LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED MALAYSIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: APPLYING NORMATIVE LEADERSHIP MODELS

SHAHRIZAL NORWAWI

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2017

Dedication

To my darlings Sofea, Sara and Soraya; and more importantly, to my better half…words can never replace how much I love all of you.

Mummy and Abah, thanks for the never ending Dua.

Abstract

Global research suggests that successful school principals are those who apply a judicious mix of instructional, distributed and transformational models of leadership. These approaches are explicitly advocated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB), the government's main education reform document that was launched in 2013. The MEB sets out an ambitious plan for all schools to have high performing principals, and high performance is associated with these three models rather than the administrative leadership which is more common in Malaysian schools. The MEB suggests that the aspiration of placing high performing leaders in all schools can be achieved by improving and refining the selection process for new principals, and by requiring them to acquire the National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders (NPQEL). The MEB also places a strong emphasis on instructional leadership as one of the more effective leadership approaches, which current and future principals should adopt.

This thesis presents the findings from a mixed methods study designed to examine the leadership features and practices of principals deemed to be high performing, serving in selected schools in Malaysia. These principals are deemed high performing because they are recipients of two government awards, the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. The study examines the extent to which instructional, transformational and distributed leadership are practiced by the principals, drawing on the following data sources: interviews with three senior policymakers; documentary analysis of relevant policies and circulars and questionnaires filled in by 20 'high performing' principals and their teachers. The data is further supplemented with interviews with six out the 20 high performing principals and their respective senior leadership team member and teachers. The findings suggest that principals who are deemed high performing in the selected Malaysian schools enact instructional leadership modestly compared to distributed leadership and transformational leadership. A tentative framework of core leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing, derived from the findings of this study, is presented at the end of this study.

Acknowledgements

All praise to Allah the merciful for giving me the strength, courage and patience to continue living life to the fullest.

Writing this thesis would never be possible without the guidance of the esteemed Professor Tony Bush and Dr Andrew Townsend. The never-ending support and guidance given from day one by the both of you have helped me to complete this long and demanding marathon (as you put it). I could have not imagined having better supervisors for my PhD study. I would like to also express my gratitude to Dr Ashley Ng for the constant words of encouragement.

My sincere thanks go to the Scholarship Division, Ministry of Education who provided me with the scholarship to pursue my studies.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, all my friends especially those in room C12, and also to my former colleagues for supporting me throughout this meaningful journey.

Table of contents

List of figures

List of tables

List of abbreviations

MEB	:	Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025
EDP	:	Education Development Plan 2001 – 2010
EDMP	:	Education Development Master Plan 2006 – 2010
NKRA	:	National Key Results Area
GTP	:	Government Transformation Programme
PEMANDU	:	Performance Management and Delivery Unit
SLTM	:	Senior Leadership Team-members
ANOVA	:	Analysis of Variance
BPSH	:	Schools Management Division (*Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian*)
PADU	:	Education Performance and Delivery Unit
JNJK	:	Schools Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Division (*Jemaah Nazir dan Jaminan Kualiti*)
BPSBPSK	:	Fully Residential and Excellence Schools Division (*Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Berasrama Penuh dan Sekolah Kecemerlangan*)
IAB	:	Aminuddin Baki Institute (of educational leadership and management)
EPU	:	Economic Planning Unit
LPI	:	Leadership Practices Inventory questionnaire
PIMRS	:	Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale questionnaire
TESOL	:	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
NPQEL	:	National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders
GPS	:	School's Grade Point Average (*Gred Purata Sekolah*)
DG41/44/ 52/54	:	'DG' refers to a specific code of service for Malaysian civil servants who are in the education sector. The numerical data range that follows determines the position as well as the seniority of all government servants with 41 being the entry

level for new civil servants who hold a minimum of bachelor’s degree.

JUSA : Superscale grade (*Jawatan Utama Sektor Awam*) reserved for the most senior civil servants. Usually a promotion from the grade of 54.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Opening Remarks

Scholars have identified school leadership as being at the heart of any educational reform (Fullan, 2011; Harris, Jones, Adams, Perera, & Sharma, 2014; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Mulford, 2003). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006: 201) contend that policymakers who aim to improve the quality of education through system-wide reforms “assume that the success with which their policies are implemented has much to do with the nature and quality of local leadership, especially leadership at the school level”. This is further supported by Hallinger and Lee (2014), who posit that, in order to accomplish meaningful changes, the policymakers behind the reforms must recognise that leadership is an essential factor. Hallinger (2011a: 306) adds that it is a “widely accepted belief among policy-makers and practitioners that effective school-level leadership is necessary in order to attain the desired effects of reform policies”.

Muijs (2011: 45) agrees that policymakers' interest in leadership means the importance of leadership in schools is often emphasised. Hence, like many other reforms that have happened, or are happening, in many parts of the world (for example, see Department of Education and Skills, 2011; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber, 2010; United States Department of Education, 2010), school leadership is often considered to be one of the key drivers of reform. A similar approach has been adopted by the Malaysian government in its reform agenda via the Malaysian Education Blueprint (Ministry of Education, 2013).

The Malaysian Education Blueprint (henceforth termed MEB) sets out a 13-year plan to raise the standards of the education system to a level with those nations that are acknowledged to have high performing education systems. In addressing this ambitious goal, the MEB identified five areas as foundations for improvement. These include: improving access to pre-school and to secondary education for all students; improving the quality of education; improving equity by reducing achievement gaps, such as gender, urban-rural differences and socioeconomic imbalances; building a solid foundation for racial unity; and improving financial efficiency to maximise student outcomes[1].

The MEB has identified eleven key shifts as the means to support the improvements. One of the shifts aims at ensuring that "every school has a high performing principal capable of improving the schools' performance" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-16). The Ministry believes that "committed and high-performing school leaders are key catalysts to improve and thus create excellent schools" (Ministry of Education, 2014: 61). Further, the Ministry is convinced that the best way to encourage greater school performance is by placing the most capable people in leadership positions (PEMANDU, 2014).

The primary motivation for this study is linked to the MEB's emphasis on high performing principals. The author believes that ensuring high performing principals in all schools is an ambitious, but attainable, aspiration for the MEB to achieve. Nonetheless, it requires a thorough understanding of what constitutes high performing leadership amongst principals. This study focuses on the leadership practices of selected principals who are deemed to be high performing. These principals are considered to be high performing as they have been awarded two Government awards: the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. While the awards differ, they both acknowledge the highest performance of Malaysian principals.

Setting the Context: Understanding School Leadership through the Reform Documents

Since Malaysia gained its independence in 1957, the education system has been strongly centralised under the purview of the Ministry of Education (Bajunid, 2008b; Hallinger & Walker, 2017; Hussein, 2014a; Noman, Awang Hashim, & Shaik Abdullah, 2016). Hussein (2014b: 4) observes that centralisation has led the Ministry "to standardise not only the education laws,

[1] Student outcomes according to the MEB, are measured by the "significant gains in their development irrespective of their background…[W]hen they leave school, students will have world-class knowledge and skills, strong moral values, and will be capable of competing with their peers in other countries" (Ministry of Education, 2013: E - 23).

rules and regulations but also the content, procedures and processes of schooling (curriculum regulations and administration)". Such standardisation is apparent in various reform documents introduced by the Ministry.

Through the many reform documents introduced by the government, Bajunid (2008b: 277) observes that school leaders in Malaysia have "seen themselves on a quality journey" for the past decade. Indeed, the journey of quality, on which school principals have embarked, can be traced to the previous three reform policy documents: the Education Development Plan 2001 – 2010 (EDP) (Ministry of Education, 2001), which was then replaced by the Education Development Master Plan 2006 – 2010 (EDMP) (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2006), followed by the education National Key Results Area under the Government Transformation Programme (PEMANDU, 2010).

The emphasis placed on the quality and performance of principals in the three previous education reforms is less prominent compared to the MEB. The focus on quality and high performing principal leadership, evidenced in the MEB, has never been greater. Perera, Adams, and Muniandy (2016: 126) agree that, with the introduction of the MEB, "principal leadership ranks high on the list of priorities for school reforms and the role of principal leadership has become all the more essential". While Perera et al. (2016) maintain that principals in Malaysia remain at the apex of leadership in a school's social system, Harris, Jones, Cheah, Devadason, and Adams (2017) see principals as the heart that drives school transformation and improvement. Jones et al. (2015: 354) further assert that the MEB has given "the clearest signal yet, that high quality leadership is a potential strategy for securing educational improvement and change".

The following section reviews the emphasis that each of the reform documents places on the quality of school leadership.

Education Development Plan 2001 – 2010

The EDP was introduced in 2001 as one of the first long term education development plans to break away from the normal five-year cycle of the Malaysian Development Plan, introduced by the Malaysian Government in 1957. While the EDP aims of increasing access, equity and the quality of education are similar to the aspirations of the current MEB, the EDP also aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education management. What sets the EDP apart from the current MEB is the importance placed on strong educational administration, from Ministry level right down to the school level. The EDP identifies school principals as those responsible for “managing and implementing teaching and learning based on national curriculum and examination standards” (Ministry of Education, 2001: 7-2). Hence, the EDP claims that a “strong, efficient, and effective management system” is key to realising the plan’s aims (Ministry of Education, 2001: 7-1). The strong focus on school administration in the EDP is not surprising, according to Bajunid (2008b: 275), who asserts that school leadership in Malaysia was initially defined as administrative leadership.

In its aim of improving the quality of education, the EDP fails to include the need to strengthen the leadership capacities of school principals; instead, the focus is primarily on improving the teaching workforce. While the EDP believes that “enhancing instructional leadership” (Ministry of Education, 2001: 1-15) could support the aim of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education management, the quality of school leadership is not adequately addressed.

Education Development Master Plan 2006 – 2010

The introduction of the EDMP halfway through the implementation of the EDP signals the aims and plans of the then newly appointed Prime Minister and Minister of Education. The focus of the EDMP is still on improving access, equity and the quality of education for Malaysian students. Nonetheless, the approach of the EDMP is linked to the bigger aspiration of *Misi Nasional* or the

National Mission (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2006). The National Mission introduces five key thrusts for making Malaysia a fully developed nation by the year 2020. To complement the National Mission, the EDMP outlines six strategic thrusts. These include: to develop a united Malaysia; to strengthen human capital; to strengthen national schools; to reduce inequality; to elevate the teaching profession; and to boost the performance of educational institutions (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2006).

Like the EDP, the EDMP does not specifically refer to strengthening the capacity of school leadership in any of the six thrusts. Instead, the EDMP puts ‘improving school leadership and teacher quality’ within the thrust of ‘strengthening national schools’. The EDMP believes that good quality school leadership is able to support and strengthen the performance of schools (Aziah & Abdul Ghani, 2014). The EDMP introduced the notion of high performing schools, which were then labelled cluster schools, as a key strategy to boost the performance of educational institutions. Hussein (2012) highlights that the aim of cluster schools is to become the centre of excellence in its niche areas such as sport, music and the performing arts, while at the same time sustaining academic performance.

The EDMP also increased the number of principals eligible for the Excellent Principals award as one of the ways to elevate the teaching profession (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2006). Tahir, Al Muzammil, and Salleh (2013) agree that many principals have benefitted from the increased number of excellent principal positions offered by the Ministry, as they do not have to wait long for promotion, but are promoted based on performance. A more elaborate description of an excellent principal will follow in a later part of this chapter.

<u>Education National Key Results Area (2012)</u>

The importance of high quality and high performing principals gained more prominence in the next policy reform. Although the EDMP officially ended at the end of 2010, the government of Malaysia via the Performance and Delivery

Unit (PEMANDU[2]) introduced the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) (PEMANDU, 2010). The GTP is an ambitious plan that aims to transform the Malaysian civil service into a dynamic, innovative, and people-focused administration through the seven National Key Results Areas (NKRAs) (PEMANDU, 2012b). One of the seven NKRAs is education. In order to support the continuity of the previous two education reforms, the Education NKRA aimed at improving student outcomes.

Yahya and Yaakob (2011) point out that the Education NKRA brought about a change in the leadership orientation of Malaysian school principals. They suggest that Malaysian principals require high quality leadership skills to improve the performance of their schools. Under the Education NKRA, the importance of high quality school leadership is given greater emphasis compared to the EDMP and EDP. For instance, the government believes that "investing in great leaders for every school" (PEMANDU, 2012b: 96) is one of the key catalysts for improving student outcomes. One of the 'investments' made by the government was the introduction of the New Deals award. The New Deals award aims to incentivise 2% of the Malaysian school principals that show a significant improvement in their schools' performance. A more elaborate description of this award is provided later in this chapter.

Another significant change initiated by the Education NKRA is the improvement of the selection process for incoming principals. Potential principals will be presented with a new career package that "focuses on further developing the performance of the profession while the principal's succession and appointment plans will be enhanced" (PEMANDU, 2012a: 29). The introduction of PEMANDU's new selection process is integrated into one of the key initiatives of the MEB. In order to reduce any overlaps, the initiatives introduced in the Education NKRA are included as a 'subset' of the MEB

[2] The Performance Management & Delivery Unit or PEMANDU was formally established on 16 September 2009 and is a unit under the Prime Minister's Department. PEMANDU's main role and objective is to oversee the implementation, assess the progress, facilitate as well as support and drive the delivery and progress of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) (PEMANDU, 2013).

(PEMANDU, 2014). The new selection process for principals is discussed further in the subsequent section.

Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025

The MEB was introduced by the current government as a means of a continuous education reform (Hussein, 2012). The MEB was launched with the view that the Malaysian education system must continue to evolve and be at the possible highest level in order to support the nation's aspirations of becoming a fully developed nation by 2020 (Ministry of Education, 2013). In addition, the MEB aims at providing "an efficient system of world class education and to transform Malaysia into a centre of educational excellence" (Hussein, 2013b: 23), indicating the importance to Malaysia of international benchmarks.

