



***SELF-EFFICACY AS MEDIATOR IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL
COMMITMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS
IN CENTRAL REGION, PENINSULAR MALAYSIA***

TEH PEI LING

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By

TEH PEI LING

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2016

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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TEH PEI LING

May 2016

Chairman : Professor Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie, PhD
Faculty : Educational Studies

Malaysian schools are experiencing constant educational challenges in the current 21st century teaching and learning, this scenario requires greater teacher's organizational commitment in accomplishing effective learning outcomes. Teachers are the agents of change in carrying out education plans and changes in schools to the benefits of the nation. School teachers get directive instructions from the principals to transform current education system. Hence, to what extent do the secondary school teachers fare in their organizational commitment?

The aim of this study is to examine the mediation effect of teacher's self-efficacy in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' organisational commitment. It was a descriptive correlational study using a survey method. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used for the selection of respondents. 349 secondary school teachers in the central region of Peninsular Malaysia were involved in a cross-sectional survey. The number of respondents was determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The response rate stood at 86.9%. The reliability and validity of the research questionnaires were determined using coefficient alpha and composite reliability for the subsequent descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and confirmatory factor analyses. The statistical procedures used to analyse the data for addressing the research questions and hypotheses included descriptive, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and mediation analysis.

Given that the hypothesized model exhibits a good fit to the data, the findings showed a high level of transformational leadership, ($M = 4.66$, $SD = .67$, score range from 1 to 6) and a high level of teachers' organizational commitment, ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .48$, score range from 1 to 5). The level of teachers' self-efficacy was high, ($M = 3.93$, $SD = .45$, score range from 1 to 5). Furthermore, the correlation between transformational leadership and teachers' self-efficacy was positive and had a medium strength, ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). Teachers' self-efficacy and organizational commitment revealed a positive and had a medium

strength of correlation, ($r=.37$, $p<.01$). Only transformational leadership and organizational commitment had a positive and strong correlation, ($r=.5$, $p>.01$). Specifically, the findings revealed that self-efficacy has a partial mediating effect in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' organizational commitment using bootstrapping method. Teachers' self-efficacy and transformational leadership only contributed 27.2% towards organizational commitment among the teachers in the secondary schools in the central region of Peninsular Malaysia.

The findings revealed teachers' self-efficacy serves as a partial mediator in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment. Due to the partial effect as a mediator, there are other factors that could influence Malaysian teachers' organizational commitment. Future research should investigate more factors that influence teachers' organizational commitment. The officers in Ministry of Education and the school management should continue the effort in boosting teachers' self-efficacy in schools by providing more professional training and development. The findings provide an impetus for policies makers and school management to continue adopting effective transformational leadership practices in their schools that will influence higher organizational commitment among the secondary school teachers. All these effort are to move towards implementing change and achieving the 11 shifts in Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) nationwide.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**EFIKASI KENDIRI SEBAGAI PERANTARAAN DALAM PERHUBUNGAN
ANTARA KEPIMPINAN TRANSFORMASI DAN KOMITMEN ORGANISASI
DI KALANGAN GURU SEKOLAH MENENGAH DI ZON TENGAH,
SEMENANJUNG MALAYSIA**

Oleh

TEH PEI LING

Mei 2016

Pengerusi : Profesor Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie, PhD
Fakulti : Pengajian Pendidikan

Sekolah di Malaysia mengalami cabaran pendidikan yang berterusan dalam pengajaran and pembelajaran abad 21, scenario ini memerlukan komitmen organisasi guru yang tinggi untuk menyempurnakan pembelajaran yang efektif. Guru ialah agent perubahan dalam menjalankan pelan pendidikan dan perubahan dalam sekolah untuk kebaikan negara. Guru di sekolah mendapatkan arahan daripada pengetua untuk membuat transformasi terhadap sistem pendidikan. Justeru, setakat mana guru sekolah menengah mempunyai komitmen organisasi?

