The Effect of School Bureaucracy on the Relationship between Principals' Leadership Practices and Teacher Commitment in Malaysia Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research paper was to ascertain the relationship between principal leadership practices and teacher commitment. The study was conducted using quantitative survey questionnaire to 384 secondary school teachers, ranging from band 1 to band 6 in Malaysia using multi stage stratified cluster random sampling. This study was using SPSS nonparametric analysis and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the data. The study found that teacher commitment was high, especially in commitment in teaching work. The study also identified three significant predictors of principal leadership practices that could enhanced teacher commitment. Findings from this study can be used to tailor for the pre-service and in-service professional leadership programs for school principals. Principal leadership practices such as continuous improvement of instruction, cooperation and collaboration and school climate that impacting teacher commitment should be given more emphases in those programs. School bureaucracy, though it is highly centralized, was another matter of important with regard to teacher commitment.

Keywords: *Malaysia, teacher commitment, principal leadership practices, secondary school teachers, school bureaucracy*

INTRODUCTION

In recent time, Malaysian education has been embroiled in various transformation programs to raise student achievement. Malaysia has committed in serious improvement initiatives spelled out in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MEB). In order to raise the standards, it has narrowed in by providing better and more competent school leaders and teacher.

It goes beyond doubt that student achievement is heavily influenced by teacher quality other than the student natural ability or attitude and home environment. Teachers are closer to the students and they play the role of craftsman constructing the masterpiece of each individual student in their learning. Henceforth, teachers are instrumental in student learning.

As teachers put in more effort into teaching and commit to professionalization, ultimately, they will have better teaching performance and will lead to improvement in student learning (Huang & Shen, 2012). Bearing this view in mind, as effort is an expression of commitment, it should be cultivated and nurtured.

However, Khasawneh et al. (2014) and Yukl (2013) have pointed out that leadership practices have significant influence on their followers.

DuFour & Marzano (2011) and Hallinger & Heck (1998) claimed that school principal actions had an indirect effect on student achievement through teacher actions in the classroom. Hence, the school principals need to be instructional leaders and the expert in schools with regard to teaching and learning. They are hands-on, engage in instruction issues, work with teachers and lead the school to high levels of student achievement ultimately (Huff et al., 2011; Horng & Loeb, 2010).

Bureaucracy as pointed out by Weber (1954), devoted to the principle of efficiency: maximizing output whilst minimizing inputs. The key features are clear hierarchical of authority, division of labour, rules and regulations and systematic work procedures (standard operating procedure, SOP). In other words, bureaucratization is imperative as a mean to attain the goals by inhibiting the emotion effect systematically in achieving the objectives, to attain the highest level of efficiency (Weber, 1978).

Armed with schools' vision, bureaucracy acts as a mean to organize and standardize the missions done by the teachers and staff. Thus, school bureaucracy is an effective control mechanism to shape teachers' activities. As school bureaucracy ensures orderly, rationality, accountability and stability, it has made the school administration system completely impersonalized. Muringani (2011) supported the above idea that bureaucracy as the tool of power, an effective device to control and direct human effort and behavior.

In the era of twenty first century, as bureaucracy is synonym to red tapes, highly rigid and impersonal structure, it should have phased out long ago. However, in the school setting, the explicit definition of a hierarchical system aids in the foundation of an orderly method of managing staff. They are very clear whom the proper authority is to take orders from and they know their functions in the school is to obey the instructions of their superiors. The teachers and staff are prepared and willing to be bound to the decisions of their superiors in all aspects of school tasks (Hanson, 2001).

Literature Review

Commitment has been recognized as a significant factor that decides the work behavior of an employee in an organization (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Mowday Steers & Porter, 1979).

In school context, teachers who have spent enough time in the same school often identifies with the school, adopts school goals as their own, and are willing to put forth extra effort (Hoy, Tarter & Bliss, 1990) in realizing its goals. When Hattie (2009) reported that teachers account for about 30% of the variance and thus make significant difference in student achievement, correspondingly, it is not a surprise to regard committed teachers as the asset to schools. On top of that, Sammons & Bakkum (2011) has confirmed that organizational commitment is positively related to teaching efficacy. Hence, teacher commitment is vital because teachers have the motivation to professionalism and pursue changes in their daily teaching practices.

Recently in 2012, Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin have estimated that high quality school leadership is having a significant impact on student outcomes, whose effectiveness is one standard deviation above the mean will have student learning gains at 0.05–0.10 standard deviations greater than average. Hence, school leadership is increasingly a priority for many countries concerned about improving student achievement results (Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008; Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009) cited in Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), 2013 by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Hence, the principals who were instructional leaders became the expert and point of reference in schools with regard to teaching and learning. The principals need to lead schools to high levels of academic achievement for students (Huff, Brockmeier, Leech, Martin, Pate & Siegrist, 2011). In other words, strong

instructional principals are hands-on, engage in instruction issues, work with teachers directly and often present in classrooms (Horng & Loeb, 2010). Thus, it is very clear that the nature of instructional leadership is typically top-down model while transformational is bottom-up. The instructional principals were the front-runners and responsible for managing the school and improving the teaching and learning in schools. This role is in line with TALIS 2013 report that claimed a strong school leader must establish a climate conducive to teaching and learning and fosters community support for the efforts of the teaching staff.

However, as compare to teachers, school principals on average devote 41% of their time to administrative and leadership tasks and meetings; 21% of their time to curriculum and teaching-related tasks and meetings; 15% to interactions with students; 11% to interactions with parents or guardians; and 7% to interactions with local and regional community, businesses and industries.