Unlike the previous two education reform policies introduced by the Ministry of Education via the EDMP and EDP, the emphasis on school leadership rather than school administration is more pronounced in the MEB. One of the eleven shifts identified in the MEB is to ensure that "every school has a high performing principal capable of improving the schools' performance" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-16). The introductory chapter of the MEB clearly explains the reasoning behind Shift Five, which is to ensure that high performing leaders are placed in every school:

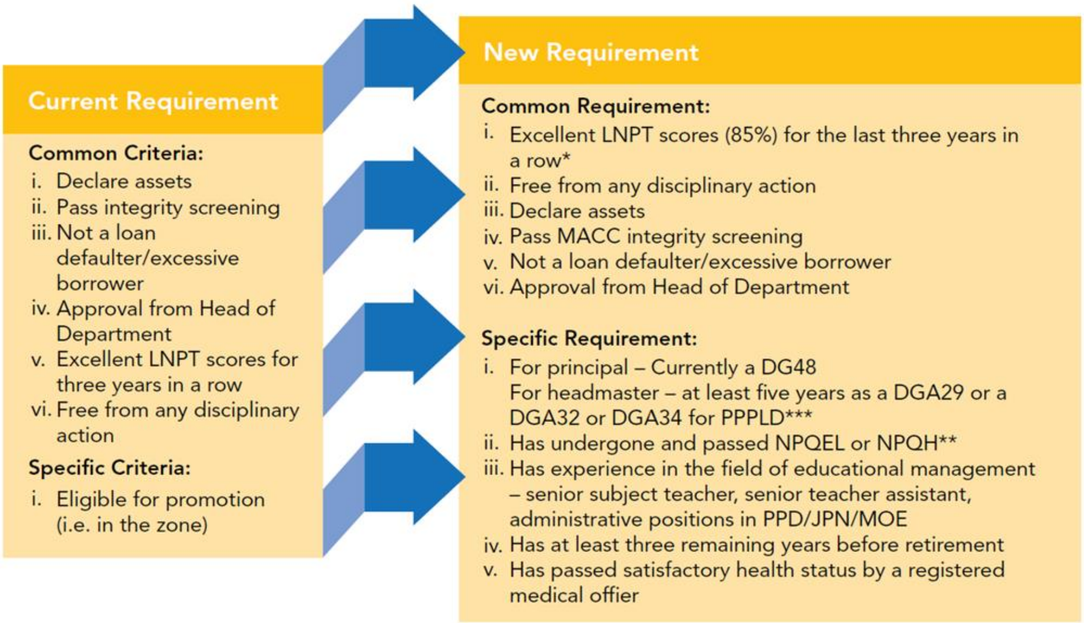
> Why is it needed? The quality of school leaders is the second biggest school-based factor in determining student outcomes, after teacher quality. Several international research on school leadership shows that an outstanding principal is one focused on instructional and not administrative leadership. Effective school leaders can raise student outcomes by as much as 20% (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-17).

The beliefs that the MEB hold with respect to the link between the quality of school leadership, school performance and student outcomes are consistent with the views offered in the literature (for example, see Bush & Glover, 2014; Day et al., 2010; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008).

As the MEB is an ambitious thirteen-year plan, the implementation of its school leadership initiatives and policies are carried out in three waves. Wave One (2013 – 2015) focused on raising standards, improving support systems, and laying the foundation for creating a large pool of highly competent leaders available to all schools in Malaysia. Wave Two (2016 – 2020) aims at rolling out new career pathways and progression schemes for principals, as well as providing support to move towards a wider distributed leadership model involving assistant principals and subject heads. The final wave (2021 – 2025) will see greater empowerment for all school leaders as the system moves towards a model of school-based management (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-16).

In focusing on school leadership, the Ministry hopes that the new initiatives introduced in the MEB are able to “raise school leadership quality by improving how the education system appoints and trains principals” (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-26). Perera et al. (2016: 129) agree that the introduction of the MEB “emphasises the importance of effective principal leadership in bringing about greater achievement in students' academic performances”.

In order to ensure that high performing school leaders are placed in every school, the initiatives introduced by the MEB include new selection criteria for the appointment of all new incoming principals. This initiative is a continuation of the one introduced by the government via the Education NKRA in 2012. The new criteria mean that only incoming principals who are able to demonstrate a minimum level of leadership competency will be considered as candidate principals (Ministry of Education, 2013). A summary of the new selection criteria is presented in Figure 1.1.



* LNPT (*Laporan Penilaian Prestasi Tahunan*) will be used until 2014 and will be replaced by the Unified Instrument by 2015
** NPQEL – National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders
NPQH – National Professional Qualification for Headship
*** PPPLD – *Pegawai Perkhidmatan Pendidikan Lepasan Diploma*

Figure 1.1: The New Selection Criteria for Principals (adapted from Ministry of Education, 2014)

Harris et al. (2017) note that, prior to the introduction of the new selection criteria, the appointment of principals was firmly based on seniority. As a result, Harris et al. (2017) observe that Malaysian principals, with an average age of 53.5, are older than the principals in most countries. The criticism of the previous selection criteria is the strict adherence to promotion based upon seniority, hence capable and potential younger talent had to wait a long time to be considered as principal candidates. Muhammad Faizal (2012: 41) also argues that Malaysian principals who are often appointed based on their seniority would most likely exhibit "deficiencies in leadership". The appointments via seniority rather than absolute competency and performance have indicated that the principals who were appointed prior to the MEB were not "tested in terms of specific skills such as problem solving, interpersonal relationships, concepts, leadership, self-image management, communication and ability to work in a team" (ibid:41).

The introduction of the new selection criteria replaces the previous tenure-based appointment system that favours the selection of ageing principals who are due to retire (Tahir, Mohd Thakib, Hamzah, Mohd Said, & Musah, 2017). The new criteria mean that potential, capable and high-performing candidates could be appointed at a younger age, thus allowing them to spend more years serving in that position before their retirement. Tahir et al. (2017: 170) further believe that the introduction of the new selection criteria, is more "rigorous, clear, and transparent; promotion is stringently based on the merit policy approach; that is, priority is given only to high-quality senior teachers with emphasis on their achievement, leadership quality, efficiency, teaching experience and annual evaluation".

Another landmark change made to the selection process is the compulsory qualification of NPQEL or NPQH (see Figure1.1). In the past, principals were encouraged, but not obliged, to attend the NPQEL course (Kamaruzaman, Norasmah, & Siti Rahayah, 2009). As a result, Tahir et al. (2017) suggest that some principals currently in post, who were appointed before the introduction of the new selection criteria, do not possess any official school headship qualifications such as the NPQH or NPQEL. Perera et al. (2016) observe that prior to the introduction of the new selection criteria, most Malaysian principals only attended leadership courses after they had assumed the post of principal.

Linking the Notion of High Performing Principalship with the Excellent Principals Award and the New Deals Award

The key premise of this study identifies and links principals who are deemed high performing to two awards: the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. Many well-intentioned reformers argue that large scale improvement of schools can be accomplished by rewarding and retaining good people (Elmore, 2000). Both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards highlight the initiative taken by the government in rewarding and incentivising high performance. Ingvarson (2010: 768) agrees that rewarding school leaders who attain high performance standards is one of the effective ways to retain high performing leaders. This is supported by Fullan (2011), who suggests that rewarding good performance is helpful to the organisation. The following section explains the background of these awards.

The Excellent Principals award

The Excellent Principals award recognises principals who display high standards of leadership and possess outstanding qualities in promoting excellence in schools (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013). Tahir et al. (2013) consider excellent principals as the most senior and knowledgeable amongst their peers. Chan and Sidhu (2009) on the other hand, believe that excellent principals possess distinct abilities in both educational leadership and educational management.

Since its inception in 1994, a total of 2,364 principals have received this award (Ministry of Education, 2013). In 2009, the Ministry of Education upgraded the scale of excellent principals by designating 20 principal posts to the grade of JUSA C[3]. This grade is equivalent to that of a State Education Director. In addition, 475 excellent principals were promoted to the grade of DG54, which is equivalent to the Head of the District Education Office (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013). The introduction of the award allowed high performing principals to serve in their schools at a higher grade than their peers (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013). Prior to this, many principals had to leave their schools to find a more senior post, with a higher grade of service, in district or state education departments, or in a division of the Ministry of Education. Bajunid (2004: 209) explains that the Excellent Principals award was an initiative implemented to offer attractive career routes and promotional opportunities for school leaders.

[3] The Malaysian Civil Service utilises a numerical data range grade-based system to determine the position as well as the seniority of all government servants. Grade 41 is the entry level grade for all positions with a minimum qualification of a bachelor’s degree. A higher grade means that the person holds a high ranked position or has been promoted to that grade based on performance/length of service (Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2010). Grade of service for principals begins at DG52 and they progress to DG54 based on their tenure and/or performance. The higher JUSA C grade is a promotion grade for Excellent Principals.

The New Deals award

Apart from the Excellent Principals award, high performing principals could be recognised through the New Deals (Bai'ah) award. This was first implemented in 2010 as one of the education National Key Results Area (NKRA) initiatives, introduced under the Government's Transformation Programme (PEMANDU, 2010). The New Deals initiative was designed to improve overall student outcomes throughout the system by incentivising principals to innovate, improve upon, and deliver, high performance academic results in the schools they lead (PEMANDU, 2011). According to PEMANDU (2012b: 114), the "New Deals initiative targets school leaders who are key drivers of change in the school system. Eligibility for a New Deals award is determined by a stringent set of requirements that look at the performance of the school as a whole as well as the individual school leader's accomplishments". The MEB claims that the New Deals initiative, which "rewarded high-performing school principals and head teachers proved to be an effective mechanism to motivate and incentivise school leaders" (Ministry of Education, 2013: A - 31).

Statement of the Problem

The MEB is significant because it represents the government's commitment to carry out strategic reforms of the education system, including strengthening principals' leadership roles in schools. However, the author argues that there are several challenging aspects of the MEB which need to be considered for successful implementation to occur. The following subsections discuss the challenges posed by the MEB in relation to its aspiration of placing high performing principals in all schools.

Clarity in understanding the notion of 'high performing'?

The Ministry aims to achieve its goal of ensuring that all schools are led by high performing principals through several measures. These include: redefining and clarifying the selection criteria for future principals by including mandatory preparatory training via the National Professional Qualification for

Educational Leaders (NPQEL); refining the succession planning for incoming and outgoing principals to include the compulsory Residency and Immersion Programme or PRIme[4]; building a pool of potential future school leaders; improving preparatory and continuous professional development; and introducing a competencies-based performance management approach (Ministry of Education, 2013, 2014).

Whilst high performing leadership is highlighted consistently in the MEB, there is a lack of clarity about what the concept of 'high performing principals' actually means. The author argues that, while the MEB envisions high performing principals in all schools, it does not describe precisely what this means. The new measures introduced in the MEB represent only a redefined procedure for selecting, training and sustaining better performing and qualified principals rather than defining the standards or attributes of a high performing principal. The author believes that the key characteristics of high performing principals need to be explicated clearly to current and future principals, so that they understand the crucial benchmark attributes necessary for all principals.

In addressing this challenge, the author believes that the absence of key attributes of high performing principals in the MEB provides an opportunity to identify the leadership features of selected principals who are deemed to be high performing. It also enables this study to link those features to the aspirations of the MEB of securing high performing principals for all schools. A better understanding of the practices of principals who are deemed high performing would allow current and future principals to understand the leadership practices adopted by this group of principals.

The literature on high performing leadership often identifies the key characteristics, traits or leadership qualities required to achieve high performance that are different from those of ordinary principals. One example

[4] The Ministry of Education states that "All candidates who are appointed as principals under the new criteria will be required to enrol in a one-month residency programme (PRIme) before assuming their respective duties. They will also undergo an immersion programme alongside principal coaches for seven days (42 hours within their first 6 months) upon taking up the position" (Ministry of Education, 2014).

is provided by Barber, Whelan, and Clark (2010: 7) who characterise high performing principals as those who are "distinguished less by who they are, and more by what they do (though both are important). They work the same hours as other principals, but spend more time working with the people in their school. They walk the halls more, spend more time coaching teachers, interact more often with parents and external administrators, and spend more time with students". Jo Blase, Blase, and Phillips (2010: 3) provide another example. They describe high performing principals as leaders who "exhibit behaviours (also called "best practices") that yield statistically greater student learning than if the leader did not engage in those behaviours".

Over-emphasis on instructional leadership

Hallinger (2005) believes that there has been a consistent focus on instructional leadership in the leadership policy literature, especially in the light of school restructuring and the reforms initiated in many parts of the world. This is true in the Malaysian context. Previous policy documents that include the EDP, the EDMP and the Education NKRA, all identify instructional leadership as amongst the key practices for Malaysian principals. More recently, the MEB advocates and emphasises instructional leadership as the most effective leadership approach for current and future principals to adopt.

The MEB envisions school principals as excellent instructional leaders who drive overall school performance (Ministry of Education, 2013). Harris et al. (2017: 210) suggest that, with the implementation of the MEB, "principals in Malaysia are now increasingly viewed as instructional leaders who are seen as chiefly responsible for improving student, school and system performance". Hallinger and Walker (2017: 136), in agreement with the suggestion offered by Harris et al. (2017), believe that "Malaysia has adopted highly explicit and prescriptive policies that mandate the instructional leadership role as well as specific practices".

The emphasis placed on the need for principals to be instructional leaders stems primarily from evidence which shows it has a stronger impact on student outcomes than other types of leadership (for example, see Bendikson, Robinson, & Hattie, 2012; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). Robinson (2010) maintains that the body of evidence that links instructional leadership and student outcomes has persuaded policymakers to place instructional leadership more prominently in policy framing compared to other leadership models, and this is evident in the MEB.

The author assumes that the MEB's overarching emphasis on instructional leadership renders other leadership models as less important. For example, the MEB states that, based on research, the "outstanding principal is one focused on instructional and not administrative leadership" (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-18). This emphasis is further expounded in the latest Annual Review of the MEB: "A principal with high leadership qualities and an effective leadership team is vital to provide instructional leadership as well as drive overall school performance" (Ministry of Education, 2016: 151).

