Headmasters' Transformational Leadership and Their Relationship with Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Teachers' Commitments

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the level of transformational leadership practices by headmasters in the primary national schools in the district of Temerloh, Malaysia. The four dimensions of Transformational Leadership studied were fostering the ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulating and individual consideration. The study also looks at the level of teachers' job satisfaction and teachers 'commitments as well as the relationship with the practice of transformational leadership by headmasters. The respondents consisted of 240 teachers working in 10 primary schools in the district of Temerloh, Pahang. The data obtained was processed using SSPS program version 12.0 and were analyzed using descriptive and multivariate. The result of the study showed that the practice of transformational leadership by headmasters in the district of Temerloh, Malaysia, was at a high level and teacher's job satisfaction was high too, and there exist a significant relation between the level of transformation leadership and teachers' job satisfaction while teachers' commitments were average. However, the results of the study showed a significant relation between the level of transformational leadership and teachers work commitment. The implication of this study is that leaders should always ensure their high performance leadership to have a significant relationship with staff's satisfaction and school staff's commitment.

Keywords: transformational leadership, job satisfaction, commitment and headmaster

1. Introduction

Transformational leadership is defined as a process inspiring change and empowering followers to achieve greater heights, to improve themselves and to improve organization processes. It is an enabling process causing followers to accept responsibility and the processes to which they are assigned (Koehler & Pankowski, 1997). Transformational leadership as a leadership approach adopted by the headmaster (Head teachers in primary schools in Malaysia) is an important element in students' excellence and schools success. The success of a school depends on the leadership style practiced at the school (Ibrahim et al., 2014; Aydin, Savier, & Uysal, 2013; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012; Ghani, Rahman, & Zohir, 2008; Hussein, 2005; Mortimore, 1995). Indeed, the success of the education system is the result of hard work and dedication of principals (Head teachers in secondary schools in Malaysia), headmasters, administrators, teachers and support staff who are the core strength of the school. Principals or headmasters are often seen as a determinant towards the sustainability of a school (Ali et al., 2014; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012; Ishak, 2003). Therefore, a school's academic success is very dependent on school leader. Previous studies also showed that school leaders had links with academic success either directly or indirectly (Ibrahim et al., 2014; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Hallinger, 2007; Mortimore, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1983).

School organization as the core of national education is dependent on the leadership management and members of the organization to achieve progress. Many previous studies on schools' management found that schools that achieve high success in academics is led by the principal/headmaster who has the qualities of effective leadership (Pont, 2014; Harris et al., 2013; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012; Harris & Chapman, 2002; Marzuk, 1997; Mortimore, 1995). Commitment of teachers towards the tasks entrusted to them start with the comfort and enjoyment of their work. All their actions are attributable to a number of factors that make the existence of an atmosphere and work

environment in schools including approach to leadership in school management.

According to Aydin, Savier, & Uysal (2013), a leader who practices transformational leadership is a leader who is concerned with having a good and friendly relation with employees, treats employees fairly and equitably, provides help, advices, and encourages employees' personal and professional development through employee involvement in decision making process as well as concerned with the achievement of a goal or vision set. In a study by Abdullah (2009), it is found that the implications of transformational leadership is the staff working in groups, leaders take the time to build relationships and provide opportunities for staff to contribute to the school and increase students' achievements. Meanwhile, Sulan (2008) stated that job satisfaction amongst teachers in the school is closely related to teacher effectiveness that contributes to student achievement. This shows that job satisfaction must be well because it is one of the key success factors of a school.

2. Problem Statement

Headmaster leadership excellence as a leader of high-performing school organizations (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014; Harris et al, 2013; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012) was a major factor that can improve student learning outcomes. Headmasters need to understand the significant role in influencing commitment and teacher job satisfaction towards creating an excellent school. High-performing schools are schools that achieve the best level, quality and excellence in all areas related to academics, character building, management, communications, infrastructure, and most importantly, leadership (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Sin, 2001).