Tujuan kajian ini ialah menyelidik kesan perantaraan efikasi guru dalam perhubungan di antara amalan kepimpinan tranformasi pengetua dan komitmen organisasi guru. Kajian ini menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan korelasi dengan kaedah kaji selidik. Bilangan responden ditentukan dengan teknik rawak berstrata mengikut kadar. 349 guru sekolah menengah di kawasan tengah Semenanjung Malaysia terlibat dalam menjawab kajian soalan dan hipotesis penyelidikan secara 'cross-sectional'. Kadar tindak balas ialah 86.9%. Kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan soal selidik diperolehi melalui pekali alpha, kebolehpercayaan komposit untuk analisis deskriptif, analisis korelasi, dan analisis faktor pengesanan selanjutnya. Prosedur statistik yang digunakan untuk menganalisis data bagi tujuan menangani kajian soalan dan hipotesis penyelidikan termasuk analisis deskriptif, pemodelan persamaan struktur (SEM) dan analisis 'mediation'.

Memandangkan model hipotesis mempamerkan data 'fit', keputusan model telah menunjukkan bahawa tahap kepimpinan transformasi yang tinggi ($M = 4.66$, $SD = .67$, skor dari 1 hingga 6) dan komitmen organisasi guru yang tinggi, ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .48$, skor dari 1 hingga 5). Tahap min efikasi sendiri guru juga tinggi, ($M = 3.93$, $SD = .45$, skor dari 1 hingga 5). Tambahan pula, hasil analisis korelasi menunjukkan terdapat hubungan signifikan, positif dan sederhana antara kepimpinan transformasi dengan efikasi sendiri, ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). Efikasi sendiri guru dan komitmen organisasi guru terdapat hubungan signifikan, positif dan kekuatan korelasi yang sederhana, ($r = .37$, $p < .01$). Hanya

keimpinan transformasi dan komitmen organisasi menunjukkan hubungan kolerasi yang positif dan kuat, ($r=.5$, $p>.01$). Secara khususnya, efikasi guru mempunyai kesan pengantaraan yang separa dalam hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi dan komitmen organisasi guru dengan menggunakan kaedah 'bootstrapping'. Efikasi sendiri guru dan kepimpinan transformasi menyumbang 27.2% terhadap komitmen organisasi di kalangan guru sekolah menengah di zon tengah, Semenanjung Malaysia.

Keputusan kajian menunjukkan sendiri guru memainkan peranan sebagai perantaraan separuh dalam hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi dan komitmen organisasi. Disebabkan oleh separuh kesan perantaraan, adalah didapati bahawa factor lain juga pengaruh komitmen organisasi guru di Malaysia. Kajian masa depan boleh dilakukan atas faktor yang lain yang mempengaruhi komitmen organisasi guru. Justeru, ia adalah penting untuk meneruskan usaha untuk meningkatkan efikasi sendiri guru di sekolah. Kajian ini memberi dorongan kepada pengetua dan pengurusan sekolah untuk terus mempraktikkan Kepimpinan Transformasi yang efektif di sekolah masing-masing untuk ke arah melaksanakan perubahan dan mencapai 11 perubahan dalam Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia (2013-2025) di seluruh negara.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie, PhD

Professor
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Soaib Bin Asimirin, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Foo Say Fooi, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

BUJANG BIN KIM HUAT, PhD

Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name and Matric No.: Teh Pei Ling (GS 30585)

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- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) were adhered to.

Signature: _____

Name of Chairman
of Supervisory
Committee:

Professor Dr. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie

Signature: _____

Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee:

Dr. Soaib Bin Asimirin

Signature: _____

Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee:

Dr. Foo Say Fook

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGFI	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
Chisq/sf	Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom
CI	Confidence Interval
CR	Critical Ratio
EPRD	Educational Planning and Research Division
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
MOE	Ministry of Education
NFI	Normed Fit Index
NNFI	Non-Normed Fit Index
NSL	Nature School Leadership
PGFI	Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index
PNFI	Parsimony Normed Fit Index
PT3	Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3
RMSEA	Root Mean Error of Approximation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SSC	Strengthening School Culture
SV	Shared Vision
TL	Transformational Leadership

TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
TSES	Teacher Sense of Efficacy



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Malaysia recognizes the education system has to keep evolving and stay abreast with or ahead of the global trends. Consequently, developed the Malaysian Education Blueprint, 2013–2025 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). It offers challenges and paradigm shifts in the education arena for all educationists. All the changes in the education system are in line with the national vision and objectives. It necessitates the Ministry of Education to plan and execute education policies and initiatives so the younger generation could stay on par with the national and international education standards. Numerous education plans and policies are designed to attain standardized quality learning outcomes across the nation. When these new education plans and policies are introduced and need to be executed, school teachers are often the persons who will implement any educational changes. With the top down approach in the Malaysian education system, teachers are psychologically more committed and are able to produce more promising student achievement and career advancement (Ross, J. A. & Gray, 2006).