The author agrees with Bush's view that "instructional leadership is a very important dimension because it targets the school's central activities, teaching and learning; however, this paradigm also underestimates other aspects of school life" (Bush, 2007: 401). Hallinger (2005: 234) points out that "instructional leadership has often been interpreted as being top-down and directive" and that the literature on instructional leadership often focuses on "turn around schools that had been in need of urgent change". Therefore, "the generalization of this model to all principals in all school settings was inappropriate in 1985 and remains so today" (Hallinger, 2005: 234).

Scholars also argue that instructional leadership often focuses too much on teaching rather than learning (Bush, 2015b; Bush & Glover, 2014; Lambert, 2002). Whilst the influence of the instructional leadership role of principals must be acknowledged, Hallinger (2003) maintains that instructional leadership will never be the only role of the school principal. Hallinger (2003: 334) further cautions against focussing narrowly on principals having the singular role of instructional leader "in an effort to improve student performance".

Leithwood et al. (2004: 7) believe that the concept of instructional leadership “has been in vogue for decades as the desired model for education leaders – principals especially”. They further contend that instructional leadership “is often more a slogan than a well-defined set of leadership practices [therefore] displacing the sloganistic uses of the term ‘instructional leadership’ with the more precise leadership practices specified by well-developed leadership models is much to be desired” (ibid:7). Bush and Glover (2004) restate and agree with the assertion offered by Leithwood (1994) that instructional leadership alone is no longer adequate because it is heavily classroom focused and does not address the wider aspect of organisation-building.

Limited focus given to other leadership models

The MEB states that it will “move towards a model of distributed leadership” (Ministry of Education, 2013) only in the second wave of the implementation, from 2016 to 2020. Although distributed leadership and, to some extent, transformational leadership, are mentioned in the MEB, they are less evident or stressed than instructional leadership. Mulford (2010: 200), believes that “a one-size-fits-all, adjectival style or approach to leadership [like instructional leadership], may seem superficially attractive but can often limit, restrict and distort leadership behaviour in ways that are not always conducive to school development and improvement”. Hence, “awareness of alternative approaches is essential to provide a set of tools from which discerning leaders can choose when facing problems and dealing with day-to-day issues” (Bush, 2007: 393). This is further emphasised by Purinton (2013) who argues that school principals must manage competing demands beyond just instructional matters. Hallinger (2003: 334) also believes that principals carry out multiple leadership roles in their schools. He maintains that focusing narrowly on “a single role in an effort to improve student performance will be dysfunctional for the principal”.

Hallinger (2007) further suggests that a specific leadership type may only be suitable at a certain stage and that it may become limiting, or even counterproductive, as time goes on and schools make progress. In addition, Bush and Glover (2014: 567) argue that "the educational context is too complex and unpredictable for a single leadership approach to be adopted for all events and issues". Leithwood and Sun (2012: 403) echo a similar position. They believe that every school situation is complex and "requires leaders to enact a wide range of practices, [hence] a narrow set of leadership practices seems unlikely to work". Leithwood and Sun (2012: 410) add that "leadership practices associated with either approach alone were not as powerful as a combination of such practices".

Muijs (2011: 55) argues that there is often a tendency of over-reliance on leadership models "which invite prescription through their identification of one set of practices as good and another set as bad". Although the MEB does not explicitly point to any 'bad' leadership model, the focus on instructional leadership may nevertheless be too prominent. Bush and Glover (2014: 566) believe that instructional leadership is "is limited and partial, and has to be considered alongside other models". As the limitations of the instructional model become increasingly apparent, the focus of attention can switch to transformational leadership, and subsequently to distributed leadership (Bush, 2015b). Nonetheless, Leithwood and Sun (2012: 389) also caution that "transformational leadership theoretically offers only a partial solution to the leadership problem".

Therefore, in order to address the limitations of the instructional model, it makes sense for this study to link it to other leadership models that may be observed in principals who are deemed to be high performing. This is in line with the literature on high performing principals which suggests that principals should not rely on instructional leadership alone as other leadership models are equally important (Anderson, Moore, & Sun, 2009; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2010; Mulford, 2010; Printy, Marks, & Bowers, 2009). Blasé et al. (2010) add that, rather than focusing on one type of leadership, high performing principals should engage in leadership practices that incorporate all the elements necessary for school effectiveness and performance. The author believes that, while instructional leadership is important, the understanding of how high performing principals operate in practice might benefit from considering other leadership features including, but not limited to, distributed and transformational leadership characteristics. This is consistent with Bennett and Anderson's (2003) argument that principals must be able to appropriately adapt to a variety of different leadership approaches.

Lessons from previous reforms advocating instructional leadership

Bajunid (2008b) argues that policy documents provide "a wealth of ideas, drawing on national and international sources, but the translation and interpretation of these ideas on the ground are the tasks which fall to school leaders". For example, Bajunid (2008b) observed that leadership for learning, central to the re-incarnated instructional leadership, is evidently fragmented in Malaysian schools. He believes that:

> "…the idea of leadership as being for learning is simply assumed to exist. It is taken for granted but does not really happen except for the one-off professional meetings in workshops, seminars or conferences and for the fortunate few nominated and sponsored to attend such meetings. There is no continuous dialogue, no protocol and procedure of examination of practice, no recording of best practices, no examination or exploration of implicit principles or theories behind effective teaching-learning practices" (ibid: 278-279).

Barker (2007: 38), in sharing Bush's (2004) view, reasons that policymakers often advocate leadership models that are essentially "incomplete but demand, nevertheless, a transformation in schools and results that are hard to achieve". As a result, Barker argues that the "policy decisions have created the conditions for an apparent leadership paradox" (ibid). This is the case in Malaysia where instructional leadership is highlighted as the leadership model or practice of choice for all Malaysian principals, especially in support of the reform. Bush (2014c: 3) believes that "the recent emphasis on instructional leadership is based largely on research and practice in decentralised or partly decentralised contexts, where the demands of the hierarchy are modest and principals have substantial scope to determine how to lead and manage their schools". However, the centralised system has always been a significant feature of the Malaysian education system and the effort to incorporate instructional leadership into the reform plan within a highly centralised system has proven to be challenging.

While Hallinger (2010c) points out that the top-down approach utilised in Southeast Asia is a common strategy for large scale reform, especially in centralised education systems, Hussein (2012: 364) argues that centralised policies and programmes coming from the top are often seen as "inappropriate and out of touch with the realities of school and classroom environments". Hussein (2012: 363) further believes that "centralised policies never or seldom get communicated to all schools" because "school heads do not often realise that they are supposed to be doing something different". Hussein (2012: 363) adds that, even if centralised policies are communicated to schools, it is done in vague terms, because "school heads and personnel either implement policy incorrectly, in part, or not at all". This is echoed by Fullan (2014: 37) who argues that "sometimes policies are aligned on paper but never seem to cohere in the minds of principals and teachers…[and, as a result], principals are expected to lead the implementation of policies that they do not comprehend and that indeed are incomprehensible as a set". Consequently, Bajunid (as cited in Hallinger, 2010c) believes that education reforms in Malaysia have often failed to live up to their promises, resulting in numerous U-turns on major policy initiatives.

For example, in the EDP, the Ministry saw the key challenge to be to "strengthen the role of principals as curriculum leaders and as the main supervisors of the teaching and learning process" (Ministry of Education, 2001: 7-11). However, that key challenge remains an ongoing problem for the Ministry to overcome. Malakolunthu (2007) carried out three studies on education reforms in Malaysia and concluded that reforms in instructional leadership and practices were not entirely successful because principals lack the professional knowledge and competencies to carry out instructional leadership effectively in schools. Malakolunthu (2007) adds that principals in the study were found to be evasive and indifferent to instructional reforms as they seemed to be prioritising other leadership roles that they felt mattered more than instructional leadership.

Even though Malakolunthu (2007) acknowledges that the Ministry of Education does emphasise the role of the school principal as an instructional leader, she laments the lack of proper coordination and support from policymakers, which she regards as crucial for any effective implementation of the reforms. As a result, principals fail to play the leadership role expected by the policymakers, putting the implementation of the reforms at risk of not achieving its desired outcome. Malakolunthu (2007: 596) thus suggests that "principals must know that they have a much bigger role to play than that of a passive observer of the implementation of instructional reforms".

More recently, Harris et al. (2017), in their study involving 30 Malaysian principals, found that some principals exhibited strong qualities as instructional leaders but only in certain areas. Nonetheless, they note that the mismatch between policy directives and professional values limits Malaysian principals' instructional leadership practices. Harris et al. (2017: 218) conclude that "the remaining challenge, however, is to ensure that all principals in Malaysia fully embrace all aspects of instructional leadership in ways that contribute directly to school and system improvement".

Dimmock and Goh (2011: 225) observe that there are relatively few examples worldwide of schools as well as education systems that are successful in their attempts to alter "the fundamentals of their instructional systems in a scalable and sustained way". Hallinger and Lee (2014: 7) found that similar education reforms in Thailand required school principals "to change their primary role orientation from system management to instructional leadership", almost immediately after the education reform was launched. Hallinger and Lee (2014: 11) suggest that principals have been viewed as "implementers of government policies” and reforms rather than as “policy initiators or instructional leaders”. As a result, Hallinger and Lee (2014) found that data collected during the pre and post-reform eras showed no increase in Thai principals' level of engagement in instructional leadership.

The author agrees that the reforms related to instructional leadership in Malaysia have yet to be implemented effectively and the challenge remains for the Ministry of Education to explore alternative ways for the reforms to be put in place successfully.

Aims and Purpose

The central aim of this study is to explore the leadership practices of principals deemed to be high performing, which relates directly to one of the aspirations of the MEB: to ensure high performing school leaders in every school. The Ministry believes that “committed and high-performing school leaders are key catalysts to improve and thus create excellent schools” (Ministry of Education, 2014: 61). The focus on principals deemed to be high performing is premised on the assumption that they are likely to exhibit exemplary and good leadership practices, hence directly provide this study with a better understanding of how to link normative leadership models to their practices. Further, understanding the leadership practices of high performing principals is especially timely as the relative value of instructional, transformational and distributed leadership, as advocated in the MEB, have become of interest to policymakers, as well as to current school leaders.

The absence of any explicitly stated key characteristics of high performing principals in the MEB underpins the author’s motivation to explore the key leadership practices enacted by a group of selected principals described as high performing. Being clear about what these characteristics entail would be useful to current and future principals and to the Ministry of Education, to identify and understand the meaning and key features of high performing principals.

Barber et al. (2010) assert that high performing principals focus more on instructional leadership. The above assertion, together with the emphasis on instructional leadership in the MEB, frame the next aim of this study: to shed light on how far instructional leadership is practiced among principals who are deemed high performing compared to other leadership model practices, notably transformational and distributed.

The specific objectives of this study, which arise from these aims, are as follows:

I. to establish the notion of ‘high performing’ within the parameters of the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award;

II. to identify the leadership practices of principals who are deemed to be high performing;

III. to understand whether, and to what extent, instructional leadership is practiced among high performing principals;

IV. to analyse and compare the dominant principal leadership practices based on the framework of transformational, instructional and distributed leadership models.

The intention of this study is not to make generalisations, but to capture and highlight the practices from multiple perspectives observed within the selected schools.

Research Questions

In order to fulfil the aims of this study, four main questions have been formulated. Three of the main questions have sub-questions which relate to the research problems identified earlier in this study. These include the need for clarity in understanding the notion of high performing principals in respect of the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. The research questions also seek to establish the extent to which instructional leadership is practised by high performing principals compared to distributed and transformational leadership practices.

Research question One: How are principals deemed to be high performing identified and selected?

Research question Two: What are the leadership practices most performed by the principals who are deemed high performing as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?

Sub-Research question 2a: How do principals who are deemed high performing perceive their own leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?

Sub-Research question 2b: How do teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?

Research question Three: How do the principals perceive their own leadership practices?

Sub-research question 3a: How do the teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices?

Research question Four: To what extent is instructional leadership practiced by principals who are deemed high performing?

Significance and Contribution of the Research

The author acknowledges that the MEB is still in its relatively early days of implementation, given that its entire span is from 2013 to 2025. However, the literature on school leadership relevant to the MEB is growing (see Azuraida & Oliver, 2016; Harris et al., 2017; Ling, Zaidatol Akmaliah, Asimirin, & Fooi, 2015; Mohamad Johdi, 2014; Murni et al., 2016; Noman et al., 2016; Perera et al., 2016). The MEB has prompted scholars to look specifically into the leadership practices of principals and to suggest certain implications. However, this study is significant and distinctive in its focus on high performing leaders, linked to the MEB. It is also significant in addressing principal leadership which is identified as one of the key shifts that support long-term education reform.

In addition, there is only limited literature specifically on educational leadership and management in Malaysia (Bajunid, 2004). Hence this study resonates well with the view of Harris et al. (2014) who believe that exploring and understanding the leadership practices and models of educational leaders in Asia is important. Several leading authors agree that the literature published on educational leadership in Asia remains minimal, with most of the worldview on educational leadership residing within the Western construct and context (Dimmock & Walker, 2000; Hallinger, 2011a; Hallinger & Bryant, 2013a; Harris et al., 2017; Harris et al., 2014; Walker & Dimmock, 2006). Hallinger (2010c: 405) highlights a “paucity of either descriptive or analytical empirical data on educational reform” in Southeast Asia. Harris et al. (2017) further assert that evidence about the leadership practices of principals in Malaysia is barely visible and mostly absent from the international literature. This study is timely in responding to the call for more empirical studies on educational leadership in Southeast Asia. This study therefore fills a gap in the existing literature on high performing leadership within the Southeast Asian school context, through the empirical evidence gathered in relation to the leadership practices of the principals researched. This study contributes to a better understanding of leadership practices enacted by principals who are regarded as high performing. This, in turn, provides the opportunity for a comparison with previous and current research into successful leadership practices.

This study is also significant in adding to the very limited body of knowledge on the leadership practices of principals deemed high performing, especially in the Malaysian context. The literature and research on high performance leadership are often grounded within the setting of high performing or outstanding schools. The leadership practices of principals in those schools are then transferred into a corpus of literature on successful school leadership practices (for example,Day et al., 2011; Gurr, 2015; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003;

Mulford et al., 2008). What makes this study unique is that the principals are deemed high performing by virtue of the awards that they have received in the specific context of Malaysia. The study shifts the focus of ‘high performing leadership’ derived from the condition and performance of the school, to that of ‘high performing leadership’ given in recognition to the principals, based on their performance.