Excellence and high performance of a school is determined by the ability of principals/headmasters in mobilizing the staff efficiently and effectively to achieve the goals of the school (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Hallinger, 2007).Therefore, headmasters should adopt a leadership style that creates a comfortable relationship and close cooperation which can increase subordinates' commitment and job satisfaction. Transformational leadership is found to be most effective in creating the necessary reaction among subordinates as transformational leadership strengthens across transactional leadership (Selamat, Nordin, & Adnan, 2013; Top et al., 2012; Bass, 1999) especially in the aspects of effectiveness of subordinate commitment towards the organization.

Transformational leadership practiced by headmasters can motivate teachers to change their attitude and values by being committed towards the mission and vision of education. The practice of transformational leadership is said to be able to move the organization led to a clear vision, mission and goals of the organization (Amin, Shah, & Tatlah, 2013; Ghani et al., 2009; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Ishak 2003).

Moreover, according to previous studies (Menon, 2014; Aydin, et al., 2013; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Top et al., 2012; Button, 2003) showed transformational leadership practices have an impact on commitment and teaching job satisfaction in which the changes brought about through transformational leadership is seen more democratic, fair and able to increase the commitment and involvement of individuals.

The study also found that many teachers who do not get job satisfaction caused them to be less committed to the task given. To tackle these problems, headmasters need to equip themselves with knowledge of organizational leadership and subsequently, practice leadership approach that can achieve closer bonding with the subordinates to create a harmonious working environment and high job satisfaction. Thus, transformational leadership is often associated with effective leadership style and the ability to change the perception and motivation of subordinates and lead to organizational excellence (Amin, Shah, & Tatlah, 2013; Aydin et al., 2013; Selamat, Nordin, & Adnan, 2013; Leithwood & Sun, 2012).

Schools' performance is also closely associated with the leadership approach of the headmaster and teacher commitment. Without school leadership and commitment to the organization, the goals targeted are quite difficult to achieve. The success of a school is heavily influenced and caused by the headmaster's effective leadership. Leadership is the one that moves a school forward or otherwise (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012; Marzuki, 1997).

In this study, temerloh district was chosen as the study site because most of the schools in this area is still remote and rural status. Academics' achievements of students from this area are still lagging behind compared to the achievement of students from other districts. In relation to this, the practice of transformational leadership by the headmaster may help increase satisfaction and commitment of teachers towards better student achievement (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014).

3. Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to investigate the practice of transformational leadership and its relationship to job satisfaction

and teachers' commitment. In particular, the objectives of the study are:

To identify the level of transformational leadership among headmasters in the district of Temerloh, Malaysia according to teachers' perceptions.

To identify the work commitment of primary school teachers in the school district of Temerloh, Malaysia.

To identify the level of job satisfaction of primary school teachers in the district of Temerloh, Malaysia.

To identify if there is a relationship between transformational leadership practices of headmaster and teachers' job satisfaction.

To identify if there is a relationship between transformational leadership of headmaster and teachers' work commitment.

4. Methodology

This study is a quantitative survey in which questionnaires are used in this study. The study population consisted of 240 primary school teachers from eight primary schools in the district of Temerloh. Primary schools selection is by zone whereby in the Temerloh district, there are four zones; Kuala Krau, Temerloh, Lanchang and Mentakab. Each zone will be represented by two schools in which the researcher will take Kuala Krau zone and Lanchang zone as representing the rural zone while zone Temerloh and Mentakab will represent the urban school.

Number of samples selected in this study consisted of 170 respondents to identify their perspective on headmaster's transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction and commitment. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1985), if the population is 240, it is suffice to take only 148 samples.

From the pilot study, it is found that the Cronbach alpha value for all the items in the questionnaire has reliable data and the validity of the entire item is 0.89. This indicates that an item being reviewed is valid and high level of trust (Hair et al., 1998).

Data were analyzed using SPSS 11.0 for Windows PC and is reported in percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics were used to obtain the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The inferential statistics of t-test (t-test), and Pearson (The Pearsons Correlation Matrix) is used to identify whether there is a relationship between headmaster's transformational leadership with teachers' job satisfaction and commitments.

