

The Influence of Principal's Transformational Leadership towards Teachers' Collective Efficacy in Rural Secondary Schools of Kanowit, Malaysia

Ying-Leh Ling^{1,*}, Gary Tay Soon
Joo²

^{1,2} Wawasan Open University
lingyingleh@gmail.com

Abstract— The purpose of this quantitative research is to investigate the significant influence of the principal's transformational leadership towards teachers' collective efficacy. Data from 86 teachers were collected from two secondary schools located in the rural area of Kanowit, Sarawak, Malaysia. Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to analyse the influence of the four dimensions of principal's transformational leadership towards teachers' collective efficacy. The result shows that the principal's transformational leadership significantly influence teachers' collective efficacy.

Keywords— *Principal's transformational leadership; Teachers' collective efficacy*

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of the education system in Malaysia has undergone a rapid change over time which encourages every school principal to adapt to the changes for the education transformation. The principals are required to equip themselves with effective leadership skills to manage the school by leading the subordinates towards the goal set. A comprehensive leadership style that capable of mobilising their subordinates to achieve the organisational goals together is needed because the organisation's achievement does not merely depend on leaders alone [1]. Related to that, transformational leadership is seen as an important tool in education institution reformation to motivate the people to perform more than what they expected to do as educational reformation start from the classroom, and teachers as they are the frontline of education policy implementation [2].

Ross and Gary's ideas have enlightened the transformational leadership style of leaders can contribute to teachers' collective efficacy through four dimensions namely redesign of the organisation, setting new directions, developing people, and improving instructions [3]. As a result, the combination of the transformational leadership and teachers' collective efficacy are crucial for future educational organisation development. It is therefore interesting for the researcher to identify the effectiveness of transformational leadership style on the teachers' collective efficacy especially in rural areas of Malaysia.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership highlights its followers to act beyond personal interests and prioritise organisational achievement [4]. There are five dimensions under transformational leadership which are charisma attribution, idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration [5-6]. Leithwood then constructed the Total School Leadership instrument based on Bass' two-factor theory of transformational leadership which consists of four dimensions which are setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organisation and improving the instructional program [7]. In Malaysia, past studies have shown that transformational leadership styles have generated significant effects on job satisfaction, self-efficacy, creativity, workplace happiness, motivation, and commitment [8-11].

B. Teachers' Collective Efficacy

According to Bandura's social cognitive theory of motivation, collective efficacy is one of the dimensions of agency belief [12]. Efficacy beliefs reflect an individual belief in their capability to bring changes through perseverance and innovation to response towards new challenges. Teachers' collective efficacy stated teachers' self-efficacy is based on self-perception in their performance while teachers' collective efficacy is the whole group perceptions based on research on the capability of the school organisation to design and implement the necessary engagements to produce positive achievements [12-13]. The study of Goddard and Skrla have found the high level perceived collective efficacy is related to the sense of purpose which helps the organisation to see temporary obstacles and challenges to overcome it rather than document their confirmed inefficacy [14]. Therefore, it is believed that people with high efficacy tend to find a solution to the problem faced rather than letting the problems be documented as evidence.

C. Research Methodology

This study uses a quantitative cross-sectional design to identify the significant influence on the principal's transformational leadership towards teachers' collective efficacy.

The questionnaire used in the study is adapted from Leithwood's Total School Leadership questionnaire (20 items) for the perceived principal's transformational leadership and Goddard's Collective Efficacy Short Form (12 items) to measure the perceived teachers' collective efficacy [15-16]. There are four dimensions in Leithwood's Total School Leadership instrument measuring principal's transformational leadership in the dimensions of direction setting, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and improving instruction.

The suggested sample size is 123 respondents according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size from a given population ($N=180$) in the district of Kanowit, Malaysia. The response rate is estimated to be at an average of 40 teachers in each school which is around 66.7%. To examine the effects of principal's transformational leadership in secondary schools which is experiencing reformation, teachers from rural secondary schools in Kanowit district were chosen to participate in the study. Purposive random sampling was applied to 123 respondents. The researcher chose the respondents from each school by random names shuffled by the principal. Purposive random sampling for this study is the only appropriate method available for there are only three data sources in this district, and it is time-effective by considering the distance travelled between the schools. A total of 86 secondary school teachers participated in this study, comprising 39 male teachers and 47 female teachers. This study uses multiple linear regression to analyse the data that has been collected.

