

Principal as an Agent of Change in Improving Educators' Human Resources at MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung

Hasana Fadilla

North Sumatra State Islamic University
hasana0307202039@uinsu.ac.id

Nasrul Saykur Chaniago

North Sumatra State Islamic University
nasrulsyakurchaniago@uinsu.ac.id

Abstract

This article examines the role of the principal as an agent of change in human resource change management to improve the quality of educators' human resources, which are required to encourage innovation and progress in all aspects of education actively. This is due to several factors that influence the development of education, where dynamic and rapid changes demand the active role of the principal as a motivator, leader, and director of human resources in schools. This research uses case study qualitative research, data obtained through in-depth interviews with administrators and members of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis of this research uses Miles & Huberman, namely with three stages, namely (a) data condensation, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing. The results of this study show that principals can create schools that can adapt to the dynamics of change, create an inspiring learning environment by producing superior educational human resources, and are ready to face future challenges. This research recommends. Strengthening the Principal's Role in Implementing Innovative Strategies in Change Management and Promoting Collaboration and Communication: This recommendation includes developing and implementing innovative programs that promote human resource development and create a collaborative culture in schools through the development of open communication and teamwork.

Keywords: Quality improvement; Human resource change management; Innovative strategies.

Introduction

Principals have a strategic role in Human Resource Change Management, which aims to optimize the quality of teaching human resources in schools. In an era of dynamics and competition, the principal acts as a leader who must be able to improve the capabilities of human resources to achieve organizational goals. Principals must be able to anticipate various shifts and developments in the global realm, predict their impact on the organization, and set a priority scale for changes that align with the organization's vision.¹ Not only that, the Principal, as a leader, must also encourage experimentation and active participation from all members of the organization to make it happen. Capable and visionary leaders can bring positive changes to the organization by increasing the capacity and capability of human resources and managing change effectively. Involving all organization members in the process will make the changes more sustainable and have a broader positive impact.²

However, many principals are still not optimal in carrying out their role as an increase in human resources competence. In 2007, the Ministry of National Education estimated that 70 per cent of the 250,000 principals in Indonesia were incompetent. Based on the Department's provisions, every Principal must fulfil five aspects of competence: personality, social, managerial, supervision and entrepreneurship.

Adi Darma's research shows that many principals still have not played a maximum role in school Human Resources Change Management. Ressi Susanti's research findings³ show the same condition: the weak role of the principal has an impact on teacher discipline. Yeo Jia Ying's study⁴ shows that the motivation and ability of principals to integrate technology into their leadership encourage teachers' technological skills.

The modern era is a whole of dynamics, requiring leaders of educational institutions to be adaptive and responsive to various global changes and developments.

¹ Ivan Septian Sufi Sumardi and Umiati Nurfaizi, "The Role of Leadership as a Change Agent in Organizing a Driving School," *Widyatama Journal of Education* 20, no. 2 (2023): 179-84.

² Munawir Nasir, "The Effect of Situational Leadership Style, Organizational Culture and Organizational Commitment on Employee Performance," *Celebes Equilibrium Journal* 1, no. 02 (2020): 1-11.

³ Ressi Susanti, "The Headmaster Leadership of SMP IT Ar-Raihan Bandar Lampung," *Annizom* 5, no. 1 (2024).

⁴ Yeo Jia Ying and Bity Salwana Alias, "Headmasters' Technology Leadership and Teachers' Motivation in Integrating Technology in the Teaching and Learning Process," *International Research Journal of Education and Sciences* 5, no. 4 (2021): 25-34.

The ability to anticipate and predict the impact of change on the organization is critical.⁵ In addition, leaders must be able to prioritize changes according to their vision. Moreover, leaders must proactively encourage experimentation and participation from all organization members.⁶ This collaboration and synergy will result in the desired changes. Employee empowerment is essential in this process so they can become the driving force of significant change.

