Analysis of State-Funded Teacher Recruitment Policies: Perspectives from Indonesia and Malaysia

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Section Information	ABSTRACT
	Objective: This study aims to analyze the teacher recruitment policies of state-salaried teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia, focusing on regulations, selection processes, distribution of placements, and pre-service training systems. *Method:* The study employs a literature review method with a descriptive-qualitative and comparative approach, analyzing policy documents, academic journals, and official sources from the period 2018–2024. *Results:* The analysis reveals that Indonesia implements a decentralised recruitment system through the CPNS and PPPK mechanisms, but still faces challenges regarding central-local synchronisation and teacher distribution. Meanwhile, Malaysia adopts a centralized approach with strict selection criteria and an integrated teacher education system. *Novelty:* In conclusion, Malaysia's system is more structured, while Indonesia requires strengthened coordination and reform of recruitment management based on regional needs.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) in the education sector is important in determining the quality and success of the national learning system [1]. One key aspect of education HRM is teacher recruitment, given that teachers are the leading actors in knowledge transfer, character building, and competency development of students [2]. Countries worldwide have adopted various strategies to ensure the availability of professional, competent, and highly integrity-driven teachers [3]In developing countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia, teacher recruitment is a strategic issue closely related to public policy, educational equity, and improving teaching and learning services. Therefore, it is important to examine how teacher recruitment policies are formulated, implemented, and evaluated by the state [4]

In Indonesia, the recruitment of teachers who are paid by the state is generally carried out through the ASN (State Civil Apparatus) and PPPK (Government Employees with Work Agreements) selection mechanisms[5]. This process is carried out nationally and is often linked to regional staffing needs and civil service regulations. However, various challenges have emerged, such as uneven distribution of teachers, low interest in remote areas, and selection processes that do not fully reflect on-the-ground needs. On the other hand, teacher recruitment in Malaysia is carried out through a different mechanism, namely an integrated pre-service training system and selection based on national needs. This approach gives Malaysia a more systematic, planned, and long-term development-oriented teacher recruitment process.

These system differences reflect the different public policy paradigms adopted by each country. In Indonesia, pressure to meet teacher quotas often dominates policy formulation, while aspects of quality and ongoing training are not yet optimal [6]. Meanwhile, Malaysia emphasizes integrating teacher education with the recruitment system, resulting in relatively more consistent teacher quality [7]This is worth analyzing as it pertains to the effectiveness of the state's role in ensuring educational quality through recruitment strategies. Within the ASEAN regional context, such policy comparisons can also serve as a reflection and source of cross-country learning.

Teachers recruited by the state are civil servants and extensions of the state in fulfilling the constitutional mandate to educate the nation [8]. Therefore, the recruitment process should not merely be administrative but reflect the national vision for education and long-term interests [9]. In practice, many regions in Indonesia still face a shortage of teachers, even though national selection processes are conducted regularly [10]. This indicates a gap between central policies and their implementation at the local level. Analyzing this issue to identify its root causes and potential solutions is important.

On the other hand, Malaysia implements a more centralized teacher education system, including managing teacher training institutions such as the Malaysian Institute of Teacher Education (MITE) [11]. Graduates from MITE are usually directly assigned to fill teacher vacancies in various regions according to a national needs map [12]. This approach minimizes disparities in the distribution of educators and provides a uniform foundation for training in terms of quality. However, this system also faces challenges, such as limited flexibility in placement and a lack of alternative selection methods. Therefore, teacher recruitment policies in Malaysia still need to be continuously reviewed and updated to keep up with evolving times.

This study is interested in examining how the state, through its public policy instruments, plays a role in determining the direction and pattern of teacher recruitment. A comparison between policies in Indonesia and Malaysia can provide new insights into the best approaches to managing the teaching workforce. By analyzing the teacher recruitment systems of the two countries, the researcher hopes to understand the strengths, weaknesses, and factors that influence the effectiveness of the policies. Additionally, this study aims to identify opportunities for improving teacher recruitment policies in Indonesia to make them more adaptive and quality-oriented. This study is descriptive-analytical and uses a literature review approach as the basis for its arguments.

