



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHERS' BEHAVIOUR IN WORK
INNOVATION**

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**FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHERS' BEHAVIOR
IN WORK INNOVATION**

By

ABEL RAJ SETHUPATHY

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

March 2019

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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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By

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March 2019

**Chair : Prof. Abdul Mua'ti @ Zamri Ahmad, Phd
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This study is about teacher responses to the implementation of School Based Assessment (SBA) in Kuala Langat secondary schools. Organizational research on Employee Silence described that individuals hold back their opinions regarding work issues due to various reasons. Although much of the studies concerning Employee Silence was done outside the education field, the main objective in this study is to examine if teachers too have the tendency to adopt similar behavior when faced with issues in the Work Innovation (SBA). Employee Silence research indicate that the danger of such a behavior can escalate into total dissatisfaction at the workplace due to prolonged unhappiness. This research design utilized a quantitative approach, using a survey instrument. Survey items were modified from previous research to suit the objectives of this study. Reliability and Validity tests were conducted with no issues in the outcome. The reliability test produced an average alpha value of ≥ 0.70 . Following that, the actual study was carried out on 320 teachers, identified using the simple random sampling method. The instruments were personally distributed and collected by the researcher.

The analysis of data was carried out using Descriptive and Inferential Statistics. The findings indicated that teachers too have a tendency to adopt the Silence approach when faced with SBA issues in their respective schools. This is consistent with research findings in business organizations whereby such a behavior is a deliberate choice of action to hold back workplace information from the management. The significance of this study is to emphasize the importance of upward communication in the form of feedback, which is important for schools to achieve top performance. Effective teacher-management communication can create a conducive environment which motivates all individuals. Policy makers at the Ministry of Education Malaysia too can benefit by considering the outcome

of this study to further refine the SBA so that the issues and problems faced by teachers will be given due attention. In conclusion, all parties concerned need to strive to create a conducive environment at schools so that a free flow of communication becomes a culture among all individuals in the organization. As such, principals, and top management must create a climate to tap the best from teachers through frequent and effective two-way communication.



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

FAKTOR YANG MEMPENGARUHI TINGKAHLAKU GURU DALAM INOVASI KERJA

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Penyelidikan ini adalah mengenai respon guru terhadap pelaksanaan Penilaian Berasaskan Sekolah (PBS) di sekolah-sekolah menengah di Kuala Langat. Penyelidikan berhubung Tingkahlaku Membisu yang dilaksanakan di luar bidang pendidikan menunjukkan bahawa individu tidak memberi pendapat mengenai pelbagai isu kerana faktor-faktor dalaman dan luaran di tempat kerja. Walaupun kebanyakan dari kajian mengenai Tingkahlaku Membisu dikaji di luar bidang pendidikan, objektif utama kajian ini bertujuan membuat pemerhatian samada guru-guru juga mengamalkan tingkahlaku sedemikian apabila menghadapi isu berkaitan PBS di peringkat sekolah. Penyelidikan budaya Membisu menunjukkan bahaya tingkahlaku berkenaan dalam kalangan pekerja boleh membawa kepada ketidakpuasan mendadak di tempat kerja sekiranya situasi ini berpanjangan. Kajian ini mengamalkan pendekatan kuantitatif, iaitu penggunaan soal selidik sebagai alat mengumpul data. Soalan-soalan dibentuk dengan merujuk kepada kajian lampau, tetapi telah diubahsuai supaya objektif kajian ini tercapai. Ujian Kesahan dan Keandalan telah dilaksanakan dan keputusannya adalah memuaskan. Ujian Keandalan telah menghasilkan bacaan purata nilai $\alpha \geq 0.70$. Berikutan ujian-ujian tersebut, kajian sebenar telah dilaksanakan ke atas 320 orang guru melalui teknik persampelan rawak mudah. Instrumen kajian telah diedar dan dikumpulkan oleh penyelidik sendiri.

Analisis data yang dikumpulkan diproses menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan statistik inferensial. Keputusan analisis ini menunjukkan bahawa pihak guru pada kebiasaannya mengamalkan Tingkahlaku Membisu apabila menghadapi isu-isu berkaitan PBS di sekolah-sekolah di daerah ini. Hal ini adalah konsisten dengan kajian pekerja di luar bidang pendidikan di mana Tingkahlaku Membisu sengaja dilakukan untuk tidak memberi maklumat kepada pihak atasan. Kajian

ini menekankan kepentingan berkomunikasi dengan pihak atasan dalam bentuk maklumbalas amat penting sekiranya sekolah-sekolah ingin memperolehi pencapaian yang cemerlang. Komunikasi pihak pengurusan-guru yang berkesan dapat mewujudkan persekitaran yang kondusif di mana terdapat motivasi dari pihak pengurusan dan maklumbalas dari guru untuk kejayaan sesebuah organisasi. Kementerian Pendidikan juga boleh mendapat manfaat dari kajian ini supaya isu dan masalah yang dihadapi oleh pihak guru diberi perhatian yang sewajarnya. Kesimpulannya, semua pihak perlu bekerjasama untuk mewujudkan persekitaran kerja yang baik di sekolah di mana komunikasi yang berkesan diwujudkan oleh semua individu dalam organisasi. Untuk itu, pihak pengetua dan pentadbir sekolah mestilah mewujudkan persekitaran di mana komunikasi dua hala antara pentadbir-guru kerap dilaksanakan.



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Above all, I thank God for His divine guidance and wisdom in enabling me to complete what I had started.