This study’s major premise is that the principals identified as high performing are those who have received both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. Local studies that analyse the leadership practices and behaviour of excellent principals are very limited (Chan & Sidhu, 2009; Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011a; Noman et al., 2016; Norlia & Jamil, 2005). The author’s view supports Tahir et al.’s (2013) acknowledgement that research on the leadership practices of excellent principals is relatively modest. Similarly, Noman et al. (2016: 13), who explored the leadership attributes of one Excellent Principal, call for “more researchers to conduct similar studies within the country to enhance our knowledge of successful school leadership and provide a meaningful perspective to existing studies”. This study is timely in supporting this call. There are also very few published studies which analyse the leadership of New Deals recipients (see Baharun, 2014; Murni et al., 2016; Nurul Aini, 2012). One aspect that sets this study apart is the in-depth analysis of the selection process for the two awards, providing a robust framework for understanding what is seen to constitute high performance.

Overview and Structure of the Thesis

This thesis contains eight chapters. This first chapter has highlighted the background to this study and introduced the aims and research questions. The following chapters can be summarised as follows:

<u>Chapter 2: Literature Review</u> contains a review of the literature on leadership theories and models, as well as previous research on high performing school leadership.

Chapter 3: Methodology provides a discussion of the methodology and methods used to address the research questions. This chapter also explains the rationale underpinning the choice of a mixed methods approach for this study.

Chapter 4: Qualitative findings and analysis at the policy level presents key findings based on the analysis of interviews with three policymakers who are directly involved with the selection process of Excellent Principals as well as the recipients of the New Deals award. The aim of this chapter is to highlight the link between high performance and the recipients of both awards. Documentary analysis is also presented in this chapter with two purposes in mind: to triangulate policymakers' views on how Excellent Principals and the recipients of the New Deals award are selected; and to identify the key leadership elements that are attributed to high performance in key policy documents.

Chapter 5 – Quantitative findings and analysis presents the analysis of the PIMRS and LPI questionnaires through mean score ranking, t-tests and ANOVA methods. These questionnaires measure the extent to which the principals in this study claim to carry out a prescribed set of leadership practices. The views of the teachers on how frequently their principals enact these leadership practices are also obtained via the two questionnaires.

Chapter 6 – Qualitative findings and analysis of interviews with principals and teachers are presented in this chapter. Interviews with six principals, as well as their senior leadership team members and teachers, provide a vivid understanding of how they view school leadership and how it is practiced. The transformational, instructional and distributed leadership models guide the analysis of the interviews.

Chapter 7 – Analysis and Discussion triangulates and discusses in depth the leadership practices performed by the principals. The leadership practices performed the most, as viewed by both principals and their teachers, are synthesised. A synthesised model of core leadership practices emerges from the analysis. This model identifies the practices found to be enacted most by the principals in this study.

Chapter 8: Conclusion includes the responses to this study's research questions. The chapter also addresses the significance of this study – contextual, empirical and theoretical. The implications and recommendations for future research are also included in this chapter.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership practices of principals, who are deemed high performing, serving in selected, high performing Malaysian secondary schools. The leadership practices of the principals are examined through the lenses of three major leadership models: instructional, transformational and distributed.

The chapter begins by positioning this study within the context of high performing leadership. The literature review draws upon the literature of effective, successful and outstanding school leadership. The second section of the review examines the three major educational leadership models that are highlighted in the MEB. This section provides a theoretical discussion, and empirical evidence, about instructional, transformational and distributed leadership, as reflected in the literature. In the final section, the literature review aims to identify any gaps in the literature to provide the warrant for this research.

Understanding High Performing leadership

This study focuses on the leadership practices of those principals who are deemed high performing. It takes as its starting point the view that understanding high performing leadership is a prerequisite for this study. Abbott and Bush (2013) contend that there is no straightforward ‘recipe’ for developing high performance. Bush and Middlewood (2005: 17), in adopting Riches’(1997) suggestion, propose that the concept of performance relates to the extent to which an individual carries out the responsibilities assigned to him or her; the accomplishment of a task or activity. However, Bush and Middlewood (2005: 17) also emphasise Riches’ argument that problems may arise as to how one is to know if what has been done is the accomplishment of something (performance) and what is the required standard when there is a good deal of subjectivity surrounding the evaluation of performance.

Hargreaves and Harris (2011: 42) believe that the leadership literature is replete with different definitions, interpretations, and versions that seek to explain various positive adjectives such as ‘good’ or ‘effective’ leadership practices. Nonetheless, a review of the literature reveals that very few scholars are able to offer a precise definition of high performing principalship or leadership. The literature that specifically relates to ‘high performing’ principalship or leadership focuses on two salient aspects: the quality of instruction (that includes students’ learning and teachers’ instruction) and how they develop and collaborate with others.

For example, Jo Blase et al. (2010: 3), being one of those very few scholars to offer a precise definition, define a high performing principal as someone who exhibits behaviours or best practices that influence and contribute to a greater student learning. Their definition links to assertion offered by Bottoms, O'Neill, Fry, and Hill (2003) who believe that high performing principals understand which school and classroom practices improve student achievement. In addition, Bottoms et al. (2003) maintain that high performing principals support teachers in carrying out instructional practices that help all students to succeed. Similarly, Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, and Porter (2010: 749) suggest that high performing principals also have a gift for acquiring, allocating, and using resources to promote student success. The link between high performing leadership and the quality of instruction is also highlighted in the report on high performing education systems, by Barber et al. (2010). They found that:

> “high-performing principals focus more on instructional leadership and developing teachers. They see their biggest challenges as improving teaching and curriculum, and they believe that their ability to coach others and support their development is the most important skill of a good school leader” (ibid: 7).

The second aspect of the high performing principal leadership literature relates to principals’ working relationship with others in the schools. High performing principals see other members of in their school as important and essential. For example, Barber et al. (2010: 7) posit that high performing principals spend more time working with the people in their school as compared to their peers who could be deemed as mediocre. This assertion is supported by Jones and Harris (2014) who claim that high performing principals are defined by their ability to build strong, functional collaborative teams. Jo Blase et al. (2010) express a similar view that high performing principals work collaboratively with others to create and maintain school performance. High performing principal leaders frequently support their staff members and inspire their teachers to become leaders (Quin, Deris, Bischoff, & Johnson, 2015).

The two aspects discussed above suggest a limited understanding of high performing leadership, but this concept can be expanded by including similar terms, such as ‘successful’, ‘effective’ and ‘outstanding’. The author believes that the literature that describes principals as successful, effective, and outstanding is also reflective of high performing leadership. These four concepts are interrelated and overlap with one another. Figure 2.1 illustrates these relationships.

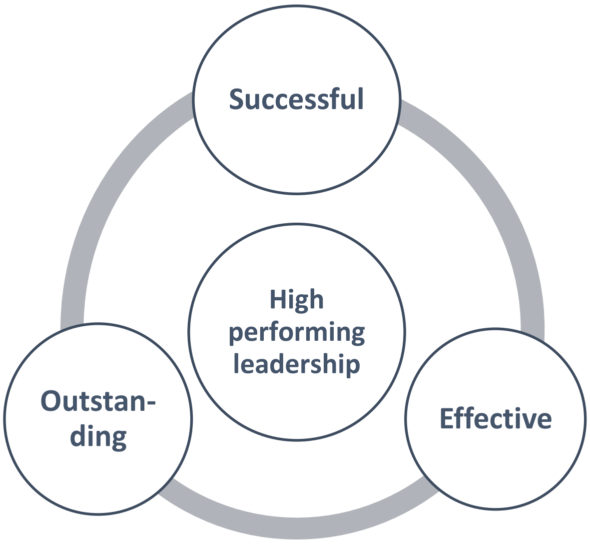


Figure 2.1: Descriptors of high performing leadership

Hence, to drive the rest of the discussion on understanding high performing leadership, the three concepts are discussed in further detail.

Outstanding leadership

As noted above, ‘high performing’ and ‘outstanding’ leadership are inter-related. Middlewood and Abbott (2017) propose five levels of performance for all school members, including principals and teachers. The first level is “the outstanding or exceptionally high-performing person” (Middlewood & Abbott, 2017: 52). They recognise that a “high performing or outstanding person in a school” carries out 14 roles and practices, although they claim that list is not exhaustive (ibid).

Gold, Evans, Earley, Halpin, and Collarbone (2003: 136) also adopt the term ‘outstanding’ when referring to a group of principals whose schools were adjudged by Ofsted to be providing high-quality education. They believe that the outstanding school leaders are “those who are able to articulate their strongly held personal, moral and educational values which may, at times, not be synonymous or in sympathy with government initiatives or policies” (ibid).

The interchangeable adoption of these terms is further exemplified by Matthews (2009), who believes that outstanding leadership is linked to highly effective school leaders. Matthews outlines two characteristics of outstanding principals: putting students’ learning and potential first, and getting the best out of members of the school. More recently, Matthews and colleagues (Matthews, Rea, Hill, & Gu, 2014) also carried out research on more than 20 examples of outstanding primary leadership across England. They summarise that the outstanding leaders are exceptional; and adopt 10 “basic tenets of outstanding” school leadership (Matthews et al., 2014: 12). Three of these tenets link ‘outstanding’ with the terms ‘effective’ and ‘successful’. They indicate that outstanding school heads are successful in doing things right consistently; they are effective models of good teaching, and they provide effective support for teachers.

Successful leadership

The terms ‘effective’ and ‘successful’ are also commonly utilised by scholars in studying the practices of high performing principals. The International Successful School Principals Project (ISSPP) provides one example. Drysdale, Goode, and Gurr (2009) claim that ISSP is important because it adds to this basic understanding of successful school leadership. ISSPP has been studying the practices of successful principals in schools around the world. Most of the reported case studies (Day & Gurr, 2014; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Jacobson & Day, 2007; Moos, Johansson, & Day, 2011; Mulford et al., 2008) reflect upon high performing and successful principal leadership who are leading high performing or excellent schools. Mulford et al. (2008) conclude that a common characteristic of these schools is successful and effective leadership. Within the local context, the interchangeable terms are also adopted by Jamilah et al. (2017) who claim that successful principals in Malaysia are considered to be effective leaders.

Pashiardis and Johansson (2016: 1) explain that school leaders who exhibit the capacity to improve the quality of teaching in schools have come to be known in the literature as successful and effective leaders. Whilst Pashiardis and Johansson (2016: 2) agree that the “international community of school leadership has been using the terms ‘successful’ and ‘effective’ interchangeably”, they also believe that scholars could not come to “much agreement as to what these two terms really mean in a particular context”. They believe that those two terms are “enormously varied in its conceptual foundations” based upon the richness of the literature on successful and effective leadership (ibid: 2). However, they contend that successful “is a more inclusive term which includes effectiveness...[but]… this does not mean that ‘successful’ is a substitute for effective” (Pashiardis & Johansson, 2016: 3). A similar approach was adopted by McEwan (2003: xxii) who uses the terms ‘successful’ and ‘effective’ “to accommodate the variety of ways people describe the principals whom they consider to be the very best”. McEwan explored the extent to which highly effective principals[5] enact ten traits which are associated with performance.

Day et al. (2011: 3) explain that successful leadership “depends significantly on leaders’ values and qualities, and on the skills with which leaders understand the underlying causes of the problems they encounter and respond to those problems in ways that are productive in context”. This explanation is linked to Bush and Glover’s (2003: 5) view that, successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. Day, Gu, and Sammons (2016: 225) also posit that successful school leadership is expressed through the application and accumulation of combinations of values-informed organisational, personal, and task-centred strategies and actions, which contribute to successful student outcomes.

Gurr and Day (2014), who draw upon the evidence found in the studies of successful principals, summarise the important qualities that successful principals possess. While they agree that all the principals featured in their book exhibit transformational and instructional leadership qualities, invariably all of the principals also show personal acumen and positive beliefs and values, as well as positive qualities of leadership. The qualities include “personal commitment to making a difference, resilience, motivation to sustain their efforts over time, high self-efficacy, high expectations of themselves and others, emphasis on establishing excellent personal relationships with the school, and an emphasis on whole-child development and establishing a supportive school environment” (Gurr & Day, 2014: 204).

Although the ISSPP provides many examples of successful and effective leadership, the claims made by Day et al. (2010), and Leithwood et al. (2008) (which was based upon the earlier work of Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006a) perhaps reinforce the ‘what’ of successful leadership. The

[5] Many of these principals, according to (McEwan, 2003: xxvii), “have received national awards either personally or on behalf of their schools”.

claims lead to three key arguments that are directly relevant to this study. Firstly, successful principals believe in the value of quality instruction. For example, although both claims indicate explicitly that successful leadership influence students' learning, the scholars explain that it is carried out by reshaping the conditions for teaching and learning; enriching the curriculum; enhancing teachers' quality; enhancing the quality of teaching and learning; and effectively managing the teaching and learning programme (Day et al., 2010; Leithwood et al., 2008).

Secondly, successful principals distribute leadership as a means to sustain and improve conditions for "teaching and learning, an enhanced sense of teacher autonomy in the classroom and sustained improvement in pupil behaviour, engagement, and outcomes" (Day et al., 2010: 17). This is supported by Leithwood et al. (2008), who believe that effective distribution by these successful principals has an effect on the quality of teaching, learning and pupil achievement.

The third point indicates that successful heads draw equally on elements of both instructional and transformational leadership. Leithwood et al. (2008) show that the core 'leadership practices' include setting directions, developing people and redesigning the organisation. Leithwood (2005: 620) claims that these core leadership practices are "the basics of successful leadership – probably not sufficient for success, but necessary in almost all contexts". However, one telling observation of these leadership practices is that they are heavily reliant upon the transformational leadership model suggested by Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) and Leithwood (2011). Day et al. (2010) build upon these core leadership practices and expand on the transformational leadership framework to include defining values and vision to raise expectations; setting direction and building trust; restructuring parts of the organisation; redesigning leadership roles and responsibilities, and building collaboration internally.