Some important questions that form the basis of this study include how state-funded teacher recruitment policies are designed and implemented in Indonesia and Malaysia. What are the fundamental differences between the two systems regarding regulations, selection mechanisms, and their impact on equity and quality in education? How effectively are each country's approaches ensuring teacher quality and equitable distribution? To what extent do these recruitment systems align with each country's long-term educational development goals? These questions form the basis for the analysis presented in the following sections.

This study is urgently needed given the importance of qualified educators in achieving national education goals. The right teacher in the right place is a fundamental principle in creating a healthy educational ecosystem. When the recruitment process is not targeted appropriately, problems such as low work motivation, high teacher turnover rates, and low quality of learning can arise. Therefore, an analysis of teacher recruitment policies is important from a bureaucratic management perspective and concerns students' rights to access quality education. As the primary provider of public services, the state must ensure that every policy implemented has undergone data-driven evaluation and contextual consideration.

Comparisons between countries in the field of education policy are not new, but they remain highly relevant in seeking inspiration and learning across systems. Indonesia and Malaysia, as two neighbouring countries, share many cultural and historical similarities, yet their approaches to education policy demonstrate significant differences. This opens up space for scientific discussion regarding which system is more effective and how policy adaptation can be carried out while maintaining local values. Through this study, awareness will emerge that educational reform must begin with professional and sustainable human resource management. Teacher recruitment is a critical starting point determining the future direction of a nation's education.

With this study, the researchers hope to contribute to education policy-making, particularly in recruiting state-salaried teachers. The results are expected to be relevant not only to academics and policymakers but also to educational institutions, teacher organizations, and the general public. This study emphasizes the importance of accountable, transparent, and quality-based teacher recruitment management. In the long term, appropriate recruitment policies will directly impact the quality of national education. Thus, this study is expected to guide the development of evidence-based education policies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a library research approach to analyze the recruitment policies of state-salaried teachers in Indonesia and Malaysia. Literature research was chosen because this study examines official documents, regulations, academic literature, and scientific publications relevant to the topic [[13]This approach allows researchers to explore the policies on recruiting state-salaried teachers in both countries and compare the principles, implementation, and impact on the national education system [14].

The data in this study were collected through a review of various primary and secondary sources, such as government regulations, policy documents from the Ministry of Education, scientific journals, research reports, academic articles, and other reliable sources discussing teacher recruitment in Indonesia and Malaysia. The researcher specifically examined policy documents issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia and the Ministry of Education of Malaysia to obtain a clear picture of the recruitment systems in place in each country.

Data analysis techniques in this study were conducted using descriptive-qualitative methods with a comparative approach [15]. The researchers identified, classified, and compared the main aspects of teacher recruitment policies in both countries, such as selection mechanisms, recruitment criteria, teacher distribution, and integration with teacher professional development [16]. Additionally, the researcher analyzed the social, political, and educational contexts influencing the formulation and implementation of these policies. Through this approach, the study aims to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of each policy and provide constructive input for future policy-making.

To maintain objectivity and validity of data, researchers only used credible sources updated between 2018 and 2024 and relevant to the study's focus. The data selection and categorization process was conducted systematically to avoid interpretive bias. As a result, this study's findings are expected to highlight the differences between the two policy systems and provide strategic insights for improving teacher recruitment governance in Indonesia.