*“The Lord is my strength and my song; He has given me victory.”
Exodus 15.2*

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 14 March 2019 to conduct the final examination of Abel Raj Sethupathy on his thesis entitled "Factors Affecting Teachers' Behavior In Work Innovation" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	i
ABSTRAK	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
APPROVAL	vi
DECLARATION	viii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xv

BAB

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Research Background	1
1.2	Problem Statement	4
1.2.1	Theoretical Justification for Utilizing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors (Moderators)	7
1.2.2	Research Gap	10
1.3	Research Questions	10
1.4	Research Objectives	11
1.4.1	General Objectives	11
1.4.2	Specific Objectives	11
1.5	Significance	12
1.5.1	Significance To The Ministry Of Education Malaysia	12
1.5.2	Significance To Stakeholders In The Malaysian Education Field	13
1.6	Scope and Limitations Of Research	14
1.7	Definitions And Key Words	15
1.8	Organization of Thesis	16
1.9	Chapter Summary	16
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	18
2.1	What is Work Innovation?	18
2.2	Innovation in Teaching And Learning	18
2.3	The School Based Assessment (SBA): Importance, Benefits And Challenges	19
2.3.1	Teachers' Perception Of SBA	27
2.3.2	Teacher Satisfaction From SBA	30
2.3.3	Teacher Dissatisfaction From SBA	31
2.3.4	Teacher Satisfaction And The School's Overall Performance	35
2.4	Employee Silence and Related Concepts	37

	2.4.1	Exit, Voice, Loyalty and Neglect	37
	2.4.2	Mum Effect	38
	2.4.3	Types of Silence Behavior	38
	2.4.4	Causes And Effects Of Voice And Silence On Employees	39
2.5		Related Theories	39
	2.5.1	The Social Exchange Theory	39
	2.5.2	Groupthink	40
	2.5.3	Application Of Social Exchange And Groupthink Theories In The Current Research	46
2.6		Development And Conceptualization Of Variables In The Current Study	52
	2.6.1	The Independent Variables	53
	2.6.2	The Dependent Variables	57
	2.6.3	The Moderating Variables	58
2.7		Research Framework	68
2.8		Discussion Of Research Objectives	69
2.9		Research Hypothesis	71
2.10		Chapter Summary	71
3		METHODOLOGY	73
	3.1	Introduction	73
	3.2	Research Design	73
	3.3	Population And Sampling Procedure	75
	3.4	Operationalization Of Variables And Measurements	76
	3.4.1	The Independent Variables	79
	3.4.2	The Moderating Variables (Intrinsic And Extrinsic Factors)	81
	3.4.3	The Dependent Variables	82
	3.5	Data Collection Method And Procedure	82
	3.6	Data Analysis	83
	3.6.1	The Demographic Section And Exploratory Data Analysis	84
	3.6.2	Research Objective 1	86
	3.6.3	Research Objective 2	86
	3.6.4	Research Objective 3	87
	3.6.5	Research Objective 4	87
	3.7	Ethics In Conducting And Reporting Research	87
	3.8	Chapter Summary	89
4		RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	90
	4.1	Introduction	90
	4.2	Demographic Characteristics	91
	4.3	Analysis Based On Research Objectives	93
	4.3.1	Research Objective 1	93
	4.3.2	Research Objective 2	116
	4.3.3	Research Objective 3	117

4.4	4.3.4 Research Objective 4	120
	Chapter Summary	122
5	SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	124
5.1	Summary	124
	5.1.1 Discussion Of Findings Based On Objectives	124
	5.1.2 Reflections Of Research Findings	132
	5.1.3 Shortcomings of Study	132
5.2	Conclusion	134
5.3	Recommendations For Future Research	135
	REFERENCES	137
	APPENDICES	162
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	171
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	172

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
3.1	Reliability of Questionnaire Items	79
4.1	Survey Response Rate	92
4.2	Demographic Information of Respondents	94
4.3	Descriptive Statistics of Variables	95
4.4	Regression Model of Predictors (LK & MV) of DV	96
4.5	Regression Model of Predictors (MW & MV) of DV	100
4.6	Regression Model of Predictors (IT & MV) of DV	106
4.7	Regression Model of Predictors (LM & MV) of DV	111
4.8	Reasons for Teachers to Remain Silent About SBA Issues	117
4.9	Teachers' Comfort When Voicing SBA Issues	119
4.10	Teachers Who Feel Comfortable Voicing SBA Issues	120
4.11	Guideline of Correlation Strength	121
4.12	Inter-Correlation Matrix Between Independent Variables and Dependent Variable	122

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	Research Framework	69
4.1	Effects of IV (LK) and MV on DV	100
4.2	Effects of IV (MW) and MV on DV	106
4.3	Effects of IV (IT) and MV on DV	111
4.4	Effects of IV (LM) and MV on DV	116



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SBA	School Based Assessment
LK	Lack of Knowledge
MW	Maximization of Workload
IT	Inability of Teachers
LM	Lack of Monitoring
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable
MV	Moderating/Influencing Variable
N	The Number of Objects or Individuals
Sig.	Significant Level
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

This research is about teacher-behavior in relation to their work at schools. The title suggests that a number of factors affect teacher-behavior when Work Innovation (School Based Assessment - SBA) is implemented in schools. The study on teacher-behavior focuses on teachers making a deliberate choice either to voice their concerns to the management when faced with issues in implementing the SBA in the form of upward feedback or to remain silent. Teachers in this study were selected from government aided secondary schools from a specific District in Selangor. The study examined the relationship between three main concepts: Issues faced in implementing the Work Innovation (SBA), The factors (intrinsic and extrinsic elements that motivate teachers to either voice concerns or to remain silent), and Teacher-Behavior (to voice or remain silent).