Having that in mind to improving student achievement, while always an important goal of schooling, has become the main agenda in this study.

On the other hand, Malaysia principals are reported to spend two-third of their time on administrative and leadership and curriculum and teaching. While these administrative activities can be seen as main business of the school and main responsibilities, principals by and large argued that if not performed, could impede the effective operation of the school (TALIS, 2013 in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD 2014).

Correspondingly, bureaucracy come into picture as it is a model of organisation design based on legitimate and formal system of hierarchical of authority. Bureaucracy, in the eyes of many, is often viewed as red tape, highly rigid and impersonal. In the literature the most common type of bureaucracy is called Weberian type, developed by German economist and sociologist Max Weber (1946). Weberian bureaucracy requires a formal organization where work is conducted according to formal rules under a hierarchy of rational-legal authority, and individuals are recruited to fill roles in the organization based on their formal competence and educational qualifications.

The initial step in founding a successful bureaucracy is the establishment of a clear hierarchical order. It is vital that bureaucratic system is encompassed a well-defined system of stratification. The explicit definition of a hierarchy aids in the foundation of an orderly method of managing the organization. This definition clearly designates each position's worth, relative to others in the establishment. They are very clear the proper authority whom to take orders from. They know that their function in the bureaucratic system is to obey the instructions of their masters.

The characterization and relevance of a centralized system of organization are essential to the development of a bureaucracy. A bureaucratic system of organization is clearly focused when fully implemented. The system has a purpose. This concept of clarity of function is viewed as centralized methodology. The large enterprise has a center of focus. Individuals have responsibilities and the organization has a focal point. Last but not least, in the educational aspects of centralization lead to defining the purpose of education in the late nineteenth century: the purpose of education was social conformity (Spring, 2008).

Statement of Problem

How to make quality education for the students? The most important persons are the teachers as they have the most contact hours with the students. In Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MEB), it clearly spells out that teacher quality is the most significant school-based factor in determining student achievement. Looking at teacher commitment in the light of teacher effectiveness is a newer trend in educational reform as it is closely connected to teachers' work performance and as one of the most critical factors for the future success of education and schools (Huberman, 1995).

In recent decades, the literature on educational administration have indicated that leadership is a pivotal force behind organizational effectiveness (Rodrigues & Madgaonkar, 2014). Consequently, efforts in improving school leadership are called to ascertain the accountability in schools and good leadership for the overall guidance and direction of the school and ultimately for its better performance. On top of that, Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom (2004) concluded that leadership was second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.

Similarly, there has been limited research on school bureaucracy in Malaysia. Though education in Malaysia is highly centralized, the implication on prominent aspects of bureaucracy in improving teacher commitment and thus lifting the student achievement should be clearly understood.

Then, Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is used for statistic analysis. PLS-SEM is the preferred choice as it is the newer trend and most importantly, the data is nonparametric (ordinal scaled). Moreover, the research model is multi items, complex with many structural relations, many indicators in order to reduce PLS-SEM bias (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2014).

The findings of the study may prove useful to teachers and school principals as they need to acknowledge and act on increased importance of collective interest of teacher commitment. Next, it is to provide significant additional support for secondary school leaders to establish the kind of instructional leadership practices that are workable in promoting and enhancing teacher commitment. As school settings are becoming larger and more complex, the principals and teachers' abilities to refocus energies in change are limited. These workable practices must be make priority in school reform efforts.

Besides, formal administrative responsibilities as stated in school bureaucracy are another key feature in schools. School teachers and principals should have a balance and fair share of conformity and professional discretion.

In short, this article outlines findings from a study of Malaysian principals' leadership practices. The study analysed different domains of principals' leadership practices and explored which domains influenced teacher commitment. At the same time, this study gives an informed knowledge about the hierarchical system of school bureaucracy in enhancing teacher commitment. Findings and data may also prove useful to school leaders who are interested in promoting better teacher commitment through school bureaucracy.

Research Objectives
There are four major research objectives as follows:
1. analyze the perception of teachers regarding their commitment in Malaysian secondary schools.
2. analyze the perception of teachers regarding their principal leadership practices in Malaysian secondary schools.
3. analyze the perception of teachers regarding school bureaucracy in Malaysian secondary schools.
4. identify the dominant domains of principal leadership practices in fostering teacher commitment in Malaysian secondary schools.

Significance of the Study
The study findings will add to the information already established by other researchers with regards to teacher commitment, principal leadership practices and school bureaucracy especially in of Malaysian schools. Findings and data may be useful to school leaders who are interested in promoting better teacher commitment through their instructional practices. School principals may use the information to understand the commitment of teachers towards school and the teaching profession. The findings may provide a better understanding which leadership practices can further enhance teacher commitment. By considering the

significant relationship, they need to recognize those practices and act on them in order to increase their teachers' commitment and ultimately lead to student achievement. Moreover, it is to provide additional evidence for secondary school principals to determine those instructional leadership practices that are relevant and practical in promoting and enhancing teacher commitment. As school settings are becoming larger and more complex, the principals and teachers' abilities to refocus energies in change are limited. These workable practices must be made a priority in school reform efforts. On top of that, as school bureaucracy provides the structural form of a school, the perception of teachers is important to determine if the bureaucratic hierarchical order is functioning well.

