

Teacher Perception on Principals Leadership Style and School Climate in Kelantan

¹Ang John Sun, ¹Abdullah Ibrahim, ²Mustafa Mamat and ²Mohamad Arif Awang Nawi

¹Faculty of General Studies and Advanced Education, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin,
Uni SZA 21300 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia

²Faculty Informatics and Computing, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin,
Uni SZA 21300 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia

Abstract: Leadership styles might ultimately lead to increased student achievement, increased staff job satisfaction, and overall improvement of the schools' climate. The objective of the study carried out by providing the necessary data and can be identified to determine if there is a relationship that exists between the perception of teachers/principals and leadership style. Data were collected and analyzed using SPSS software to get the results to answer the study questions and determine whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected. Results shows that there is a major effect of leadership style on school climate [$F(1, 81) = 19.622, p < 0.05$]. In conclusion, the leadership styles of principal are significantly affected on school climate. The results also showed that there was a significant effect of the age and gender-controlled variable on school climate. As shown, transformational and transactional leadership styles have the most impact on the school climate.

Key words: Principals Leadership Style • School Climate • ANCOVA

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership increases an organization ability to meet all challenges, including the need to obtain a competitive advantage, the need to foster ethical behavior and the need to manage a diverse workforce fairly and equitably [1]. Therefore, it is imperative that principals develop leadership styles that enhance a school's climate, which in turn, helps in meeting the mandates of a nation. As a result, these leadership styles might ultimately lead to increased student achievement, increased staff job satisfaction and overall improvement of the schools' climate [2].

Hoy and Miskel [2] describes a school climate as a relatively enduring quality of the whole school which is experienced by school members, reveal their shared perceptions of beliefs, and influences their attitudes and behavior in school. This implies that positive school climate is related to the effectiveness of the whole school. A number of studies in developed countries have demonstrated that the principals play a major role in establishing School climate.

The creation of any school climate is dependent on the leadership styles employed by the principal while managing the school. Taylor and Pashiardis [3] argue that

the principal deliberately establishes the school climate through the application of selected leadership styles. Consequently, schools with effective leadership styles set high but achievable school goals and academic standards. Such schools believe in the capacity of their students to achieve and encourage them to respect and pursue academic success.

Schermerhorn *et al.* [4] defines leadership as a case of interpersonal influence that gets individuals, or groups of people to do what the leader wants to be done. By implication, the leader's focus is on what he/she wants from people, therefore followers' input is not encouraged with regard to what it is to be done. However, Maxwell [5] argues that the leader's attention is on what he/she can put into people rather than what he/she can get out of them, so as to build the kind of relationship that promotes and increases productivity in the organization. As the focus shifts from bureaucracy (In which the leader tends to direct others and make a decision for others to implement) to non-bureaucracy, the perception of leadership appears to emphasize motivation, inclusion, and empowerment of followers.

Rooney [6] assumes that leadership affects directly on student achievement and principals are judged on the ability to lead. On the other hand, Sagie [7] reports that

leadership is like the most powerful communication machine to achieve success. According to Levine and Lezotte [8] states that principals are monitoring school progress and they are also the predictors of school effectiveness. Effective principals are essential for school advancement [6, 9]. Furthermore, with their challenge to prove school and student achievement is a great responsibility to each principal. Bennis [10] reported that the leadership affects the quality of life and he believes that leaders are developed through a process that is still not fully understood by researchers.

Taylor [9] reports that vision needs to be linked to transformational leadership and this leadership theory combines old and new ideas. The theory of transformational leaders needs to create the conditions in which followers can understand and follow him/her [11]. The transformational leader was chosen to build a team and support community among them.

Passive-avoidant leadership is characterized as a leader who avoids important leadership tasks and becomes passive, inactive, and mostly absent. Meta-analysis studies have shown that transformational leadership behavior and transaction leadership are effective while passive-avoidant leadership is ineffective [12, 13].

Positive principals encourage teachers to find solutions and look at the problem from different perspectives. Principals should also encourage teachers to take lessons from past experiences and improve them for future improvements. Various programs and methods of professional development can be made to improve the skills of teachers thereby will increase their confidence in carrying out their assignment. Organizational culture and transformational leadership practiced principals have proven to improve employee sustainable performance [14]. However, research findings by Marks and Printy [15] through a combination of transformational leadership and instructional are the best recipes that can have a major impact on school organization.

Nowadays, there are various studies that exist to measure teachers' perceptions such as reviewing the competence of teachers affecting their principals' ability to positively impact the school climate [16-21]. Williamson [22] defines the school climate by emphasizing the relationship between schools and influencing teacher-principal's relationships as a strong effect on school climate. A quiet and comfortable school atmosphere, ideal for teaching and learning is considered as an effective school climate. Halpin and Croft [23] who is pioneers in school climate researchers say that the school climate reflects the personality of one's own individual and how

the teacher works to reach the level of school climate organization. Next, Howard [24] defines the school climate as a social and cultural state of the school that affects the behavior of people around.