Researchers aim to produce a comprehensive and meaningful analysis of teacher recruitment policies in both countries through this method. In addition to contributing to academic knowledge, the results of this study are also intended as a practical reference for policymakers in designing a teacher recruitment system that is more equitable, professional, and oriented toward improving the quality of national education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
A.   Teacher Recruitment Policies in Indonesia

A widespread teacher shortage crisis drives the teacher recruitment policy in Indonesia for 2018–2024. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) projects that the teacher shortage will reach 1,090,678 people (2021) and increase to 1,312,759 people (2024). The government has launched a large-scale recruitment program to address this, primarily by increasing the quota for Government Employees with Work Contracts (PPPK) [17]For example, in 2021, the "one million PPPK teacher recruitment" program was launched as a policy breakthrough. This PPPK policy is primarily aimed at honorary teachers who can no longer be appointed civil servants, so they are appointed civil servants with contract status. PPPK teachers receive a higher basic salary of approximately Rp2,966,500 for Grade IX plus professional allowances and other benefits, significantly higher than their previous honoraria. Thus, this policy combines improvements in teachers' welfare with the provision of new positions to meet national needs. Regulatory-wise, teacher recruitment is based on Law No. 5/2014 on Civil Servants and its implementing regulations, such as Government Regulation No. 49/2018 on PPPK, emphasizing the principle of meritocracy. The selection process for PPPK positions for teaching roles includes administrative and competency-based stages according to the Civil Service Commission (BKN) guidelines.

2023 for example, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) allocated 601,174 PPPK positions, but local governments only opened 296,059 positions. There was a priority tier for certified honorary teachers in the

selection process, accounting for 50,248 positions, while other applicants took tests based on their respective qualifications. In implementation, the Civil Service Agency (BKN) and Kemendikbudristek applied a Computer-Assisted Test (CAT) and Situational Judgment Test (SJT) to assess technical, managerial, and social competencies; certified teachers received 100% affirmation of technical competencies. This demonstrates efforts to ensure the quality and formality of the selection process align with professional standards for teachers. The implementation of the policy on the ground faces challenges in central-regional coordination. For example, the shortage of teachers is reported to reach hundreds of thousands, but the actual opening of positions is minimal. As a result, 12,276 Priority 1 applicants were not accommodated in the 2023 selection process because many regions were "reluctant" to open positions despite the teacher shortage.

The contributing factors include reports that several regions have a surplus of teachers and have not submitted new recruitment forms [18]. This issue indicates weak synchronization between planning at the central level and implementation at the regional level [19]. From a policy implementation perspective, the policy output in the form of PPPK quotas has not been fully realized due to communication gaps and differences in priorities among actors. To address this gap, the government has allocated special funding in the General Allocation Fund (DAU) specifically for PPPK teacher salaries since 2022; however, strengthening coordination in its implementation remains necessary. Within the framework of pre-service training, Indonesia has teacher certification institutions.

Prospective civil servant teachers are generally required to complete PPG to be competent [20]. In PPPK recruitment practices, PPG graduates are given priority and special treatment; they do not need to retake the test after passing the PPG selection. This means that recruitment focuses on formal qualifications. Meanwhile, non-certified teacher candidates must take the standard competency selection test. Other efforts related to training include collaboration programs with Teacher Education Institutions and the implementation of on-the-job training. However, further research is needed on the effectiveness of post-recruitment training. From a public policy theory perspective, such as Anderson's policy cycle, the formulation stage of PPPK quota policies is often not thoroughly followed up by the implementation of regional recruitment openings, making continuous evaluation crucial.

The distribution of teacher placements is also a concern. Regulations state that the government has the authority to regulate placements in disadvantaged and border areas, but there are still imbalances in practice. There is a shortage of teachers in 3T areas (remote, frontier, and disadvantaged), which are less attractive to teachers. Some areas in Java even report an excess of teachers, while many remote districts face shortages. This has sparked discussions about teacher placement based on priority needs, such as providing incentives or special assignments to difficult areas. This uneven distribution is further exacerbated if national recruitment quotas are not adjusted to meet regional needs.

One issue raised in the report was that some regions did not open positions despite needing teachers. From an implementation theory perspective, this challenge highlights the need for stronger oversight mechanisms and incentives to ensure recruitment policies are oriented toward national equity.