Educational System in Malaysia

Malaysia, as a developing nation, has made education a tool to churn out global players with the necessary skills to allow them to succeed in the 21st century. In order to sustain and continue to progress in tandem to meet the highly competitive global environment, Malaysia has invested a lot of money for mapping out various transformation programs to raise the student achievement and literacy level. In so doing undoubtedly, the student enrolment rate for primary (age 7 – 12) was at 94% in 2011. The enrolment rate for the lower secondary (age 13 -15) was at 87% while for the upper secondary (age 16 – 17) was at 78%. At the same note, the literacy rate for youth was at 99% and adult at 92%. In lieu of that, the number has increased tremendously and continued the upward trend since then.

The Malaysian education system consists of 6-year compulsory primary education, 3-year lower secondary and 2-year upper secondary. It is free for all, both in the primary and secondary through the age of 17. At the end of primary and upper secondary, students sit for public examination while at the end of lower secondary, there is a common assessment.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

This study reported the findings of a proportional stratified random sample of 384 Malaysian public secondary school teachers (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) as there were 181747 teachers from 2404 secondary school across Malaysia. This effort was to ensure that all subgroups were selected (Fraenkel et al., 2012; McMillan, 2012) and were able to give a comprehensive picture and made statistically sound generalization about the field of study (Meyerhoff & Schleef, 2010).

It was interesting to note that the majority of the teachers in the sample were female (76.04%), had more than 5-year of teaching experience (70.83%), more than 5-year of teaching experience in that particular school (65.89%) and almost all having a bachelor degree (87.76%). See Table 1.

Table1. Sample personal characteristics

Demographic	Variables	Number	%
Gender	Male	92	23.98
	Female	292	76.04
Teaching Experience	1-3 years	68	17.71
	3-5 years	44	11.46
	More than 5 years	272	70.83
Teaching Experience in that Particular School	1-3 years	83	21.61
	3-5 years	48	12.50
	More than 5 years	253	65.89
Academic Qualification	Bachelor Degree	337	87.76
	Master Degree	45	11.72
	PhD	2	0.52

Note: N= 384

Instrument

This study used three instruments to collect data for various measurements to fulfill the objectives. These three instruments are used as the pilot test has shown high reliability, ranging from .82 t0 .94 (Chua, 2013) as reported in Table 2, 3, 4 and 5. On top of that, instrument translation and standardization are done careful to mitigate Type I significance and Type II sampling errors.

The first was the adapted Marzano's School Leaders Evaluation Model (2013). The Marzano's School Leader Evaluation Model (SLE) has 24 items of principal instructional practices, grouped into five domains: 1). A Data-Driven Focus on Student Achievement (5 items), is to ensure that the school has a clear focus on student achievement and all decision-makings are guided by relevant data; 2). Continuous Improvement of Instruction (5 items), making sure that all teachers' pedagogical skills are effective in enhancing student learning and are committed to upskilling those skills on a continuous basis; 3). A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (3 items), safe-guarding school curriculum in optimizing learning for all students and that all teachers follow the curriculum; 4). Cooperation and Collaboration (5 items), ensuring that teachers have the opportunities to address critical learning issues and at the same time functioning as a cohesive team; and lastly 5). School Climate (6 items), guaranteeing that the school is safe, orderly and well-functioning.

The SLE is rated on a four-point rubric scale ranged as follow: 1=ineffective; 2= developing; 3= effective and 4= highly effective. During the pilot test, the reliability of the questionnaire was established and the overall alpha reliability coefficient for the scale ranged from .71 to .95 respectively. See Table 2.

Table 2. Principal leadership practices reliability

Domain and Sub Domains	Pilot
Principal Leadership Practices	.91
• A Data Driven Focus on Student Achievement	.71
• Continuous Improvement of Instruction	.93
• A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum	.89
• Cooperation and Collaboration	.92
• School Climate	.95

The second instrument used was the adapted Celep's Teachers' Organizational Commitment in Educational Organizations (2000) which is used to measure teacher commitment (TCEO) based on the teacher perception of organizational commitment. TCEO has four four domains with 16 items.

The four domains are: 1). Commitment to School (5 items), the teachers' strong desire to be a member in the school by upholding the school goals and values and expressing them into various efforts; 2). Commitment to Teaching Work (5 items), the teachers' strong desire in their teaching job and to be satisfied in daily life, continuous in upskilling their teaching practices for the benefit of the students and to be proud of their school. This commitment is about both physical and psychological bondage; 3). Commitment to Teaching Profession (3 items), it is about teachers' mindsets towards their teaching profession, the ethics, the skills needed in carrying out the tasks effectively and efficiently and the drive in advancing the professional career path; and lastly 4). Commitment to Work Group (3 items), a strong sense of belonging toward the working colleagues within the school. The commitment arose from the collaboration and loyalty as well as the association with the working units in handling their daily teaching works (Celep, 2000).

All items were positively worded statements in active forms (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). Active nouns were inserted, for example, 'I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful' and 'I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization'. All items were rated on a four-point Likert-type response scale, ranged as followed: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= agree; and 4= strongly agree. Teachers were more committed if their score were high. The TCEO was chosen because it valid and reliable. During the pilot test, the reliability of the

questionnaire was established and the overall alpha reliability coefficient for the scale ranged from .74 to .82 respectively (Hair et al., 2014). See Table 3.