D. Results and Discussion

The result indicates that principal's transformational leadership significantly influence teachers' collective efficacy as much as 20 per cent of variance change. The findings of multiple regression analysis showed that two dimensions of principal's transformational leadership are

namely setting direction ($\beta=.394$, $p < .05$) and developing people ($\beta=-.805$, $p<.05$) was found to have a significant influence on teachers' collective efficacy. This finding is aligned with previous research was done which explains the significant influence of the principal's transformational leadership behaviour towards perceived teachers' collective efficacy [14, 17].

E. Conclusion

Transformational leadership may support principals to manage better the schools based on the proposed aspects. It is generally determined that principal's transformational leadership influences teachers' efficacy in this research. The analysis showed significant influence for dimensions of setting directions and developing people towards teachers' collective efficacy. This research shows that principals could provide achievable goals and directions for teachers to improve teachers' performance in schools. The findings suggested professional development is needed to upgrade the teachers' quality in respective schools. Principals' knowledge of school management should be updated to support subordinates in the organisation. Preparing principals to become better leaders encourages positive changes in teachers' efficacy which will influence decisions for building effective schools.

Table 1. Coefficient value for the effect of transformational leadership on teachers' collective efficacy

Independent Variable: Principal's Transformational Leadership	Dependent Variable: Teachers' Collective Efficacy
Setting direction	.394*
Redesigning organization	.222
Developing people	-.802*
Improving instructional program	.487
R	.447
R ²	.200
Adjusted R ²	.160
Durbin Watson	2.325

* Significant level at .05

III. REFERENCES

- [1] Ling, Y. L., Abdullah, A.G.K., & Ismail, F. (2015). Feedback Environment and Job Motivation among the Middle Leaders of Educational Organizations. *Journal of Education and Training*, 3(1), 90-105. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jet.v3i1.8415>
- [2] Bass, B.M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Collier Macmillan.
- [3] Ross, J. A. & Gray, P. (2006). Transformational leadership and teacher commitment to organisational values: The mediating effects of collective teacher efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2), 179-199
- [4] Bass, B.M., & Avolio, B.J. (1994). *Improving organisational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Sage.

- [5] Avolio, B. J. (1999). Full leadership development: Building the vital forces in organisations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [6] Bass, B. M. (1998). Transformational leadership: Industry, military, and educational impact. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- [7] Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2009). Transformational leadership. In B. Davis (Ed), The essentials of school leadership (2nd ed.) (pp. 37-52). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- [8] Arokiasamy, A.R.A., Abdullah, A.G.K., Ahmad, M.Z., & Ismail, A. (2016). The transformational leadership of school principals and organisational health of primary school teachers in Malaysia. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 229, 151-157.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.07.124>
- [9] Mustafa, M. N. & Othman, N. (2016). The effect of work motivation on teacher's work performance in Pekanbaru senior high schools, Riau Province, Indonesia. *Sosiohumanika*, 3(2), 65-72.
- [10] Abdul Ghani Kanesan Abdullah, Ling, Y. L., & Shamihah Binti Sufi. (2018). Principal transformational leadership and teachers' motivation. *Asian Education Studies*, 3(1), 36-42.
- [11] Abdul Ghani Kanesan Abdullah, Ling, Y. L., & Zahrana Binti Sheik Abdul Kader. (2016). Principal's transformational leadership and teacher's creativity: Mediating role of self-efficacy. *Management Research Journal*, 6(1), 1-7
- [12] Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- [13] Goddard, R. D. & Goddard, Y. L. (2001). A multilevel analysis of the relationship between teacher and collective efficacy in urban schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 807-818.
- [14] Goddard, R. & Skrla, L. (2006). The influence of school composition on teacher perceptions of collective efficacy. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42(2), 216-235.
- [15] Leithwood, K. (2012). Core practices: The four essential components of the leader's repertoire. In K. Leithwood and K. S. Louis (Eds.), *Linking leadership to student learning* (pp. 57-67). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- [16] Goddard, R. (2002). A theoretical and empirical analysis of the measurement of collective efficacy: The development of a short form. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 62 (1), 97-110. doi: 10.1177/0013164402062001007
- [17] Ross, J. A. & Gray, P. (2006a). Transformational leadership and teacher commitment to organisational values: The mediating effects of collective teacher efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2), 179-199