

Transformation Leadership at the *Sekolah Agama Rakyat*: A Purpose towards the Development of Education

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ABSTRACT

Education reform process that applies in this country has caused leadership in school increasingly complex and challenging. Despite to the royal party's willingness to help in advancing a part of Sekolah Agama Rakyat (SAR) to Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan (SABK), there are still some part of SAR remain with its status. The purpose of this investigation is to look into the ability of school leaders in the SAR to compete with the current prime schools. Is there any leadership practice transformation foreman in SAR is able to affect the commitment of teachers in the SAR. The transformational leadership scale adapted from MLQ (Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire) Form 5X-Rater (1992) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) which is obtained from Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) were used and the result demonstrates that adaptive min scores transformation leadership foreman in the SAR is 3.3231. When the results of data analysis on the relationship of transformational leadership and organizational commitment of teachers foreman at the SAR show a relationship both scored two variables $r = 0.647^{**}$. This value may be said to be large and significant. When the analysis using simple regression test showed all the R-square is rather high ($0.236 < R \text{ squared} < 0.419$) with a Beta value is also high ($0.486 < \beta < 0.639$) to make sure investigators headmasters transformational leadership has a significant relationship with organizational commitment and all sub-factor.

Keywords: Education management, Sekolah Agama Rakyat, organizational commitment questionnaire, transformational leadership.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Development of the *Sekolah Agama Rakyat* (SAR) in Malaysia since the beginning to the end is greatly aided by the state and central authorities in administering and managing the journey so much better than existing ones (Azizi Umar, 2003). Education reform process taking place in the country has also take account of the leadership at the school level, including the increasingly complex SAR. However, religious schools today have undergone some changes in terms of administration and curriculum. Formerly, all administration and management in the SAR under are the responsibility of the local community and concerned parties. The head master usually is from the founder of the society or the state religious authorities.

Now, the state and the federal government are also involved in the administration of religious schools. For example, Kedah state government intends to strengthen the state's SAR to enhance the potential of these school to attract foreign students to enroll in the SAR. Chief Minister Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir stated the impact of the presence of foreign students will not only help boost the economy and the tourism sector, but it will be able to strengthen the teachings of Islam. Even at the school, *Nabdhah Hasanah* in Kedah State already has nearly 70 students from ASEAN countries (The Star, Oct 5 2013).

This means that the role of principals in the SAR not sonly to ensure continuity and structure of the existing system but also the role of principals must be able to move his subordinates to change, so that the organization will be more sensitive and correlated to deal with the changes in the current education system. Kamaruddin (1989) stated that the administrators at the school not only play a role as administrator of education but also as a community leader. Some of the changes that occur in the country's education system as the introduction of the the Standard Curriculum for Primary Schools (USSR) in 2011 and the latest Education Development Plan 2013-2025 contains 11 big shift to be implemented will add more stress and strain on the school leaders and educators. Currently, studies in Malaysia (Abd. Rahman Ali, 1998; Kamaruddin Deraman, 1998; Mohammed Abdul Manaf Bustaman, 1995; Mohd Nasir Amir, 1999, Faridah Mohd Fauzi, 2000) focus more on leadership at the National School High School whereas the SAR leadership principals seems to be isolated. Religious school principals also have an equally important role in the government school principals to achieve educational excellence in the country.

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The effectiveness of leadership in schools has become a major issue in the country's education system. According to Balasandran A. Ramiah (2007), teachers affect student achievement and teachers affected by the power and leadership style especially administrators, principals and teachers. Effective leadership style has contributed to the effectiveness of the teacher in implementing the teaching and learning process of the students (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Quality of teachers is varies from one school to another depending on their physical locations. The difference may be due to several factors, but it remains focused on the environment (Zainal Abidin, Khalid, 1997).

Sapie (2004) in a related study of religious leadership in schools in Brunei have overall leadership behavior *Sekolah Agama Arab Menengah Perempuan Raja Isteri Pengeran anak Damit Brunei Darussalam* shows that there is an effect towards the school success. Mohd Azmi (Malaysiakini, 2003) states in the context of religious education in Malaysia, the commitment of religious educators in high school is great in serving the students as the importance of Islamic education to children of the nation, despite the minimal remuneration they received. (Malaysiakini, 2003). To what extent the statement can be proved true in other country and states. Do diversity trends and types of religious schools in the state of Kedah have been distinguished from the point of the practicing the principal leadership style.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to identify the degree of transformation leadership style practice principals in the state of Kedah and the extent of SAR practices can affect the commitment of the teachers in the SAR state. The study also identify the relationship or correlation between transformational leadership styles of principals with organizational commitment.