A committed teacher teaches and guides students in effective learning for knowledge and skills, with the objective of shaping the future generation of the nation. It is inevitable that a teacher who is highly committed in his/her teaching and work will bring positive changes to students and the school (Park, 2005). Similarly, Celep (2000) stressed the importance of committed teachers in bringing effective learning alive among students in the classroom. The author also commented school principals play a pivotal role in engaging school teachers in a shared commitment in school. However, there is still a lack of knowledge on the effects of teachers' organizational commitment, their self-efficacy and principals' leadership style on the school students in the Malaysian schools. Thus, this study endeavors to find out to what extent the principals' transformational leadership styles influence teachers' organizational commitment that will in turn affect the learning outcomes of the school students. To be more precise, this study investigates the mediation effect of self-efficacy in the relationship between transformational school leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

Undeniably, changes in the education system require committed teachers for the implementation. However in Malaysia, the teachers are facing challenges in their job as a result of the new changes in the education system in which they have to adapt. Often the changes in the education system challenge the teachers' job descriptions and roles (Sezgin, 2009). A case in point, was the newly-introduced 'School Based Assessment' in all secondary schools and the Form Three public examination, 'Penilaian Menengah Rendah' (PMR) was replaced by 'Penilaian Tingkatan 3' (PT3) starting from year 2014 (Moe, 2013). Consequently, form three students have to sit for four core subjects (Malay language, English language, Science and Mathematics) in the public examination and at the same time to complete the school-based assessment for other subjects. Students'

achievements based on their academic results, co-curriculum involvements and the PT3 results. Thus, these changes require teachers to have optimal and positive commitment in the teaching and the learning process and in particular the successful implementation of the School Based Assessment.

More importantly, Malaysian Education Blueprint focuses on all aspects of education and emphasizes teachers' organizational commitment in making sure the mission, vision and objectives of the national education are dealt with by all education personnel.

In 2011, the Malaysian government introduced several initiatives in the Government Transformational Programme 2.0 (GTP 2.0). In this GTP 2.0, the education sector was given the priority in the Government Transformational Programme 2.0 (GTP 2.0) to focus on the literacy of young children at an early childhood, generate more high performing schools that are on par with the international standard and execute transformational programmes under the School Improvement Programme. Besides, the school principals are offered reward deals and teachers are furnished with the Teacher Career Package. All these are laid upon the educators in Malaysia to transform the education plans.

To achieve the GTP 2.0 initiatives, school principals are to have plans to boost teachers' commitment in their career as this is an important factor in improving students' achievement (Dannetta, 2002). Good teachers produce good students. It is for these reasons that this study is necessary to examine the relationships among principals' leadership styles, self-efficacy and also their organizational commitment that contribute towards school improvement and effectiveness in Malaysia.

Teachers' commitment and leadership has often been intertwined. Committed teachers perform well under good leadership and ultimately improve the school academic and non-academic performance. Hence, the importance of leadership contribution in school performance cannot be denied. Clearly, the promotion of 'Super Principals' in Malaysia is to encourage and promote efforts in producing more effective school principals. School principals who have showed great improvement in school achievement will get a change to be promoted to be a 'super principal' or the Ministry of Education also named it as 'Excellent Principal'. As practised in the education system, outstanding principals are being promoted and sent to low performing schools to transform them. Very often, these excellent principals are sent to a school for a span of five years. Then they will be transferred to under-performing schools to transform these schools. It is reported there are many principals who are successful in transforming the low-performing schools into performing schools. Though, the leadership of the principals are said to have contributed to the effectiveness of the school, there could still be other contributing factors towards the performance of the schools. Thus, this study attempts to bridge the gap of knowledge concerning the importance of teachers' commitment and the contributions of their self-efficacy towards school effectiveness.

