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## **Application Of The Appreciative Inquiry Paradigm In Creating A Vision And Mission At State Elementary School 1 Babakan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The formulation of a school's vision and mission often falls into a deficit-based approach that focuses on weaknesses, failing to inspire school members. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Appreciative Inquiry paradigm through the BAGJA framework in formulating the vision and mission at SDN 1 Babakan. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection was carried out through participant observation, in-depth interviews with school stakeholders, and documentation studies. The results showed that the Appreciative Inquiry approach was able to transform the mindset of the school community to focus on existing strengths and best practices. Through the BAGJA stages, SDN 1 Babakan successfully formulated a vision that is more student-centered and asset-based: "Realizing Individuals of Character, Innovative, and Environmental Culture Based on Pancasila Values." The application of Appreciative Inquiry proved to increase the sense of ownership and intrinsic motivation of teachers in implementing the school's mission. This study concludes that Appreciative Inquiry is an effective strategic instrument in school change management to create a positive and sustainable educational ecosystem.

**Keywords:** *Appreciative Inquiry, BAGJA Framework, School Vision, Paradigm Change*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Education in today's era of transformation demands that schools serve not only as a place for knowledge transfer but also as an adaptive and innovative ecosystem. The key to the success of this transformation lies in a clear, measurable, and future-oriented school vision and mission. A vision and mission are not simply a series of words displayed on a school wall; they are a moral compass and strategic direction that motivate the entire school community to achieve common goals. However, a common challenge is the process of developing a vision and mission, which tends to focus solely on addressing existing deficiencies. Determining a school's vision and mission should not be done individually by the principal but must involve all stakeholders through deliberation to achieve a shared commitment (Mulyasa, 2022).

To date, many schools have been trapped in a deficit-based thinking paradigm. In this mindset, school development begins with a list of complaints, deficiencies, and failures, and then seeks solutions. This approach often drains energy and creates a less stimulating atmosphere for educators. As an alternative to this mindset, a new, more empowering paradigm has emerged: Appreciative Inquiry.

Appreciative Inquiry is a collaborative change management approach based on strengths (asset-based thinking). Philosophically, the application of Appreciative Inquiry in formulating a school's vision and mission is firmly rooted in the views of Humanism and Social Constructivism. From a humanist perspective, education is seen as a process of humanizing humans, where each individual possesses unique potential that must be developed, not fixed as if they were a defective product. Furthermore, when contextualized within the thoughts of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, this paradigm aligns with the Law of Nature and the Law of Time. The "guiding" philosophy taught by Dewantara emphasizes that educators are tasked with cultivating the natural strengths that children already possess (Dewantara, 2013). This aligns with the opinion of Cooperrider & Srivastva (1987) that organizations have a "positive core" that is a source of energy for change. School members no longer focus on limited facilities, but rather on how to optimize existing human resources. Appreciative Inquiry provides a framework for finding good "rice" in the school field and providing the best environment for that rice to grow optimally. Thus, the school vision and mission formulated through Appreciative Inquiry are not coercive, but rather grow from the exploration of existing noble values and local strengths.

Appreciative Inquiry encourages all stakeholders to explore existing good practices, envision ideal conditions, and design concrete steps based on the school's strengths. Based on Ministerial Regulation No. 26 of 2022 concerning Teacher Leadership Education, the Appreciative Inquiry approach, with the BAGJA framework, is positioned as a strategic methodology for achieving the goals of

educational transformation in Indonesia. The principles of Appreciative Inquiry are adapted through the BAGJA flow (Create questions, Learn lessons, Explore dreams, Describe plans, and Organize execution) as a means to realize the school's vision and mission that is student-centered and aligned with the Pancasila student profile.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Qualitative research is a method for exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to social or humanitarian issues (Creswell, 2014). The qualitative approach was chosen because of its ability to explore social phenomena in depth in a natural context, understanding the subjective meanings, experiences, and perceptions of participants. In this context, the researcher seeks to interpret how the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, or better known as POAC, are implemented and understood by stakeholders at the locus school. This approach allows the researcher to be a key instrument in data collection and interpretation, resulting in a rich and holistic description of ongoing management practices. The significance of the qualitative approach lies in its ability to uncover the "why" and "how" of a phenomenon, rather than simply measuring frequency or correlation, which is highly relevant for analyzing the complexity of implementing management theory in field practice. It also aims to describe in depth how the Appreciative Inquiry paradigm is applied in developing the school's vision and mission. This approach was chosen because the researcher wanted to understand the process of collaboration and the transformation of school community mindsets naturally through the BAGJA flow. BAGJA is a modification of the 5D process in Appreciative Inquiry, which consists of: Develop a Key Question, Learn Lessons, Explore Dreams, Develop a Plan, and Organize Execution (Noble & McGrath, 2016).