Table 3. Teacher commitment reliability

Domain and Sub Domains	Pilot
Teacher Commitment	.82
• Commitment to School	.80
• Commitment to Teaching Work	.74
• Commitment to Teaching Profession	.78
• Commitment to Work Group	.79

The third instrument was the adapted Hall's Organizational Inventory (1968). Hall's Organizational Inventory (HOI) is used to measure organizational (school) bureaucracy. HOI has six domains with twelve items: 1). A Division of Labor Based on Functional Specialization (2 items), the job specification was based on the functional specialization that entailed the work tasks within the organization; 2). A Well-Defined Hierarchy of Authority (2 items), the pre-structured hierarchical order within the organization and determined the process of decision making in the organization; 3). A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees (2 items), these rules will spell out clearly the allowable behaviors and benefits allotted to performing such tasks; 4). Systematic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations (2 items), a standard of procedures to ensure clear lines of authority and accountability within the organization. These procedures denoted the common approach in dealing with various work situations that they dealt with; 5). Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals (2 items), the basic premise was detaching personal element when dealing with members in the organization in all decision-making and policy-making processes and lastly 6). Promotion and Selection based on Technical Competence (2 items), personnel selection and advancement were based on the accepted expertise and proficiency.

All items were rated on a four-point Likert-type response scale, ranged as followed: 1= once a while; 2= sometimes; 3= often; and 4= always. During the pilot test, the reliability of the questionnaire was established and the overall alpha reliability coefficient for the scale ranged from .71 to .94 respectively. See Table 4.

Table 4. School bureaucracy reliability

Domain and Sub Domains	Pilot
School Bureaucracy	.94
• A Division of Labor Based on Functional Specialization	.71
• A Well-defined Hierarchy of Authority	.83
• A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees	.80
• Systematic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations	.82
• Impersonality Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals	.74
• Promotion and Selection based on Technical Competence	.74

Instrument Translation Process

To ensure the original meaning are kept, forward and backward translating were done by two certified translators, bilingual in English and Malay language (from English to Malay and Malay to English). Then, the instruments were proof read by six lecturers who are active in educational leadership field to gauge the content validity. They gave positive feedback to the adapted version.

Instrument Standardization

In the pilot study, 60 secondary school teachers from central part of Malaysia tested the three-instrument (SLE, TCEO and HOI). In order to mitigate Type II error in sampling, these teachers were excluded from the main sample of the study. After referring to content experts, some changes were made by upon their recommendation; the adaptations were mostly done in the wordings of items and due to the low Cronbach's alpha values obtained during the pilot study. Some local common terminologies were added to suit the contexts. The calculated coefficient alpha reliability values for the three instruments were high (Chua, 2013); for SLE was .91; TCEO was .82; and HOI was .94. See Table 5.

Table 5. Level of reliability

Unacceptable	Low	Average	High	Unacceptable
.01 to .49	.50 to .64	.65 to .79	.80 to .95	.96 to .99

All three instruments had high reliability. To conclude, the three instruments were suitable and fit to measure principal leadership practices, teacher commitment and school bureaucracy in Malaysian secondary schools.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out during the first semester of 2015 school year. The researcher first went to the Ministry of Education to obtain the approval to conduct such study in Malaysian secondary schools. Next, the researcher then sent out the survey questionnaire to the selected schools using proportional stratified random sampling through the state education departments.

The questionnaire had a cover letter that briefly introduced the researcher, described the main objectives of the study, provided a general instruction to answer the questionnaire, suggested that participation in the study was on the voluntary basis and assured the respondents of the anonymity of the information provided by them. The letter stated that it should take no more than 30 minutes to complete the survey.

The respondents returned the completed instruments to the researcher through the state education departments.

Data Analysis

Data were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Smart Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Means and median were used to describe the level of Principal Leadership Practices, Teacher Commitment and School Bureaucracy for objective 1, 2 and 3 while PLS-SEM Stone-Geissers' Q^2 value and factor loading were used to determine the dominant domains of principal leadership practices in fostering teacher commitment. Q^2 value is a good indicator of predictive relevance as it can accurately point out the predicted indicators in reflective measurement model.

FINDINGS

Objective 1 was to analyze the perception of teachers regarding their commitment in Malaysian secondary schools. As the data was descriptive in nature, statistics including mean and median were used for this objective. As shown in Figure 1, the mean for Principal Leadership Practices was 76.7411 and median was 75.000.
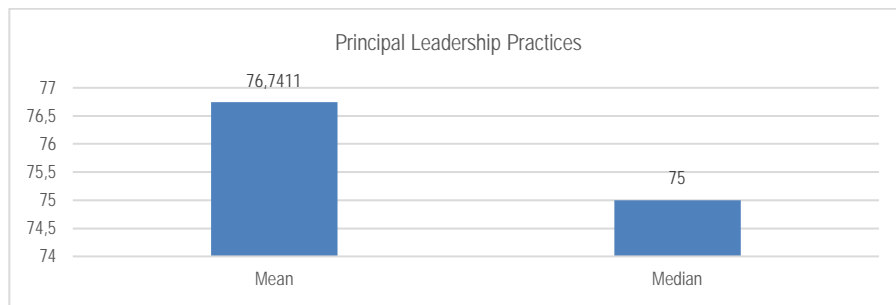
Figure 1. Mean and Median of Effectiveness of Principal Leadership Practices

The Principal Leadership Practices in Malaysian secondary schools was measured using the sub domains of: A Data Driven Focus on Student Achievement, Mean was 16.0191 while Median was 15.000; Continuous Improvement of Instruction Mean was 15.8338 while Median was 15.000; A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum Mean was 10.06654 while Median was 10.000; Cooperation and Collaboration Mean was 15.8801 while Median was 15.000 and School Climate with Mean of 18.9428 while Median of 18.000.

