

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**SCHOOL INSPECTION, LEADERSHIP  
ATTRIBUTES AND LEADERSHIP  
PERFORMANCE IN MALAYSIAN HIGH  
PERFORMING SCHOOLS IN SABAH**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**  
(Education)

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## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institutions or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledged that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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## ABSTRACT

Undeniably, school inspection has become the top priority of quality improvement in education for many countries. It has created the basic requirement for greater quality assurance to ensure better monitoring and organizational efficiency as well as accountability. For years, Malaysia has established a scientific school inspection approach as a major mechanism for controlling and promoting the quality of schools. The Malaysian School Inspectorate (*JNJK, hereafter*) is at the helm to ensure a sustainable standard of quality education through the use of ‘Standards for Quality Education in Malaysia’ (*SKPMg2, hereafter*). Recently, the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 has placed an ultimate demand for school leaders and instructional leaders in high performing schools to enhance students’ learning outcomes prompting them to look seriously into various issues of school leadership and management. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to examine the interaction between School Inspection, Leadership Attributes and Leadership Performance in the selected Malaysian High Performing Schools. This study was guided by six research objectives and six research questions. A convergence parallel research design of mixed-methods approach was used to address the research questions. Two groups of respondents were involved in the study consisting of 120 school leaders and instructional leaders from two randomly selected Malaysian High Performing Schools in Sabah and three school inspectors from the *JNJK*. The quantitative data were collected from respondents via survey questionnaire while qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that a majority of the school leaders and instructional leaders were satisfied with the current conduct of school inspection where it has assisted schools to move forward towards the current paradigm shift. The conduct of school inspection using *SKPMg2* as a reference document was affirmatively well-received by leaders. In the aspects of communication and feedback, it was found that majority of the school leaders and instructional leaders agreed that the communication approach adopted by school inspectors were satisfactory and the feedback provided have assisted them to identify their weaknesses and to further capitalize their strengths. Majority of the leaders acknowledged that school inspectors have conformed to the elements of impartiality, independence, mutual respect and transparency while conducting the school inspection. This study has successfully featured the work and leadership characteristics of the *JNJK* through the Knowles’ Process Enneagram © to signify a well-planned and organized execution of school inspection based on specific ethical guidelines and standardized operation procedure. It was further revealed that the attribute of leadership performance as specified in Standard 1 (*SKPMg2*) encompasses various leadership-roles such as “the Frontrunner”, “to Guide” and “to Inspire” were effective to boost leadership performance. The study also identified a positive and significant relationship between school inspection and leadership performance. Besides, there was a positive and significant relationships identified between leadership attributes and leadership performance. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) analysis demonstrated that the variable of school inspection had the highest effect on leadership performance. The present study found that among the four variables of Leadership Attributes (LA), acquiring proper knowledge in *SKPMg2* was found to have some significant impact on the enhancement of Leadership Performance. In consequence, all these findings lead to meaningful understanding of school inspection. This study has implications at the school leadership policy, training and development, administrative, as well as research level, among others. Clearly, the study had demonstrated the need for urgent and specific actions to elevate leadership performance of instructional leaders in Malaysian High Performing Schools.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>AUTHOR'S DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xvii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xix</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	3
1.2.1 School Inspection	4
1.2.2 School Inspection from the prospect of the Process Enneagram©	6
1.2.3 Leadership Attributes	7
1.2.4 Leadership Performance	8
1.3 Statement of the Problem	12
1.4 Research Objectives	18
1.5 Research Questions	19
1.6 Limitations of the Study	20
1.7 Significance of the Study	21
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	22
1.9 Chapter Summary	28