1.2 Problem Statement

It is quite alarming that among more than 10,000 schools in Malaysia (Ministry Of Education, 2012), only a handful of schools are labelled as the higher ranking for school achievement. The report of Average Grade School Achievement in 2011 and 2012, with 10,091 schools in Malaysia (7,744 primary schools and 2,347 secondary schools) graded only four schools that achieved the 'Excellence' category, 27 schools are in the 'Good' category, 118 schools are at the 'Satisfactory' category and only four schools fall in the 'potential' category. Most of the Malaysian government schools are graded in the category of Average Grade School Achievement. When school achievement is concerned, it often relies on the leadership of a school and the capability of the teaching workforce. With a total of 2,347 secondary schools in Malaysia, it is crucial to know and identify the factors that affect teachers' organizational commitment, that will indirectly affect students' achievement and school effectiveness. Given that Malaysia education authorities aim to achieve an education system which is on par with the international arena, it is crucial to evaluate teachers' organizational commitment.

At the same time, Malaysia's ongoing education agendas and the continuous push for changes for the betterment of the nation have resulted in written instructions given to school principals to ensure all school policies and procedures are carried out successfully. Teachers, being at the forefront facing and executing changes, face with challenges in producing positive outcomes in schools and in student achievements.

Though there are many approaches in the effort to boost school effectiveness, it is still interesting and important to study the relationships among teachers' organizational commitment, teachers' self-efficacy and principal transformational leadership (Ross, J. A. & Gray, 2006). Committed teachers produce more promising learning outcomes among students. However, with the constant changes in education policies in Malaysia, teachers are to stay alert and carry out the changes as well. Teachers play important roles in putting Malaysia on par with the standard education quality. There are many factors influencing teachers' organizational commitment and one common variable is leadership in school. Transformational leadership, teacher's self-efficacy and teachers' organizational commitment variables were used to address the issue in handling change in education platform.

In social cognitive theory, Bandura (1986) defines human action as a function of the interplay between personal, behavioural, and environmental factors. This theory deals with the social foundations of thought and actions. How the environment influences a person's thought and ultimately produce the behavioural outcome is the focus of this research. At the same time, in school open system, the type of leadership serves as the input of leadership into a school, then the process deals with how teachers think if they are capable of achieving school goals and as the output, behavioural outcome, which is the projected organizational commitment. How we equate leadership as environmental, self-efficacy as personal factor and organizational commitment as behaviour are further explained in the research. These three factors interplay is applicable in school open system when there is a single direction from input, process and output of a school system. The perceived self-efficacy is a self-judgement of capabilities. It is how a teacher believes he

or she can do a particular task instructed by the leader in school, the principal. The leadership style of the school principals is termed as the environmental factor, then, teacher's sense of self-efficacy as the personal factor and the behavioural as the organizational commitment of the secondary school teachers. This relationship is further explained by Kurt Lewin's field theory for the behavioural change in a person. One way direction from environmental factor which is the transformational leadership factor has influenced teachers' behaviour and ultimately, influencing the education system in general.

Among a few educational leadership styles, transformational leadership is one of the most prominent and applicable leadership styles that respond well to the competitive environment. In line with the Malaysian Government Transformation Programme 2.0 (GTO 2.0) and the Malaysian Education Blueprint, principals' practice of transformational leadership style has been earmarked to transform schools towards school improvements and effectiveness. In line with the effort to transform schools, a lot of effort has been put into training school principals in practising transformational leadership style in their role as effective principals (IAB, 2010). Principals play critical roles in uplifting and sustaining the school teachers with great commitment. Day, Elliot, & Kington (2005) also had the same notion that principals' role is crucial in addressing teachers' commitment. Literature gathers transformational leadership can affect organizational commitment significantly (Ross & Gray, 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2002). Some scholars found out self-efficacy contributes to teachers' commitment (Ross & Gray, 2006) as a teacher with higher self-efficacy will be more committed. However, minimal research attention has been given to the role of self-efficacy as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment in the Malaysian secondary schools context.