The main challenges faced include the lack of effective strategies to improve the professionalism of educators, create a conducive school environment and provide the necessary encouragement and motivation for the entire school community.⁷ This is compounded by limitations in the qualifications, competencies and pedagogy of educators in some schools, which act as barriers to achieving optimal education quality.⁸

According to Dechlorane and Tanjung, education continues to proliferate in the era of globalization and increasingly fierce competition. Principals are not only required as administrative leaders but also as inspirations for human resource change that actively encourage innovation and progress in all aspects of education.⁹ This is due to several factors that influence the development of education, where dynamic and rapid changes demand the active role of the principal as a motivator, leader, and director of human resources in schools.¹⁰

The basic assumption of this study is that the development of Human Capital Change Management by school principals is an effective solution to address the challenges that exist in the educational context. This strategy includes three main components: developing Educators' Professionalism, creating a Conducive School

⁵ Inge Kadarsih et al., "The Role and Tasks of Principal Leadership in Elementary Schools," *Edukatif: Journal of Education Science* 2, no. 2 (2020): 194-201.

⁶ Amiruddin Siahaan et al., "Principal Leadership Style in Education," *Edukatif: Journal of Education Science* 4, no. 6 (2022): 8311-20.

⁷ Fitriyah Mahdali and Abdulloh Abdulloh, "Efforts to Improve the Quality of Education Through the Role of the Principal," *Studia Manageria* 4, no. 2 (2022): 93-106.

⁸ M Imamul Muttaqien et al., "The Role of Leadership in Building a Model of Renewal of Educational Institutions," *Journal of Collaborative Science* 7, no. 1 (2024): 491-97.

⁹ M Ihsan Dacholfany, "Initiation of Management Strategies of Islamic Education Institutions in Improving the Quality of Islamic Human Resources in Indonesia in Facing the Era of Globalization," *At-Tajdid: Journal of Education and Islamic Thought* 1, no. 01 (2017).

¹⁰ Rahman Tanjung et al., "Principal's Managerial Competence in Improving Elementary School Teacher Performance," *JIP-Scientific Journal of Education Science* 4, no. 4 (2021): 291-96.

Environment, and Implementing Innovative Programs.¹¹ In addition, principals should actively improve teachers' competencies through continuous training and development. This can include training in new teaching methods, educational technology, assessment strategies, and opportunities for lifelong learning and career development.¹²

This research is expected to describe the role of school principals in Human Resource Change Management in improving the quality of educators' human resources. With this knowledge, principals are expected to be more effective in leading and managing change in their schools, resulting in a sustainable positive impact. This study aims to explore principals' policies in Human Resource Change Management in improving educators' HRH, as well as understand the support, assistance and attention required from principals in this process. The targets of this study include principals, educators, and all school members involved in the education process.

The research is expected to provide insight and understanding of the role of school principals in Human Resource Change Management. By understanding and internalizing this role, schools are expected to adapt to the dynamics of change, create an inspiring learning environment, and produce excellent educators ready to face future challenges.

Research Methods

This study examines the role of the principal as an agent of change at MTs Al-Washita Tambang. The approach is qualitative field research,¹³ a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing from observable behavior of people. This aims to deeply understand the principal's role in human resources change management for MTs Al-Washita Tambang. This study's data sources include in-depth interviews with key participants, namely the principal, vice principal, teachers, and staff of MTs Al-Washita Tambang. Second, participant observation, namely researchers directly involved in activities at MTs Al-Waliya Tembung. *Second*, participant observation, namely, the researcher is directly involved in activities at MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung to observe how the principal leads are not only managerial but also seeking

