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MODELLING OF TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES AND ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRINCIPALS' DEVELOPMENTAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AND TEACHERS' COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

FANNY KHO CHEE YUET

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(EDUCATION MANAGEMENT)

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to develop an empirically substantiated Teacher Leadership Competency Model (TLCM). The study also aspired to identify the relationship between Teachers' Leadership Competencies (TLC) and Principals' Developmental Leadership Behavior (PDLB), PDLB and Teachers' Commitment to Change (TCC). Further, the study also intended to ascertain the relationships among TLC, PDLB and TCC. Structural Equation Modeling was applied to test the model. A total of 928 teachers from 58 High Performing Secondary Schools in Malaysia completed the survey. The analysis yielded a four-factor TLC Model, namely Fostering a Collaborative Culture; Facilitating Improvement and Establishing Standards for Student Behavior, Modelling Leadership Attributes and Skills; and Performing as Referral Leader. The finding shows that TLC Model will benefit school principals in developing effective teacher leadership among teachers in schools. Meanwhile, the TLC Scale with 16 items offers a promising new measure for examining TLC. The result of the study also shows that TLC is significantly related to PDLB. PDLB is also significantly related to TCC; and PDLB not only mediated the relationship between TLC and TCC, but indeed a partial mediator. As the findings confirmed that the quality of TLC matters in determining PDLB and TCC, it is a *sine quo non* for school teachers to equip themselves with adequate and sufficient TLC so as to implement school change successfully. Also as PDLB plays a critical role in governing the relationship between TLC and TCC, in-depth focus on PDLB is lthe most effective way to increase the likelihood of school principals to initiate school change. The finding encourage a fresh look at teacher leadership development and alter the traditional approach of teachers in implementing change.

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PEMBINAAN MODEL KOMPETENSI KEPIMPINAN GURU DAN HUBUNGANNYA DENGAN TINGKAH LAKU PEMBANGUNAN KEPIMPINAN PENGETUA SERTA KOMITMEN GURU TERHADAP PERUBAHAN

ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama kajian ini ialah untuk membangunkan sebuah Model Kompetensi Kepimpinan Guru (MKKG). Kajian ini juga bertujuan mengenal pasti hubungan Kompetensi Kepimpinan Guru (KKG) dengan Tingkah Laku Pembangunan Kepimpinan Pengetua (TLPKP), TLPKP dengan Komitmen Guru Terhadap Perubahan (KGP) dan seterusnya hubungan antara KKG, TLPKP dan KGP. *Structural Equation Modeling* (SEM) digunakan untuk menguji model. Data dikumpul menggunakan soal selidik yang diedarkan kepada 928 orang guru dari 58 Sekolah Menengah Berprestasi Tinggi. Dapatan kajian menghasilkan empat faktor KKG iaitu Memupuk Budaya Kerjasama, Memudahkan Pengajaran dan Mewujudkan Standard Tingkah Laku Pelajar, Pemodelan Atribut Kepimpinan dan Kemahiran Kepimpinan, serta Peranan sebagai Pakar Rujuk. Model KKG memberi manfaat kepada pengetua sekolah dalam membangunkan kepimpinan guru yang efektif dalam kalangan guru di sekolah. Sementara itu, 16 item yang mewakili KKG merupakan instrumen baharu yang berkesan untuk mengukur KKG. Selain itu, kajian juga mendapati bahawa KKG mempunyai hubungan signifikan dengan TLPKP. TLPKP juga mempunyai hubungan signifikan dengan KGP, dan TLPKP bukan sahaja menjadi perantara hubungan KKG dan KGP, malah merupakan perantara separa. Implikasi kajian menunjukkan bahawa guru sekolah perlu melengkapkan diri dengan KKG yang sesuai. Selain itu, fokus mendalam terhadap TLPKP merupakan pendekatan paling berkesan untuk meningkatkan kebarangkalian guru-guru menerima perubahan memandangkan TLPKP memainkan peranan kritikal antara hubungan KKG dan KGP. Dapatan kajian turut membuka pandangan baharu dalam pembangunan kepimpinan guru serta mengubah pendekatan tradisional guru sekolah dalam melaksanakan perubahan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CAB	Capacity Beliefs
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CHA	Charismatic
COB	Context Beliefs
COM	Competitive
CRI	Composite Reliability Index
DEV	Developer
DSS	Daily Secondary School
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
FCC	Fostering a Collaborative Culture
FIES	Facilitating Improvement and Establishing Standards for Students' Behavior
FOC	Focused
FRSS	Fully Residential Secondary School
GOF	Goodness of Fit
GPS	Grade Point Average
HPSS	High Performing Secondary School
ML	Maximum Likelihood
MLAS	Modelling Leadership Attributes and Skills
NFI	Normed Fit Index
NMLCI	Nich-Malaysian Leadership Competency Instrument
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PDLB	Principals' Developmental Leadership Behavior
PDLBS	Principals' Developmental Leadership Behavior Scale
PEG	Personal Goals
POD	Participating in Organizational Development
PRL	Performing as Referral Leader
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RO	Research Objectives
RSS	Religious Secondary School
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SLT	Social Learning Theory
SMC	Squared Multiple Correlations
SUP	Supportive
SQEM	Standard Quality Education Malaysia
TCC	Teachers' Commitment to Change
TCCS	Teachers' Commitment to Change Scale
TLC	Teachers' Leadership Competencies
TLCM	Teacher Leadership Competency Model
TLCS	Teacher Leadership Competency Scale
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview and Rationale