Communication at workplace between employer-employee is crucial for the success of the organization. School leadership requires effective top-down communication from the management in order for the school to achieve the desired objectives and targets. Student achievement depends heavily on teachers and as such school principals and the management frequently expect input from teachers in order to steer the organization towards the desired direction. Top-down as well as upward communication between management and teachers allows a healthy environment at schools for collaborative decision making between management and employees. However, there are situations whereby employees make a deliberate decision to withhold crucial information from the management (Milliken, Morrison, & Hewlin, 2003). It is important for school administrators to understand and monitor the behavior of teachers so that an open communication climate exists at the workplace.

Prior to the introduction of the SBA in Malaysian schools, public examinations have long been the only measurement of students' academic achievement. A transformation of the national education system, in line with globalization, was necessary. This idea was initially announced by the then Education Minister, YAB Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin on Teacher's Day 2009. A whole new system (SBA) will be used to evaluate students, in both academic and extra-curricular achievements (Retrieved from www.Teo-education.com). SBA was officially introduced into the Malaysian Education system in January 2014. This new concept is Work Innovation for the teaching profession in the country. School Based Assessment (SBA) is an assessment that encompasses the process of both learning and teaching. SBA has a number of important characteristics that differentiate it from other types of assessment, which are now considered

traditional. SBA is used in different types of activities and it provides instructions to students and their parents concerning the development in attaining skills, knowledge and attitudes, to provide guidance or help to teachers in order to change their teaching style and their students' learning activities and to provide instruction to other stakeholders to make decisions concerning the policy of education related to students, for instance, decisions about the students' promotion and the involvement of the students in education programs (Haertel, Moss, Pullin, & Gee, 2008).

The new method of assessment (SBA) for public schools in Malaysia was gradually introduced on a wider scale into the system since 2012, in-line with the second National Key Result Areas (NKRA). This was announced by the former Education Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin who stressed that SBA would allow students to enhance their potential and to become more creative as well as innovative (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). In the previous system of assessment, all public examinations in Malaysia were standardized by the Examination Syndicate of Malaysia which comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education Malaysia. This allows for the administration and preparation of major public exams such as Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia, Penilaian Menengah Rendah and Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia under close supervision of the syndicate of examination. This control includes the preparation of exam papers, administration of the exams, exam papers marking, as well as the announcement of the results.

Cheng (2009) mentioned that the new system of assessment is an integration of SBA and traditional types of centralized examinations, stipulated by The Ministry of Education Malaysia. The Teacher Education Division of Malaysia is to plan guidelines and policies to train educators for new enforcement of assessment. As mentioned in student assessment innovation, continuous SBA is ruled at entire levels and grades. In addition, students sit for common public exams at the end of every level and term. Ferguson (2009), expressed that the teacher's role in the new system of assessment is very important. Teachers will be given authority and freedom in assessing their students, and this responsibility comes with the needs of sufficient skills and knowledge in utilizing different informal testing methods and psychometric testing, namely, aptitude test and general capability.

Despite having mentioned all the strengths of the new system of assessment over the old method, the public's overall acceptance and satisfaction about the implementation of SBA was negatively portrayed in the local media during the initial stages. However, much of the grouses were voiced by groups and individuals outside the teaching profession and the voices of teachers were minimal (Sunday Star, 2014, March 23). Therefore, this study had examined the reasons for the Silence Behavior among secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat, Selangor Darul Ehsan with regards to the issues and problems faced when implementing the Work Innovation (SBA) in their respective schools. Pinder and Harlos (2001) has mentioned that the Employee Silence Concept is

referred to whenever individuals who scan the information from the environment decide whether their personal views and ideas on a particular problem is shared or not shared with others, especially superiors. The Employee Silence Concept states that if after scanning the information from within and surroundings one will decide to remain silent because of several motivating factors. The Silence Behavior exists when one purposefully withholds information about the situation in the organization/ workplace even when voicing the issues can make a change or difference to the situation. The whole concept of SBA is viewed as Work Innovation in the Malaysian Education scenario, even though it has long been practiced in other countries. Due to new methods in assessing the ability of students, this research was carried out to examine if these individuals too (as employees outside the Education Field) adopt the Silence Behavior because of the challenges faced in the implementation of SBA.

The second important focus of the study is the Silence Behavior concept. Although most of the research about this concept is outside the Education field, such a behavior does have a high possibility of occurring among teachers too. The danger of such an attitude is that it could possibly escalate into dissatisfaction among individuals and teachers, affecting the whole organization in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. This type of attitude and the outcome was reported by research conducted among employees in business organizations (Jerald & Jason, 2005).

The third element in the study is concerning factors that motivate teachers either to voice concerns to the management or to remain silent. These factors have been classified as intrinsic and extrinsic elements, based on prior research (Daniel, 2013). A detailed explanation of these factors are outlined later in this chapter.

Having identified the main areas in this study, the main goal of this research is to highlight the importance of implementing and encouraging an open communication system in schools in order for effective top down flow of instructions, and upward communication in the form of feedback. Feedback from teachers allow management to make goal directed decisions as well as understand the emotional experience of teachers (especially dissatisfaction towards work) regarding workplace issues and obstacles. By encouraging and motivating teacher-feedback, principals and school management can make effective policies and decisions that will bring positive progress and changes to the organization. Employees at all levels have the capacity to contribute usefully to the decision-making process.