5. Findings

Descriptive analysis is used to explain the results of a study on the teachers' profiles toward transformational leadership of headmasters in the district of Temerloh while inferential analysis is used to determine the relationship between teachers' commitment and job satisfaction.

5.1 Level of Transformational Leadership Practices among Headmasters

Table 1. Mean distribution, standard deviation for transformational leadership practices

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1.	States with confidence that goals can be achieved.	3.97	0.74	High
2.	Dare to face the risk of any actions taken.	3.67	0.89	High
3.	Provide high hopes on the ability of the followers.	3.88	0.83	High
4.	Has a clear vision of the mission in achieving organizational goals.	4.00	0.78	High
5.	Has confidence in decision making.	3.90	0.89	High
6.	Helps to develop my personal potentials.	3.78	0.78	High
7.	Perceive each individual has their own abilities.	3.97	0.86	High
8.	Encourage sharing of new ideas.	3.92	0.87	High
9.	Provide a variety of perspectives when I solve problems.	3.76	0.79	High

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
10.	Provides space for his/her followers to express their opinions.	3.88	0.89	High
11.	Treats me as an individual and not as a member of a group.	3.92	0.82	High
12.	Takes care of the welfare of the followers from various angles.	3.83	0.87	High
13	Proposes several new ways to complete tasks.	3.75	0.82	High
14.	Explains the importance of having a clear purpose.	3.91	0.73	High
15	Treats followers with respect	3.88	0.76	High
16	Provides adequate facilities while on duty.	3.75	0.81	High
17	Always work together in performing tasks.	3.71	0.92	High
18	Emphasizes the importance of completing mission together.	3.91	0.84	High
19	States the future with optimism.	3.93	0.78	High
20	Says with enthusiasm on things that should be done.	3.95	0.80	High
	Overall Total	**3.86**	**0.67**	High

Table 1 show the Transformational Leadership Practices among headmasters is at a high level with a mean of 3.86 and standard deviation 0.67.The overall mean score for all items of transformational leadership is in the range of 3.41 to 4.20. The findings show that most of the teachers perceive that the practice of transformational leadership by headmasters in the primary schools in Temerloh district is high.

5.2 Level of Teachers Job Satisfaction

Table 2. Mean distribution, standard deviation for teachers' job satisfaction

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1.	Number of students under your responsibility.	3.91	0.74	High
2.	Opportunity to advance in your profession.	3.87	0.73	High
3.	Opportunity to discuss the problems with the administrators.	3.85	0.80	High
4.	Your trust in the administrators.	3.88	0.76	High
5.	Your career in the school system.	3.91	0.67	High
6.	Your opportunity to advance in your area of interest.	3.92	0.74	High
7.	The physical facilities at your school.	3.71	0.79	High
8.	Professional competency and leadership of the administrators.	3.74	0.76	High
9.	The number of subjects you teach	3.99	0.79	High
10.	The layout of the equipment in your school.	3.73	0.73	High
11.	Appropriate teaching aid facilities.	3.65	0.77	High
12.	The number of tasks to be performed by you.	3.73	0.80	High
	Overall Total	**3.82**	**0.58**	**High**

Table 2 shows that the level of job satisfaction is at a high level (mean = 3.82, standard deviation = 0.58). The overall mean score for all items of job satisfaction among the teachers are 3:41 to 4:20. This indicates that most of the teachers agree that the level of their work satisfaction is very good in the area they endeavor.

5.3 Level of Teachers Work Commitment

Table 3. Mean distribution, standard deviation for teachers work commitment

No.	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1.	I feel myself as a part of the school.	2.88	0.43	Moderate
2.	Proud tell my place of duty.	2.85	0.43	Moderate
3.	Unsatisfied until I help the school.	2.77	0.47	Moderate
4.	Effort is not for me only.	2.91	0.36	Moderate
5.	Do not mind working overtime.	2.68	0.58	Moderate
6.	Do not transfer to other school offering higher salary.	2.48	0.68	Low
7.	Do not recommend a friend to switch to another school.	2.68	0.62	Moderate
8.	My job is just to contribute to the school.	2.44	0.76	Low
9.	Do not feel upset when doing a tough job.	2.49	0.58	Low
10	Ready to pour my energy at any time.	2.68	0.54	Moderate
11.	Do not feel a waste of time.	2.77	0.46	Moderate
12.	Work faithfully and willingly.	2.91	0.36	Moderate
	Overall Total	**2.71**	**0.34**	**Moderate**