The objective of the study carried out by providing the necessary data and can be identified to determine if there is a relationship that exists between the perception of teachers/principals and leadership style. Identifiable data can be determined and analyzed through the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI). The objective of this study is to determine the relationship that exists between the leadership style of the principal and the school climate.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Population and Sample Size: A total of 90 teachers and 90 principals in Kelantan have been taken to carry out this analysis. The sample size necessary for this analysis considered level of significance, power, and effect size. For the purpose of this research, the significance, or alpha level (α) is the probability "Used to determine whether the outcome is significant or not" [25]. The alpha criteria used for this research was $\alpha = .05$, which indicates a 95% confidence level of a correct conclusion when the null hypothesis was true. The power of a significance test is the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is false or the probability of committing a Type II error. The level of power for this research was set at .80 and was considered in determining the sample size a priori [26].

School climate was measured using the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) for middle school teachers was used to identifying school climate based on teacher perception. The surveys were combined into a single format to be administered electronically. The Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) for middle school teachers contained 50 questions with a Likert-type response scale to include four possibilities: RO (Rarely Occurs), SO (Sometimes Occurs), O (Often Occurs) and VFO (Very Frequently Occurs).

The OHI-M instrument, originally developed by Halpin and Croft [23] and revised by Hoy *et al.* [27] broke down respondents' selections pertaining to climate into six key dimensions. These dimensions included: a) supportive principal behavior, b) directive principal behavior, c) restrictive principal behavior, d) collegial teacher behavior, e) committed teacher behavior and f) disengaged teacher behavior [27, 28]. The respective reliability scores for each subtest on the middle school version included: "Supportive (.96), Directive (.88),

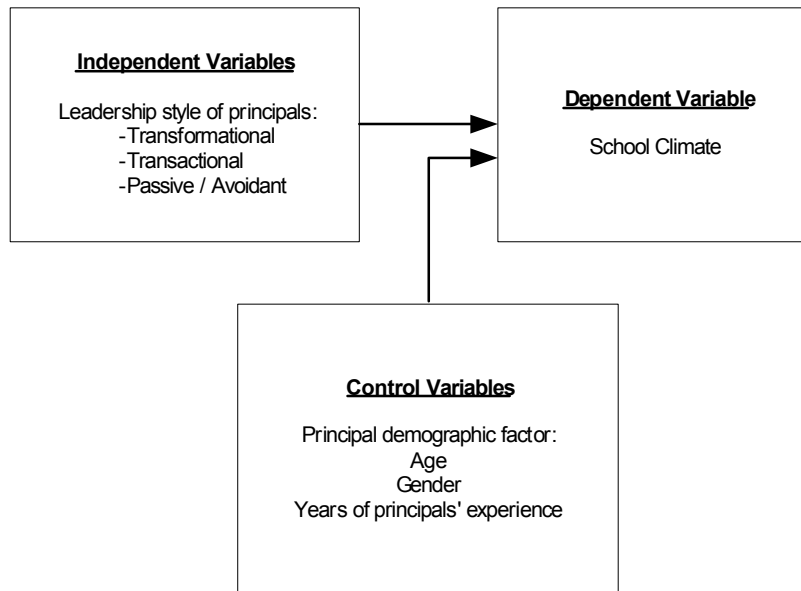


Fig. 1: Variables for ANCOVA Analysis

Restrictive (.89), Collegial (.90), Committed (.93), and Disengaged (.87)” [27]. The properties of the six subtests of the OCDQ-RM are strong. All the scales have high-reliability coefficients, with the reliability of the subtests on this final form being higher than the pilot.

Based on the MLQ (Multifactor leadership questionnaire), there are three leadership styles studied namely transformation, transaction and passive/avoidant. 45 items were measured with the three leadership styles above and the item has strong validity and reliability and can be widely used in this research. Bass and Avolio [29] use MLQ to assess leadership transformation. Three charisma subscales (Referred to as charismatic leadership; eight items, = 0.91), individual consideration (Nine items, = 0.93) and intellectual stimulation (10 items, = 0.92) were taken.

Testing the Hypotheses: Null Hypothesis stated: There is no significant relationship between leadership style and school climate. The alternative stated: There is a significant relationship between leadership style and school climate.

ANCOVA Analysis: ANCOVA is a statistical method that is used to control for the effects of covariates, or scale variables that are not the independent variables in the study [30]. According to Leech *et al.* [30] covariates may cause one to “Draw incorrect inferences about the

prediction of the dependent variable from the independent variable, if not controlled”. Utilizing ANCOVA will allow determining the significance of the contribution of the covariate as well as whether the nominal variables (Factors) significantly predict the dependent variable, over and above the ‘effect’ of the covariate [30].

ANCOVA test is a combination of ANOVA, correlation and linear regression procedure. All of this analysis was to determine the relationship between leadership style and school climate by controlling the variables of age, gender and years of work experience. Figure 1 show the variables involved in the study based on the objective of the study.