B.   Teacher Recruitment Policy in Malaysia

Malaysia faces a proportionally smaller teacher shortage than Indonesia, but it remains significant. According to the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) in early 2023, there was a deficit of around 4.49% or 19,431 teachers due to retirement, transfers, or other reasons. This shortage was detected throughout the country (not just in border areas) and was concentrated in specific fields such as Malay, English, and Islamic Education. To address this, the MOE regularly conducts special teacher recruitment drives. For example, between 2021 and January 2023, over 22,327 teachers were appointed through one-off schemes and subject clusters.

This recruitment targets critical subjects (language, religion, science, etc.) and is intended to be sustainable yearly. The government has also scheduled a five-year plan; the 2023–2027 KPM projection estimates an increase of approximately 16,886–20,081 teachers overall. This figure reflects dynamic national teacher demand planning that is reviewed periodically based on the latest data. Malaysia's teacher recruitment administration structure is centralized. Unlike Indonesia, the Minister of Education states that teacher recruitment is carried out by the Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Pendidikan (SPP), an independent agency under the Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Awam. Prospective teachers apply through the MySPP portal. Starting in 2023, the KPM will expand recruitment for non-education graduates with different job statuses. Education graduates qualified as teachers will be appointed permanently, while graduates from other fields will only be appointed on a contract basis [21]

This policy allows for expanding the recruitment base without lowering educational standards, as those who remain in the Educator track are guaranteed a career. At the same time, other candidates contribute as contract teachers in the short term [22]. All applicants continue to undergo a competitive selection process, but whether they pass or fail is determined by their academic qualifications and the track they choose. The pre-service education system in Malaysia is also structured. Prospective teachers with SPM or equivalent high school qualifications are enrolled in the Bachelor of Education Program (PISMP) at the Institute of Education or subsidized subsubsidised teacher training programs at private/foreign universities. To enter IPG, applicants must meet strict academic requirements (e.g., passing Malay, History, and English exams) before being invited for an interview. Upon completing PISMP/IPG, KPM contracts them.

In addition to pre-service training, there are scholarship and independent teaching programs for science and engineering graduates. This approach sets high formal requirements for becoming a teacher, which is expected to improve quality. However, this means that only a portion of the population who meet these high standards can become civil servant teachers. The distribution of teachers in Malaysia is also centrally regulated [23]. The KPM has the authority to assign teachers to each school based on

recommendations from the State Education Department (JPN). Recently, to address geographical disparities, a policy was implemented to allocate recruitment quotas according to three central regions: the Peninsula, Sabah, and Sarawak. This decision aims to ensure that the allocation of new teachers is proportionate to the needs of the Borneo region, which has many remote schools.

Assignments to remote areas or outside urban centres often receive additional incentives (location allowances). For example, teachers in Sarawak receive allowances of RM500–1,500 for teaching in remote areas. However, there is still criticism, for example, some teachers refuse assignments outside urban centres due to heavy workloads or difficulties with facilities. Hence, protection and incentives are the focus of policy improvements. Overall, policy implementation in Malaysia demonstrates higher policy coherence [24]The KPM policy aligns with the SPP process, annual needs planning is adjusted based on retirement and transfer data, and transparency is promoted through open applications via the MySPP portal. Additionally, the selection and recruitment process adapts to conditions, such as special recruitment for previously applied teachers. Data indicates that in 2023, KPM still conducts one-off recruitment and subject-based clustering to fill vacancies.

Suppose this policy is adopted within the framework of public policy theory. In that case, the policy-making agenda is responsive to complaints about teacher shortages, and the implementation stage is continuously evaluated through published 5-year quota targets. In practice, Malaysia strives to balance merit and need and adjust recruitment methods according to applicant groups. For example, there is no longer a special selection process for education graduates compared to non-education graduates in the latest recruitment.