Effective leadership

Most of the literature appears to explain effective as similar to successful leadership, some scholars identify ‘effective’ as a key leadership process that would ensure successful outcomes. For example, Bass and Bass (2008) maintain that effective leadership is the act or process of successfully influencing others by the leaders that results in the attainment of goals. Hence, effective leadership could also be measured and determined by the organisational outcomes, goal attainment and follower satisfaction (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson, & Jinks, 2007: 407). A key aspect of ‘effective’ is achieving and improving the successful outcome desired by the leader. Hence, school principals can be considered to be effective if and when they are able to transform the performance of their school (Barker, 2007).

Whilst Bush (2009) believes that effective leadership is vital for successful schooling, Harris, Jones, and Adams (2016) note that effective leadership is at the heart of high performance. This further highlights the interdependence of ‘effective’ with ‘high performance’ and ‘successful.’ This is further illustrated by Riley and MacBeath (2003: 184) who believe that effective school leaders “are also good leaders”. Riley and MacBeath maintain that effective school leaders are distinguished by their vision and passion and by their capacity to bring a critical spirit into the complex and demanding job of headship, whilst at the same time focusing on staff and pupil performance, and on classroom pedagogy. Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin (2012) add that an effective principal who is dynamic and skilled is frequently described as the key element of a high-quality school.

This is further reiterated by Day et al. (2009: 5) who believe that “effective leadership results in the improvement of physical, psychological and social conditions for teaching and learning, raised aspirations of staff, students and communities, and the improved achievement of all pupils”. In order to achieve that improvement, effective leaders apply strategies in ways that are relevant and sensitive to schools and student characteristics, with the aim of maximising their achievement and performance (Day et al., 2009). The strategies suggested by Day et al. (2009: 3) include “layered leadership strategies within and across three broad improvement phases”. Another strategy highlighted by Day and colleagues is the effective distribution of leadership to other members in school. This strategy is also supported by Harris (2010), who maintains that effective principals tend to distribute certain strategic leadership responsibilities or core developmental work to teams or individuals within the school.

Effective leadership also has a more process-oriented nuance. ‘Effective’ therefore means that someone is successful in achieving the results that they want. For example, Day et al. (2016) view effective leadership as focusing on the internal states of organisational members that are critical in achieving goals such as school performance. Hence, effective leadership involves determining the focus of the task at hand in a manner that enables staff to understand and become committed to achieving the goal (Robinson et al., 2008). Goal effects are strongest when effective strategies are used (Sun & Leithwood, 2015). One of the effective strategies identified by Sun and Leithwood (2015) is setting the direction. They suggest that direction-setting leadership practices are effective in shaping a positive working environment and culture, achieving a shared understanding of school goals among staff, and fostering shared decision-making in schools.

Another distinct aspect of effective leadership according to Leithwood (2012), is the ability to integrate management and leadership functions in a way that would maximise the output and productivity of the schools. He believes that effective leadership’s defining attribute is the ability to carry out the most routine and seemingly trivial management and administrative tasks in such a way that would push their organisations forward. He then provides an example of how a highly effective leader approaches the management task:

> Marginally effective principals often view timetabling as a routine or “technical” administrative task and create timetables for their schools largely aimed at satisfying the preferences of their teachers. Highly effective principals, in contrast, typically

> view timetabling as an "adaptive" task, an opportunity to maximize instructional time for their students and to provide opportunities for collaborative work by their teachers (ibid: 6-7).

Conversely, Day, Harris, and Hadfield (2001b) believe that because management and leadership components are essential components of principalship, effective leaders are able to do both successfully.

Previous research on high performing successful principals

In this section, the author expands the notion of high performing principalship to include evidence of successful and effective school leadership from the literature. Various studies carried out as part of the International Successful School Principals Project (ISSPP) also offer various examples of how principals across different countries enact their leadership practices which are deemed successful (see Day & Leithwood, 2007; Moos et al., 2011). For example, Leithwood and Day (2007b) summarise the key leadership practices within five overarching leadership concepts or dimensions. The five dimensions include: setting direction; developing people; redesigning the organisation; managing the instructional program; and coalition building. While the first four overarching dimensions of leadership practices are heavily referenced against the transformational leadership model suggested by Leithwood and colleagues, the inclusion of the fifth dimension, 'coalition building', highlights the view that successful principals need to maintain good rapport with the community as well as with policymakers.

Other participants in the ISSPP offer alternative views which serve as a point of departure from the practices which are biased towards the transformational leadership model. For example, Merchant et al. (2012) compared the successful leadership practices of principals in schools with diverse populations in Sweden and the United States. The eight-year longitudinal study unearthed seven leadership practices with respect to the characteristics of principals who were successful in creating inclusive schools within a context of increasing student diversity. These were: engagement and pride; high expectations; student autonomy; early student learning and development; teamwork; diversity and integration; and an international focus on academic rankings (Merchant et al., 2012). Merchant et al. (2012), however, note that the extent to which these practices are enacted would vary across countries.

Wang, Gurr, and Drysdale (2013: 272) offer an Asian perspective to the ISSPP. Their study provides a useful addition to an emerging knowledge-base of successful school leadership in Singapore. The qualitative study focuses on four Singaporean principals who are deemed successful. Seven major themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews with the four principals. They showed strong evidence that they practice collaborative visioning; collaborative culture; educating the whole child; developing people; building on the legacy of past principals; school-wide systems and structures; and personal qualities, beliefs, and values (Wang et al., 2013).

More recently, Jamilah et al. (2017) adopted the ISSPP leadership framework offered by Day and Leithwood (2007), in their study of leadership practices among three high performing principals in Malaysia. Their qualitative data reveal that these three principals show evidence of ‘setting direction’; ‘developing people’; ‘redesigning the organisation’; and ‘managing instructional programmes’. Their findings also suggest that the practice of ‘managing high-performance management’ was apparent amongst the three principals. The authors claim that the principals “had the knowledge, skills, and expertise in managing aspects of high performance work systems, curriculum, co-curriculum, financial and discipline management” (Jamilah et al., 2017: 8).

<u>Contextualising principals who are deemed high performing in this study</u>

The review of literature above suggests that there is only limited differentiation in the conceptual understanding of high performing, successful, effective and outstanding leadership. However, the author agrees that there is no universal definition of high performing, outstanding, successful and effective leadership, and that, these terms are contextualised within the nation’s education system

(Pashiardis & Johansson, 2016). For example, the principals involved in the ISSPP can all be considered as leading successful schools (for example, see evidence from Gurr & Day, 2014; Leithwood, Sun, & Pollock, 2017). Gurr and Day (2014) posit that some of the schools that are selected as the cases for the ISSPP are amongst the highest performing in their countries while others are performing at a level beyond expectations.

The common characteristics of high performing principalship are also based on and contextualised from the performance and condition of the schools. For example, some researchers, including those who are part of the ISSPP research group, believe that high performing school leadership could be represented by school principals who are effective in turning around poor performing or disadvantaged schools and sustaining their performance (for example; Garza, Murakami-Ramalho, & Merchant, 2011; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss, 2013; Minor-Rogan & Jacobson, 2014).

In the first chapter, the author posited that the focus of 'high performing leadership' shifts from the condition and performance of the school, to that of 'high performing leadership', based upon the recognition bestowed on the principals. For the purpose of this study, recipients of both the Malaysian Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award are considered to be high performing principals, rather than identifying such principals on the basis of the excellent status attained by the schools. Linking the discussion to the conceptual underpinning of high performing leadership, the author suggested that principals who are the recipients of both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards are deemed to be high performing. The principals are considered outstanding compared to their peers through the recognition bestowed upon them by the government via the Excellent Principals award. The principals are also successful in leading their schools to improve performance, and this is exemplified through the New Deals award which recognises principals who are able to lead their school towards a significant improvement in their school performance and ranking. Finally, those principals who are the recipients of both awards could also be considered as effective as they manage to demonstrate their leadership and management capacities as assessed by the Ministry's officials before both awards are granted.

Educational Leadership Models

While the discussion thus far suggests that high performing leadership is conceptually inter-related to successful, outstanding and effective leadership, the elements that bind and explain those concepts are quite extensive. In order to understand high performing leadership (with consideration of successful, effective and outstanding leadership), the author links the practices to three leadership models: instructional, transformational and distributed.

As the subject of educational leadership became established as an academic field in its own right, practitioners began to develop alternative models based on their observation of, and experience in, schools and colleges (Bush, 2008a: 275). Conceptual models of leadership provide structure and clarity to observations of leadership practices in schools (Heck & Hallinger, 2005). Perhaps Leithwood and his colleagues (Leithwood et al., 1999) have suggested "the best known" typologies of leadership models (Bush, 2011: 36). Leithwood et al. (1999) categorise school leadership practices and approaches into six models. These models derived from 20 leadership concepts which appeared in 121 educational leadership journal articles. The six educational leadership models are instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial and contingent leadership. Bush and Glover (2002) extend Leithwood et al.'s six models by including distributed, transactional, postmodern and emotional leadership. What sets the leadership models offered by Bush and Glover apart from the six models suggested by Leithwood and colleagues is the link made to five competing management models. Bush (2011: 9) believes that educational leadership and management models must be given "equal prominence if schools are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives".

Whilst scholars attempt to categorise and discover more models of leadership that are suited to the schooling organisation, Bush (2011) argues that leadership models are never exhaustive. Nonetheless, Mulford (2008: 39) believes that, “over the past three decades, debate over what is the most suitable leadership role for school leaders has been dominated by the three conceptual models of instructional, transformational and distributed leadership”. Although Day et al. (2016) posit that instructional and transformational are the most commonly researched leadership models linked with successful leadership, distributed leadership is also highlighted in the claims of successful leadership offered by Leithwood et al. (2008) and Day et al. (2010). The MEB also highlights transformational and distributed leadership, apart from the much-focussed instructional leadership as the models that principals could adopt as they enter a period of long term reform that aims for high performance and quality school leadership.

These three models link to the aim of this research which is to explore the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing and to apply these normative leadership models in their practices. The models also enable the author to explore local perspectives of instructional, distributed and transformational leadership, rather than testing the suitability of a particular model or assessing the level of principal performance.

Instructional leadership

Whilst the roots of leadership models such as transformational and distributed leadership can be traced to the general management literature, instructional leadership captures the essence of school leadership. The focus on “instruction” was first introduced by Ronald Edmonds in 1979, and subsequent research into instructional leadership has expanded significantly (Hallinger, 2005; Neumerski, 2012). The early development of the concept of instructional leadership took place in the USA, which has a highly decentralised system of education (Hallinger & Walker, 2017). However, Hallinger (2011b) observes that instructional leadership has transformed from a largely North American perspective into a concept with “international currency” and thus has led policymakers worldwide to adopt instructional leadership as the essential leadership practice of choice in schools. Huber (2004: 670) posits that since "the core purpose of school, that is education and instruction, are at the centre of attention", many scholars find that instructional leadership fits the approach that is most suitable for school principals to adopt.

However, despite its popularity, Purinton (2013) claims that the very idea and concept of instructional leadership can be confusing. Bush (2011: 17) adds that the "lack of explicit descriptions of instructional leadership in the literature suggests that there may be different meanings to this concept". For example, one of the earlier conceptual understandings of instructional leadership is often criticised for being primarily concerned with teaching rather than learning (Bush, 2011; Bush & Glover, 2014). The critical focus of attention of principals' instructional leadership is on the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students (Leithwood et al., 1999). The focus of instructional leadership, therefore, centres on the quality of teacher practice, including the quality of the curriculum, teaching and assessment, and the quality of teacher inquiry (Robinson & Timperley, 2007).

Nonetheless, the conceptual definition of instructional leadership has become more inclusive to the needs of teaching as well as learning. Some scholars emphasise students' learning as a critical component of instructional leadership. In a more recent publication, Hallinger and Murphy (2013: 7) posit that the concept of instructional leadership includes "an influence process through which leaders identify a direction for the school, motivate staff, and coordinate school and classroom-based strategies aimed at improvements in teaching and learning". Similarly, Hoy and Miskel (2008) define instructional leadership as a particular form of leadership that emphasises the improvement of teaching and learning. Essentially, instructional leadership is primarily about the direction of leaders' influence because of its focus on improving teaching and learning (Bush, 2011, 2014b).

The focus on students' learning rather than on teachers' teaching is more accentuated in Huber's (2004) conceptual definition of instructional leadership. He believes that instructional leadership focuses most on aspects of school leadership actions that concern the learning progress of the pupils. Bush and Glover (2002) agree that instructional leadership targets students' learning, but it is mediated via teachers. Similarly, Coleman and Earley (2005: 15) identify that instructional leadership stresses the centrality of learning that focuses on "good teaching, effective learning and achievement". Therefore, arguments are divided on the focus of instructional leadership between the learning of the students and the quality of teachers' instructions. Despite its fair share of criticism, Hallinger (2011b: 275) nevertheless maintains that "instructional leadership has demonstrated impressive staying power as a core concept guiding both practices in the field of educational leadership and management".

Scholars agree that instructional leadership has proven to have an impact upon school and student outcomes (Harris et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2008). Robinson and her colleagues (Robinson et al., 2008; Robinson & Timperley, 2007) show that the effects of instructional leadership on student outcomes are consistently and notably larger than the effects of transformational leadership. Their synthesis indicates that transformational leadership has moderate effects on teacher attitudes and on perceptions of the school climate and organisation. They also note that these effects are thought to be weak in influencing students' performance. Robinson et al. (2008) argue that the core activities in schools are teaching and learning, hence, the more principals focus their professional relationships, their work and their learning, on the core business of teaching and learning with teachers, the greater their influence on student outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008).

A revision of instructional leadership: Leadership for learning

Elmore (2000) highlights that the purpose of educational leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, hence a definition of leadership in terms of instruction is also far more focused than most of the other leadership conceptions in education. However, the original approach to instructional leadership suggested a stronger focus on teaching than learning whereas critics argued that both should be of equal importance (Bush, 2015b).