Openness and trust are crucial but the truth is we seldom fully trust others and we are at the same time rarely totally open with them. All individuals have experiences, stories, issues, etc. that we choose to keep to ourselves and not share with others. The fear of vulnerability is a natural experience because of the fear of being hurt is in all of us. In most organizational situations, there is

interpersonal blockage which leads to communication breakdown and lack of progress. Furthermore, how an organizational member looks at both the communication climate and the organizational climate positively relates to that member's commitment level (Guzley,1992). These organizational situations are relevant to the school scenario.

1.2 Problem Statement

The factors that affect teacher's behavior in relation to the challenges in their Work Innovation (SBA) can motivate them to adopt the Silence Behavior, which can escalate to dissatisfaction at schools.

Employee Silence is a deliberate behavior which can escalate into a serious problem in the form of dissatisfaction among employees at the workplace environment (Milliken et al., 2003). Employee/Teacher Silence concept is the backbone in this study as it is investigated as being the probable cause in teacher-behavior in relation to their Work Innovation. The current study hinges on several theories on human interactional behavior that help clarify the "Factors that Motivate Individuals' Behavior" in various circumstances. As suggested by the title, three major concepts have been investigated, namely, the Work Innovation (School Based Assessment), Employee (Teacher) Silence, and Factors That Motivate Teacher-Behavior (to voice concerns or to remain silent).

The School Based Assessment

School Based Assessment (Work Innovation, in this study) has become a major and common feature in the Malaysian Education system. Primary school students spend most of their early years at education institutions with teachers and it is through the assessments of teachers that they can better perceive and work on their capabilities and talents (Ministry of Education Malaysia). To depend entirely on one-time investigations is a common practice in several countries to obscure teacher's vision and deny them a creativity and strong voice. The SBA's role in students final grading at senior secondary schools needs attention as well as recognition. In senior secondary schools, teachers continue to assess the students daily. However, the final outcome of their struggling efforts is overshadowed by national exams which are prepared, administered and analyzed by an external central body, such as the Examination Syndicate in Malaysia.

Brookhart (2002) explained that what teachers are or must be taught and what they know have usually inferred that large-scale testing of teacher's knowledge is restricted, especially in the essential area of interaction results of assessment to parents, administrators, students as well as other stakeholders. The observations noted that teachers have limited skills at collecting and utilizing data from classroom assessment for developing the learning process of students. The

observations also indicated that the measurement and testing courses for teachers must develop emphasis on assessment of classroom and reduce emphasis on testing of large scale. These are several issues and problems that are linked to classroom assessments.

Work Innovation (SBA) and its implementation in Malaysian schools officially began in 2014 and is based on the National Education Blueprint. This policy was not well received by the general public, and there were dissatisfaction and grouses voiced by parents, The National Union of Teaching Profession and other stakeholders. Though teachers did voice their unhappiness, their grouses were minimal and controlled. Hence, this research seeks to discover answers as to why teachers had chosen to be on the passive side, which provides an indication that they prefer to follow the Silence Behavior. Such a behavior is detrimental to the organization because the 'communication element' is very important in organizations as it constitutes one of the chief means through which organizational members work together, and also helps to hold the organization together by making it possible for members to influence one another and to react to one another (St. John, 1994). Also, being silent when faced with problems and issues at the workplace is dangerous to the organization as it can escalate into negative reactions towards the implementation of policies introduced by the management (Ashford & Northcraft, 1992).

The new assessment requires teachers to gauge students on a continuous basis. After the teaching-learning session process, students are given exercises/tests to gauge their understanding level before they are permitted to initiate to the following skill or stage. This is a lifelong practice and students are set in groups ranging from one to six based on their mastery levels of the skills taught. Besides, teachers are required to key in raw data into a computer programme made to interpret the student's performance. This has also been among the issues faced by teachers since the introduction of SBA in Malaysian schools. In the system, frequent breakdowns due to limited number of servers had reduced the pace in which the teachers can key in the students' information (The Star, 2014, February 21). Work could not progress since bottle necks were frequent. This has caused emotional stress among the teachers, who had to finish the syllabi within the time duration allocated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia. Besides, Chan, Sidhu and Md. Rizal (2009) mentioned time limitation developing workload of teacher, lack of knowledge, supervision as well as monitoring since the challenges are to be much efficient in the implementation of School Based Assessment. Rohizani, Yaakub and Norlida (2003) mentioned that developing teacher's best practices in assessment and testing must be an essential objective to develop their teacher's knowledge levels in implementing the SBA. Another research indicated that teachers also faced constraints of time, inability due to lack of efficient methodologies and materials and bad facilities of information communication and technology in schools (Norzila, 2013).

Employee Silence Concept

The second area of study, the Employee Silent is based on the research work of Hirshman in 1970. This is a concept which explains that employees facing difficulties at the workplace may make a deliberate choice not to communicate the problem/s faced to the management in the form of upward feedback whether intentionally or unintentionally. Such behavior of not communicating upward keeps managers from receiving important feedback that may bring progress to the organization. Van, Ang and Botero (2003) explained this type of silence as employees' motivation to withhold crucial information work-related improvements as intentional. On the other hand, unintentional silence is a situation where the employee/s has really nothing to say (Thangiraira & Ramanujam, 2008). This action of communicating or remaining silent at workplace environments are interesting patterns of behavior because they indicate that silence is a communicative choice that employees choose to adopt. Employee-Silence hinders improvements to processes, projects and goals being made. The effects of the silence behavior are quite damaging as prolonged silence can cause an "escalating level of dissatisfaction" among employees which can cause adverse effects on productivity (Jerald & Jason, 2005). Besides, employee silence can give rise to indifferent and unengaged employees who, over time may choose to neglect their work (Hirshman, 1970). Research has proposed the practice of workplace justice as a potent way to protect against employee silence. A strong reason for this is because encouraging workplace justice balances perceptions of fairness among employees (Rusbult, Zembrodt, & Gunn, 1982).

