THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is the cornerstone of good management in an organization. A well -led organization, can determine the desired success. A quality leader is also able to influence his staff to work better, to ensure the success of the organization can be achieved. The conditions and needs are also the same as in the school organization. Effective leadership in a school can guarantee success for the school. Therefore, the application of one important concept needs to be discussed in focusing on relevant and efficient leadership practices in schools. This article review was conducted to determine the basic concepts of leadership practices practiced in schools. Several studies serve as references in determining the established concepts. It is hoped that the findings of this study can provide a basic picture related to this issue and can help future researchers to continue research related to this issue.

Keywords: educational leadership, special education, quantitive approach, qualitative approach

I. INTRODUCTION

The leadership of an organization is often said to be a mirror to the success or failure of an organization itself (Abdul Jalil et al., 2021; Mohd Noh et al., 2021; Mustafa et al., 2021; Roszi et al., 2021; Tumisah et al., 2021). How it is implemented, what approach is used will influence the performance of the organization. Leadership is also able to form a cohesive workforce if it is mobilized correctly and appropriately (Mohd Ali et al., 2021; Parimala et al., 2021; SitiJamilah et al., 2021; Nor Fauziyana et al., 2021; Noel et al., 2021). This statement is agreed by many researchers such as Rasdi (2007), who stated that the leadership of a leader will influence the achievement of the organization, be a motivator to the members and also the progress of the organization especially in schools. The ability of a school leader in adapting challenges to opportunities, makes it easier for them to practice efficient leadership (Ahmad Shafarin et al., 2021; Junaidah et al., 2021; Farah Adibah et al., 2021; Ahmad Shakani et al., 2021; Muhamad Amin et al., 2021). The same is true if we examine leadership styles in school organizations. Generally, the leadership style of a head i.e. head teacher or principal will influence various aspects in management in the school (Irma et al., 2021; Suzana et al., 2021; Rohanida et al., 2021; Nazrah et al., 2021; Shahrulliza et al., 2021).

This leadership style of the head teacher or principal becomes a medium of very significant change on teachers' work motivation, school achievement and also the level of academic achievement of students (Ahmad Shafarin et al., 2021; Junaidah et al., 2021; Farah Adibah et al., 2021; Ahmad Shakani et al., 2021; Muhamad Amin et al., 2021). Sustainable leadership by head teachers can help continuous learning in schools (Badaruddin et al., 2021, Abdul Rasid et al., 2021). In Malaysia, there are various studies on this leadership style and its influence in secondary schools as well as mainstream primary schools (Santibuana et al., 2021; Nor Diana et al., 2021; Zarina et al., 2021; Khairul et al., 2021; al., 2021; Rohani et al., 2021). Nevertheless, are the results the same if a study on the leadership styles of headmasters or principals is conducted in special education national schools? As is well known, these schools are schools that accommodate students from people with disabilities (OKU). Does the
stigma that occurs in regular schools, also occur in special education schools? To what extent can the leadership style applied by the headmaster or principal influence teachers and students?

II. BACKGROUND STUDY

This study was conducted after the researcher examined a report issued by the Examination and Instructional Unit in the Special Education Division (BPKhas), Ministry of Education Malaysia in 2015 and 2016. The report is an analysis related to the achievement of Grade Point Average (GPS) for all 29 schools national education (SKPK) throughout Malaysia. The analysis made covers the GPS achievement for two consecutive years, namely the years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 as well as the increase or decrease in the GPS achievement of the schools involved. There are some SKPKs that have achieved a significant increase in GPS and there are also those that have experienced a very significant decrease in GPS even though the number of candidates who sat for the Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) is the same or almost the same amount. This situation raises some questions in researchers about how this situation can occur. If we take into account the situation of students who are also UPSR candidates, they are in the same special education category. This gives the impression that, the student's ability is almost the same whether it is a little more or a little less.

As for the number of candidates, there are SKPKs that have experienced a decrease in achievement while the number of candidates decreased from the previous year. Similarly on the other hand where the number of candidates is more, it helps in achieving good GPS. It is also possible that other factors such as changes in the format of UPSR questions are the cause of such changes. However, not all SKPKs show the same effect even though the student ability categories are different. For example, UPSR candidates for SKPK in the blind category are SKPK who achieved a high increase in GPS and SKPK who have candidates in the blind category are also SKPK who experienced a significant decrease in their GPS. This means that the change in the format of the question paper did not have a direct impact on the GPS achievement of the relevant school.