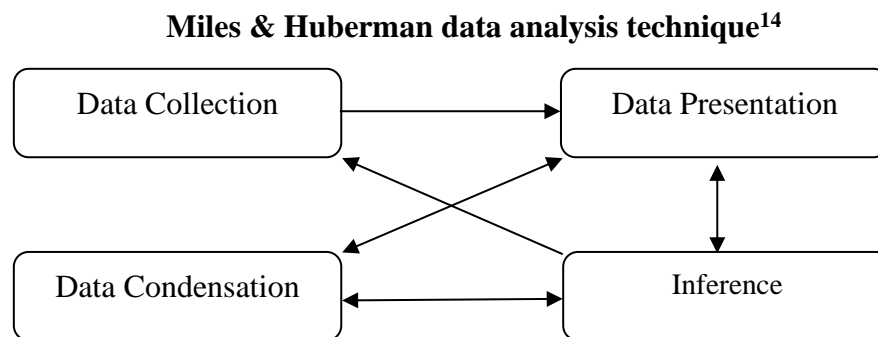
¹¹ Teguh Narutomo, "Manajemen Perubahan Dalam Paradigma Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia Guna Mendukung Keunggulan Kompetitif Organisasi," *Jurnal Bina Praja: Journal of Home Affairs Governance* 4, no. 1 (2012): 29–34.

¹² Emas Kurnianingsih, "Peran Kepala Sekolah Dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Guru," *Indonesian Journal of Education Management & Administration Review* 1, no. 1 (2018): 11–18.

¹³ Sugiyono, *Educational Research Methods* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019).

human resource change. *Third*, the Official documents of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung, such as vision, mission, goals, work programs, articles, and books relevant to this research.

Operationally, the analysis follows the analysis presented by Miles & Huberman, namely with three stages: (a) data condensation, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing. Data condensation is done by selecting and condensing data that can provide an overview of the focus of the research study. Data display is done by organizing, describing and providing interpretation of the data that has been generated and condensed. Finally, conclusions will be drawn. The data that has been presented will be concluded following the research context.



The Principal's Role in Human Resource Change Management

This study examines the role of the Principal as a leader who encourages significant changes in education. Some of the steps taken by the Principal of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung in making changes that promote the improvement of educators' professionalism are:

1. Provision of Resources and Support.

The data shows that the Principal of MTs, Al-Washliyah Tembung, in human resources change management, is responsible for providing the necessary resources and support for teachers' professional development. This includes creating opportunities for teachers to engage in peer learning, access relevant training and experiment with new teaching strategies. This step is carried out by principals in collaboration with specialized teams formed to foster a climate where new ideas and

¹⁴ B Matthew Miles, A Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, "Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook" (Sage Publications, 2014).

initiatives are valued and given full support. This step is very effective in building competence and collaboration in innovating.

This phenomenon can be seen in the results of interviews with informants;

"In various meetings or meetings between the Principal and educators, the Principal always emphasizes the importance of developing teachers' abilities. Besides that, the Principal also provides finance for teachers to improve their abilities. On several occasions, the Principal requires us to attend training or coaching organized by the government."

Another informant emphasized that "MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung does internal training specifically for teachers, usually one of the teachers is asked to be a speaker, this activity is carried out semi-formally, this makes the atmosphere less tense and teachers do not hesitate to provide input to each other".

The data above shows that the role of the Principal of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung is significant in creating an environment that supports innovation and growth. This finding is in line with the findings of research conducted by Eklopas Dakabesi,¹⁵ which confirms the importance of collaboration between principals and teaching staff to achieve a climate of innovation in organizations. Principals need to provide understanding and encouragement to teachers that the learning process is always moving and following the changes that occur in society; this condition carries risks for teachers, one of which demands innovation that can be achieved by participating in many development activities or exchanging experiences between teachers.

In addition, Kadarsi and Aswaruddin revealed that school principals are not only required to have professional abilities in the field of education but are also expected to be capable and inspiring leaders.¹⁶ Practical managerial and leadership skills are essential for principals to manage schools well and achieve the desired goals.¹⁷

¹⁵ Eklopas Dakabesi Dakabesi and Luhur Wicaksono, "Collaborative Leadership of Principals in Building Teacher Performance Teams in the Era of Society 5.0," *JISIP (Journal of Social Science and Education)* 6, no. 4 (2022).