Factors that Motivate Employee Behavior (to voice issues or to remain silent)

The third area of focus in the current study is the factors that motivate employees either to voice (when they are comfortable) or to remain silent (when they are uncomfortable) about issues faced, which has been broadly categorized as intrinsic and extrinsic elements. These were identified and tested in prior research to study Employee Silence. Intrinsic elements include: avoiding confrontation, promotional desires, work experience, lack of organizational trust, believe that voicing will not make any difference, employee-management relationship, and fear that voicing will impact others negatively. Extrinsic factors on other hand, includes, fear of retaliation by the management, and fear of negative peer reaction [Pinder & Harlos (2001); Van (2003); Greenberg (2009); and Richard (2003)].

The current study is an investigation based on a quantitative approach conducted to observe the relationship between the issues and problems related to the SBA as being the probable cause for the Employee Silence (Teacher Silence) operating among the secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat district. The issues identified in the SBA are Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of

Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring (Chan, Gurnam, & Rizal, 2006) and (Norzila, 2013). Research on Employee Silence outside the education field had also identified similar problems faced by employees at the work environment namely, Lack of Knowledge/Skills, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Employees, and Lack of Monitoring (Ali & Ramazan, 2015; Francesca & Alberta, 2010; Leila & Reza, 2017). These investigations used moderators which influenced employee behavior in the situations. The current study is modeled after the various studies that has been done outside the education field to observe teacher-behavior (by utilizing and examining the relationship between similar issues with similar moderators), so as to make relevant comparisons and conclusions regarding similarities and differences in the behavioral patterns at workplace environments. These factors were utilized in this research to observe how the elements motivate teachers to decide weather to voice to the management or to remain silent about the issues faced when implementing the SBA. The selection and the reasons for the use of moderators in this study are based on prior research. Besides, theoretical justification is provided to support and further strengthen the reasons for selecting the moderators and using them as intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence teacher-behavior in the current investigation.

1.2.1 Theoretical Justification For Utilizing Intrinsic And Extrinsic Factors (Moderators)

The theories discussed below are related to human behavior in a number of circumstances. These behaviors are influenced by various factors which are from the characters of the individuals or from the surroundings. For the purpose of this study, the factors are classified as intrinsic and extrinsic elements, termed as moderators. The moderators are explained in detail in Chapter 2.

Theories on Motivation

Research show that concentrating on social skills and their development in favour of technological advancement in an organizational setting is crucial because a change in the attitude of workers through motivation from the management would bring in much more benefits to the work culture than any other means. This concept explains that communication is key to making decisions on a daily basis. Information transmitted within the system encompasses a wide spectrum of different activities. The practice of participative management explains that employees at all levels have the capacity to contribute usefully to the decision-making process. Real participation is dependent on feelings and attitudes of the employees and they must have the desire to participate in the form of ideas, opinions, etc. (Carl, 1976).

Openness and trust are crucial but the truth is we seldom fully trust others and we are at the same time rarely totally open with them. All of us have experiences,

stories, issues, etc. that we choose to keep to ourselves and not share with others. The fear of vulnerability is a natural experience because of the fear of being hurt is in all of us. In most organizational situations, there is interpersonal blockage which leads to communication breakdown and lack of progress. When individuals/employees derive benefits and avoid penalties through being encouraged to be tactically open about mutual problems and issues, they will be prepared to be more readily open in future. However, communication inevitably demands for open discussion. Discussion of such an important initiative as changes in working environments will always happen. The management cannot stop or suppress employees thinking or talking about workplace situations, issues and problems. By providing employees adequate opportunity for open discussion in structured sessions, many of the negative effects of the grapevine can be suppressed. As such, mutually productive discussion of important issue as changes in working practices requires established and structured channels of communication. This is more so as we live in an era of ever more open communication due to globalization (Huang, 2003).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs explains that unsatisfied needs are motivators. He explains that those who have been unemployed for a time period who, once employed, would willingly accept a change for fear of losing the little that they have achieved. Being aware of the needs of people means being able to motivate them to work (Maslow, 1970). The management needs to be creative in motivating employees on a daily basis (Herzberg, 1968).

Rensis Likert, focused on the workers- their feelings and needs. Human relations are linked to both the positional and relational traditions, but most of these theories, according to Likert, look at human relations from a production, management-oriented perspective. For Likert, system iv is the best because it leads to high performance and an increased sense of responsibility and motivation among the individuals in the system. If management is authoritative, there is less group loyalty, more conflict, and consequently less mutual support. Workers have a lower attitude and commitment toward the organization and management with not much motivation to produce. Consultative and participative management, on the other hand, leads to greater loyalty, higher performance goals, more mutual support, and more positive attitudes. The motivation to produce is higher, so that sales are greater, costs are less, and earnings are increased. The overall growth of the organization will be healthy. Likert further explained that the human asset is the most important to an organization. He recognized that co-operation, loyalty and positive attitudes among employees must be the main objective that management needs to strive for and achieve. Pushing employees in order to improve the overall financial status of the organization could be damaging because the final result could be a loss of the best employees and individuals to competitors, leaving the grudging, discontented and demotivated ones behind (Likert, 1961).