From the observation, the teachers found that their school principals were effective in their practices. See Table 6 and Figure 2.

Table 6. Mean and median of effectiveness of principal leadership practices and sub domains

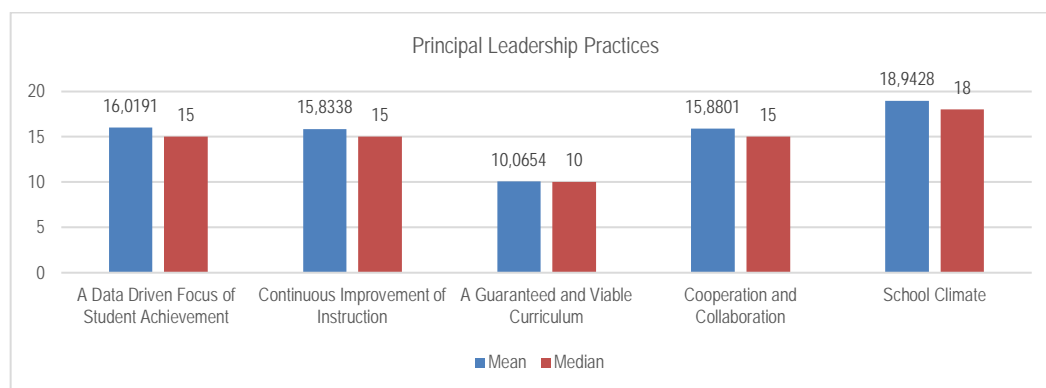|	Effectiveness of Principal Leadership Practices				
	A Data Driven Focus of Student Achievement	Continuous Improvement of Instruction	A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum	Cooperation and Collaboration	School Climate
Mean	16.0191	15.8338	10.0654	15.8801	18.9428
Median	15.0000	15.0000	10.0000	15.0000	18.0000

Figure 2. Effectiveness of principal leadership practices

Objective 2 was to analyze the perception of teachers regarding their principal leadership practices that was effective in Malaysian secondary schools. Mean and median were used in this study to attain this objective. These results clearly revealed that secondary school teachers in Malaysia perceived that their principals were most effective in promoting the sub domain of School Climate (Mean = 18.9428, Median =

18) and followed by sub domain A Data Driven Focus of Student Achievement (Mean = 16.0191, Median = 15). As shown in Figure 3, the overall mean of Teacher Commitment was 56.3297 and median was 57.000.
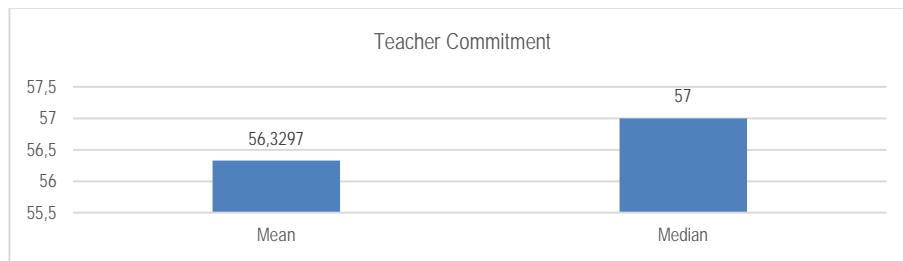
See Figure 3.

Figure 3. Mean and median of teacher commitment

Teacher Commitment was measured using its four sub domains: Commitment to School, Commitment to Teaching Work, Commitment to Teaching Profession and Commitment to Work Group. The mean and median provided a better picture of the level of agreement as to the commitment descriptors. The teachers perceived that their commitments were more inclined to agree and strongly agree to quantitative items (Celep, 2000). See Table 7 and Figure 4.

Table 7. Mean and median of teacher commitment and sub domains

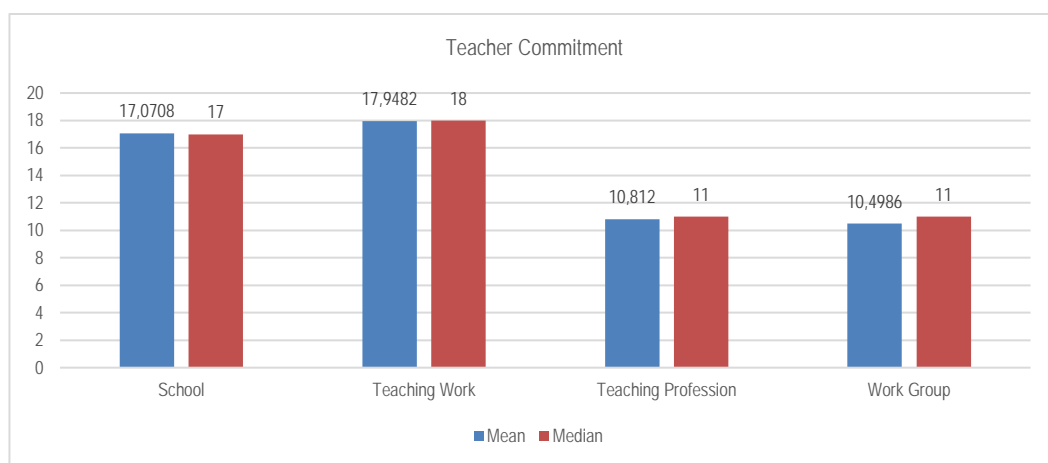|	Commitment to			
	School	Teaching Work	Teaching Profession	Work Group
Mean	17.0708	17.9482	10.8120	10.4986
Median	17.0000	18.0000	11.0000	11.0000

Figure 4. Teacher commitment

Objective 3 was about the Malaysian secondary teachers' perception regarding their school bureaucracy. Mean and median were used to realize this objective. Obviously, the teachers perceived that School Bureaucracy was always being practiced especially in the element of Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals (Impersonality) when dealing with school staff and outsiders where communication was minimized to avoid a constant source of tension, friction and conflict within the schools. See Table 8.