¹⁶ Aswaruddin Aswaruddin et al., "Performance Management Principles in Shaping a Quality Work Environment (Case Study at MIS 'Aisyiyah North Sumatra)," *Tambusai Journal of Education* 7, no. 3 (2023): 26894-900.

¹⁷ Kadarsih et al, "The Role and Task of Principal Leadership in Elementary Schools."

2. Challenges in Leadership Transformation

Leadership transformation is a complex and challenging process that involves changes in organizational structure, culture and individual roles. In the context of schools, principals play a crucial role in directing transformation in schools. However, in the process, it often faces various challenges. These challenges can range from resistance to change, a lack of resources, and challenges in changing the school culture. In the next section, the researcher will discuss more about the specific challenges faced by the principals of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung in the leadership transformation process and how they overcame these challenges.

It is undeniable that we are currently in the midst of rapid change. As leaders, we are required to provide clear and supportive instructions. On the other hand, it requires openness and transparency in communicating with teachers and staff, explaining why change is needed and how we can face it together.

The Principal further explained. That transformation often requires allocating resources that can understand the needs; on the other hand, madrasah human resources are always below the standard needs, and principals must manage these limitations wisely, prioritizing their use according to the needs of change. I am always open to creative and collaborative solutions proposed by teachers or staff to maximize the efficiency of existing resources.

Technology is an integral part of leadership transformation in this digital age. I always strive to understand the latest technology trends and ensure the school can adapt to these changes without sacrificing efficiency or productivity. I also actively promote training and digital skills development for staff and students to enable them to adopt technology well.

3. Fostering a Culture of Improvement and Continuous Learning

As part of the Principal's responsibility as an Agent of Change, this research also highlights the importance of principals in fostering a culture of improvement and continuous learning in schools. Principals, as leaders, must be role models for teachers in making improvements and becoming personal learners, actively seeking opportunities for their professional growth, and demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning. The data shows that creating an environment that supports innovation and growth involves empowering teachers to take steps to develop their skills and try new approaches.

Here are the results of the interview with the Principal

Creating a continuous improvement and learning culture is an essential foundation for a school's success in achieving its educational goals. As a leader, I strive to foster a culture where teaching staff feel supported and encouraged

to improve continuously. I believe the Principal should be a role model and a personal learner who actively seeks opportunities for professional growth and demonstrates a solid commitment to continuous learning. In addition, creating an environment that supports innovation and growth involves empowering teachers to take steps to develop their skills and try new approaches. The school strives to provide the support and resources for teaching staff to experiment and develop innovative ideas. The next step is to constantly support the professional development of teacher staff through training, workshops and other self-development programs. In addition, I regularly conduct performance evaluations and provide constructive feedback to the teaching staff. I appreciate their achievements and efforts in improving the school's teaching and learning quality.

Fazira stated that leadership is an effort or way of interacting with people through instructions or orders (communication) that makes others respond or act and bring positive changes to achieve goals. This means leadership is the ability or effort to lead, survive, and survive education personnel as subordinates to achieve various educational goals through better-planned activities.¹⁸

According to Kosman, individuals who play a role in Human Resources Change Management are responsible for encouraging clients to accept new ideas to achieve predetermined goals. This change process is characterized by transitioning from the previous condition (initial condition) to a new condition (final condition). Planned changes can occur at the leadership's initiative, either driven by internal organizational factors or external demands from the surrounding environment.¹⁹

In a different interpretation, the Head of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung in Human Resources Change Management emphasizes shaping a school culture that is dynamic, responsive and focused on continuous learning. With Human Resources Change Management, schools can continue to develop and improve the quality of education they provide through their educators. The Principal's policy in improving Human Resource capability involves various strategies and actions that aim to improve the quality of educators in the school.

