explained the material clearly and the classroom atmosphere was supportive. This approach to learning helped me understand the lessons more easily, especially with the practice problems that deepened my understanding. The teacher was also very helpful in boosting my self-confidence, as he often gave me opportunities to answer questions and speak in front of the class. At first I felt nervous, but over time I got used to it and became more confident in expressing my opinions." S1

Students also noted that teachers play a crucial role in boosting their self-confidence. By giving them opportunities to answer questions and speak in front of the class, students become more confident in expressing their opinions. Although they felt nervous at first, they gradually got used to it and experienced an increase in self-confidence throughout the learning process.

"I often discuss and collaborate with my friends, and I find that very helpful because it allows us to exchange ideas and understand the material better. In addition, I am motivated to study because of the support I receive from my teachers and parents, as well as my own desire to achieve good results." S2

Based on the students' statements, it is clear that discussions and collaboration among students help them better understand the learning material. In addition, students' motivation to learn is also influenced by support from teachers and parents, as well as their own inner drive to achieve optimal results. Soft skills are developed through learning activities such as group discussions, presentations, and collaboration among students. Teachers integrate soft skills into learning so that students not only understand the material but are also able to interact well with their peers and teachers. The development of soft skills by teachers enhances students' engagement in the learning process and helps them understand the material better, thereby improving academic quality.

Soft skills are a key factor in supporting students' academic success, as they focus not only on cognitive aspects but also on the development of attitudes and behavior. Strong soft skills help students adapt to the learning environment, collaborate in groups, and effectively communicate their ideas and opinions. Soft skills are non-technical abilities related to students' communication, collaboration, and social interaction. The development of soft skills in learning is an integral part of efforts to improve academic quality. Thus, the academic experiences students undergo serve not only as formal learning activities but also as a foundation for shaping the attitudes, character, and skills that support their learning success. This demonstrates that the development of self-

efficacy and soft skills plays a crucial role in helping students navigate various challenges throughout the learning process.

Academic quality refers to the extent to which students achieve optimal learning outcomes, in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Academic quality is not measured solely by grades or achievements, but also reflects students' ability to understand the material, think critically, and apply their knowledge in daily life. Thus, academic quality is influenced by various factors, including individual ability, learning strategies, the learning environment, and support from teachers and the school. Therefore, improving academic quality cannot be done in isolation but must be approached comprehensively, including the development of self-efficacy, soft skills, and effective learning organization. Furthermore, academic quality also reflects the extent to which students are able to meet the competency standards established in the learning process.

The research findings indicate that teachers at the school have implemented various teaching strategies focused on developing students' self-efficacy and soft skills in an effort to improve academic quality. In the learning process, teachers not only emphasize the delivery of content but also strive to foster students' self-confidence, communication skills, and ability to collaborate. Furthermore, the learning implemented in the classroom is supported by a conducive learning environment, which creates an effective learning atmosphere and encourages active student engagement. The integration of self-efficacy and soft skills into the learning process is a key factor in improving students' academic quality.

"In the classroom, I usually assign tasks in stages based on the students' abilities, accompanied by positive feedback so they feel capable of completing their assignments. In addition, I encourage students to try new things without fear of making mistakes, acknowledge their efforts, and create a safe and comfortable learning environment. I also actively engage students by giving them opportunities to present and share their opinions in front of the class to boost their self-confidence. I foster students' skills through learning activities such as group work, discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects. Through these activities, students can exchange ideas, making the material easier to understand." T1

The teachers at the school have implemented learning strategies focused on building students' self-confidence by assigning tasks in stages according to their abilities, accompanied by positive feedback to help them feel capable of completing their assignments. In addition, teachers also encourage students to dare to try without fear of making mistakes, give appreciation to students at the school for every effort made, and create a safe and comfortable learning environment. In the learning process, teachers actively involve students by giving them opportunities to present in front of the class or a

larger audience and express their opinions, so that their self-confidence can develop gradually.

In addition, teachers also adapt the learning process to the circumstances and needs of the students in the classroom. They do this by choosing more interactive methods, actively engaging students, and creating a stress-free learning environment. As a result, the material becomes easier to understand and helps boost students' participation and confidence in their learning activities.

