



Policy on Principal Recruitment in Implementing Change Management the Education Office Jambi Province

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Received: 10/08/2024

Accepted: 10/09/2024

Published: 01/10/2024

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the recruitment policy of school principals in implementing change management at the Education Office Jambi Province. The research highlights how competency-based recruitment practices contribute to leadership effectiveness in driving educational reform. Using a qualitative case study approach, the study identifies critical components, such as the selection process, principal competencies, and challenges in implementation, including resistance to change and resource limitations. Findings emphasize the importance of comprehensive recruitment policies that align with both national standards and local educational needs. This research contributes to developing strategic frameworks for principal recruitment and offers actionable recommendations for policymakers to enhance educational leadership.

Keywords: School Principal Recruitment, Change Management, Education Policy

Introduction

Education reform in Indonesia continues to drive improvements in the quality and effectiveness of the education system.[1] One crucial element determining the success of education is the school principal as an educational leader.[2] A principal is not only tasked with managing an educational institution but also must serve as a change agent oriented towards achieving the school's vision and mission. In Education Office

Jambi Province, efforts to implement change management through the recruitment policies for school principals have become a strategic issue. Effective and competency-based recruitment of school principals is believed to foster leaders who are innovative, adaptive, and responsive to the challenges of change.

The recruitment of principals refers to the process of selecting and appointing qualified individuals to lead schools effectively.[3] This process ensures that

schools are guided by leaders equipped with the necessary skills, expertise, and competencies to achieve their educational objectives. Effective recruitment transcends administrative tasks, focusing on selecting candidates with the ability to foster transformational leadership in education. In independent schools, this responsibility primarily lies with the board of governors, which must align the school's vision and operational needs with the selected principal's qualifications and capabilities.

Principal recruitment policies aim to identify leaders with the vision and ability to drive educational excellence and manage change. The overarching objective is to select candidates who can enhance school performance, foster a supportive learning environment, and promote fairness and transparency in the hiring process. However, several challenges impede these goals. Nationally, the pool of applicants for principal roles is shrinking due to an aging workforce, increased job pressures, and growing accountability demands. Many potential candidates avoid applying due to concerns over job satisfaction, including work-life balance and job security. Addressing these challenges requires innovative recruitment strategies, such as offering competitive salaries, career development opportunities, and targeted initiatives to attract talent to underperforming schools.[4]

The declining interest in principalship, particularly in low-performing schools, necessitates focused efforts to make the role more appealing. Effective recruitment strategies include restructuring leadership responsibilities, creating supportive career paths, and providing comprehensive training programs to build leadership capacity. Furthermore, recruitment efforts should prioritize candidates capable of implementing transformative practices,

such as setting clear goals, fostering collaboration, and inspiring a student-centered vision. By addressing these issues through thoughtful policies and practices, the recruitment process can contribute to cultivating a new generation of innovative, adaptive, and impactful school leaders, ultimately driving educational success.

Recruitment of school principals is a vital strategic step in implementing change management in schools. In this context, recruitment policies should be designed to select individuals with strong leadership capabilities and a clear vision for the changes required in education. This recruitment process involves several stages, including administrative selection, interviews, and assessments of candidates' managerial and pedagogical competencies. These measures are essential to ensure that selected principals can lead positive changes in the school environment.

An effective school principal recruitment policy for change management also involves the participation of various stakeholders, including local governments, education offices, and school communities. The selection process should be transparent and competency-based to ensure that candidates not only possess adequate educational backgrounds but also the ability to manage change and inspire the entire school community to adapt. Furthermore, prospective principals must have a deep understanding of the school culture and how to transform it to create a better and more productive atmosphere.

It is crucial for recruitment policies to emphasize expertise in change management, such as the ability to plan and implement change programs and manage resistance from teachers, staff, and students. Selected principals must act as effective change agents, utilizing various leadership techniques, including clear communication, conflict management, and

empowering teachers to be part of the change process. Therefore, recruitment policies must include an assessment of these skills to ensure that principals can lead schools toward desired changes.

Additionally, school principal recruitment policies should incorporate a system of continuous training and development for selected principals. This is important because change management is a dynamic and ongoing process. Principals need training and preparation related to education policy changes, the latest technologies in teaching, and innovative ways to improve educational quality. Thus, a well-designed recruitment policy not only focuses on selection but also on providing support to ensure principals can effectively carry out their roles in leading necessary changes in schools.