### **1. Research Procedure (BAGJA Flow)**

The process of implementing Appreciative Inquiry is carried out through five main stages known as the BAGJA flow, namely:

- a. Develop a Key Question: Determine the focus of change to improve the quality of learning.
- b. Learn Lessons: Identify existing strengths and good practices in the school.
- c. Develop Dreams: Visualize the ideal future state of the school.
- d. Develop a Plan: Formulate concrete steps and indicators of success for the vision.
- e. Organize Execution: Determine personnel, resources, and a timeline for implementation.

### **2. Data Collection Techniques**

Data were collected using three main techniques to ensure validity through triangulation. To achieve the depth of understanding desired by the qualitative

approach and case study method, the researcher will use several complementary data collection techniques (triangulation), including in-depth interviews, limited participant observation, and document study.

a. Interviews

The application of the POAC management functions (planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling) in data collection provides a systematic framework so that the information obtained from informants (interviews) is more accurate, relevant, and accountable (Septihandini, A., et al., 2023). Qualitative Research Management. This technique will be used to explore the perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of key informants regarding the implementation of the POAC function. Interviews will be conducted semi-structured, allowing flexibility to explore issues that arise during the interview process. Key informants include the Principal, Teachers, and Administrative Staff directly involved in the school management process. Questions will be designed to uncover how they understand and apply each POAC element in their daily tasks.

b. Observations

Observations will be conducted to directly observe management practices, interpersonal interactions, and the physical environment relevant to the POAC function in both schools. Researchers will observe activities such as teacher meetings, learning processes, extracurricular activities, and interactions in the staff room or office. These observations aim to verify information obtained from interviews and capture non-verbal and contextual aspects that may not be revealed in interviews.

c. Documentation Study

The documentation study will involve reviewing and analyzing various official and unofficial documents relevant to school management. These documents include the School Work Plan (RKS), Curriculum, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Organizational Structure, and performance evaluation documents. The documentation study serves to provide historical data, context, and formal evidence that supports or clarifies the findings from the interviews and observations.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The planning stage began with the formulation of a research design focused on the strengths of SDN 1 Babakan. This stage involved selecting a set of activities and subsequently deciding what to do, when, how, and by whom (Handoko, 2012). The researcher carefully selected the research instrument, an interview guide, that no longer sought to identify the school's weaknesses but instead explored positive core questions through probing questions based on the BAGJA flow. In this planning process, the researcher also identified key actors within the school with a long history or significant influence, such as senior teachers and the school committee, to ensure the credibility of the data collected. Furthermore, the researcher established a data collection timetable to ensure the process of exploring dreams (visions) did not

conflict with students' academic schedules.

Next, in organizing, the researcher arranged the workflow and supporting resources to ensure efficient data collection. This involved grouping informants into specific clusters so that perspectives from leaders, educators, and parents could be documented equitably. The researcher also organized tools such as digital recorders, field notebooks, and visual media to document the collective dreams of the school community. Administrative arrangements, such as obtaining permits and arranging discussion spaces within the school, were carried out neatly to create a formal yet warm and collaborative interview atmosphere.

Entering the actuation phase, the researcher took concrete action by conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions using the Appreciative Inquiry paradigm. The researcher acted as a facilitator, encouraging school members to share moments of past success as a foundation for building a vision for the future. Interactions were conducted using active listening techniques to capture their deepest aspirations regarding their dream school. This implementation required the researcher's sensitivity in building good relationships so that informants at SDN 1 Babakan felt safe and enthusiastic about contributing to the development of the school's new mission. The research conducted at SDN 1 Babakan demonstrated that the implementation of the Appreciative Inquiry paradigm through the BAGJA process successfully transformed the school's vision and mission formulation. The research results are grouped into five stages of the flow:

1. "Create Main Questions" Stage

In the initial stage, researchers, along with the Principal and the Curriculum Development Team at SDN 1 Babakan, shifted from problem-based questions (such as: "Why is student discipline low?") to strengths-based questions: "How can we create a learning environment that fosters student independence and creativity using the resources we have?" This created a more positive and open discussion atmosphere from the beginning of the work meeting.

2. "Learn Lessons" Stage

Through group discussions, the school community successfully identified local strengths at SDN 1 Babakan that had previously been under-recognized, including:

- a. Human Assets: The presence of a leading teacher and a strong spirit of collaboration between senior and junior teachers.
- b. Social Assets: Harmonious relationships with parents who are very supportive of school activities.
- c. Natural Assets: The school's location is close to sports fields and agricultural areas, which can provide contextual learning resources for students.

