

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP
BEHAVIOURS PRACTICES AT
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SRI
AMAN, SARAWAK**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify principals' leadership styles in secondary schools in Sri Aman, Sarawak. Two secondary schools from urban and rural area were selected for the study. Data were collected using questionnaire and interview techniques. The questionnaire was distributed to a total of 188 randomly selected teacher respondents and 155 questionnaires were returned. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The principals' leadership styles of this study are idealized influence-attribute, idealized influence-behaviour, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management by exception-active, management by exception-passive, laissez-faire leadership, extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction. The data reveals that transformational leadership components were practiced at a frequent level by principals. On the other hand, transactional leadership components were still practiced by principals but at a moderate level and principals show low interest in incorporate Laissez-Faire leadership. Furthermore, teachers' gender, and secondary schools' location do not influence the level of leadership behaviours components practiced by principals. Additionally, teachers from different years in service perceived that principals' leadership behaviour increases when teachers' year in service increase, for example, principals' idealized influence-attribute, Laissez-Faire leadership, effectiveness and satisfaction. But in overall, there were no significant difference of others principals' leadership behaviours. Besides, teachers from different teaching departments perceived that although the principals' leadership behaviours were frequently practiced, different teaching departments may have different needs and focus depending types of principals' leadership behaviours. Finally, principals were reported practiced both transformational and transactional leadership with transformation leadership was highly practiced in compared to transactional leadership components. Based on the findings, this study also provides recommendations for improvement of practices and future research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the overview of the study conducted. Throughout the chapter, background of the study, statement of problems, research objectives, research questions, significant of the study, research limitations and terms of definition were presented.

1.1 Background of the study

Ministry of Education in Malaysia has set a target to achieve the human capital that is competitive. Further, in nurturing the top talents, the Government undergoes comprehensive reform across the entire life cycle of human capital development, from upgrading early childhood education right through the existing adult workforce. Developing and motivating teachers will be the focus towards driving improvement in student outcomes. School's principal will be responsible in increasing students' performance. In addition, National key Area (NKRA) was formed to lead and improve the effectiveness of school administration. This is supported by Malaysian Ministry of Education (2012) interim strategic plan that the ministry is going to propel the excellence of the country education system so it is relevant to meet the current demands and building capacity to confront the challenges of the future. Furthermore, Moore (2009) suggest that school reform in the 21st century requires leaders to transform schools organization into an autonomous, systemic-thinking organizations also centered within professional learning communities that can embrace change and create a high performing learning environment for students, teachers and school communities as a whole.

The resolution that has been set by the ministry also provided some aspects of principals' leadership that have to take under consideration and need to be improved by time, especially to those secondary schools' principals located in rural areas as student's achievement is enormously different in comparing with the students in the urban. Thus, principal's leadership behavior is the main concern in achieving the aspirations set by the government. In conjunction with this matter, Yukl (2006) stated that principals should

know how to incorporate and define leadership as the process of influencing their subordinates to understand and agree about what needs to be done especially in this context to merge the gap between urban and rural schools' achievement and how to do it. In addition, the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives need to be conducted for a better and inclined achievement towards the need of the school in future with determination to accomplish the ministry of education suggestions.

With different school settings, there are characteristics that need to be considered to determine qualities of effective leaders. As the culture and environment of the rural school are considered different from the urban school, the sense of vision, ability to set goals and plan, personal charisma, strong communication skills, strong sense of self and personal convictions, relationship and empathy skills, and the ability to motivate and influence others are the most important part for the school success. It is this last virtue, the ability to activate others to follow, which actually defines leadership itself. Therefore, a principal has to be wise to adapt the various leadership styles in his administration to suit a particular school, situation and the different needs especially when confronting the school situation in rural area. A good principal will be able to practice suitable leadership styles based on situations without depending on one particular style of leadership (Dunford, Fawcett & Bennett, 2000).

Armstrong (2006) stated out that organization effectiveness is linked to their management performance. Principal plays the pivotal role to raise standards of teaching and pupil learning and achievement. Therefore, principal need to practice leadership style that later contribute to the success of school mission and build effective terms to implement a vision, furthermore can lead others to commit persistent hard work as to inspire their co-worker and subordinates. Furthermore, Dumay (2009), mentioned that leadership is widely recognized as a critical factor in determining school outcomes and effectiveness.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Although Malaysian government's policy is to ensure the delivery of quality education in secondary schools, student's achievement has remained low in terms of performance in