4. Building Strong Relationships with Teaching Staff

Research shows that building solid relationships with teaching staff is a priority for principals. By understanding each educator's strengths, challenges and

¹⁸ Yuni Fazira and Riska Mirani, "The Effect of Leadership on Employee Performance at the Dumai City Library and Archives Office," *JMKSP (Journal of Management, Leadership, and Educational Supervision)* 4, no. 1 (2019): 76-83.

¹⁹ Dedi Djubaedi, Cecep Sumarna, and Didin Nurul Rosidin, "The Role of Supervisors as Agents of Change in Islamic Education in Indonesia" (Perkumpulan Rumah Cemerlang Indonesia, 2022).

professional goals, principals can tailor support and development opportunities to meet individual needs. This allows for more personalized and effective development for each educator.

As revealed by Susmiyati, behind the school leadership, the head has a crucial role, namely, human resources change management. Principals are tasked with initiating, managing and encouraging positive transformation in the education system. Through this role, the Principal not only leads the institution but also becomes a catalyst for sustainable change to advance the world of education.²⁰

5. External Stakeholder Engagement

Organizational change is changing an organization from the previous condition to the following condition. The transition from the initial condition to the following condition requires a transformation process that does not always go smoothly, considering that changes are often accompanied by various kinds of conflicts that arise.²¹ Therefore, it is necessary to manage change to minimize potential problems. In addition to internal collaboration, the research data shows that principals should involve external stakeholders, such as parents and community members, to garner support for implementing changes. Building a coalition of support can help sustain change efforts and ensure that the entire school community is aligned and committed to the improvement process.

Improving the Human Resources of Educators in Schools

Increasing educators' human resources (HR) in the MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung environment is significant in forming quality human resources. The government and various related institutions have realized the critical role of education in creating superior teaching human resources. With effective leadership, the Principal can act as an educator, manager, advisor, supervisor, leader, innovator, and spirit booster known as the abbreviation EMASLIM to encourage the improvement of the quality of teaching human resources in schools.²²

²⁰ Sri Susmiyati and Khairul Saleh, "Boosting the Professional Performance of Madrasah Teachers," 2023.

²¹ Basuki Jaka Purnama, "Optimizing Human Resource Management in Efforts to Improve School Quality," *Journal of Education Management UNY* 12, no. 2 (2016): 113839.

²² Muhammad Abrori and Chusnul Muali, "Improving the Quality of Human Resources Through the Leadership Role of the Principal," *JUMPA: Journal of Education Management* 1, no. 2 (2020): 1-16.

From this, it can be understood that the Principal of MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung is responsible for encouraging and guiding teachers in continuous self-development so that they can carry out their duties as well as possible following the development of the situation. The Principal's role as an educational leader includes effectively managing educational facilities and infrastructure, special school services, and other educational facilities to ensure teacher and student satisfaction.

In addition, the Principal of MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung is responsible for the continuous development of teachers; he must be able to help teachers understand the community's needs and work with teachers to develop a curriculum relevant to the interests, needs and abilities of students.

One essential and inseparable aspect of an organization, including institutions or companies, is Human Resources (HR). HR is also a critical factor that determines an institution's educational progress. In essence, HR refers to individuals appointed or working in an organization as a driving force to achieve the set goals.²³ That is because Human Resources (HR) in an organization is considered an essential and fundamental element for the organization's continuity. The organization cannot function without human contribution because organizational management requires human participation, which has certain qualities. In addition, HR planning must be done carefully because the role of HR in organizational management has a high value, is very important, and is vulnerable.²⁴

Principles are an essential part of the performance of the Principal of MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung to improve the quality of Human Resources (HR) of educators. Due to educators' critical role in determining the education standard in schools, improving their competence will directly impact the quality of learning. Educators who have good skills can provide superior learning, which in turn will create graduates who are also qualified. MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung implements several strategies to improve the human resources of educators in schools, one of which is:

²³ Dian Tri Wibawani, Bambang Budi Wiyono, and Djum Djum Noor Benty, "Visionary Leadership of Principals as Leaders of Change in Improving Education Quality," *Journal of Educational Administration and Management* 2, no. 4 (2019): 181-87.