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In today's ever-changing world, teacher quality is embedded in an environment to be the most significant school-based factor determining student outcomes and educational improvement (Cochran-Smith, 2006, Darling-Hammond, 2012). Additionally, Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 also affirmed that teachers who assume formal leadership roles in the classrooms as well as school leaders who assume more formal leadership roles in their schools, serve as the most important school-based drivers of student outcomes.

Nonetheless, research has shown that the commonly held view concerning the effects of school leaders' leadership on school outcomes is not warranted. This view is aligned with Hallinger and Heck (1996) who claimed that school leaders had less and indirect effect on student achievement as compared to subject and classroom teachers.

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Hence, school leaders should focus on school condition in which leadership practice is enhanced (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

Indeed, research on teacher leadership has emphasized on teachers assuming new role as instructional leaders (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hill & Amabile, 1993; Crowther, 2002). In other words, teachers should portray leadership values and perform as leaders particularly in creating effective instructional practices based on their specialized area which will contribute to school improvement (Andrews, Crowther, Hann & McMaster, 2002). The emphasis on school improvement would greatly depend on the effectiveness of shared leadership approach implemented in school (Chesterton & Duignan, 2004).

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In fact, the norm of such a shared approach requires teachers to share leadership responsibilities with principals (Crowther et al, 2002a & 2002b). Principals, on the other hand, need to distribute leadership responsibilities among teachers (Lashway, 2003; Pearce & Sims, 2002; Harris, 2002; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001; Elmore, 2000). Similarly, Pearce and Sims (2002) had conducted a research on how leadership is distributed, as well as distributive influence of positional leaders and effectiveness of shared leadership of informal leaders, in which leadership practice in schools was assigned as the unit of analysis.

Elmore (2000), too, emphasized that leadership in schools need to be distributed among school communities, in which expertise is incorporated within a culture of coherence, collaborative work, guidance and direction for improvement of instructional practice (Katz, Earl & Jaafar, 2009). Silins and Mulford (2002) believe that a whole-

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school re-structuring require teachers to engage in leadership responsibilities and students' development. Distributed leadership therefore, need to be relocated to other school communities (MacBeath, 1998; Day, Harris & Hadfield, 2001; Harris 2002).

With respect to support whole school re-structuring process, Harris (2002) revealed that strong collegial relationship, trustworthy, supportive, enquiry-based focused are essential factors for effective school reform to occur. The undelying norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions in the collegial relationship also lead to effective teamwork among teachers (Peterson, 1994). Silins and Mulford (2002), provide evidence that students' achievement will improve when teachers are empowered in decision making particularly on the effectiveness of instructional practices and assessment.

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Nonetheless, empowerment is hardly to establish and maintain in practice if leadership is not individually desired and distributed (Harris, 2002). Hence, principals need to find ways to influence teachers to assume leadership role as classroom instructional leaders while providing support and resources in changing current individualistic instructional practices to collaborative practices. Obviously, a new paradigm in teaching profession is needed to provide new forms of leadership in schools and communities (Crowther et al., 2002a).