As for other issue on teachers' commitment, Sharif et al. (2002) found out that organizational commitment among teachers is only average in Malaysia whereas Noordin et al., (2008) also argued teachers possess low to moderate levels of commitment in Malaysia. Since organizational commitment is treated as a success factor of an organizational (Farahani, Taghadosi, & Behboudi, 2011), it is crucial to tap into organizational commitment of the teachers which will translate into school improvement and effectiveness. However, minimal research attention has been given to the role of self-efficacy in the relationship between transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment in the Malaysia secondary schools. Bandura (1986) coined 'self-efficacy' as one's confidence level in accomplishing some tasks. In school, self-efficacy is a more suitable mediation to organizational commitment (Ross & Gray, 2004; Ryan & Harry, 2007). This is because they advocated organizational commitment and principal leadership style will gauge on the level of self-efficacy. Nevertheless, self-efficacy as the mediating effect between transformational school leadership and organizational commitment is given less attention in the Malaysia context. There is still a gap on how far does the Malaysian self-efficacy mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' organizational commitment. Hence, this study hopes to provide an insight on how teachers' sense of self-efficacy among the secondary school teachers mediates the relationship between the principals' transformational leadership practices and organizational commitment in the Malaysian secondary schools.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to examine self-efficacy as a mediator in the relationship between the principals' transformational leadership practice and teachers' organizational commitment.

Specifically, the objectives of this research are to:

1. Determine the levels of transformational leadership dimensions in Malaysian secondary schools.
2. Determine the levels of self-efficacy dimensions in Malaysian secondary schools.
3. Determine the levels of teacher's organizational commitment dimensions in Malaysian secondary schools.
4. Examine the relationships between principals' transformational leadership practice, self-efficacy and organizational commitment in the Malaysian secondary schools.
5. Examine the mediation effect of teachers' self-efficacy in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

1.4 Research Questions (RQ)

Based on the main aim of the research and the accompanying research objectives, the following research questions are formulated.

RQ 1: What are the perceived levels of transformational leadership dimensions in the Malaysian secondary schools?

RQ 2: What are the perceived levels of self-efficacy dimensions in the Malaysian secondary schools?

RQ 3: What are the perceived levels of teachers' organizational commitment in the Malaysian secondary schools?

1.5 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed to examine the interrelationships among principals' transformational leadership practices (the eight dimensions comprise of shared vision, school goals, high expectations, model behavior, individualized Support, intellectual stimulation provisions, strengthening of school culture and building collaborative structure), teachers' sense of self-efficacy (efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional strategies and efficacy in classroom management) and teachers' organizational commitment (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment).

Hypothesis H₁: There is a significant relationship between the principals' transformational leadership and teacher efficacy.

Hypothesis H₂: There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and teachers' organizational commitment.

Hypothesis H₃: There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

Hypothesis H₄: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

Hypothesis H₅: Self-efficacy and transformational leadership contribute towards organizational commitment in the Malaysian secondary school teachers.

1.6 Significance of study

This study takes into account the eight dimensions of the Principals' transformational leadership, the three dimensions of self-efficacy and three dimensions of teachers' organizational commitment based on the current problems faced in the Malaysia educational arena and the research gap obtained from literature review. Thus, here are the significance of the study.

Firstly, the findings of the thesis may assist any educationists in knowing the levels of principals' transformational leadership, self-efficacy and teachers' organizational commitment in the central region of Peninsular Malaysia. At the same time, principals will know which aspects or factors to focus on their effort in enhancing teachers' organizational commitment. Besides that, school administrators can comprehend to what extent self-efficacy mediates the relationship between the dimensions of transformational leadership and teachers' organizational commitment.

The findings potentially help secondary school principals in handling school issues more effectively by looking into the dimensions of transformational leadership. As it is widely acceptable that an effective school leadership will help increase teachers' organizational commitment among the secondary school teachers (Ross, J. A. & Gray, 2006).

Thirdly, the results of this study may help principals in their efforts to boost organizational commitment continuously. Thus, a school principal should be able manage the teachers well in sustaining higher school capability and enhance the implementation of school improvement effort. The results of this study may also help school principals identify the strengths and deficiencies in teachers' organizational commitment. This is because teachers' ability to have high commitment in teaching and educating the students is important for effective teaching and thus will lead to quality teaching (Dannetta, 2002).

Forth, while transformational leadership and self-efficacy were examined separately as independent variables in past studies (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Douglas, 2010; Ilkur Eginli, 2009; Hoy, 2000; Ross & Gray, 2004; Ryan & Harry, 2007; Ware & Kitsantas, 2011), the design of this research differs from those studies by empirically examining

self-efficacy as a mediator and teachers' organizational commitment as the dependent variable. Therefore, this study provides a fundamental shift in the design of the independent, mediator and dependent variables that are useful in the context of Malaysian educational research.