RESULTS

Based on Table 1, the majority of principals reported as transformational with the highest rates of N = 55 and transactional leadership style of N = 35. This shows that the transformational leadership style yields the highest rates of school climate with a mean score of 2,955 while the transactional leadership style yields the lowest rate for school climate with a mean score of 2.703.

Normality assumption in the multivariate analysis was tested by Q-Q plot. Since the points are approaching normal lines, data for school climate is normal, so multivariate analysis can be done. The results by using multiple regression analysis are shown below:

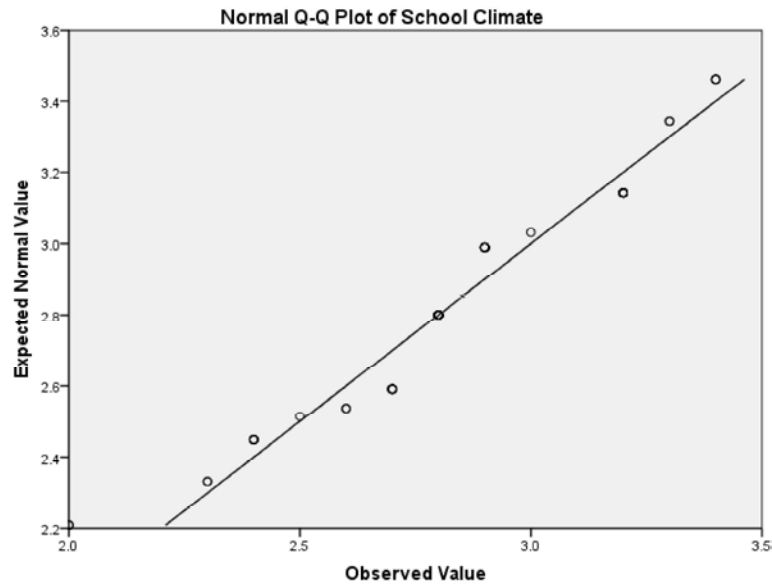


Fig. 2: Normal Q-Q Plot of School Climate

Table 1: Table 1: School Climate Summary for each Leadership Style

Leadership Style	N	Mean	Standart Error
Transactional	35	2.703	0.052
Transformational	55	2.955	0.031
Passive/Avoidant	0	0	0
Total	90	2.829	0.042

Table 2: Tests of Between-Subject Effects of Leadership Style and Demographic Factors in School Climate: Dependent Variable: School Climate

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	5.863 ^a	8	0.733	38.090	0.000
Intercept	12.594	1	12.594	654.624	0.000
Leadership Style	0.378	1	0.378	19.622	0.000
Age	0.518	2	0.259	13.469	0.000
Gender	0.746	2	0.373	19.381	0.000
Years of Principals' Experience	0.053	2	0.026	1.372	0.259
Error	1.558	81	0.019		
Total	741.870	90			
Corrected Total	7.421	89			

a. R Squared = 0.790 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.769).

Is there a relationship between the leadership style of the principal and the school climate? To answer this research question, ANCOVA has been used. The results are shown in Table 2.

Statistical analysis of covariance is a combination of regression analysis and ANOVA. Regression tests the extent to which an independent variable is able to predict dependent variables (Predictor). ANOVA also examines the comparative average. Thus, by using analysis of covariance, the role of the independent variable on the dependent variable can be identified simultaneously. Based on Table 2, it shows that there is a major effect of leadership style on school climate

[F (1, 81) = 19.622, p <0.05]. In conclusion, the leadership styles of principal are significantly affected on school climate.

In addition, the results of the ANCOVA test showed that there was a significant effect of the age-controlled variable on school climate [F (2, 81) = 13.469, p, <0.05]. Meanwhile, gender control variables are a significant impact on school climate [F (2, 81) = 19.381, p, <0.05]. Control variable for years of working experience for principals is not significant. Based on these results, the reviewer accepted the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between leadership style and school climate.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the ANCOVA table, F statistics are used to see if the school climate influences different leadership styles. The results show that the probability of the F-statistic is significant. Value of the F statistic is enough of 38.09 with a p-value of 0.000, which is below the level of 0.05. Thus, there is a significant relationship between leadership style and school climate. As previously reported, there is a relationship between leadership style and climate school (See Table 2). As shown, transformational and transactional leadership styles have the most impact on the school climate.

Basically, these research results continue to support the findings of previous findings. Levine and Lezotte [8] reported that the effectiveness of school principals through a predictor of the success of a school. Whereas, Folly [31] believe that the leadership in the education system is key to the learning outcomes of students or academic achievement. The positive relationship between past and present research is believed to agree with the earlier results. The theory expressed in this research was supported by the positive and significant correlation presented in the research findings. Previous studies believe that leadership style has a clear impact on school success. These three different leadership styles have been examined and reported, thus also supporting previous findings.

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