However, despite the various policies on school principal recruitment, field practices still face challenges. These include a lack of in-depth understanding of change management and limited involvement of principals in change-oriented training. This phenomenon poses a challenge that requires more structured and relevant policy approaches.

Research on principal recruitment policies to support change management in Education Office Jambi Province shares similarities and differences with previous studies, such as those by Lee and Mao[5], Atherton[6], and Doyle and Locke[3]. A key similarity lies in the emphasis on the critical role of principal recruitment in ensuring the success of educational management and school transformation. However, the approaches and contexts differ significantly. Lee and Mao provide an international perspective through a systematic review of various studies, while Atherton focuses on human resource management practices in the United States, including principal development.

Doyle and Locke highlight challenges in national-level principal recruitment in the United States, such as the lack of qualified leaders. In contrast, the study in Education Office Jambi Province emphasizes the local Indonesian context, focusing on how recruitment policies can support change implementation in regional schools. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of effective principal recruitment in driving sustainable educational transformation.

This gap creates a significant research void, particularly in regions with specific cultural and educational characteristics like Education Office Jambi Province. The lack of understanding of how recruitment policies can encourage principals to become strategic, innovative, and collaborative change leaders poses a challenge that needs to be addressed.

Previous studies have shown that competency-based school principal recruitment plays a critical role in improving educational quality. International studies highlight the importance of transformational leadership in driving positive change within school environments. At the national level, several policies have been implemented to improve the quality of school principal recruitment, such as Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) Number 6 of 2018 on Assigning Teachers as School Principals. However, implementation still often faces obstacles, such as a lack of policy synchronization and weak oversight.

In the context of change management, Lewin's theory of change stages (unfreeze, change, refreeze) provides a framework for understanding how change can be effectively managed. However, the application of this theory in the context of education in Indonesia, particularly in

regions like Education Office Jambi Province, has yet to be extensively studied.

This research offers a novel approach by integrating school principal recruitment policies with the implementation of change management in the context of Education Office Jambi Province. The focus of the study is to identify how recruitment policies can produce principals who are not only administratively competent but also capable of leading sustainable change.

As a primary contribution, this study will develop a competency-based school principal recruitment model tailored to the local context. This model will serve as a guideline for policymakers to ensure that the recruitment process for school principals not only meets national standards but also aligns with regional needs. Thus, this research is expected to have a significant impact on the development of educational leadership in Education Office Jambi Province.

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore the recruitment policies for school principals in supporting change management implementation in Education Office Jambi Province.[7] A qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of complex and contextual phenomena. The case study design allows a comprehensive analysis of the policy process, including its planning, implementation, and impact on school change management. Through this approach, the researcher aims to understand the role of policies in influencing principals' effectiveness in addressing challenges associated with change.

Data collection was conducted using three primary methods: in-depth interviews, direct observation, and

document analysis.[8] In-depth interviews were carried out with key informants such as education department officials, school principals, and teachers involved in policy implementation. This method provided insights from various stakeholders directly involved in the recruitment process and change management. Direct observation offered information on policy practices in the field, especially how principals manage change within school environments. Document analysis reviewed formal regulations and policies related to principal recruitment to understand the procedures and selection criteria.

Data triangulation was applied to ensure the validity of findings and minimize bias.[9] By combining data from interviews, observations, and documents, the researcher gained a holistic picture of policy implementation. The triangulation process also helped confirm the consistency of data from various sources, strengthening the interpretations produced. This is crucial for supporting the accuracy and credibility of the study.

The findings of this study are expected to provide deep insights into the effectiveness of principal recruitment policies in a local context. By highlighting challenges in the selection process, the study identifies key competencies required to support successful change management. These findings also provide relevant policy recommendations to improve future recruitment processes.

The study's contributions extend beyond academic aspects, influencing the development of educational policies in Education Office Jambi Province. The findings can be utilized by policymakers to refine the recruitment system, ensuring that selected principals possess the capacity to lead change effectively. Thus, the study is expected to support the creation of better change management in local schools.

This research serves as an important example of how a qualitative case study approach can be used to analyze educational policies in a local context. By focusing on Education Office Jambi Province, it provides specific insights into the relationship between recruitment policies and change management while offering recommendations that could be adapted to similar contexts elsewhere.