“ In my opinion, the soft skills most frequently developed are communication and collaboration, as both are crucial for social interaction and also support students' academic success. Collaboration and interaction among students greatly aid the learning process, as they can share ideas with one another and better understand the material. A conducive, structured classroom environment that supports students' active participation also significantly influences the learning process. However, there are still challenges, such as students' fear of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, and the influence of past experiences. Therefore, schools need to provide facilities, offer training for teachers, and create a positive and inclusive learning environment so that students' learning outcomes can improve optimally.” T1

With a focus on developing soft skills in the classroom, teachers strive to instill communication and collaboration skills as essential components of the learning process. Interaction among students serves as a means for them to exchange ideas and better understand the material. Additionally, a conducive and structured classroom environment also supports students' active engagement in learning. However, there are still some challenges, such as a lack of self-confidence and a fear of making mistakes; therefore, support from the school is needed to create a more positive learning environment that fosters student development.

These achievements are not only measured by final grades but also by the learning process itself, such as active engagement in lessons, the ability to complete assignments, and participation in academic activities. Thus, academic quality serves as a key indicator in assessing the success of the educational process at school. Furthermore, high academic quality is influenced by the involvement of various stakeholders, including teachers, students, and the school environment as a whole. Teachers play a role in designing and implementing effective instruction, while students are expected to demonstrate motivation and responsibility in their learning. A supportive school environment such as adequate facilities and a conducive learning atmosphere also contributes to improving academic quality.

Discussion

The Role of Self-Efficacy in Improving Academic Quality

The implementation of self-efficacy in improving academic quality is evident through various learning strategies designed to foster students' self-confidence. Based on interviews with teachers, the efforts undertaken include providing motivation, positive feedback, and opportunities for students to present and express their opinions in front of the class. This approach creates a supportive learning environment that does not judge mistakes, allowing students to feel safer to try new things and grow. Students reported that teachers' support significantly influenced their confidence in completing assignments and taking exams. When teachers acknowledge their efforts, students become more confident in their abilities (Gavrila et al., 2025).

Classroom observations also show that students with high self-efficacy tend to be more active, more persistent, and less likely to give up when faced with academic challenges. This indicates that the development of self-efficacy impacts not only psychological aspects but also engagement and perseverance in learning. Theoretically, self-efficacy reflects an individual's belief in their ability to complete academic tasks. Individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to be more confident, more diligent, and possess greater resilience when facing learning challenges (Zhang & Qian, 2024).

In an educational context, self-efficacy serves as an internal motivator that influences how students set goals, choose learning strategies, and persevere when facing difficulties. The findings of this study are also consistent with previous research indicating that self-efficacy influences an individual's mindset, emotions, and actions. Students who are confident in their abilities are more willing to try new things and better prepared to accept learning challenges (Shao & Kang, 2022). This belief encourages them to remain focused on their academic goals and not give up easily when faced with obstacles. Thus, fostering self-efficacy through teacher support, a supportive classroom culture, and opportunities for growth has proven to be a key factor in improving academic quality. Self-efficacy not only boosts learning motivation but also strengthens students' perseverance and the quality of their engagement in the learning process. Therefore, developing self-efficacy should be an integral part of a sustainable strategy for enhancing academic quality in schools (Haase et al., 2018).

These findings indicate that self-efficacy is an important factor among students; however, students with high self-efficacy tend to view learning difficulties as part of the learning process rather than merely as obstacles (González Moreno et al., 2024). Theoretically, self-efficacy relates to an individual's belief in their ability to act and achieve success (Elisabeth Christina Tumanggor et al., 2022). In an educational context, this belief primarily impacts personal performance, such as improved academic quality, engagement in learning, and perseverance in the face of challenges.