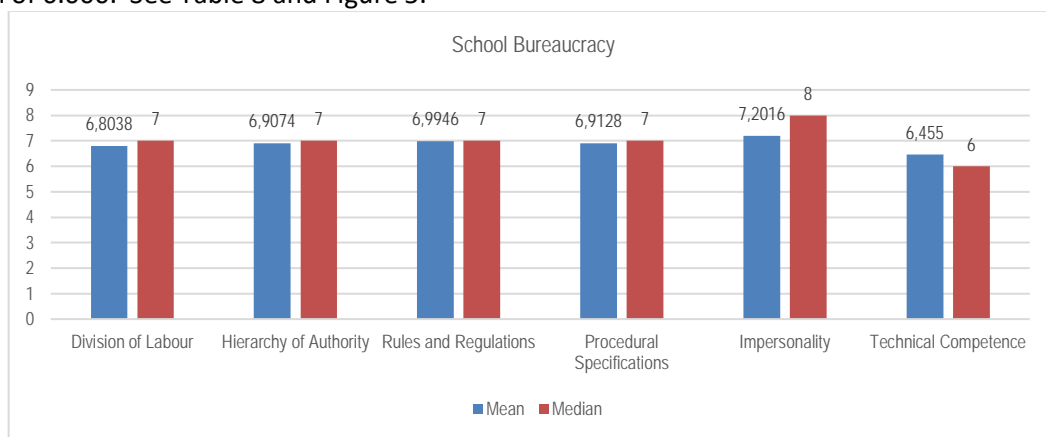**Table 8.** Mean and median of school bureaucracy and sub domains

| | School Bureaucracy | | | | | |
	Division of Labor	Hierarchy of Authority	Rules and Regulations	Procedural Specifications	Impersonality	Technical Competence
Mean	6.8038	6.9074	6.9946	6.9128	7.2016	6.4550
Median	7.000	7.0000	7.0000	7.0000	8.0000	6.000

Note:

Division of Labor	:	A Division of Labor Based on Functional Specialization
Hierarchy of Authority	:	A Well-defined Hierarchy of Authority
Rules and Regulations	:	A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees
Procedural Specifications	:	Systematic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations
Impersonality	:	Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion

of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals

Technical Competence	:	Promotion and Selection based on Technical Competence

The teachers perceived that the bureaucratic orders were highly practiced in schools. Among the sub domains, the result seemed to indicate that Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals (Impersonality) was the sub domain that the teachers equated with the most, scoring the highest Mean, 7.2016 and Median at 8.000. It was closely followed by sub domain of A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees (Rules and Regulations) with Mean of 6.9948 and Median at 7.000. Next sub domain was Systematic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations (Procedural Specifications), Mean of 6.9128 and Median at 7.000.

Subsequently, the fourth was A Well-defined Hierarchy of Authority (Hierarchy of Authority), Mean of 6.9074 and Median at 7.000. Thereafter, the fifth sub domain was A Division of Labor based on Functional Specialization (Division of Labor), Mean of 6.8038 and Median at 7.000. Lastly, the sixth sub domain was Promotion and Selection based on Technical Competence (Technical Competence), Mean of 6.4550 and Median of 6.000. See Table 8 and Figure 5.

**Figure 5. Mean and Median of School Bureaucracy**

Note:

Division of Labor	:	A Division of Labor based on Functional Specialization
Hierarchy of Authority	:	A Well-defined Hierarchy of Authority
Rules and Regulations	:	A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees
Procedural Specifications	:	Systematic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations
Impersonality	:	Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion

of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals

Technical Competence	:	Promotion and Selection based on Technical Competence

Objective 4 was to identify the dominant domains of principal leadership practices in fostering teacher commitment in Malaysian secondary schools. PLS-SEM Stone-Geissers' Q^2 value and Factor Loading index were used to establish the dominant domains of principal leadership practices in fostering teacher commitment. The highest Q^2 value in this research model was Continuous Improvement of Instruction, .733 and followed by Cooperation and Collaboration, .682 and third was School Climate, .657. See Table 9.