Results and Discussion

Results

School Principal Recruitment Policy

The principal recruitment policy at the Education Office Jambi Province, Jambi Province, is essential for implementing effective change management within educational institutions. This policy focuses on various aspects of recruitment, teacher competency, and the overall management of educational resources to enhance the quality of education.

The recruitment of teachers, particularly non-civil servant (Non-PNS) teachers, is a significant focus. The policy outlines that headmasters are responsible for establishing criteria that include educational background, teaching experience, and adaptability to the school environment. Emphasis is placed on recruiting teachers who not only meet academic qualifications but also possess the necessary skills and attitudes to foster a conducive learning environment.

The recruitment policy for school principals plays a pivotal role in shaping the leadership quality in educational institutions. This policy is grounded in the framework established by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud), which outlines specific criteria for assessing the competence of prospective school principals. These criteria encompass managerial competence, supervisory skills, social intelligence, personality traits, and entrepreneurial capabilities. By adhering to

these standards, the policy ensures that selected principals possess the necessary qualifications to lead schools effectively and adapt to dynamic educational challenges.

The recruitment process involves several comprehensive stages designed to identify and select the most capable candidates. It begins with an administrative screening to verify the applicants' eligibility, followed by a competency test to evaluate their knowledge and skills. The next stage includes interviews to assess their leadership vision and potential. Finally, successful candidates are required to undergo a principal strengthening training program (diklat calon kepala sekolah), aimed at equipping them with advanced skills and practical insights into managing educational institutions.

The underlying principle of this recruitment policy is to foster a leadership cadre that can drive meaningful and sustainable change in schools. Principals are expected to act as agents of transformation, implementing innovative strategies that enhance the quality of education. By prioritizing competence and vision in the selection process, the policy aligns with the broader objective of creating a forward-thinking and adaptive educational environment.

This policy also reflects a commitment to supporting educational reform through leadership. Principals who meet the outlined criteria are better positioned to manage schools efficiently, foster collaboration among teachers and staff, and create a conducive learning environment for students. Their ability to combine managerial expertise with social and entrepreneurial skills ensures that schools can respond effectively to evolving educational demands and societal needs.

In summary, the recruitment policy for school principals is a structured and strategic effort to ensure the selection of

qualified leaders capable of implementing positive change. By emphasizing comprehensive criteria and rigorous processes, it underscores the importance of strong leadership in achieving educational excellence. This policy not only supports the professional development of principals but also contributes to the overall progress of the education system.

Implementation of Change Management

The implementation of change management in schools heavily relies on the role of the principal as a driving force. Principals are expected to act as agents of change by effectively implementing educational policies, improving the quality of education, and creating a school environment that adapts well to shifts and advancements in education. Their leadership is crucial in translating vision into action, ensuring that the entire school community is aligned with the goals of progress and development.

To achieve this, principals must adopt a strategic approach to change management. One of the key strategies is effective communication, where the principal clearly conveys the vision and mission of the intended changes to all stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, and parents. This helps foster a shared understanding and collective commitment to the changes being implemented. Transparent and consistent communication minimizes misunderstandings and builds trust within the school community.

Another vital strategy is enhancing the competencies of teachers and staff. This can be achieved through professional development programs, training workshops, and continuous learning opportunities. By investing in the growth of educators, principals ensure that the team is equipped to handle new teaching methodologies, integrate technology, and

improve instructional quality, which directly impacts student outcomes.

The management of resistance is another essential aspect of implementing change. Principals must employ conflict management techniques, such as participatory approaches and motivational efforts, to address hesitance or opposition to change. By involving stakeholders in decision-making processes and recognizing their contributions, resistance can be reduced, and a culture of collaboration can be fostered. This approach not only resolves conflicts but also strengthens the sense of ownership among the staff.

Lastly, strengthening the school culture is fundamental to successful change management.[10] Principals must build a positive and conducive working environment that encourages innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement. A strong school culture promotes shared values, fosters teamwork, and supports the implementation of new initiatives effectively. This cultural foundation ensures that changes are sustainable and embedded in the daily practices of the school.