The Spiral of Silence

Neumann's Spiral of Silence is a mass communication theory and it illustrates about the task of public opinion. Neumann describes the "Spiral of Silence" as the process of isolated experiences. Individuals feel isolated when they have difference of opinion from the majority and The Spiral of Silence plays an important role to individuals who remain silent. The Spiral of Silence supports mass media; it would be useful to silent persons in public.

The Spiral of Silence is a theory, which emphasizes that individuals hide their own thoughts because of increasing enforcement from society or humanity. But the Spiral of Silence was created with a motive of mass mediated environment, but it was felicitated and sometimes criticized by many of the political scholars. The author related the spiral theory to social media, which analyses political sciences, public suggestions, political posts in online etc. And some individuals started to decrease their fear and started to utter words in public. Few groups support their opinion and some others may not support their views or opinions. The choice between voice and silence is determined mainly by the climate of opinion in an individual's work environment. Individuals are more encouraged to voice opinions when they believe that their position in the situation is the same as that of the majority and remain silent when they perceive it is not. Generally, The Spiral of Silence has been applied in various contexts to examine how fear of isolation affects individual's desire to communicate (Bowen & Blackmon, 2003).

Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory

Gudykunst developed this theory in an effort to define what defines effective communication. Griffin (2006) describes the theory as an intercultural research that claims high levels of uncertainty and anxiety which could ultimately lead to greater misunderstanding when individuals fail to communicate mindfully and effectively. Individuals tend to experience anxiety when feelings of being uneasy, tense, worries, and apprehensive about what might happen when communicating and interacting with others. Uncertainty refers to the confidence a person has in his or her own ability to predict the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors of others in his/her presence or situation.

Mindful communication explains a scenario where a person is open to new information and acknowledges that the other individual may have a different perspective than him/her. Individuals in an organization need to communicate effectively and this is achieved when the person interpreting the message attaches a meaning to the message that is relatively similar to what was intended by the person transmitting it (Gudykunst, 1991). Therefore, the management must strive to minimize the anxiety and uncertainty levels amongst employees when communicating upward and as well as among colleagues in order to avert

them from choosing to remain silent regarding workplace situations and issues, and to motivate them to be more proactive.

1.2.2 The Research Gap

As there are limited research work on Employee (Teacher) Silence at schools, this study had relied on and is an extension of the studies done by Daniel (2013), which observed Teacher Silence towards their general work at schools (without any specific area of focus), and Nair et al., (2014), which utilized the Spiral of Silence as the basis to examine teacher-behavior towards the implementation of the SBA in a selected number of schools. This research had examined the issues faced by teachers when implementing the SBA in their respective schools as being the probable cause for teacher silence in their respective schools. Literature review identifies Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring as the main problems faced by teachers with reference to the SBA (Yip & Cheung, 2005; Chan et al., 2006; Tuah, 2006). The moderating factors identified above function as motivating elements that help teachers to make a final decision whether to communicate the problems to their superiors or to remain silent.

Due to limited research on Teacher Silence at schools, the obvious gap in knowledge is the link between the two main concepts in this research, SBA and Employee (Teacher) Silence. SBA was examined as the probable cause for Teacher Silence among secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat District. Teachers adopt the Silence approach when they are motivated by several factors, as mentioned earlier, either to voice their concerns or to remain silent about the issues faced.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to gather information about the Silence Behavior among teachers when faced with problems implementing the SBA in their respective schools. Van et al., (2003) and other researchers suggested that employees often feel uncomfortable communicating problems at workplace to the management. As such, this research was mainly to uncover if similar patterns of communication and employee behavior are prevalent among teachers.

The research questions were framed to investigate the relationship between the Independent Variables (Work Innovation (SBA) issues: Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring) and the Dependent Variable (Teacher-Behavior, comfort levels that leads them to voice or remain silent about SBA issues), through the influence of Moderators (Intrinsic and Extrinsic Factors).

The research questions are:

1. What are the influences of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors on the relationship between teacher-behavior and the challenges in their work innovation (SBA)?
2. What reasons do teachers give for not voicing the challenges faced in implementing the work innovation (SBA) to the management?
3. What is the comfort levels of teachers when deciding to voice the work innovation (SBA) challenges to the management?
4. Are there statistically significant relationships between each of the work innovation (SBA) challenges (Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring) and teacher-behavior (to voice or to remain silent about the challenges)?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

To examine the moderating effects of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors on the relationship between teacher-behavior and the challenges in their work innovation (SBA).

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the influences of intrinsic and extrinsic factors (moderators) on the relationship between teacher-behavior and the challenges in their work innovation (SBA).
2. To identify the reasons that teachers give for not voicing the challenges faced in implementing the work innovation (SBA) to the management.
3. To examine the comfort levels of teachers when deciding to voice the challenges faced in implementing the work innovation (SBA) to the management.

4. To examine if there are statistically significant relationships between each of the work innovation (SBA) challenges (Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring) and teacher-behavior (to voice or to remain silent about the challenges).