Thus, another question arises as to the possibility that can cause this situation to occur in addition to the student's own factors. Researchers see that there are external factors that affect the achievement of students with special needs. Researchers have decided to find the relationship between the leadership style of a headmaster in SKPK to be the heart of this GPS change. As we already know that there are several studies have already proven that the leadership style of a head teacher or principal influences student achievement and subsequently to the school GPS. According to Christopher Day, Pam Sammons, David Hopkins, Alma Harris, Ken Leithwood, Qing Gu, Eleanor Brown, ElpidaAhtaridou& Alison Kington (2009), leadership provides insight into the greatest influence on student learning through their role models on teacher motivation, commitment and working conditions.

However, can the same effect be seen for students with special needs in SKPK? This study focuses on one category of students with special needs only, namely students with hearing impairment (BD) because the number of candidates involved is mostly composed of candidates in the BD category and the rest are students with visual impairment (BL). While the selected SKPK is only in the state of Johor only because the increase in GPS achievement for SKPK involving BD students occurred significantly in the state of Johor. In addition, the researcher also wants to see what leadership style is appropriate and can be proposed to be practiced on students with special needs and teachers who teach at SKPK in Malaysia.

THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICE IN MALAYSIA

Conceptually, this study is a trigger to the perceptions of teachers and students related to the leadership style of headmasters in excellent SKPK in the state of Johor. This perception was born as a result of research on the academic achievement of students as well as the work of teachers in the school (Mohd Arafat et al., 2021; Sumaiyah et al., 2021; Hifzan et al., 2021; Shahrul et al., 2021; Helme et al., 2021). This situation is a trigger for researchers to see to what extent the leadership style of the headmaster affects the academic achievement of students as well as the performance of teachers in meeting the above achievements. In addition, the researcher also wants to see and identify the type or style of leadership of headmasters that is suitable to be used as a guide for other SKPK throughout Malaysia to achieve the same success.

To achieve that purpose, the researcher has examined several existing leadership styles that have been introduced by renowned researchers previously in related fields. Through this study, the researcher managed to find several theories of leadership, namely Theory X and Y pioneered by McGregor related to behavior. In addition, the researcher also did a reading on Situational Leadership Theory which is discussed in depth by the pioneer of Fiedler's Contingency Theory, Fred Fiedler (Farah et al., 2021; Syahrul et al., 2021; Quah et al., 2021; Ahmad
Syarifuddin et al., 2021; Ahmad Syarifuddin et al. et al., 2021; Jumiah et al., 2021). Both of these theories are the main reference in this study. Quantitative and qualitative data collection can be carried out with the use of interview instruments, data analysis and questionnaires. The data obtained are then analyzed to obtain the results of the study and then will answer research questions related to student academic achievement, school GPS and appropriate leadership style.

This study is an important study in exploring the leadership style of a department head, the headmaster in one of the best SKPK in the country. With a background of special needs students or better known in the community as people with disabilities (OKU), it is certainly a challenge as a leader to translate his leadership. As we all know, the leadership practiced by a leader will in turn influence the achievement of the organization he leads. With such a huge challenge that comes from the condition of students, even teachers of various backgrounds and inclinations, then the appropriate leadership style needs to be practiced. Thus, for the sake of looking at the suitability of the leadership practiced, this study will be conducted to further confirm the assumptions of previous researchers who apparently agreed that leadership will reflect achievement. This study is also expected to be able to be a reference for future researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of certain leadership styles in managing students with disabilities in a school environment with a small population compared to enrollment in regular day schools. The researcher also hopes that the research findings at the end of the process will be able to answer all the research questions set and meet the desired research objectives. In the opinion of the researcher, the method of data collection and analysis chosen is able to supply rich and diverse data to this study which in turn can produce an accurate result.

### III. CONCLUSION

Overall, this study is expected to be able to provide a good impact to the leadership in other SKPK throughout the country in practicing the right leadership style in managing students with disabilities and teachers who teach these students. The results that will be obtained are very important to be used as a reference and guide in dealing with problems that arise when managing people. The researcher suggested to all leadership in SKPK throughout Malaysia to use the findings of this study as a reference in determining leadership practices in their respective schools. Considering that this study has a positive impact on the management of SKPK in the future, the researcher recommends that this proposal paper be accepted for implementation. In the future, the researcher also suggested that the study on leadership style in the best SKPK is also conducted in other states in Malaysia so that we can find differences and similarities in leadership practices in different states. The results of the study will definitely be able to provide more reference sources to the leadership of SKPK throughout Malaysia.

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