C. Comparison of Teacher Recruitment in Indonesia and Malaysia

The above analysis shows several important similarities and differences between Indonesia and Malaysia. Both countries face teacher shortages and respond with mass recruitment, but on different scales. Indonesia addresses millions of teacher shortages through the large-scale PPPK program, while Malaysia targets tens of thousands of new teachers each year. Both systems adhere to the principle of meritocracy, where selection is based on competence, but they differ in their mechanisms. Indonesia has a decentralized system, where quotas are set at the central level but applications are submitted by regions and then allocated to states. Regarding selection mechanisms, Indonesia emphasises certification and experience for honorary teachers, while Malaysia emphasises pre-service academic qualifications [25]For example, Indonesia provides affirmation to PPG teachers (no need for retesting) to encourage formalization, while Malaysia requires an education degree at the outset for permanent appointment.

Both are now open to non-education graduates, but through different pathways. The pre-service approach also contrasts with Indonesia, which relies on postgraduate certification programs (PPG), while Malaysia uses a Bachelor of Education program with a license (IPG) before individuals become teachers. These differences reflect differing orientations: Indonesia tends to be pragmatic, while Malaysia is more structural. Both

countries use medium-term projections for planning needs, but their implementation differs.

Indonesia faces a significant gap between projected needs and available positions [26]. This indicates the need for improvements in the policy formulation phase to ensure that regional staffing proposals align with actual teacher needs. Malaysia has outlined a five-year demand forecast and reviews data annually, enabling a more sustainable planning process. Unlike Indonesia's system, Malaysia's central authority for teacher recruitment facilitates this synchronization, where regional political/budgetary interests can influence staffing proposals. The distribution of placements also has different dynamics. Both acknowledge challenges in remote areas, but their policy responses differ.

Indonesia often prioritises subsidies and recruitment of PPPK specifically for 3T areas, but this is still considered ineffective in equalising the number of teachers. Malaysia has taken structural steps to divide new teacher quotas by region to address imbalances [27]. For example, data shows that thousands of exceptional teachers in Sarawak have been appointed through a special channel, and nearly 90% of placements in Sarawak exceed the target. This policy demonstrates how the country works together to plan distribution based on region, unlike Indonesia's approach, which still relies on proposals from each region. From a policy implementation perspective, both countries face similar issues, namely the gap between formulation and implementation. Indonesia often encounters coordination challenges between the central and regional governments, while Malaysia sometimes faces teacher resistance to specific placements.

Malaysia tends to be quicker in adapting strategies, such as adjusting recruitment channels to meet qualification requirements. Easton's theory suggests the importance of feedback and control in public policy, and both countries have conducted internal evaluations, such as monitoring the recruitment of teachers. However, challenges in teacher quality remain: both countries must ensure that increasing quantity does not compromise quality by continuing to strengthen training and certification. In summary, Indonesia operates on a larger scale with a decentralised approach, while Malaysia uses a centralised model with more systematic teacher preparation. Both emphasise improving teacher welfare and certification, but each country's political and administrative structures influence implementation on the ground.

D. Strategic Recommendations for Indonesia

Based on the comparisons, several recommendations can be proposed to make teacher recruitment policies in Indonesia more effective and adaptive. First, coordination between the central and regional governments should be strengthened when planning teacher recruitment. The main issue arises when the regions do not fully propose the PPPK quota set by the central government. The central government needs to provide incentives or obligations for local governments to submit quotas in line with the actual needs of their respective regions, possibly by linking the allocation of DAU already earmarked for PPPK salaries [28]

The funding policy already directed toward PPPK in 2022 needs to be continued with a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the funds are used to increase the number of teachers. A needs mapping model, such as the one implemented in Malaysia (estimating five-year needs and regularly reviewing teacher retirement data), could be adopted. For example, teacher recruitment targets every five years based on retirement projections and student growth could be set, as the KPM has set a target of 16–20 thousand new teachers for the 2023–2027 period.

Second, region-based recruitment allocations should be implemented to ensure more equitable teacher placement. Malaysia's policy of dividing new teacher quotas into three regions is a good example. Indonesia could design separate formations (e.g., Java Island, Sumatra Island, and Eastern Region/Kalimantan-Papua) so that areas with shortages become the primary focus. This can be integrated with affirmative action programs for 3T areas, such as providing special selection channels or additional allowances. With a separate quota system, it is hoped that disadvantaged areas will no longer be hindered by a surplus of Java teachers, encouraging them to open new positions.