While there are criticisms of the concept and practice of instructional leadership, this leadership model is still advocated as the most suitable for schools (Hallinger, 2011b; Robinson et al., 2008).

In order to address the need for a more progressive instructional leadership model, Hallinger has ‘rebadged’ instructional leadership as ‘leadership for learning’ (Bush, 2014c; Hallinger, 2009, 2010b, 2011b). Leadership for learning proposes a broader concept that incorporates a wider range of leadership attributes such as instructional leadership, transformational leadership, shared leadership and distributed leadership (Hallinger, 2010b, 2011b). Leadership for learning focuses on the intentions and actions of the school leader in targeting student learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 2011). In addition, leadership for learning stresses the need for a distributed approach and also redresses the balance with its central focus on learning rather than instruction (Bush, 2015b). This concept provides “a wider perspective of who might exercise instructional leadership” (Bush, 2014c: 3).

Leithwood et al. (2004) assert that much of the existing research underestimates the impact of leadership on student learning. They also believe that the effects (direct or indirect) of leadership on student learning account for about a quarter of total school effects. As a leader in learning, the principal manages the environment to optimise learning and, at the same time, provides guidance and support for other school leaders or teachers to improve the quality of instruction and the achievement of all students (Bendikson et al., 2012: 4). The local scholar Hussein (2014b) also calls for Malaysian principals to transform their instructional leadership role to consider students’ learning. He believes that the curriculum should no longer be centred on teacher-based knowledge, but instead, primarily focus on the students’ learning competencies, capabilities, growth capacity and self-development.

In his earlier work, MacBeath (2008) agrees that leadership for learning is frequently related to concepts such as instructional leadership and curriculum leadership. Subsequently, MacBeath (2010) argues that the original American conception and terminology of instructional leadership proved to be problematic not only to non-English speakers but to other English-speaking communities as well. As a suggestion for a universal understanding of leadership for learning, MacBeath (2010: 821) suggests five principles of leadership for learning. The first principle suggests that leadership for learning is a "process of continuing exploration and deepening understanding as to what learning is most worth, how it plays out in practice, and who the learners are". The second principle is "creating and sustaining conditions favourable to learning". The third principle emphasises the process by which learning and leadership are made explicit, discussable, and transferable, not only conceptually but also in practical application. The fourth principle "involves the sharing of leadership by creating structures which invite participation, encouraging all members of the school community to take the lead as appropriate to task and context". The final principle "holds that leadership for learning implies accountability by taking account of political realities and exercising informed choice as to how the school tells its own story to external audiences".

Hallinger (2011b: 126) admits that instructional leadership originally focused only on the role of the principal, while leadership for learning "suggests a broader conceptualization that incorporates both a wider range of leadership sources as well as additional foci for action". Thus, Heck and Hallinger (2014) agree that leadership for learning incorporates the teaching and learning focus not only on instructional leadership, but also as the distinct and more general capacity-building perspective of transformational leadership. Apart from the elements of instructional and transformational leadership within leadership for learning, Hallinger and Heck (see Hallinger, 2009; Hallinger, 2011b; Hallinger & Heck, 2010a, 2010b) posit that the term leadership for learning has also come to incorporate features of distributed leadership.

A conceptual model of instructional leadership

Hallinger and Murphy (2013) maintain that instructional leadership is a practice-based rather than a theory-driven construct. Hallinger (2005) agrees that several models of instructional leadership have been proposed by many researchers in educational leadership, but the model proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) has been used most frequently in many empirical investigations (Hallinger & Chen, 2015; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Hallinger, Wang, & Chen, 2013). The model proposes three dimensions of instructional leadership: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). Each of these three dimensions is divided into several functions. For the purpose of this study, the functions are termed instructional leadership practices. Figure 2.2 shows the model of the instructional management framework suggested by Hallinger and Murphy (1985).

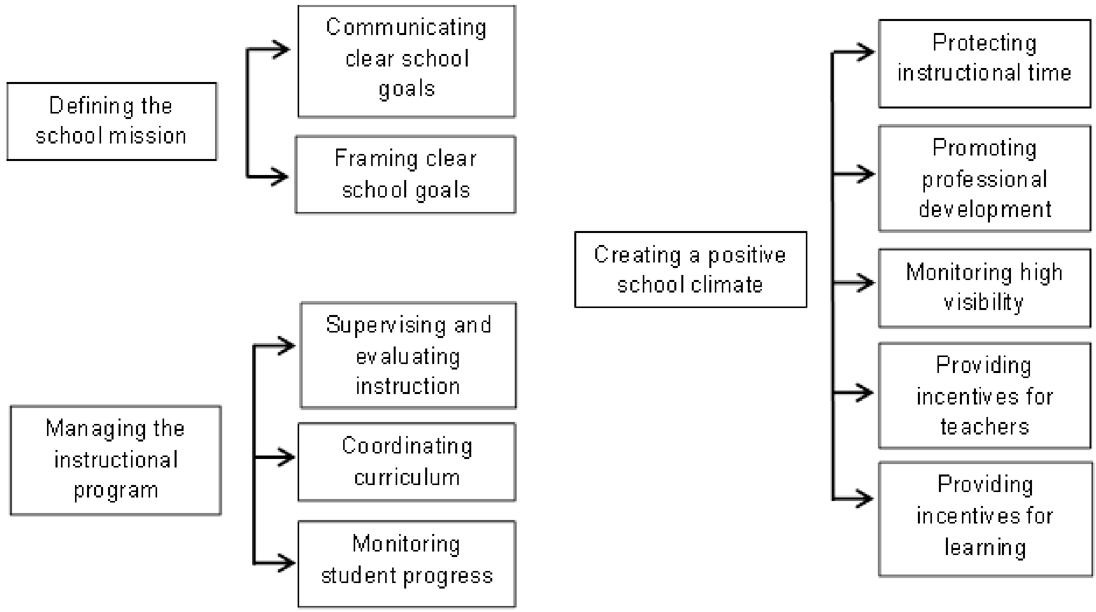


Figure 2.2: Principal Instructional Leadership and Management model

i) Defining the school mission

This dimension concerns the principal's role, together with those of the teachers, in determining the school's goals and mission (Hallinger, 2009, 2011b). The goals are focused on the academic progress of students. The principal needs to ensure that the goals are communicated clearly throughout the school community (Hallinger, 2009). This dimension assumes that, while the goals and mission are set together with the staff, the responsibility lies with the principal in ensuring that the goals and mission of the school are clear, measurable and understood by all (Hallinger, 2003). Hallinger (2009) further explains that the process of goal development is considered less important than the outcome.

ii) Managing the instructional programme

The second dimension of this model incorporates three practices that focus “on the role of the principal in ‘managing the technical core’ of the school” (Hallinger, 2011b: 277). Hallinger (2009: 9) explains that, within this dimension, the principal is required “to be deeply engaged in stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning in the school”. Hallinger (2005) maintains that these practices demand that the principal possesses expertise in teaching and learning as well as commitment to improving the school’s performance. The three instructional leadership practices included of this dimension suggest “that coordination and control of the academic program of the school are key leadership responsibilities of the principal” (Hallinger, 2011b).

iii) Creating a positive school climate

The third dimension bears more instructional leadership practices compared to the previous two dimensions. Hallinger (2005) explains that, through the enactment of these practices, the principal creates a culture that fosters and rewards continuous learning and improvement and this could be achieved by developing high standards and expectations for students and teachers. In order to create a positive school climate, the responsibility lies with the instructional leader to “align the school’s standards and practices with its mission and to create a climate that supports teaching and learning” (Hallinger, 2003: 333). Hallinger (2011b: 277) acknowledges that this dimension is “broader in scope and intent than the second dimension and overlaps with dimensions incorporated into transformational leadership frameworks”.

Previous research on instructional leadership

Hallinger (2011c: 272) claims that “instructional leadership had become the most prevalent perspective adopted by researchers engaged in the study of school leadership". The interest in instructional leadership has "metamorphosed from a largely North American perspective into a construct with international currency" (ibid: 272). Whilst school leadership research that adopts instructional leadership is in abundance within the Western sphere (apart from research carried out by Hallinger and colleagues, other notable research include Bendikson et al., 2012; Coldren & Spillane, 2007; Gumus & Akcaoglu, 2013; Kaparou & Bush, 2015; Quinn, 2002; Robinson, 2010), research that adopts and contains instructional leadership in Malaysia and to some extent, Southeast Asia is still emerging.

Hallinger and Walker (2017: 139) suggest that "the earliest mention of instructional leadership [in Asia] would have been in Malaysia and Singapore in the mid-1990s". However, they argue that the understanding of instructional leadership's concept and its related principles and practices in the region is understood at a much slower pace. Hallinger and Murphy (2013: 7) further contend that "it is only in the past decade that instructional leadership and its alter ego 'leadership for learning' have attained broader international currency". Nevertheless, instructional leadership is one of the main leadership models researched in Malaysia (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013b; Harris et al., 2017), compared to transformational and distributed leadership.

The local research carried out on the extent to which instructional leadership is practised amongst Malaysian principals suggest that it is carried out to varying degrees. For example, Muhamad Latip and Robiah (2008) note that principals in selected schools in the state of Selangor were perceived by their teachers to enact instructional leadership practices 'sometimes'. The principals claim to enact only four out of ten instructional leadership practices 'frequently' while the rest were claimed to be enacted 'sometimes'. Similarly, Quah (2011: 1798), who also adopted Hallinger's instructional leadership framework in her study, which involved selected principals in the state of Johor, asserts that "not all [of the instructional] practices are given full attention" by the principals.

Azlin (2008), in her study of six principals who are deemed to be excellent[6], found that these principals spent only 0.3% of their time supervising instructional activities in their schools. These principals also allocated only 1% of their time to teaching. Azlin reveals that these principals spent almost half of their time meeting teachers, support staff, visitors and students. The principals spent 20% of their time attending and chairing meetings, and a similar amount of time was spent on administrative work. The only instructional activity undertaken by the principals was 'walking about', which took up 9% of their total time.

More recently, Harris et al. (2017: 217) explored the instructional leadership practices of 30 Malaysian school principals and found that the principals are "engaged in some of the core work of instructional leaders". Harris and colleagues identified that the instructional leadership practice enacted the most by these principals was promoting professional development. Jamelaa and Jainabee (2011a) also agree that the instructional leadership practices of the principals in their study are not all encompassing, when referenced against Hallinger's model of an instructional leadership framework. Muhamad Latip and Robiah (2009) found that the principals involved in their study were perceived by their teachers to enact instructional leadership practices only moderately. The findings of their study reveal an overall mean score of 3.629 when measured by the Hallinger's PIMRS survey. Sharma (2011: 5) points out that the results from her study indicate that principals were rated by their teachers as having "moderate levels of leadership capacities and leadership qualities" including that of instructional leadership.

Previous research carried out within the context of local high performing schools suggests that instructional leadership is practised to a greater extent than it is by their peers in other schools. Quah (2011), for example, found that principals in schools which consistently produce excellent results show a greater disposition towards instructional leadership compared to their peers in

[6] These six principals were deemed 'excellent' by the researcher, based on their service track record, excellent appraisal review and recommendation from the State Education Department.

schools with satisfactory academic performance. Similarly, Sharifah, Zaidatol Akmaliah, and Suhaimi (2008) compare instructional leadership practices amongst principals in high, average and low performing schools. They note that, while the majority of the instructional leadership practices were observed to be carried out by principals in all schools, there were “some practices of excellent school principals [in the high performing schools] which are exemplary and need to be noted by other instructional leaders” (Sharifah et al., 2008: 237). For example, the principals of the high performing schools had established a “five-year excellence plan” while their peers had plans reflecting only that particular academic year. Finally, Murni et al. (2016) explored the instructional leadership practices of three principals leading high performing schools. They discovered that, whilst the principals understood the notion and expectation of instructional leadership, the principals nevertheless emphasise only certain aspects of this leadership model. The principals stated that, although administrative duties dominate their daily schedule, supervising teachers’ instruction was the instructional leadership practice that was carried out the most.

Factors that might limit instructional leadership in Malaysia

Whilst the MEB emphasises the role of Malaysian principals as instructional leaders, previous local research suggests that instructional leadership is not given the desired attention by the principals. One of the ongoing debates of managing instructional leadership is the need to balance it with existing administrative duties. Hallinger (2007: 3) laments that principals’ management duties have put a heavy demand on their time and, as a result, the “majority of their work activities may be unrelated to instructional leadership”. Leithwood, Patten, and Jantzi (2010: 698) argue that, although “teachers and students would benefit from the type of instructional leadership”; it is, nevertheless “fraught with difficulties”. They highlight that one of the difficulties that principals face is the wide range of administrative challenges. Hence, there is a gap that exists between the principal’s role as an instructional leader and their day-to-day administrative duties (Leonard, 2010). Ironically, the workplace conditions and demands, which are largely cultivated by the policymakers, have moderated their attempt to cultivate an instructional leadership role for school principals (Hallinger, 2007).

In the previous section, the author highlighted the need for principals to strike a balance between carrying out leadership roles alongside administration and management. As instructional leadership represents one of the more prominent leadership roles that directly supports teaching and learning in schools, the imbalance between management and administration with instructional leadership remains prevalent in Malaysian schools. For example, the EDP found that “school heads/principals often give less priority to their role as instructional leaders as compared to [that of] administrators” (Ministry of Education, 2001: 7-11). A 2012 principals’ survey, highlighted in the MEB, found that planning and administration still ranked as the most important skills which the principals believe they need (Ministry of Education, 2013). This survey is consistent with Lee and Hallinger’s (2012) study, which reports that principals in developing countries, with a strong hierarchical organisational structure, such as Malaysia, tend to spend more time on administrative duties as compared to instructional leadership.

Previous research in Malaysia also reported a degree of imbalance between managing and administrating with school leadership (for example, Azlin, 2008; Bity Salwana, Ahmad Basri, Ramlee, & Mohammed Sani, 2010; Ghafar & Arbak, 2008; Quah, 2011; Tahir, Hamdan, Sidek, Yassin, & Yusof, 2008). Quah (2011) further argues that principals fail to perform their role as instructional leaders because they are more focused on administrative work and school management rather than on matters of instruction. She found that Malaysian principals tend to perform more administrative duties so that they have less time to spend on instructional responsibilities.