Duignan and Marks (2003), on the other hand, claimed that schools need a powerful professional development to develop leadership competencies among potential teachers in a shared leadership framework. Likewise, principals need to have the competency to share leadership responsibilities among teachers and create

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conducive environment for leadership practice (Lambert, 1998), which lead to school-based teacher leadership and teachers as 'change agent'.

As change agent, teachers need to identify the support needed to initiate change in schools and where leading change is required from the classroom (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011). Although teachers have often served as 'representatives' rather than "leaders' who enact change (Livingston, 1992), their role as 'leaders' are still lacked of flexibility, lengthy, and ongoing commitment of time and energy. Their role as 'leaders' would be enhanced if they perform as 'leaders' in the professional development community, as well as members of school-wide leadership teams and instructional support teams (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000; Camegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Holmes, 1986; Elmore, 2002; Livingston, 1992). Simply stated, teachers are more competent in initiating change in a comprehensive and continuous manner (Howey, 1988; Livingston, 1992), without necessary leaving the classroom.

In fact, the task of initiating effective reform requires a multi-dimensional set of leadership competencies (Day & Harris, 2002). Competencies is one of the three critical factors that contribute to successful school reform, followed by commitment and capability (Marcus & Pringle, 1995). Identifying competencies is significantly important in the leadership development puzzle (Yamazaki & Kayes, 2004) as it has a great influence in teacher leadership success in schools, and can be fine-tuned for greater efficiency in leading change from the classroom (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011; Tubbs & Schulz, 2006).

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All too often, problem and complication of leading change from classrooms arises when there are multiple challenges and when change is needed on various fronts. The challenge, for teachers in leading change from classrooms, is to ensure that implementation is an intrinsic part of policy development and that there is a clear theory of change that not only explains how goals will be achieved but also details the necessary steps and changes in practice to achieve them (Fullan, 2001b; Schon, 1983). Similarly, school system will be flex if teachers reluctant to initiate change from the classroom level.

In fact, leading change from the classroom is closely linked with the development of teacher leadership (Kho, Hamidah Yusof, & Syed Ismail Syed Mohamad, 2014, 2015, 2015a, 2015c, 2016). Development of teacher leaders is considered to be the significant outcome of teachers' commitment to change from the classrooms. In this regard, it is a privilege for teacher leaders to walk with principals who portray developmental leadership behavior in order to be competent teacher leaders (Kho et al., 2015, 2015b). In general, teacher leaders therefore need to understand exactly what they are leading, clearly communicate their intentions for teachers' leadership while actively building connections, coherence and alignment across teachers' leadership throughout the classroom. This alignment is best achieved through identifying a few clear priorities for teachers' leadership in enhancing students' academic achievement and ensuring that these are embraced, embedded and reinforced (Fullan, 2010).

As teacher leadership is widely recognized in the process of school reform effort (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Muijs & Harris, 2003), teacher leaders must play a vital

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role in influencing other teachers to assume leadership responsibilities needed for the reform (Westley, 1991). As a matter of fact, principals who always portray positive developmental leadership behavior, i.e. strive for excellence in both academic and sports of the school, also play a significant role in developing teachers' leadership competencies, and capacity building (Spillane & Coldren, 2011). Over time, in turn, their competencies influence teachers' commitment to assume new leadership responsibilities. Precisely, teachers collaborate with the teacher leaders as a source of certainty and actions (Blasé & Anderson, 1995; Oreg & Berson, 2011) in their effort to lead change from the classroom. Being behavioral predisposition, principals' positive developmental leadership behavior influence teachers' competencies toward leading development. In other words, in the process of leading change from the classroom, principals enhance teachers' leadership competencies and commitment to change.

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Without sustainable teacher leadership, leading change from the classroom will be superficial (Fullan, 2010). Levin (2008) emphasized that development of leadership competencies requires sustainable effort and collaborative culture in leading change from the classroom. Teachers in schools with a collaborative culture open to teacher leadership find that there are many opportunities to help one another. In this type of school, teachers move in and out of one another's classrooms to identify effective solution for instructional difficulties (Little, 1982; Rosenholtz, 1989). They accept professional talk as essential to their growth and development. In schools where collaboration is the exception, teachers rarely know what is going on in the classroom right next door (Heller & Firestone, 1995). If teachers want to be leaders and their school community celebrates the value of teacher leadership, then the door is open to

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