Additionally, clarifying the national teacher rotation policy can help redistribute teaching staff to needy areas. Third, it enhances the flexibility of recruitment pathways. Malaysia has implemented a dual system: permanent positions for education graduates and contracts for others.

Indonesia could explore similar models, such as accommodating non-education graduates through medium-term contract programs while providing opportunities to participate in PPG. This would expand the recruitment base while maintaining competency standards for those entering the whole civil service/PPPK pathway. The policy of directly appointing honorary teachers without selection should be avoided. However, a contractual approach could incentivise young prospective teachers who have not yet completed their bachelor's degree in education [29]. Reforming the professional education pathway, such as implementing a Fast Track PPG program for other bachelor's degree holders, is also worth considering. Further studies are needed on the effectiveness of in-service training programs for contract teachers to ensure quality is not overlooked. Fourth, the implementation of pre-service training and certification must be strengthened. Given that Indonesia has prioritised PPG graduates in PPPK recruitment.

Efforts to increase PPG capacity must be intensified. The government's target of 100% certified teachers needs to be followed up with increased PPG quotas and partnerships with private teacher training institutions. In addition, pre-service training for non-certified teachers must be mandated before they are appointed, so minimum quality is maintained. The Malaysian model, which requires IPG graduation as part of teacher recruitment, could be an ideal long-term benchmark. Affirmative action policies, such as waiving entrance exams for PPG graduates, should be continued to make the certification program more attractive, as evidenced by its positive impact on recruitment in 2023.

Fifth, consider public policy theory in evaluation and feedback. Anderson's policy cycle teaches the importance of the monitoring and evaluation phase [30]. Indonesia needs to establish a sustainable evaluation mechanism by comparing actual needs with the number of teachers recruited in each selection round and publishing the results transparently. Also include public participation in the form of honorary teachers and community members in policy dialogues to hear aspirations from remote areas. The Easton system approach (input-process-output-feedback) suggests that inputs such as complaints about teacher shortages should guide the process of formulating teacher allocation calculations and creating regulations, with outputs that can be measured and evaluated for subsequent policy improvements. By establishing these evaluation practices, Indonesia can quickly adjust recruitment policies if discrepancies arise between bureaucratic levels.

Overall, regulatory refinement and improved coordination are key. Indonesia needs to adopt strategies that have been successful in Malaysia, such as allocating teacher positions based on regional needs with local contextual adjustments. These recommendations are expected to help Indonesia address its national teacher shortage more effectively, equitably, and sustainably, in line to equalize the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study highlights contrasting teacher recruitment policies in Indonesia and Malaysia. Indonesia adopts a two-track system (CPNS and PPPK) emphasizing honorary teachers through a national computer-based selection. In contrast, Malaysia applies a centralized and structured process via the Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Pendidikan (SPP), focusing on candidates graduating from the Institut Pendidikan Guru (IPG). Both uphold meritocracy, but Indonesia emphasizes inclusivity for non-education graduates, while Malaysia sets stricter pre-service standards. **Implication :** Improving Indonesia's teacher recruitment system requires enhanced data-driven planning, equitable placement mechanisms, and integration between selection and training. Malaysia's centralized approach and pre-service requirements offer valuable lessons for Indonesia in designing effective, sustainable teacher policies. **Limitation :** Indonesia struggles with central-local coordination, where many regions fail to submit formation needs aligned with central quotas, leaving thousands of priority applicants unplaced. Malaysia maintains greater stability through national planning and structured teacher distribution across its regions, making its system more effective in addressing teacher distribution. **Future Research :** Findings suggest that while Malaysia has achieved an integrated system linking selection, training, and placement, Indonesia is still transitioning. Future research should explore how local bureaucratic structures and fiscal capacities affect recruitment outcomes and identify scalable strategies to harmonize central policies with regional implementation across diverse contexts in Indonesia.

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