Robinson (2006: 71) observes that there are important mismatches between the contexts in which principals currently work and the conditions that would enable them to be stronger instructional leaders. She highlights the concern with the scope of the principal’s current job and the intensity of focus that is required to lead or oversee a successful programme of instructional improvement. Robinson (2006) believes that most principals are burdened with a heavy administrative workload and, as a result, it takes up considerably more hours per month compared to the hours spent on instructional leadership. However, Robinson's view on the burden of principals is rhetorically dismissed in the MEB which expects principals to enjoy "a reduced administrative burden so that they can focus their energy on instructional leadership" (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-24).

Muijs (2011: 53) admits that the dualism of instructional leadership and management must be taken into consideration. Muijs adds that instructional leadership is usually seen as a matter of degree rather than an absolute, and it is acknowledged that administrative functions remain a component of the principals' work. However, if instructional leadership has become the priority in Malaysia, then it is important to negotiate between the existing administrative workload of principals and the expectation that they should carry out instructional leadership.

Transformational leadership

Valentine and Prater (2011: 7) suggest that, by the late 1990s, researchers believed that the conception of "the principal as instructional leader was ill suited for the changing contexts in which schools' function". This is further echoed by Hallinger (2007: 2) who concedes that the introduction of school restructuring in North America during the 1990s had propelled the concept of transformational leadership ahead and it actually "began to eclipse instructional leadership's popularity". Whilst instructional leadership is focused on the school context, transformational leadership is widely used in multiple organisational contexts, especially in business organisations (Bass & Bass, 2008; Northouse, 2016).

The transformational leadership approach was first developed by Burns (1978) and was expanded by Bass (1985). Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) agree that the vast majority of empirical research on transformational leadership has been restricted to the measurement of transformational leadership behaviours based on Bass's work. However, Hallinger (2003) acknowledges that Leithwood and his colleagues (see Leithwood et al., 1999) have carried out the most substantial adaptation of Bass's transformational leadership model in the field of educational leadership and management. They have developed a set of transformational leadership practices which "largely subsume and extend beyond Bass"; and their primary focus was to better capture the practices of leaders working in school organisations (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) maintain that, while instructional leadership has an important influence on how teachers adopt changes in their classroom practices, transformational approaches to school leadership seem to hold considerable promise for this purpose.

Transformational leadership is usually described as leadership that transforms individuals and organisations through an appeal to vision, values and long-term goals (Muijs, 2011). Bush (2011: 85) agrees that the transformational leadership model "is comprehensive in that it provides a normative approach to school leadership which focuses primarily on the process by which leaders seek to influence school outcomes, rather than on the nature or direction of those outcomes".

Whilst the focus of instructional leadership is specifically on the teaching and learning in the school, transformational leadership "assumes the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members" (Leithwood et al., 1999: 9). Hence, Leithwood and colleagues (see Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009; Leithwood et al., 1999) believe that the central purpose of transformational leadership is the enhancement of the individual and collective capacities of the members in the schooling community. Accordingly, principals who are transformational leaders must play a key role in "establishing the school as an intellectual environment", and this could be achieved by extending personal concern for fellow teachers, and inspiring them to their best efforts (Printy et al., 2009: 505).

Even though “transformational leadership lacked an explicit focus on curriculum and instruction” (Marks & Printy, 2003: 373), it nevertheless creates a shared sense of direction, clear goals and support and encouragement for teachers by the principals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Hence, while transformational leadership might not have a direct influence on student performance, it is likely that the impact of transformational leadership on student performance is mediated through the schools’ internal conditions (Barker, 2007; Leithwood et al., 1999; Stewart, 2006). The internal conditions include teachers’ motivation and commitment.

Leithwood and Sun (2012: 405) found that specific leadership practices with the greatest influence on both teacher commitment and motivation were those related to the practices of transformational leadership such as developing people (i.e., modelling and providing intellectual stimulation and individualised support), and developing a shared vision (a direction-setting practice). Central to the concept of transformational leadership is the ability of the principals to maintain, sustain and improve teachers’ motivation and commitment (Geijsel, Sleegers, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009). Leithwood et al. (2008) claim that school leaders are able to improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on teachers’ motivation and commitment. Teacher motivation and commitment are important precursors for achieving the schools’ goals and mission (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

The MEB indicates that, in order for the education system to improve, it is pivotal to place “strong transformational leaders” at every level, including schools (Ministry of Education, 2013: 8-10). Hussein (2014a) agrees that transformational leaders are needed to support education reform in Malaysia. Hence, “principals in Malaysia are now viewed as transformational leaders who are expected to lead change and improve performance in line with national expectations” (Jones et al., 2015: 356).

A conceptual model of transformational leadership

The original conception of school transformational leadership, according to Leithwood and colleagues (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1994; Leithwood et al., 1999), is conceptualised in terms of three main categories. Each of the three categories has its corresponding dimensions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). "Each dimension is made up of multiple, more specific, practices which encourage contingent responses on the part of leaders depending on the contexts of their work" (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006: 205). This conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 2.3.

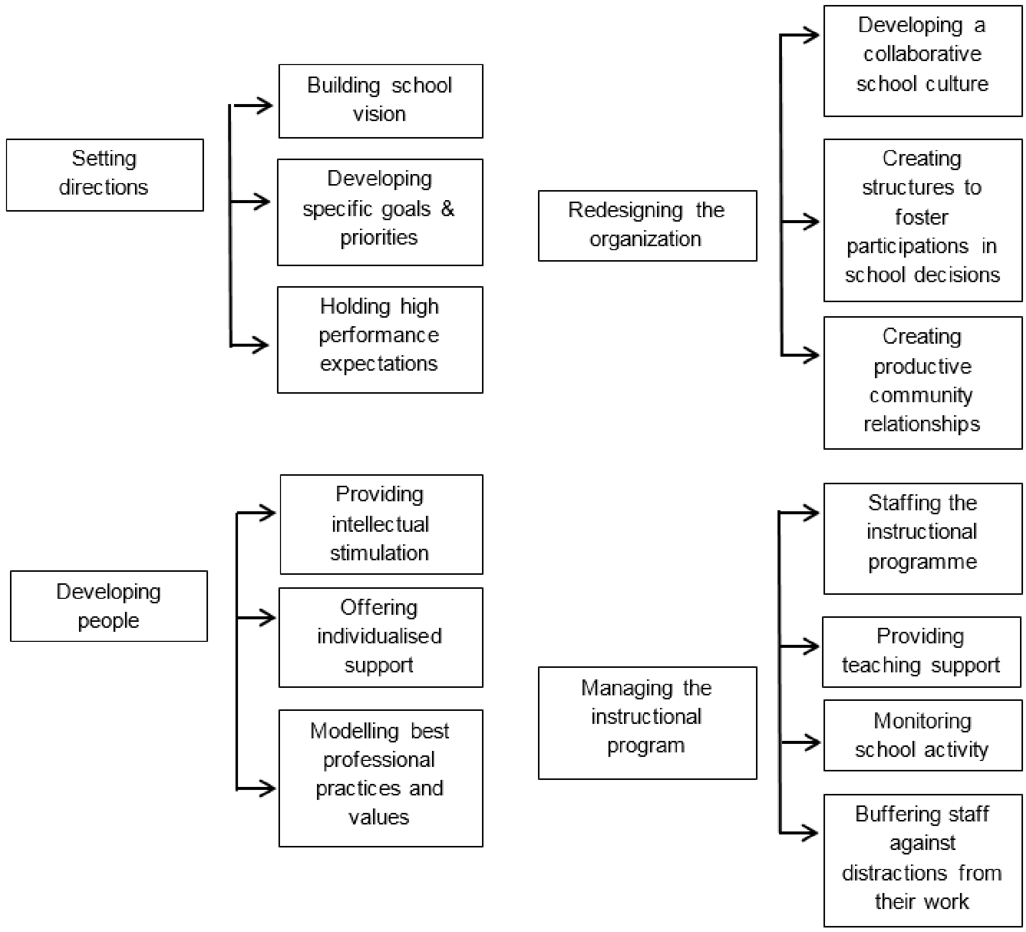


Figure 2.3: Transformational leadership model (Leithwood, 2010; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006b)

Recently, the three main categories of transformational leadership have been expanded to include one additional dimension of improving the instructional programme (Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Leithwood et al., 2006a; Leithwood &

Riehl, 2003). Leithwood and Sun (2012: 401) reason that the development and inclusion of this set of leadership practices represent the most substantial difference between the models of transformational leadership developed for school and non-school contexts. They also acknowledge that these practices overlap with models of instructional leadership but are included to create a "purpose-built" model of transformational leadership appropriate for school contexts.

i) Setting directions

This first category includes dimensions aimed at "developing goals for schooling and inspiring others with a vision of the future" (Leithwood & Day, 2007a: 5). Leithwood and Sun (2012) claim that the most powerful leadership practices influencing school performance are those related to the dimension of setting directions. This category of practices carries the bulk of the effort to motivate leaders' colleagues. It is about the establishment of shared purpose as a basic stimulant for one's work (Leithwood et al., 2006a: 6). Direction-setting leadership practices have direct and significant impacts on teachers' inner states and they foster teacher efforts to work towards school goals and vision (Sun & Leithwood, 2015: 512). Leithwood and Jantzi (2009: 47) point out that having goals would allow the school community and members to "find meaning in their work and enable them to find a sense of identity for themselves within their work context".

Within this category, three other specific practices are relevant to the how leaders set directions. These include building the school's vision; developing specific goals; and holding high performance expectations. Geijsel et al. (2003) suggest that the vision-building dimension of transformational leadership appears to have the greatest potential to influence this source of teacher motivation. Transformational school leaders develop and articulate a shared vision for their schools that "is appealing and inspiring to staff" (Leithwood & Sun, 2012: 400).

While visions can be inspiring, Leithwood believes that agreement on the more immediate goals is required in order to move toward fulfilling the vision. Leithwood and Jantzi (2009) explain that clear organisational goals will lead to increased motivation amongst the members of the organisation. Transformational school leaders who set directions for their schools are also clear in conveying their expectations for quality and high performance and these leaders help others to "understand the challenging nature of the goals being pursued" (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003: 5).

ii) Developing people

Leithwood and Riehl (2003) explain that most tasks in schools are carried out through the efforts of the teachers and other staff members. Therefore, effective educational leaders influence and encourage the development of human resources in their schools. However, Leithwood and Jantzi (2009: 47) argue that the ability to develop people depends on the "leaders' knowledge of what is required to improve the quality of teaching and learning". Although the ability to engage teachers in the core business of teaching and learning is often invoked as a key dimension of instructional leadership, Leithwood argues that the emotional aspect of school leadership is equally important in increasing the level of teaching performance of the teachers. In essence, the practice of developing people relates to the building of the personal and professional capacity of the teachers which are necessary to create and sustain the 'communities of practice' prescribed in the literature (Jacobson, 2011).

Hence, the primary aim of this component is capacity building (Leithwood, 2010). Developing people is deemed to be part of the transformational leadership practices that contribute directly or indirectly to the development of the teachers' dispositions, motivations and skills that are required for them to effectively contribute to the success and performance of the schools (Leithwood et al., 1999). Developing people consists of three practices: providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualised support; and modelling best values and practices.

Intellectual stimulation is achieved through four strategies (Leithwood et al., 1999). These are: changing school norms that might constrain teachers' thinking; challenging the status quo; encouraging new initiatives; and bringing colleagues into contact with new ideas. Individualised support, on the other hand, includes two facets (Leithwood et al., 1999). One facet involves considerate treatment of fellow professionals such as being approachable and protecting teachers from excessive intrusions on their professional work. The second facet involves support for professional development. Finally, modelling best values and practices entails leading by example (Leithwood et al., 2006b). Setting positive examples for others is considered one of the key practices that would enhance the teachers' beliefs about their own capacities which are modelled against their principals.

iii) Redesigning the organisation

The third category of transformational leadership suggests that effective leaders would enable the school to function as a professional learning community, in addition to supporting and sustaining the performance of teachers and students (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009). Leithwood et al. (2004: 25) add that "this category of leadership practices has emerged from recent evidence about the nature of learning organizations and professional learning communities and their contribution to staff work and student learning".

Redesigning the organisation involves creating an environment that promotes a collaborative school culture; creating a structure that promotes shared decision-making; and fostering school-community relationships. The first two elements also link to elements of distributed leadership. Harris (2010) maintains that schools with a collaborative culture are more likely to be able to improve student performance and achievement. Transformational school leaders who promote collaborative school culture also ensure that "staff participate in decisions about programs and instruction, establish working conditions that facilitate staff collaboration for planning and professional growth, and distribute leadership broadly among staff" (Leithwood & Sun, 2012: 401).

iv) Managing the instructional programme

This dimension includes practices with a focus on teaching and learning which are not found in the other three dimensions of transformational leadership (Leithwood, 2011). Whilst this dimension was included only after the publication of Leithwood et al.'s (1999) seminal work, it does raise some potential confusion about the effects of this set of practices, which appear to be linked to the instructional leadership model proposed by Hallinger (Leithwood et al., 2006b).

Leithwood (2010) agrees with the original transformational model offered by Bass (1998) but finds it problematic to replicate the transformational-transactional leadership continuum in which 'transactional' is often considered to be a management practice. Hence, as a result, Leithwood and his colleagues have replaced transactional leadership with managerial practices in their school-specific model of transformational leadership (Leithwood, 2010). Leithwood et al. (2006b) believe that this fourth dimension of school transformational leadership practices is dissimilar to the instructional leadership offered by Hallinger as the focus is on the managerial behaviours of the principals. However, scholars such as Boberg and Bourgeois (2016), and Scheerens (2012) feel that Leithwood's fourth transformational leadership dimension overlaps with at least two of Hallinger's three aspects of instructional leadership.