Table 3 shows that the level of teachers work commitment is at a moderate level (mean = 2.71, standard deviation = 0.34). Overall, the mean score for teachers' commitment is between 2.61 to 3.40. However, there are three items that have a low mean score and nine items at a moderate mean score. Nevertheless, the overall findings of this study indicate that teachers agree that they modest commitment in performing their work.

5.4 Relationship between the Level of Transformational Leadership Practices of Headmaster and Teacher's Job Satisfaction

Hypothesis $H_o 1$: There is no relationship between the level of transformational leadership of Headmaster and teachers' job satisfaction.

To identify whether there is a significant relationship between the level of transformational leadership and job satisfaction, the null hypothesis (Ho1) was developed and proven using Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 4. The results of Pearson correlation for the relationship of the level of transformational leadership with teacher job satisfaction

Variable	Transformation Leadership Level		Strength
	R	**sig. (ρ)**	
Job Satisfaction	0.35	0.00	Weak

**p< 0.05

Table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between the level of transformational leadership practices of the headmasters and teachers' job satisfaction, that is, the value of r = .035, p = 0.00 (p <0.05). The r value indicates a positive correlation coefficient at a weak level. This resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho1). Thus, the results show that there is no significant relationship between the levels of transformational leadership to job satisfaction among teachers.

5.5 Relationship between the Level of Headmaster's Transformational Leadership Practices and Teachers' Work Commitment

Hypothesis $H_o 2$: There is no relationship between Headmaster's Transformational Leadership and teachers' work commitment.

To identify whether there is a significant relationship between the level of transformational leadership and teachers' commitment, the null hypothesis (H$_o$ 2) has been developed and proven by the Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 5. The results of Pearson correlation for the relationship of the level of transformational leadership with teachers work commitment

Variable	Transformation Leadership Level		Strength
	R	**sig. (ρ)**	
Work Commitment	0.70	0.00	Strong

**p< 0.05

Table 5 shows that there is a significant relationship between the level of transformational leadership practices of the headmasters and teachers' work commitment, that is, the value of r = .070, p = 0.00 (p <0.05). The r value indicates a positive correlation coefficient at a strong level. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H$_o$2). Therefore, the results showed that there is a significant correlation between the level of headmaster's transformational leadership and work commitments among teachers.

6. Discussion

The results showed that transformational leadership practices among headmasters and teachers' job satisfaction are at a high level; and there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership level and job satisfaction among teachers whilst teachers commitments is average. However, the results showed that there is a significant relationship between the headmaster's transformational leadership level and teachers' commitments. Although many leadership approaches being practiced, transformational leadership practices according to Hallinger (2007) is the best example for this leadership approach could drive change to the many behaviors of the members in the organization. This assertion is consistent with Selamat, Nordin, and Adnan (2013) who noted that a transformational leader is a change agent who will drive change in the organization or school. School organization is in dire need of leadership formula like this, especially in terms of judgments and teacher development as an individual.

The results of this study support the findings of Menon (2014); Amin, Shah, and Tatlah (2013); Abas (2011); Aydin, Savier, and Uysal (2013); and Top et al. (2012) which showed that one of the factors that respondents have job satisfaction is the transformational leadership practices of the principal/headmaster. Such leader is capable of working and influencing teachers to work together in achieving the mission and vision of the school. They will support and strengthen the individual who is always ready to excel. If the practice of transformational leadership can be enhanced, job satisfaction of teachers in schools will also be enhanced and work potential can be developed to achieve organizational goals.

