

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AMONG SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL
REFORM IN
MUSCAT, OMAN**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the core professional development needs of school principals in Muscat in the context of educational reform in Oman since 1998, when the general education curriculum was revamped to the basic education curriculum. The core professional development needs were initially identified and categorized into fifteen main areas and could be typified into two general types, that is, those concerning instructional matters (instructional leadership) and innovative initiatives (transformational leadership). This study also investigated challenges faced by school principals and their suggestions for improving school leadership and management in Muscat, Oman.

The study largely used the survey method, which involved 80 school principals in the capital city of Muscat. As many as 25 principals from Cycle 1 and 55 principals from Cycle 2 participated in the study and they fully responded to the professional development needs survey questionnaire. Apart from the survey method, school visitations were made and some principals were interviewed to elicit information through face-to-face interactions regarding challenges, problems, and improvement efforts in school leadership and management related to school reform.

Data obtained by survey was analyzed by descriptive statistics and inferential statistics using the SPSS software version 16. Descriptive statistics was used to assess principals' perceptions regarding the extent of their professional development needs. Apart from that factorial analysis was used to examine the tenability of item groupings into their relevant factors, and to determine the dominant factors for professional development. Correlation matrix was also constructed to determine the inter-factor relational coherency.

The results of the study showed that there were essentially fifteen areas or factors needed for professional development of school principals in the reform context. A majority of factors pertained to instructional matters, while other factors were concerned with leadership initiatives in making relevant changes suitable for new education policies and curriculum. Among the factors, building community involvement, leadership capacity, and problem solving were the dominant factors. Most principals contended that many professional development programs organized by the Ministry of Education did not match their professional development needs and roles. School principals were not properly trained in many aspects of school management and leadership.

The implications of this study are: total retraining of school principals is needed whenever a system reform takes place, and new leadership competencies are needed to implement new policies and changes.

KEPERLUAN PEMBANGUNAN PROFESIONAL PENGETUA DALAM KONTEKS REFORMASI PENDIDIKAN DI MUSCAT, OMAN

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti keperluan pembangunan profesional utama dalam kalangan guru besar atau pengetua di bandaraya Muscat dalam konteks reformasi pendidikan di Oman mulai tahun 1998 yang memfasakan struktur persekolahan kepada dua kitaran, iaitu Kitaran 1 (Tahun 1-4) dan Kitaran 2 (Tahun 5-10). Keperluan pembangunan profesional pada awalnya dikenalpasti dan dikategorikan kepada lima belas bidang atau faktor yang boleh dikelaskan kepada dua jenis, iaitu, jenis yang berkait urusan pengajaran (kepimpinan instruksional) dan yang berkait dengan inisiatif inovasi (kepimpinan transformasi). Kajian ini juga telah meneliti cabaran dan masalah yang dialami oleh guru besar atau pengetua serta cadangan mereka memperbaiki keadaan kepimpinan dan pengurusan di Muscat, Oman.

Kajian ini pada sebahagian besarnya menggunakan kaedah tinjauan yang melibatkan 80 orang pengetua di bandaraya Muscat. Seramai 25 orang pengetua dari Kitaran 1 dan 55 orang pengetua dari Kitaran 2 telah terlibat dan menjawab soal selidik keperluan pembangunan profesional. Selain daripada tinjauan, pengkaji telah membuat lawatan ke sekolah-sekolah serta menemubual beberapa pengetua untuk mendapatkan gambaran dan maklumat tentang cabaran, masalah, dan usaha penambahbaikan dalam kepimpinan dan pengurusan sekolah dalam konteks reformasi pendidikan di Oman.

Data soal selidik telah dianalisis dengan statistik deskriptif dan inferensi melalui perisian SPSS versi 16. Statistik deskriptif adalah untuk menentukan setakat mana keperluan pembangunan profesional menurut persepsi pengetua yang berada dalam arus reformasi pendidikan. Selain itu, analisis faktor telah digunakan untuk mengelompokkan item-item mengikut faktor masing-masing dan untuk menentukan faktor dominan dalam keperluan pembangunan profesional. Juga, matrik korelasi telah dibina untuk menentukan koherensi relatif antara faktor dalam keperluan pembangunan profesional pengetua.

Hasil analisis kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa terdapat lima belas bidang atau faktor utama yang memang diperlukan oleh pengetua sekolah di bandar Muscat untuk memimpin dan menguruskan sekolah dalam era reformasi pendidikan di Oman. Majoriti faktor adalah mengenai urusan keguruan dan pengajaran, sementara sebahagian lain faktor adalah bersabit dengan inisiatif kepimpinan untuk melakukan perubahan yang relevan dengan urusan perubahan dasar dan kurikulum. Antara faktor yang dominan ialah membina penglibatan komuniti, kapasiti kepimpinan, dan penyelesaian masalah sekolah. Kebanyakan pengetua berpendapat bahawa program latihan yang diadakan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Oman tidak sepadan dan relevan dengan keperluan pembangunan profesional mereka. Para pengetua menyatakan bahawa kurang latihan dalam banyak aspek pengurusan sekolah dan kepimpinan.

Hasil kajian mempunyai implikasi bahawa latihan semula pengetua adalah perlu bila berlaku reformasi sistem pendidikan. Kompetensi baharu pengurusan dan kepimpinan sekolah diperlukan untuk pelaksanaan dasar dan kurikulum baharu.

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