In summary, the implementation of change management in schools hinges on the principal's ability to lead with vision, communicate effectively, empower staff, manage resistance, and nurture a supportive culture. These elements collectively drive the transformation needed to adapt to educational advancements and improve the overall quality of learning environments.

Challenges in Implementation

One of the significant challenges in implementing change management in schools is budget constraints. Education departments often struggle with limited financial resources, which hinder the execution of recruitment programs and training sessions for principals. Without

adequate funding, it becomes difficult to provide necessary support, such as professional development opportunities, infrastructure upgrades, or resources for implementing new policies. This limitation can delay or compromise the quality of change initiatives, affecting the overall progress of the schools.

Another critical challenge is resistance to change from teachers and staff.[11] Some educators may feel hesitant or unwilling to embrace the changes introduced by a new principal, particularly if they fear the disruption of established routines or practices. This resistance often stems from a lack of understanding of the benefits of the change or insufficient involvement in the decision-making process. Addressing this resistance requires principals to adopt participatory approaches, foster open communication, and create a sense of shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

Lastly, the competence of principals remains a pivotal factor in the success of change implementation.[12] Not all appointed principals possess the skills and knowledge required to manage change effectively. Weak leadership can lead to poorly communicated goals, inadequate strategies, and a lack of motivation within the school community. To overcome this, education departments must ensure that principal recruitment focuses on identifying individuals with strong leadership potential, supported by comprehensive training programs to enhance their competencies. This approach can help bridge the gap between leadership capabilities and the demands of managing change successfully.

Impact of Policy on Change Management

The recruitment policy for school principals has a significant impact on the implementation of change management, particularly in improving the quality of

education. Competent principals are equipped to manage changes effectively, which directly enhances the learning environment and student achievements. Their ability to introduce innovative teaching methods, integrate technology, and align school programs with educational goals ensures that students receive a well-rounded and high-quality education. This improvement in educational outcomes is one of the most tangible effects of strong leadership driven by the policy.

Another critical impact is the fostering of better collaboration within the school community.[13] A principal with strong leadership skills can create a culture of teamwork among teachers, students, and parents. By encouraging open communication, mutual respect, and shared goals, principals can build an environment where everyone works together to achieve the school's vision. This collaborative atmosphere not only boosts morale but also strengthens the implementation of changes, ensuring that they are supported by all stakeholders.

The policy also enhances schools' ability to adapt to national education policies.[14] With a strong leader at the helm, schools are better prepared to implement initiatives such as the "Kurikulum Merdeka" (Independent Curriculum) and digitalization in education. These complex programs require strategic planning, training, and a forward-thinking approach, which are hallmarks of effective leadership. Principals who understand the importance of aligning school practices with national directives can guide their institutions through transitions more smoothly.

In addition to these practical benefits, the policy contributes to a more forward-thinking and innovative school culture. By selecting leaders who are not only knowledgeable but also visionary, the policy ensures that schools are guided by

individuals who can anticipate future challenges and opportunities. This proactive mindset fosters a culture of continuous improvement, where the school community is always seeking new ways to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative practices.

In conclusion, the recruitment policy for school principals has a profound impact on change management within schools. By focusing on the selection of competent and visionary leaders, the policy drives improvements in education quality, promotes collaboration, and ensures readiness for national policy implementation. These effects collectively contribute to the creation of dynamic, adaptive, and high-performing educational institutions.

Discussion

The findings of research on the school principal recruitment policy and its implementation of change management at the Education Office Jambi Province Regency highlight significant aspects of the policy framework, execution processes, and its broader impacts on school environments. This policy reflects a strategic approach aimed at enhancing school leadership to foster meaningful and sustainable educational changes.

The recruitment policy for school principals is guided by clearly defined criteria based on the Ministerial Regulation of Education and Culture.[15] These criteria encompass managerial, supervisory, social, personal, and entrepreneurial competencies. The recruitment process itself involves multiple stages, including administrative reviews, competency tests, interviews, and formal training programs for prospective principals. These steps ensure that selected individuals are well-equipped to assume leadership roles and drive positive transformations within their schools.

In the implementation of change management[16], principals play a critical role as change agents. They are tasked with improving educational quality and creating adaptive school environments. Effective strategies include clear communication of the vision and mission for change, professional development programs for teachers and staff, and conflict resolution through participatory approaches. Additionally, fostering a supportive and innovative school culture is essential for sustaining improvements in education quality. These strategies collectively empower school communities to embrace and adapt to changes effectively.