Table 9. Summary of Stone-Geissers' Q^2 values of predictors

Variables	Q^2
A Data Driven Focus on Student Achievement	0.635
Continuous Improvement of Instruction	0.733
A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum	0.592
Cooperation and Collaboration	0.682
School Climate	0.657

Similarly, when using Factor Loading index analysis, the study found that Continuous Improvement of Instruction was having the highest loading index, .908 and followed by Cooperation and Collaboration with loading index of .901 and third was School Climate, .883. See Figure 6.
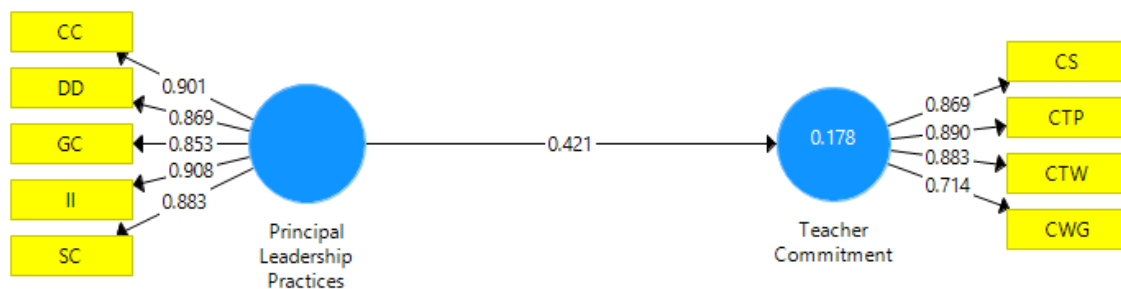
Figure 6. Predictor of dominant domains in fostering teacher commitment

The results revealed that Continuous Improvement of Instruction of Principal Leadership Practices was the highest predictor (Factor Loading value = .908) of the relationship between Teacher Commitment and Principal Leadership Practices. Cooperation and Collaboration (Factor Loading value = .901) continued to be significant with the added predictors. School Climate (Factor Loading value = .883) was the third highest score as predictor.

DISCUSSION

The main agenda of this study was to analyze the perception of Teacher Commitment. It found that Teacher Commitment was high among Malaysian secondary school teachers. Teachers were very committed to Teaching Profession firstly, committed to Teaching Work secondly and committed to School thirdly.

When teachers are Committed to Teaching Profession, they are motivated and high spirited to carry out works professionally, to constantly seeking new knowledge and upgrading professional skills besides teaching competencies (Lei, Nordin Abd Razak & Ramayah Thurasamy, 2014). They are the subject matter experts as their body of knowledge are wide and they are able to assist their students excelling in academic press. Through their professionalism, they help to improve students' outputs and outcomes within their expertise.

Lei, Nordin Abd Razak & Ramayah Thurasamy (2014) have termed Committed to Teaching Work as teachers' disposition to be involved in their daily teaching activities. They were able to carry out day-to-day teaching work with much enthusiasm (Wong et al., 2015). Arm with the latest research strategies and ever willing to provide support, the teachers are able to help students learn better, efficiently and effectively.

Lastly, this study also found that Malaysian secondary school teachers were Committed to School as they put in a great deal of effort beyond that which was normally expected in order to help the schools to be successful (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979). They get involved in various school activities to realize schools' goals and remained working within the schools for some considerable time.

Successively, the Malaysian secondary school teachers perceived that their school principals were very effective in their instructional practices. To elaborate, they found that their principals were effective in ensuring Continuous Improvement on Instruction, promoting Cooperation and Collaboration and safeguarding School Climate.

As pointed out by Hallinger & Heck (2010), principal instructional leadership practices that focused on core teaching and learning made a difference in the quality of schools and thus impacting student learning. Their practices are able to make teachers feel productive and motivated in ensuring student learning, hence making the schools excellence (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). These leaderships are much sought after as their school goals are clear and collective. It implies that quality instruction is the top priority in school. This noble idea is consistent with the research finding.

On top of that, Hallinger (2011), clearly spelled out that an instructional leader should guide and interact with teachers in propelling instructional efficacy to achieve better student performance. The exemplary instructional practices are continuous improvement of instructions and academic emphasis.

Subsequently, the teachers felt that their principals are effective in promoting Cooperation and Collaboration sub domain. The school principals were effectively ensuring teachers had the opportunities to observe and discuss effective teaching collaboratively. When teachers had the formal and informal ways to collaborate and discuss school initiatives, the process of decision-making is collective and shared.

Thoonen Sleegers, Oort, Peetsma & Geijsel (2011) found that teacher collaboration in professional learning activities, especially a culture of reflecting what works and what don't is powerful predictor for excellent teaching practices. This study established that Principal Leadership Practices in ensuring that the teachers have opportunities to discuss and observe effective teachings are important in fostering Teacher Commitment in term of Teacher Collaboration.

The school principals in this study were effective in ensuring that School Climate was safe, orderly and effective for leaning. In turn, the students, parents and the community were able to perceived that the

school environment was safe and orderly too. On top of that, the school principals made sure that all resources in schools, either fiscal, operational or the technological are in best position to aid in teaching instructions for better student learning. The teachers perceived their school principals as instructional leaders where their practices were based on what was best for all students and actively involved in continuous professional development.

Lastly, this study was consistent with Arumugam Raman, Chang & Rozalina Khalid (2015) and Siti Noor Ismail (2011) that when the school principals diligently safeguarding the school climate and culture would ultimately have resulted an increase of Teacher Commitment in Malaysian schools.

The study also attempted to analyzed the teachers' perception with regard to School Bureaucracy. They noticed that the school top management were very bureaucratic in school administration. The school top management applied A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees, Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals and observed Systemic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations.

The highest among the sub domain was A System of Rules Covering the Rights and Duties of Employees. These rules spelled out clearly the degree to which the school staff should behave in this organizational control system (Hall, 1968); teachers' behavior and their conduct and how work was to be performed and how decisions were to be made.