3.1 Importance of the Study

The findings of this study can be a guide for principals to determine the pattern or style of leadership should be practiced to avoid missing teacher commitment to the organization in which they work. The findings of this study may also help teachers to know the extent of their level of organizational commitment. This study can also serve as a guide for principals and inspire principals on the results

obtained. The study discovers a pattern of superior leadership and aspects that need to be addressed to enhance teachers' organizational commitment.

4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

There are three categories of religious schools in the state of Kedah, the *Sekolah Agama Rakyat* (SAR), *Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan* (SABK) and Maktab Mahmud. SAR begins with booths from Pattani system located in the South of Thailand (Fatin Hanim, 1996). It is also said to be developed by those who were educated in Mecca by Muslim Students Association of the National University of Malaysia (PMFPI UKM Journal, 1972). Generally all religious schools in Kedah is derived from SAR except Mahmud College administered by an advisory committee appointed by the Sultan of Kedah pleasure. Chief Minister usually becomes the chairman and the principal advisor of Mahmud College as the secretary. Appointed Islamic scholars and administration is under the authority of the Religious Affairs Office of Kedah. Its inception funded Maktab Mahmud Kedah by *Jabatan Zakat Negeri Kedah*.

In 1999, two SAR has been assumed to be Maktab Mahmud branch Yan and Langkawi. In 2004, another nine SAR has been assumed to be Maktab Mahmud district is providing a total of 12 pieces of Maktab Mahmud Alor Setar, Maktab Mahmud Yan, Maktab Mahmud Langkawi, Maktab Mahmud Pokok Sena, Maktab Mahmud Padang Terap, Maktab Mahmud Pendang, Maktab Mahmud Merbok, Maktab Mahmud Kuala Muda, Maktab Mahmud Sik, Maktab Mahmud Baling and Maktab Mahmud Kulim Bandar Baharu. To strengthen the religious schools in Malaysia, the *Sekolah Agama Rakyat* (SAR) and *Sekolah Agama Negeri* (SAN) registration program as a *Sekolah Agama Bantuan Kerajaan* (SABK) was carried out through a program proposed in 2002 by the Minister of Education and recommended by the Special Committee Tan Sri Murad in August 2004 (IDB, 2008).

5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the Transformation Leadership questionnaire adapted from the MLQ scale (Multi Factor Leadership Questionnaire) Form 5X - Rater (1992). This questionnaire was revised from the MLQ-Form 5 has been derived from Bass (1985). The questionnaire consists of 34 items based on the four subscale of Charisma, Intellectual Stimulate thoughtful, individually and Motivation Inspiration. While the Organization Commitment Questionnaire consists of 15 questions based on questionnaires adapted Organizational

Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) obtained from Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979). This questionnaire has three subscale of Pride, Personal involvement and loyalty. This questionnaire was used in the study by Roodzi Mohd Aziz (1997) and Norazlinda Saad (2010).

6.0 FINDINGS

Based on descriptive ANOVA test conducted to examine the transformation of leadership style practiced Principal SAR shows the mean scores on the SAR Principal Leadership Transformation is 3.3231. Result of this analysis of the relationship with the Principal Leadership Transformation Organizational commitment of teachers in SAR using Pearson correlation coefficient shows the relationship between the two variables get the value of $r = 0.647^{**}$. This value is very large and highly significant at $p = 0.000$.

Simple regression analysis by testing the R squared shows all the R squared is quite high ($0.236 < R \text{ squared} < 0.419$) with the beta value is also high ($0.486 < \beta < 0.639$) (Standardized β parameter equal to the Pearson r) to enhance researchers confidence that the Principal Leadership Transformation has a significant relationship with Organizational Commitment and sub-factors, namely pride, personal involvement and loyalty.

While the analysis conducted by stepwise multiple regression tests show no direct charisma dominant factor in the SAR. Generally inspiration motivation factor is significant for organizational commitment model and two sub-factors of pride and loyalty and intellectual Stimulating factor is dominant on organizational commitment model and sub-factors, namely loyalty. There is only one out of the four factor model of charisma.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study provides a positive future for principals SAR on the leadership style that should be implemented in order to change the teachers underneath so as to provide a high commitment to the school. The results also able to demonstrate to the administrator in the SAR that they have the strength to compete in today's world of education which is increasingly complex and challenging. With better leadership the SAR is expected to face the challenges in making the SAR as an option student not only from within the country but from abroad as the hope that the new Minister of Kedah, Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir.

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