²⁴ Triwahyu Riyatuljannah, "The Role and Function of the Principal in Realizing Effective Schools in the Elementary School Environment," *Al-Aulad: Journal of Islamic Primary Education* 3, no. 2 (2020): 56-68.

1. Educators in schools must meet academic qualification requirements relevant to the education level. These standards ensure that educators have sufficient knowledge and skills to teach effectively.
2. Pedagogical skills improvement focuses on how people learn. Pedagogical competence is the ability of educators to manage the learning process effectively and efficiently. These skills can be improved through various training, seminars and workshops.
3. Improve the quality of professional competence by mastering all elements that can support the learning process. Improving professional competence at MTS Al-Washliyah Tembung is done by participating in learning activities and self-development.
4. Improving the quality of personality: Personality competence is the ability of educators to show themselves as excellent and professional individuals. Personality competence can be enhanced through self-introspection activities and professional guidance.

Principals are required to have the ability to provide encouragement and enthusiasm for educators to continue to develop themselves. In addition, principals can also create a supportive work environment for educators to work and improve themselves. Improving the human resources of educators in schools is an ongoing and sustainable process.²⁵

This research finding aligns with Farid's statement that the importance of Educator Human Resources lies in their ability to provide practical and quality learning, support students' overall growth, and create a safe, inclusive and innovative learning environment. Educators also have the responsibility of planning, implementing and evaluating learning programs according to the needs and educational goals set.²⁶

However, realizing quality teaching human resources requires a joint commitment from various parties, including the government, schools and educators. Improving the quality of teaching human resources in schools is a must, given their crucial role in

²⁵ Umi Salamah, "Improving the Quality of Education Through Academic Qualifications and Competencies," *Evaluation: Journal of Islamic Education Management* 3, no. 1 (2019): 61-73.

²⁶ Edy Sugiyanto and Ghufon Abdullah, "The Role of the Principal's Visionary Leadership in Realizing Adiwiyata School Culture at Smp Negeri 1 Lasem, Rembang Regency," *Journal of Education and Counseling (JPDK)* 4, no. 6 (2022): 7999-8011.

determining the quality of education. Competent educators can deliver quality learning, which in turn produces excellent graduates.

As a school leader, the Principal of MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung carries managerial responsibilities in controlling school operations to achieve educational goals. A critical aspect of his managerial role is managing human resources (HR), particularly teachers, who play a vital role in achieving academic and school goals. The Principal's leadership skills are crucial in ensuring teachers can function optimally in the learning process, ultimately leading to improved student achievement.

The availability of competent teachers at MTs Al-Washliyah Tembung is critical to improving the quality of education and student learning achievement. Therefore, all efforts in education, including curriculum changes and human resource development, should be focused on improving the quality of teachers. Although many factors influence the success or failure of education, teacher performance remains one of the most critical factors. Society generally views teacher quality as the primary determinant of educational success. Therefore, improving teacher quality should be a top priority in efforts to improve the overall quality of education.

Conclusion

Principals not only play the role of administrators but also show that the role of principals in Human Resource Change Management is crucial in improving the quality of educators' human resources. Inspiring and supportive leadership and a focus on continuous professional development create a conducive environment for teachers to develop. This not only improves the quality of teaching but also contributes to improved student learning outcomes. The implication is that schools should integrate technology into the curriculum and ensure that teachers are adequately trained and provided with practical and thorough support, assistance and care. Thus, a practical principal functions as a manager and a visionary leader who can bring about positive changes in the school. Principals play an essential role in building the capacity of educators, which in turn improves the overall quality of education.

This study has some research limitations that need to be considered: The conclusions are only based on one school-specific research or study. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the results to other school contexts with different dynamics and challenges. Therefore, the findings may only be applicable in certain contexts, such as a

specific type of school, geographical area, or education system. Future researchers can direct the research to local contexts to generate more specific findings in the context of principal leadership.

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