1.5 Significance

1.5.1 Significance To The Ministry of Education Malaysia

Policy:

It is hoped that policy makers (MOE) would consider the outcome of this research as part of the mechanism to further improve and develop more comprehensive strategies/policies to refine the education. This is relevant and is based on ongoing global changes in the education field. Changes are necessary to be competitive at the global level due to the fact that the Education Blueprint timeline stretches to 2025 (Ministry of Education Malaysia). Effective communication patterns that contribute to the overall well-being and growth of schools must be a feature that is given due attention from the Ministry level right down to every individual that belong to educational institutions. Communication patterns that create comfortable work environments are known to produce performing institutions (Norton, 1983).

Theory:

This study seeks to contribute in the theoretical aspects to the existing knowledge, methodology, and related aspects to the education field about the relationship between Work Innovation (SBA) and Employee/Teacher Silence in the education scenario in Malaysia. Literature review on both the SBA and The Silence Behavior (as well as the factors that motivate such behavior) are researched in this study in order to link all the concepts to the local education scenario. As such, it is hoped that the outcome of this study is capable of contributing valuable insights to existing knowledge about teacher-behavior, especially towards implementing new education policies such as the SBA. The reasons for the Silence Behavior among teachers due to difficulties at workplace should be given attention because of the consequence of such behaviors upon the organizations in the long run. As indicated earlier, research show that prolonged silence can lead to dissatisfaction at the workplace bringing along devastating overall effects on the performance of the organization. Also, trust is easily established when there is free flow of communication in all directions in the organization.

Method:

This research had adopted a quantitative investigation with the desire that the result may contribute exactly to what the researcher had intended to observe. A quantitative methodology was selected to investigate Teacher Silence among a larger number of respondents (320) as compared to a prior investigation on SBA and teacher-behavior which was limited to 60 respondents only (Nair et al., 2014). The findings here reveal that teachers too have a tendency to remain silent when faced with workplace issues (SBA). Further research in similar area of study may be conducted as it may yield deeper revelations about human (teacher) behavior at workplace environments. These investigations may benefit students too because teachers are the individuals who have direct contact with them at schools. As such, studies on teacher behavior from other angles and aspects such as emotional conditions, family, threats, etc. should be encouraged.

Practicality:

The rapid societal, innovative, educational, as well as various other changes that takes place on a daily basis, both locally and at the global stage affects us either directly or otherwise. As such, research done on Work Innovation, and Human Behavior at workplace situations can contribute immensely to human progress. It is the humble desire of the researcher that this work and effort too is able to add to the existing knowledge on Work Culture, Human Behavior, and Education practices, focusing mainly within the Malaysian context.

1.5.2 Significance To Stakeholders In The Malaysian Education Field

The main purpose of this research was to observe if teachers too react in a similar fashion (as employees outside the Education Field) towards problems and issues implementing the SBA by adopting the Silence approach and not communicating the experiences encountered to the management in the form of feedback. This research had focused specifically on the effects of SBA together with several influencing factors on teacher behavior based on the numerous grouses voiced by individuals and organizations in the local medias towards the introduction of the SBA into the Malaysian education system. Teachers too had initially reacted negatively towards the policy but their voices diminished over time. This has become a curiosity to the researcher, which has led to the justification for this study.

Studies on Employee Silence are mostly outside Educational Research. However, a thorough understanding of the concept of Employee Silence and its existence among teachers is important for school administrators and policy makers at the Ministry of Education level. School authorities must motivate,

encourage and create conducive working environments for teachers to feel comfortable and happy. Teacher satisfaction at workplace indicate that teachers obtain satisfaction through their roles as educators like student successes, personal growth, and healthy and positive relationships with all stake-holders (Scott & Dinham, 2003).

According to Norton (1984), a school's climate determines the type of communication patterns that are practised. Of these, top-down and upward communication are crucial. Bandura (1991) explained that feedback is very important for goal pursuit and that information on successful and failed actions allows employees and individuals to restructure, realign, adjust and direct their energy and efforts to overcome the challenges that comes along their path. Feedback in the form of positive communication among school members influence the overall well being of the school community, school quality, and satisfaction among teachers and staff (De Nobile & McCormick, 2007). Communication that is comfortable to all impact interpersonal relationship among members of the school, which in turn affects the school climate towards the desired direction (Palestini, 2011; Price, 2011).

On the other hand, silence over issues at workplace could affect the performance and morale of employees and the effect could lead to negative consequences (Milliken et al., 2003). As for the school environment, principals and administrators must create a conducive environment for teachers to communicate freely at the workplace, of which, upward communication is much needed. Akpakwu (2012) described that upward communication provides a "feedback" of the effectiveness of downward communication. Through it, management are able to assess how well, its plans, policies and objectives are understood by lower levels employees. Akpakwu (2012) pictures communication as "a dynamic process by which someone, who has a purpose to accomplish, tries to get someone else to do something for accomplishment of that purpose". To sum up, internal communication is a powerful and effective way to create a strong spirit among the individuals and employees (Hopkins, 1996).

1.6 Scope and Limitations of Research

This study has several limitations. Firstly, it investigated Teacher Silence related to the implementation of SBA among the secondary schools in Kuala Langat, Selangor only. As such, any comparisons of several similar investigations are not possible. A nation-wide investigation comprising schools from urban, suburb and rural schools may produce interesting findings. These schools comprise of different students, teachers, facilities, and environments. All of these may provide various types of information that may contribute different levels of understanding of the concept that had been investigated here.