However, such self-confidence does not automatically determine the direction and quality of the learning process in a systemic and collective manner. This situation can be understood because the learning process in schools generally already has established systems, rules, and structured mechanisms. Therefore, even if individuals possess high self-efficacy, its impact on improving academic quality still depends on leadership support, teacher coordination, and a collaborative culture fostered within the school environment (Baswara, 2023). Improvements in academic quality are largely determined by synergy among school community members, effective communication, and a shared commitment to enhancing the quality of education. Thus, while the implementation of self-efficacy in improving academic quality continues to play a significant role at the individual level, strengthening academic quality requires a more comprehensive approach. Improving academic quality must be supported by a robust management system, visionary leadership, and a sustainable culture of collaboration (Yang & Zhao, 2021). Therefore, the development of self-efficacy should be integrated with the strengthening of school factors so that improvements in academic quality can occur comprehensively and sustainably.

The Application of Soft Skills in Improving Academic Quality

Research findings indicate that soft skills contribute to improved academic quality. Soft skills include communication, teamwork, discipline, responsibility, and self-management, all of which are essential for academic success. In the learning process, soft skills help students adapt more easily to the learning environment, work effectively in groups, and participate more actively in discussions and other academic activities (Wang et al., 2024). These skills will indirectly improve the quality of the learning process and learning outcomes. Students with strong soft skills tend to be better at managing their time, more responsible toward academic tasks, and more open to feedback from teachers and peers. This has a positive impact on overall academic achievement. Additionally, soft skills play a role in fostering positive learning attitudes, such as discipline, perseverance, and commitment to achieving goals. These attitudes will foster continuous academic excellence. Therefore, the development of soft skills in education not only supports academic success but also shapes students' character and prepares them to face future challenges (Li et al., 2020).

Soft skills are developed through collaborative learning, group discussions, presentations, and the division of responsibilities in academic assignments. Teachers deliberately design activities that foster students' communication, cooperation, and sense of responsibility. Interview results indicate that students find it easier to understand the material when discussing it with peers. Communication skills help them exchange ideas and clarify their understanding of concepts. Additionally, the practice of taking responsibility in group tasks fosters discipline and commitment to learning outcomes. Classroom observations reveal that active interaction among students creates a more

dynamic learning environment. The soft skills developed through this process contribute to improved task quality and material comprehension, which ultimately support academic quality.

The implementation of soft skills in improving academic quality is evident in learning activities that emphasize communication, cooperation, responsibility, and emotional regulation. Based on interview results, teachers actively design group discussion activities, presentations, and role assignments in collaborative tasks to develop students' interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Through these activities, students learn to express their opinions openly, respect others' perspectives, and take responsibility for assigned tasks. Research findings indicate that soft skills not only improve the quality of classroom interactions but also contribute to academic quality. Strong communication skills, collaboration, leadership, and empathy help create a more effective and conducive learning environment. This environment strongly supports improved learning outcomes and academic quality among students (Ricchiardi & Emanuel, 2018).

In an educational context, soft skills encourage students to be more open to new ideas, to respect differing opinions, and to resolve conflicts constructively. These qualities are essential for maintaining the continuity and quality of the learning process. When students possess strong interpersonal skills, the exchange of knowledge and experiences becomes more effective, thereby enriching the collective learning experience. Furthermore, soft skills foster a culture of collaboration and mutual learning within the school environment. Students with strong soft skills tend to work more easily in teams, support one another, and demonstrate a commitment to learning objectives. This indicates that the development of soft skills not only impacts students' individual academic quality but also supports the improvement of overall academic quality (González Moreno et al., 2024). The implementation of soft skills is a key strategy for creating an effective, inclusive learning process that is focused on improving academic quality. Soft skills must be developed on an ongoing basis through collaborative learning practices and a school culture that fosters positive interactions among students.

The Role of the School Environment in Supporting Academic Quality Improvement

The school environment plays a crucial role in supporting improvements in students' academic quality. The school environment is not merely understood as physical facilities and infrastructure but also encompasses the learning atmosphere, social interactions, and the academic culture that develops within it. A conducive environment can create a sense of comfort for students during the learning process, thereby encouraging their active participation in class. Research findings indicate that the school environment at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu is sufficiently supportive of the learning process. Interviews with teachers reveal that the school has implemented effective teaching strategies, ranging from maintaining an orderly classroom atmosphere and

fostering good communication between teachers and students to ensuring that the learning process proceeds in a focused and structured manner (Azan et al., 2017).