Impersonal Approach to Interpersonal Relations and the Promotion of Rational Behavior according to Organizational Goals (Hall, 1968) was scored second highest in the relationship. The line of communication among school staff and the school community were without the any personal agenda, treated solely based on the advancement of the organizational goals. It was focused on the administration and management of the organizational to avoid a constant source of tension, friction and conflict within it.

This was closely followed by the sub domain Systemic Procedures for Dealing with Work Situations. It is vital that this bureaucratic system incorporates a well-defined system of stratification. The teachers found that the top management has clear focus of procedural specifications to ensure the schools run smoothly. Henceforth, they noted that school principals are aware of various tasks and responsibilities through these systemic procedure recordings.

In a nutsheell, this study was consistent with Najeemah Mohamad Yusof (2012) study of School Climate and Teacher Commitment: A Case Study in five national primary schools in Penang using Celep (2000) teachers' organizational commitment in educational organizations. Similarly, it further agreed with Lei, Nordin Abd Razak & Ramayah Thurasamy (2014) that Teacher Commitment is multi constructs in nature.

As the study was keen to establish the dominant domains of Principal Leadership Practices in fostering Teacher Commitment. This study found that the dominant predictors of Principal Leadership Practices were Continuous Improvement of Instruction, Cooperation and Collaboration and lastly School Climate.

The finding was consistent with Hulpa, Devos & Van Keer (2011) as they pointed out the leaders should advocate instructional priorities, group cohesion, role clarity in order to promote teacher commitment. The finding was consistent with previous researches that examine effective leadership and its correlation to teacher commitment (Naser, 2007; Cheng, 2005; Gabbidon, 2005; Brown & Moshavi, 2005).

These Principal Leadership Practices were important to the schools in that they regulate day-to-day schooling activities. As Principal Leadership Practices were based on Instructional Leadership, focused on core teaching and learning, gearing with clear goals in ensuring the realization of school vision, motivating teachers by fostering teachers professional learning (Hallinger, 2003, 2011; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Bass,

1985; Burns, 1978). Most importantly, as reported by PISA (2009), the quality of an education system could not exceed the quality of its teachers and principals (OECD, 2010).

To conclude, the findings were coherent with Rusmini Ku Ahmad (2006) pointed out that school principal leadership, especially instructional leadership practices was the most important factor in school effectiveness and its excellence. However, Sii (2012) opinioned differently by claiming that transformational leadership impacting Teacher Commitment directly and indirectly in 1,014 secondary school teachers at Miri, Sarawak.

This study was the first of its kind in studying School Bureaucracy in Malaysian secondary schools. Many would have argued that study of this nature was pointless as schools in Malaysia are highly centralized in nature. However, this study has had pointed out that School Bureaucracy had its fair share in fostering Teacher Commitment.

CONCLUSION

When there was a significant relationship between Principal Leadership Practices and Teacher Commitment, the researcher made a few suggestions in educational reform:

1.   The Malaysian Ministry of Education should design, plan and provide continuous professional development programs for principals (job-embedded) and aspiring principals (pre-appointed) that emphasize the understanding of effective instructional leadership practices and how to bring forth positive changes to that teacher commitment.

2.   Secondary school principals are thus encouraged to hold periodical meetings for educational planning to resolve school problems and get the teachers involve to boost teachers' sense of belonging in schools and in their teaching profession and teaching work. These efforts are able to able to promote a collaborative school culture and learning community and further enhance teacher commitment.

3.   School principals who are aspired to improved student learning should shape the conditions and climate in which teaching and learning occur by promoting teachers' motivation, satisfaction and working conditions.

4.   The organizational commitment can be developed by strengthening the school's collaborative culture and creating a more flexible structure when school principals demonstrate their instructional leadership best practices.

5.   The hierarchy of bureaucracy established in a school helps to define roles of teachers and ensures that responsibilities are equally delegated. Rules and regulations serve to maintain teacher professionalism and collaboration with school policies, procedures, goals and values. In schools with healthy environment, the goals of teamwork are accomplished, work roles are balanced and everyone equally contributes to the success of students. Imperatively, the school principals need to create equal opportunities for the development and growth of teachers. This is referred to as the good of bureaucracy.

6.   The school principals should take into consideration teachers' interests and capabilities while assigning duties and task, thus creating competence-based trust in the teachers. The formative and structural orders are able to provide clear guidelines and strongly focus on personal interactions, collaboration and commitment.

7.   Similar studies that address primary and tertiary level, types of schools and teaching grades across Malaysia should be carried out to see if findings are consistent with this study and may provide additional useful information.

Contribution of the Study

The findings from this study will further complement the body of knowledge in area of educational leadership, particularly teacher commitment and principal leadership practices, both in Malaysian schools and international arena. The school principals at large will be able to have a better insight of the Malaysia education system and structure, especially the principal instructional leadership practices, and the impact of these practices on teacher commitment. By having these imperative and vital information in mind, secondary school principals are clear and able to effectively carried out those instructional practices that are applicable in enhancing teacher commitment. In education reform, these kind of instructional leadership practices should be highlighted and made relevant. On the other hand, both the soft (practices) and hard (bureaucratic) aspects of leadership are essential in school leadership preparation and continuous professional development programs. Thus, school teachers and principals should have a balance and fair share of conformity and professional discretion. Last but not the least, the findings of this study may provide some useful data for school leaders who are interested in promoting better teacher commitment through school bureaucracy.

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