Secondly, the research focused on teachers in government aided schools and did not include teachers in private schools which may have utilized the SBA also as their standard curriculum. It may be possible that these teachers too face similar type of difficulties when implementing the SBA. Investigation on teacher behavior at private schools could possibly yield different findings due to difference in facilities, classroom sizes, quality of teachers, and other factors. Teachers here could also be working in conditions that differ from their counterparts at government aided schools. The likely differences could be in terms of salary, smaller manageable classes, self-esteem, as well as the overall work culture. All of these could have produced different findings if teacher-behavior in private schools had been included in this study.

Besides, the variables selected in this research were only based on a handful, identified in previous educational research. For the purpose of this study, only Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring have been selected. As such, the investigation about the link between issues in SBA leading to the Silence Behavior does not include a wider range of variables that can affect individuals at schools. Business research has revealed that employees choose not to communicate to the management due to many factors such as the introduction of technology, work relocation, replacing humans with automated systems, and others (Tangiaraja & Ramanujam, 2008). Hence, the current research has its limitations in the type of variables tested on teacher behavior.

Next, this study examined teacher behavior among secondary school teachers only, whereas, all primary schools in the country follow a standardized curriculum that employs the SBA also. Therefore, the limitations here is that it does not include teacher the Silence Behavior among primary school educators in the country. The consequence of this limitation does not allow an overall picture of the implementation of SBA in the country.

Finally, the sample is limited to 300-400 teachers in the district, and as such, it is a cross-sectional study. A research on a larger scale and number of respondents may produce different findings that can create new knowledge which may not emerge from a limited number of respondents, as in this study. New knowledge may include aspects related to culture, work location, language obstacles, etc.

1.7 Definitions and Key Words

- i. School Based Assessment (SBA): Classroom assessment conducted by respective subject teachers whereby students' progress as they complete each level of skill/topic.

- ii. The Silence Behavior: Deliberate action of with-holding crucial information from superiors in workplace situations.
- iii. Innovation: A new method or changes in doing work.

1.8 Organization of Thesis

This thesis is written under following five chapters:

- i. Chapter 1:** The introduction chapter focused on the research background providing a general outline of the study which consists of the problem statement, purpose, justification of research and other relevant information. These information help provide the link between the two main areas of the research which are, Work Innovation (School Based Assessment) and the Employee Silence (Teacher Silence) concept.
- ii. Chapter 2:** This chapter is the literature review that summarizes several relevant work-related elements to School Based Assessment (SBA) and the general attitudes of academic teachers towards the new policy. The chapter also discussed the Employee Silence concept in detail based on research done outside the Education field. Besides, the research framework and hypothesis have also been planned in this study.
- iii. Chapter 3:** This chapter described the research methodology that provided a thorough explanation about the research strategy, design, sampling plan, data collection and analysis and interpretation techniques used in this research.
- iv. Chapter 4:** This chapter discussed the data analysis and interpretation part that analyses the accumulated data utilizing several statistical tools in order to test the proposed research objectives and hypothesis.
- v. Chapter 5:** This is the conclusion chapter that has provided the summary of findings of data analysis followed by the conclusion of the research and recommendations for further research.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter began by stressing on the importance of communication among individuals at the workplace. It further gave an overview of the focus in this research by highlighting the key areas of study. The two-main focus of the discussion are about the Work Innovation (SBA) and The Employee Silence

concept. With regards to SBA, the focus is mainly about issues and problems faced by teachers when implementing the teaching methodology. The study had also observed if there is a link between The Employee Silent concept and teachers being passive when faced with problems related to SBA, this being the research gap. The Problem Statement is closely related to teachers' attitude of being silent and not communicating issues about SBA to the management, and the consequences.

Further, the chapter highlighted that concentrating on social skills and their development in favour of technological advancement in an organizational setting is crucial because a change in the attitude of workers through motivation from the management would bring in much more benefits to the work culture than any other means. This concept explains that communication is key to making decisions on a daily basis. Information transmitted within the system encompasses a wide spectrum of different activities. Besides the above, the Research Questions and Objectives have been given due attention and explained. The Significance of this research seeks to draw the attention of the Ministry of Education Malaysia, as well as all stakeholders in the education scenario in the country.

Finally, the Scope and Limitation, and Organization of Thesis are provided for the benefit of readers.

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BIODATA OF STUDENT

I, Abel Raj Sethupathy am an academician who started my career as a teacher in Kapit, Sarawak in 1988. Since then, I have overcome many challenges in the Education field. Armed with the determination to be a successful academician, I pursued my studies at University Malaya in 1997, graduating with a degree in Education, majoring in TESL.

Even after graduating with a degree, I have constantly committed myself to self-improvement through academic and intellectual pursuits in a variety of fields such as law, communication and business studies. Besides teaching at schools, I have also taught a number of professional programs at privately owned higher institutions. My personal philosophy is, "Learning Never Stops". Apart from being an academician, I am a registered member of The Institute of Public Relations Malaysia (Selangor Chapter). I am currently a Communication Studies lecturer at a private university and am pursuing a PhD degree to further equip myself academically.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Abel, R., Abdul M, Akmar, H., & Hani, S. (2018). School Based Assessment and The Silence Behaviour among secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat, Selangor Darul Ehsan. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research [AJHSSR]*, e-ISSN: 2378-703X, Volume-02, Issue-03, pp-01-13.

Abel, R., Abdul M, Akmar, H., & Hani, S. (2018). School Based Assessment and The Comfort Levels of secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat District when reporting issues and problems to the management. *American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research [AJHSSR]*, e-ISSN: 2378-703X, Volume-02, Issue-05, pp-61-69.



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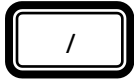
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