However, the research also identifies several challenges in the implementation process. Budget constraints often limit the ability of education departments to execute recruitment and training programs fully.[17] Resistance to change from teachers and staff is another hurdle, stemming from concerns over disruptions to established routines. Furthermore, not all selected principals possess the requisite competencies to manage change effectively, highlighting the need for more robust training and support mechanisms to address these gaps.

Despite these challenges, the policy has demonstrated positive impacts on change management in schools. Competent leadership has led to significant improvements in the quality of education and student achievement. Strong principal leadership fosters better collaboration among teachers, students, and parents, creating a unified school community. Additionally, schools with effective leadership are better prepared to implement national policies such as the Independent Curriculum and education digitalization. These outcomes underscore the importance of comprehensive recruitment and training policies in driving meaningful change in the education sector.

The findings of the research on school principal recruitment policies and change management align with several established theories in education leadership and change management. One relevant framework is Fullan's Change Theory[18], which emphasizes the importance of leadership as a driving force for sustainable change in educational systems. According to Fullan, leaders must possess the ability to build shared goals, foster collaboration, and address resistance effectively—elements that resonate with the identified strategies of communication, professional development, and culture building. The research findings also align with Kotter's Eight Steps to Change[19], particularly in creating urgency (through competency-based recruitment), developing a vision (by setting clear leadership goals), and anchoring new approaches in the organizational culture.

Another theoretical alignment is with Transformational Leadership Theory[20], which highlights the role of visionary leaders in inspiring and motivating others toward achieving shared objectives. The principal's role as a change agent, fostering collaboration, and building a supportive school culture, is a practical application of this theory. Transformational leaders not only influence the behavior of teachers and staff but also create a conducive environment for educational innovation, as seen in the adaptation to national policies like the Independent Curriculum.

This research contributes to the academic field in several ways. First, it provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of competency-based recruitment in enhancing school leadership. By linking recruitment policies to specific leadership outcomes, the study fills a gap in understanding how initial selection criteria impact long-term change management success.

Second, the research highlights the practical challenges, such as budget constraints and resistance to change, offering insights into the contextual barriers faced by educational institutions in Indonesia. This adds to the body of knowledge on how local socio-economic factors influence the implementation of leadership and change management theories.

Lastly, the study provides a foundation for further exploration of the relationship between leadership training programs and the effective implementation of educational reforms. By emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development, it underscores the need for ongoing support systems for school principals. This can guide policymakers and educators in designing more robust frameworks for leadership training and change management in the education sector.

These contributions not only advance theoretical understanding but also offer practical implications for improving leadership practices in schools and driving systemic educational change.

Conclusion

The recruitment policy for school principals at the Education Office Jambi Province has shown significant influence on change management within schools. Competency-based selection ensures that principals possess the skills necessary for effective leadership, fostering innovation, collaboration, and adaptability in their institutions. However, challenges such as budget limitations, resistance to change, and varying levels of principal competence highlight the need for improvements in recruitment practices and continuous professional development.

The study concludes that transparent and structured recruitment policies can produce visionary leaders capable of

implementing sustainable educational reforms. A focus on developing principals' leadership capabilities is crucial for achieving quality education, particularly in addressing local challenges and aligning with national policies like the Independent Curriculum. By addressing these gaps, the education system in Jambi Province can set a strong foundation for long-term progress.

To enhance the recruitment and development of school principals and improve educational quality in Jambi Province, several key recommendations are proposed. Recruitment practices should be strengthened with more robust and transparent selection criteria, emphasizing leadership competencies, change management skills, and alignment with local educational goals. Continuous professional development programs must be prioritized, focusing on change leadership, technology integration, and innovative educational strategies to support principals post-recruitment. Stakeholder involvement, including local governments, school communities, and education experts, is crucial to ensure that selected candidates meet regional needs. Addressing budget constraints through partnerships and alternative funding will support comprehensive recruitment and training initiatives. Finally, regular monitoring and evaluation of recruitment policies and their outcomes are essential to refine processes and ensure principals perform effectively in driving change. Collectively, these strategies form a comprehensive roadmap for policymakers to foster strong and capable educational leadership.

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