3. "Dream Digging" Stage

The school community was invited to imagine the future of SDN 1 Babakan in the next five years. The outcome of this stage was a collective dream: a school that:

- a. Becomes a center for learning innovation based on local wisdom.
- b. Produces graduates who embody the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly

independence and mutual cooperation.

- c. Has a beautiful physical environment that supports learning outside the classroom.

4. "Develop a Plan" Stage

Based on this collective dream, a new, more appreciative Vision and Mission for SDN 1 Babakan were formulated:

- a. New Vision: "Creating Individuals with Character, Innovation, and Environmental Culture Based on Pancasila Values."
- b. New Mission: (1) Implements project-based learning rooted in local wisdom; (2) Develops a school ecosystem that supports student leadership; (3) Strengthens synergy with the community for environmental conservation.

5. "Manage Execution" Stage

To ensure that the vision is not just slogans, SDN 1 Babakan formed a policy implementation team involving teachers, education staff, and the school committee. Initial monitoring results indicate increased teacher motivation in developing more student-centered teaching modules and more optimal utilization of school assets (yard and surrounding areas) as learning spaces.

The following is a comparison of the SDN 1 Babakan vision and mission as implemented with the results of the appreciative inquiry approach.

	<b>Long</b>	<b>New (with Appreciative Inquiry)</b>
<b>Determining Vision and Mission</b>	Created only by the Principal and Curriculum Development Team and focused on school deficiencies	Involving the entire school community by highlighting the school's strengths and then creating a BAGJA (Integrated Action Plan) flow.
<b>Vision</b>	Creating Religious, High-Achieving, and Environmentally-Loving Students	Creating Individuals with Character, Innovation, and Environmental Culture Based on Pancasila Values
<b>Mission</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementing religious understanding and practice, as well as cultivating noble moral values (akhlakul karimah) and noble</li> <li>2. Equipping students with broad global perspectives</li> <li>3. Creating a cool, comfortable, beautiful, and environmentally conscious school environment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instilling religious values and noble character in every aspect of school life.</li> <li>2. Implementing student-centered learning by utilizing the latest technology and learning methods.</li> <li>3. Implementing environmentally friendly practices through plastic waste reduction programs and greening school areas.</li> </ol>

Appreciative Inquiry is a change management strategy that emphasizes interpersonal relationships and constructive dialogue (Hammond, 2013). In implementing this appreciative inquiry approach, the entire school community expressed the strengths of SDN 1 Babakan through constructive dialogue. These strengths were not only recorded but also linked to each other, creating a vision and mission aligned with the school's character.

In the controlling stage, researchers closely monitored the quality of the collected data. This process involved cross-checking (verification) through data triangulation, which involved comparing the results of interviews with informants with the school's pre-existing strategic plan document. Researchers conducted participant observation to determine the alignment between the informants' narratives of excellence and the reality of interactions and work culture within the school environment. Furthermore, researchers verified through documentation, reviewing archived annual reports, photographs of achievement activities, and records of previous school programs to ensure that interview data was supported by authentic physical evidence. Control through the integration of interview data, field observation results, and document studies ensures that the formulated vision and mission are truly based on objective facts and real assets owned by SDN 1 Babakan.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results and discussions regarding the application of the Appreciative Inquiry paradigm in developing the vision and mission at SDN 1 Babakan, several key conclusions can be drawn: 1. Effective Paradigm Shift: The implementation of Appreciative Inquiry has successfully shifted the mindset of the school community from a problem-based (deficit-based) approach to a strengths-based (asset-based) approach. This demonstrates that a school vision built on past successes and current potential is far more inspiring than a vision that only aims to address shortcomings. 2. The BAGJA Flow as a Strategic Instrument: The use of the BAGJA flow (Ask questions, Learn lessons, Explore dreams, Describe plans, Organize execution) provides a clear and systematic structure for SDN 1 Babakan in formulating its vision. This process ensures that each step of change is based on real, robust data, not mere imagination. 3. Increased Collaboration and Ownership: The Appreciative Inquiry approach significantly increases the involvement of the entire school community (the Principal, teachers, staff, parents, and students). This involvement creates a strong sense of ownership of the vision of "Creating People of Character, Innovation, and Environmental Culture," allowing for more organic implementation of the mission on the ground and full support. 4. Philosophical Relevance: The vision formulation process at SDN 1 Babakan aligns with Ki Hadjar Dewantara's educational philosophy of "guiding" the dictates of nature and the times. By focusing on strengths, the school fulfills its function as a humanist and constructivist nurturer of students' potential.

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