This environment has a positive impact on students' learning experience and helps them better understand the material being taught. Additionally, the interaction between teachers and students during the learning process is effective. Teachers do not merely act as content deliverers but also as facilitators guiding students through the learning process. This open interaction model provides students with the opportunity to ask questions, express their opinions, and actively participate in classroom learning activities (Sulistiyo, n.d.). A supportive school environment is also evident through the implementation of more varied and interactive teaching methods. Teachers provide opportunities for students to participate in discussions, practice problems, and presentation activities. This creates a learning atmosphere that is not monotonous and also encourages students to be more active in developing their academic abilities.

The school environment plays a role in shaping students' learning habits. Teachers' support in creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere encourages students to be more confident in trying new things, asking questions, and answering them. This situation indirectly helps increase student participation and engagement in the learning process. However, based on the interview results, several obstacles in the learning process were still identified, such as a fear of making mistakes and a lack of self-confidence among some students. This indicates that although the school environment is already quite conducive, further reinforcement is still needed so that all students can participate optimally in learning activities (Martasubrata & Suwatno, 2016).

Therefore, the school environment must be continuously improved by enhancing the quality of interactions, strengthening the role of teachers, and creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. These efforts are crucial to ensuring that all students feel safe and comfortable while learning, thereby maximizing their engagement. Consequently, a positive school environment serves as a significant supporting factor in improving students' academic quality. A supportive environment not only aids in the comprehension of subject matter but also fosters active, confident, and responsible learning attitudes, ultimately leading to an improvement in overall learning outcomes (Pakaya & Posumah, 2021).

A conducive school environment is also reflected in teachers' support for creating an interactive and stress-free learning atmosphere. Teachers strive to build positive relationships with students so that the learning process is more open. This environment gives students the confidence to participate in classroom activities. Research findings also show that a structured learning process helps students follow each stage of the learning activities with ease. This process makes it easier for students to understand the material step by step and reduces confusion during the learning process. Thus, targeted instruction contributes to improving students' academic understanding. A supportive school environment also fosters a sense of safety and comfort for students as they learn.

Consequently, students will be better able to focus on their studies without feeling stressed. This demonstrates that a positive school environment not only impacts academic performance but also influences students' mental readiness for the learning process (Triamah & Sahertian, 2020).

From an educational management perspective, this study shows that school leaders play a crucial role in fostering students' self-confidence and soft skills. Principals are expected to formulate policies that encourage active learning, collaborative activities, and student participation in both academic and non-academic programs. Creating a supportive school climate through teacher development programs, a positive classroom environment, and student-centered learning strategies can significantly contribute to enhancing students' self-confidence and social competencies. Furthermore, school administration must integrate the development of self-confidence and soft skills into school programs and policies. Principals, teachers, and other educational stakeholders need to collaborate in designing activities that promote students' communication skills, teamwork, responsibility, and motivation. Therefore, improving academic quality is not only the responsibility of individual students but also the result of effective educational management and supportive school leadership.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills plays a crucial role in improving the academic quality of students at SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu. Self-efficacy encourages students to be more confident, not to give up easily, and to be able to face various challenges in the learning process. Students with strong self-confidence tend to demonstrate higher learning motivation and are able to achieve more optimal academic results. The development of soft skills also makes a significant contribution to improving academic quality. Communication skills, teamwork, responsibility, and good social interaction help students understand learning materials and increase their engagement in learning activities. Soft skills not only support academic aspects but also foster positive attitudes and behaviors in the learning process. A supportive school environment also serves as a key factor in enhancing students' academic quality. Therefore, the improvement of academic quality is not only influenced by students' abilities but also by the development of soft skills and the support of the school environment. These three aspects are interrelated and must be optimized simultaneously so that the learning process can proceed effectively and yield better academic outcomes. This study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted at only one junior high school, namely SMP Negeri 3 Muara Batu, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. Second, the number of participants was relatively small, consisting of one teacher and two students. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve a larger number of participants and different

school contexts in order to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding the implementation of self-efficacy and soft skills in improving academic quality.

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