This finding is also in line with Menon (2014); Top et al. (2012); and Hushin and Hussin (2006), which examines the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, in which the results of their study showed the most likable transformational leadership practice which provide high job satisfaction for teachers. Similarly, a study by Abdullah (2009), found that the effect of transformational leadership can be seen in five forms, namely, the impact on behavior, psychology and on students' achievements. According to him, the variables used to study the effect of transformational leadership on the psychology including job satisfaction. Obviously, this statement describes transformational leadership not only bring change to the organization; it is even able to change the teachers' perceptions with regards to their satisfaction towards a completed work.

In addition, the study also showed a relationship between transformational leadership levels among headmasters with teachers' commitment is at an intermediate level. Transformational leaders must play an exemplary role to his followers. Some leadership aspects must be shown so that followers can feel the enthusiasm of working and be more committed. Commitments are variables that are used to measure employee relationship with the organization. Commitment also has relationships with loyalty, obedience and satisfaction towards the organization (Ibrahim et al., 2014; Selamat, Nordin, & Adnan, 2013; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

This finding is also consistent with studies by Ibrahim et al. (2014); Aydin, Savier, and Uysal (2013); and Selamat, Nordin, and Adnan (2013) that found there is a significant relationship between headmaster's transformational leadership and the level of the teachers' commitment for the organization. Charismatic leader is

needed to transform the organizational structure lead and also transformation of individuals' thoughts and workers in the school organization. Ali et al. (2014) and Ishak (2001) stated the level of the teachers' commitment is influenced by the type of task assigned besides administrator's transformation practice. Meanwhile, Isa (2009) emphasizes three important aspects related to job satisfaction which are salary or remuneration, the work, and the good relationship with the employer. The statement is in line with the findings of the study where there is a significant relationship between the level of headmaster's transformational leadership and teachers' job satisfaction and commitments.

7. Study Implications

The results showed that the leader of an organization, whether school principals or headmasters, have an important role as an agent of change as they have expertise as leaders through leadership practices practiced. This scenario is clearly illustrated by the findings from this study that there exist a significant relationship of the level of transformational leadership with teachers' job satisfaction and commitments, where these two items are very helpful in the success of any school organizations.

Overall, the results of this study have raised a number of implications towards the headmaster's transformational leadership practiced. Headmasters are urged to pay more attention towards their credibility as leaders in terms of their appearance, confidence in decision making, motivating subordinates and have considerations on an individual basis.

This study aims to help all headmasters in the district of Temerloh, to assess them whether they have adopted the four dimensions in the practice of transformational leadership at a high, medium or low level. If this practice is applied in the leadership of a headmaster, it will have a positive impact on the success of the vision and mission that has been made.

The study is also expected to provide guidance to all administrators, not only the headmaster but also to the senior teachers and assistant teachers to implement transformational leadership practices within them. To produce high performance schools, headmasters need to practice transformational leadership practices that lead towards continuous improvement changes. For successful realization of such students, leaders such as headmasters should always implement improvements and practice transformational leadership.

8. Conclusion

The findings showed that most of the headmasters in primary schools in Temerloh district had implemented transformational leadership at a high level. The mean scores for transformational leadership practices were at a high level. This proves that the practice of transformational leadership is suitable to be practiced in primary schools by headmasters. In fact, there was a significant relationship between the level of headmaster's transformational leadership practiced and the teachers' job satisfaction and commitments. Therefore, it is hope that to ensure the success of transformational leadership practiced, the headmaster should be supported by the middle leadership team to drive the school's performance. In addition, the approach to school leadership in Malaysia need to move away from conventional leadership to distributive leadership as practiced now in most developed countries. Leadership scenario is able to give more power and opportunity to the senior assistant teacher and mid-level management officials such as the head of the area to make decisions at the school level. In this respect, teamwork must be nurtured and instilled among teachers for successful realization of the goals and vision built together.

Headmasters must be committed to building a capacity of school leadership by adding value to the four dimensions in the practice of transformational leadership which are fostering an ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and provide individualized attention to all subordinates in the hope they get job satisfaction and committed to the task given and can achieve excellence in the vision and mission targeted by the school and the Ministry of Education.

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