This study contributes to the development of research methodology for the study of interrelationships among transformational leadership, self-efficacy and multidimensional organizational commitment because this study takes into account both direct and indirect effects in the relationships between transformational leadership and teachers' commitment. From a practical perspective, the increasing level of organizational commitment has underscored the need for understanding the implications of school improvement practices on teachers' commitment, and for devising plans to boost the commitment among the secondary school teachers. In this aspect, this study may provide an important guide in responding to the educational challenges.

Finally, the proposed research model of this study is useful as a supplementary screening instrument to assist the school administrators in diagnosing the implications of transformational leadership and self-efficacy on teachers' organizational commitment and for the development of teachers' professional development training in order to boost teachers' organizational commitment. Subsequently, schools will function more efficiently gearing towards school missions and visions, and the secondary school teachers will be highly committed in their teaching career.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Overall, the main objective of this study was to investigate the mediation effect of teachers' self-efficacy in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' organizational commitment. The teachers' perceptions on their principals' transformational school leadership practices were evaluated along with teachers' self-efficacy and organizational commitment. Like any other researches, this research has its limitations too.

Firstly, this study was conducted in thirteen national secondary schools at the three states in the central region, Peninsular Malaysia. Hence, the results cannot be generalized to all schools in Malaysia. The thirteen schools in the Central Region (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya) were selected and cross-sectional survey method was utilized. The simple random hand-picked teachers answered the pre-designed questionnaires adopted from three established literature sources. The cross-sectional survey ensured the teachers' perceptions were taken at a particular point of time, their views about their principals' transformational leadership practices, their own self-efficacy and organizational commitment were answered.

Based on the data provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) website, there are 181,747 secondary school teachers in Malaysia as of 31 March 2012. Due to time factor and cost efficiency, the focus of this research was taken from only thirteen schools from

the three states in the central region of Peninsular Malaysia. As the survey questionnaires were conducted at only thirteen schools, hence the findings of this research can only be analyzed and interpreted from the limited sample size.

1.8 Definition of terms

The definitions of terms for the independent, mediator and dependent variables of this study are as explained as the followings.

1.8.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership includes the practices of the school principals involving school vision, goal setting, individual support, intellectual stimulation, best model practices, demonstration of high performance expectations, creation of a productive school culture and developing collaborative structures (Leithwood, 1994). In this research, the principals' transformational school leadership practices were measured by the Nature of School Leadership (NSL) questionnaires by Leithwood (1994). It consists of 50 items with 6-point Likert scales. The higher the scores, the higher is the principals' transformational leadership being practised in schools.

1.8.2 Self-efficacy

It is defined as the capability of a teacher in planning, organizing and carrying out the planned activities which are required to make a specific teaching task a success (Tschannen-Moran, M. & Hoy, 2001). To be more precise, teachers' self-efficacy in this research comprises three dimensions namely, Efficacy for instructional strategies, Efficacy for classroom management and Efficacy for student engagement. In this research, self-efficacy was measured by the TSES questionnaires by Tschannen-Moran (2001). It consists of 24 items with 5-point Likert scales. The higher the scores, the higher is the self-efficacy being projected by the teachers themselves.

1.8.3 Organizational Commitment

Organizational Commitment (OC) is an attitude, a belief, a sense of attachment to and in an organization (Meyer & Allen, 2004). In this research, the secondary school teachers' organizational commitment was measured by the Three-Component Model (TCM) of commitment known as affective commitment, normative commitment and continuance commitment. The questionnaires by Meyer and Allen have 18 items with 5-point Likert scales. The higher the scores, the higher is the organizational commitment being projected by the secondary school teachers in the central region of Peninsular Malaysia.

1.9 Summary

This chapter illustrates the basic write-up and research direction of this study. It touches the background of the study by looking at Malaysia current education scenario. Then, the

importance of teachers' organizational commitment was highlighted due to the urgency of implementing change in the education plans. Teachers' self-efficacy as a mediator was also proposed as a mediator in the relationship between principals' transformational leadership practices and teachers' organizational commitment. The research objectives were stated with three research questions and five hypotheses. Significance of the study was highlighted to address the importance of the study. Subsequently, the limitations and operational definitions were also dealt with in this chapter. Therefore, the next chapter presents a review of the literature in order to establish the conceptual framework for this study.



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