Whilst the adoption and inclusion of this dimension has been welcomed by scholars who are part of the International Successful School Principal Project (ISSPP) (Leithwood & Day, 2007b), the original conception of transformational leadership, which is based upon the first three dimensions, is still widely referred to by scholars (Bush, 2008b, 2011; Hallinger, 2007; Marks & Printy, 2003). The reference to the first three dimensions of the transformational leadership model also appears even in some of Leithwood's work (Geijsel et al., 2003; Leithwood, 2005; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Previous research on transformational leadership

The educational leadership literature suggests specific transformational strategies that enable principals to strengthen teacher commitment towards achieving common goals. For example, Geijsel et al. (2003), in examining the effects of transformational school leadership on teachers' commitment to change, found that the vision-building dimension of transformational leadership is the only leadership dimension that significantly influenced teachers' commitment towards goals.

Barker (2007) argues that, although transformational leadership is an important strand in education policy, few studies suggest that school leaders have more than a small, indirect impact on achievement. For example, Valentine and Prater (2011), in a study involving 155 principals in Missouri, United States of America, suggest that the several transformational leadership dimensions were identified as contributing to positive student achievement. This was attained through the second-order changes that facilitate the growth of teachers through establishing a vision and emphasising a collaborative approach to decision-making and governance processes. The principals' transformational leadership practices set an example for staff members to follow, consistent with the values that the leader espouses, inspiring others with his or her vision of the future, and fostering group goals that transcend personal ambitions.

A meta-analysis carried out by Robinson et al. (2008) suggest that the average effect of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times that of transformational leadership. Nonetheless, Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) who carried out a study that was set in the context of England's National Numeracy and Literacy reform found that transformational leadership had a moderate and significant effect on teachers' classroom practices. Consequently, this suggests that transformational leadership should also be highlighted as one of the possible avenues for principals to improve teachers' performance.

However, the author has not identified any Malaysian research that links transformational leadership with student outcomes. Previous research carried out in Malaysia in relation to transformational leadership ranges from focusing on the extent to which principals exhibit such leadership practices as well as examining teachers' efficacy and organisational commitment in relation to transformational leadership. For example, Ling et al. (2015) found that the principals in selected secondary schools in Malaysia were perceived to exhibit a positive level of transformational school leadership. They also carried out multiple regression analyses to test the hypothesised relationships between the principals' transformational leadership practices and teacher efficacy. The test indicates that transformational school leadership practices – which include the domains of developing school goals, modelling good behaviour, and providing individual support – contribute significantly to teachers' efficacy.

Abdul Ghani and Anandan (2009), similarly, examine the effect of principals' transformational leadership practice towards teachers' instructional commitment in their study of selected secondary schools in one of the northern states of Malaysia. The multiple regression analysis indicates that principals' transformational leadership contributed significantly to the teachers' instructional commitment. Aziah, Abdul Ghani, and Abdullah (2009) conducted research to establish the differences in transformational leadership practices between two secondary school principals in Malaysia. The research also set out to examine the correlation between the principals' transformational leadership and teachers' leadership capacity. The results indicate that the principal in School A showed moderate enactment of transformational leadership compared to the principal in School B, who displayed a high level of transformational leadership practice. However, their study did not show any signification correlation between the principals' transformational leadership practices and the leadership capacity of the teachers in both schools.

Mohd Izham, Fuziah, Norazah, and Saemah (2011) carried out a quantitative study to gauge the perceptions of teachers from six high performing schools in Malaysia on the extent to which their principals exhibit transformational leadership qualities. The focus of transformational leadership qualities in their study was confined to fostering idealised influence; providing inspirational motivation; creating intellectual stimulation; and showing individualised consideration. The dimension of providing inspirational motivation was rated the highest by the teachers. Nonetheless, they found that the teachers perceived their principals to be enacting transformational leadership practices highly overall. They further found that there is a significant but moderate positive relationship between transformational leadership enacted by principals and the teachers' learning organisational practices.

More recently, Jamilah et al. (2017), in a study carried out in three high performing schools in Malaysia, claimed that the principals show evidence of transformational leadership practices that include setting the direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and high performing management. In addition, they found that the principals encourage an ‘open door policy’ that strengthens their relationship with the teachers. Jamilah and colleagues conclude the positive values and practices made them accessible and a great model to their subordinates.

Critics of transformational leadership

Gronn (2002: 426) outlines that one of the main concerns with transformational leadership is the value and emphasis “attached to the concentration of influence in individual leaders”. Gurr (2002) adds that the influence process is ambiguous. Gurr (2002: 85) further explains that:

> “…there is too much emphasis on the leader-follower dyadic processes and not enough on the leader influence on group and organisational processes, both transformational and transactional behaviours are ambiguous and lack theoretical clarity, important behaviours are not included in the theory, situational and negative effects are not given sufficient consideration, and there is an undue emphasis on heroic leadership”.

Hallinger (2003), and Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), further suggest that practices associated with transformational leadership may be widely distributed throughout the organisation. This suggestion has led Browning (2014: 391) to suggest that Leithwood's transformational model does not assume that the principal alone provides the leadership to create the conditions or dimensions described, but instead, the principal shares leadership with teachers. Hence, Browning believes that it is rather difficult to capture the actual impact of the principals when the underlying ethos of transformational leadership is that the leadership of teams can be collectively transformational as well as distributive.

Transformational leadership is also criticised for being a form of control over teachers and for transformational practices more likely being accepted by the school leaders than by the teachers (Bush, 2011). For example, Bush and Glover (2014) offer a cautionary note on the process of influencing others in order to achieve the vision, particularly in relation to the transformational leadership model. They suggest that leaders may use the influencing process as a vehicle for the manipulation or control of their followers who are required to support the 'vision' and aims of the leader. This is supported by Yukl (1999: 298) who adds that, "when people give substantial power to a leader with an appealing vision of a better future, the power is often misused while the vision remains an empty dream". Therefore, visions must have an explicit ethical and moral component that are in line with professional and personal values (Gill, 2011).

In addition, scholars also argue that vision and how it is developed must be carried out collectively (Hallinger & Heck, 2002; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Stronge, Richard, & Catano, 2008) . Their position is aligned with that of Yukl (1999) who maintains that vision is usually the product of a collective effort, not the creation of a single, exceptional leader. Bush and Middlewood (2005: 10) further argue that "people are more likely to understand, and to seek to implement, the vision if they have been involved in its development. If the school is to be democratic, it is inadequate for the head or principal to enunciate the vision without the participation of others with a legitimate interest in the outcome".

Distributed leadership

Hoy and Miskel (2008: 438) argue that approaches such as instructional leadership and transformational leadership "emphasise, or in some cases romanticise, leadership by individuals such as principals as being the key to school effectiveness". Hence, the turn of the new millennium has seen a greater focus being given to distributed leadership (Bolden, 2011; Bush, 2011; Harris, 2012). Bolden, Petrov, and Gosling (2009) agree that the concept of distributed leadership is a useful and attractive alternative to the traditional 'leader-centric' models of leadership, suggesting instead that leadership is a property of the collective rather than the individual. Bush (2015b) also claims that the focus of attention in the studies of school leadership has switched to distributed leadership because of the limitations of other leadership models, particularly instructional leadership.

Harris (2013: 543) claims that distributed leadership has provided an alternative and powerful empirical lens on educational leadership research. The popularity of distributed leadership is reflected in the growing number of research articles published between 2002 and 2013. Tian, Risku, and Collin (2016) who carried out a meta-analysis of distributed leadership found that over 720,000 articles had been published within that period. Hence, suggesting that distributed leadership is not just researched but also widely encouraged as a preferred way of leading (Lumby, 2016). It further emphasises the widespread acceptance of the positive nature of distributed leadership (Middlewood & Abbott, 2017: 9).

Woods, Bennett, Harvey, and Wise (2004: 425) believe that distributed leadership "attracts a range of meanings and is associated with a variety of practices". Hence, most scholars agree that the approaches to conceptually understand distributed leadership remain diverse and broad-based (Bennett, Wise, Woods, & Harvey, 2003; Diamond & Spillane, 2016; Leithwood et al., 2007; Woods et al., 2004). Bennett et al. (2003: 6) explain that “there are few clear definitions of distributed or devolved leadership and that those that exist appear to differ from each other, sometimes widely and sometimes more in nomenclature than in essence”. Tian et al. (2016: 148), who selected and analysed 85 articles on distributed leadership, reveal that the challenge for most of the scholars and researchers “was the absence of an explicit and commonly accepted definition of the concept”.

Leithwood, Mascall, and Strauss (2009) believe that the definitions of distributed leadership differ from the normative to the descriptive and, not surprisingly, there are competing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of what distributed leadership means. For example, Lumby (2016) opines that distributed leadership is linked to general characteristics such as empowerment, collaboration and the inclusion of multiple leaders. Woods and Bennett (see Bennett et al., 2003; Woods et al., 2004) on the other hand equate distributed leadership with delegated leadership; democratic leadership and dispersed leadership. Leithwood et al. (2007), and Spillane (2005), also agree that democratic leadership overlaps with distributed leadership but they also include shared, team, collaborative, and participative leadership as having certain similarities with distributed leadership.

Take shared leadership for instance. Hallinger and Heck (2010b) and Dean (2007) both agree that the perspective of shared leadership is commonly reflected in the ideas of distributed school leadership. Crawford (2012: 612) also affirms that the idea of distributed leadership can be seen as part of a wider discussion of shared leadership. Hallinger and Heck (2010b) opine that the similarities of shared leadership with distributed leadership lie in the fact that it has the potential to account for the broader range of leadership processes that exist in schools beyond the formal leadership exercised by principals alone.

Harris (2005: 11), however, cautions against believing that distributed leadership is a “shorthand way of talking about shared leadership”. This leads to the argument that distributed leadership is often misinterpreted “as a convenient ‘catch all’ descriptor for any form of shared, collaborative or extended leadership practice” (Harris, 2009: 5). Hence, conceptual understanding of distributed leadership frequently ended “prematurely with an acknowledgement that multiple individuals take responsibility for leadership in schools” Spillane (2005: 144).

Spillane (2005: 144) explains that distributed leadership is “first and foremost about leadership practice rather than leaders or their roles, functions, routines, and structures”. Hence, distributed leadership is grounded in activity or practices instead of position or role (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). It further “implies broad-based involvement” of others in leadership practices, rather than a person in the position of power (Harris, 2008: 10). Distributed leadership practice therefore “recognises that leading and managing schools can involve multiple individuals” (Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Stitziel Pareja, & Lewis, 2008: 191).

Harris (2009) adds that one key feature which is necessary for distributed leadership to function successfully is the importance of distributed leadership to those who are capable and knowledgeable to carry out leadership tasks expected of them regardless of their position. Hence, distributed leadership pushes the locus of leadership beyond principals and senior managers, extending leadership roles to middle management and to teachers, both as individuals and as groups (MacBeath, 2005, 2010). This enables distributed leadership to “concentrate on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role” (Harris, 2004: 13). This is further supported by Bolden et al. (2009: 267) who also believe that distributed leadership should draw on individual strengths and experts rather than depending solely on formal leaders.

Whilst distributed leadership opens up avenues for other leaders to emerge, the principal still “retains a powerful role despite the rhetoric of distribution” (Abbott & Bush, 2013: 595). Therefore, one of the key requirements for this to happen is that leadership needs to be uncoupled from positional authority (Bush, 2011). Harris (2012) identifies the changing roles of principals as a precursor for any attempt to enact successful distributed leadership in schools. Harris (2012: 8) explains that principals need to relinquish “some authority and power” and reposition their roles “from exclusive leadership to a form of leadership that is more concerned with brokering, facilitating and supporting others in leading innovation and change”.

Abbott and Bush (2013) further add that the principal’s judgement about the extent and nature of distributed leadership is usually the decisive factor. This is supported by Torrance (2013) who found that perceived leadership roles of teachers are only “legitimised” by the head-teacher’s endorsement. This assertion is likely to be valid in a strictly hierarchical organisation, such as that in Malaysian schools, where power resides with the principals, and any leadership roles that are endorsed by the principals are normally within the senior leadership team circle. In dealing with this possible barrier, it is useful to adopt Harris’s (2008: 10) suggestion of “rearranging and removing those structural barriers that prevent teachers” from being involved with distributed leadership most effectively. Nonetheless, such action requires “risk taking by those in formal leadership positions” (ibid:10), and certainly, that would be a big ask in a highly structured and hierarchical system of Malaysian schools.

Another key concept of distributed leadership is offered by Spillane (2005). He believes that distributed leadership is a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situation. This concept is supported by Timperley (2005: 396), who acknowledges that most appear to agree, conceptually, that “distributed leadership is not the same as dividing task responsibilities among individuals who perform defined and separate organizational roles, but rather it comprises dynamic interactions between multiple leaders and followers”. Spillane (2006) adds that interactions between leaders and followers enable leadership practices to be generated by all members. Dynamic interactions between leaders and followers would enable principals to further understand and engage in the expertise across many members of the school rather than a selected few (Bennett et al., 2003; Middlewood & Abbott, 2017). For example, Harris (2008) suggests that interactions between leaders and teachers could influence the instructional practices of the school. Interactions that extend beyond the normal senior leadership circle to other teachers enable the principal to make school-based decisions that are governed by the interaction of many individuals, rather than one individual direction.

Delegation of tasks as misguided distributed leadership vs emergent leadership

When viewed in terms of the definition of distributed leadership, the applications of leadership distribution may easily become confounded with the mere distribution of management responsibilities (Leithwood et al., 2004: 7). Corrigan (2013: 66) rejects the notion of distributed leadership and views it as traditionally hierarchical management designed for contemporary organisations. One of the areas causing concern is the idea of allocating or delegating tasks to others. Although English (2008: 115) views distributed leadership as a “concept that some of the functions of leadership can be delegated or embedded in other persons or roles in an organisation”; Harris (2008) cautions against linking distributed leadership with mere delegation or allocation of tasks.

Rather than looking at the distribution of tasks or roles as a downward delegation to specific individuals, distributed leadership celebrates individual differences and sees these as fostering collective strengths when tasks are allocated (MacBeath, 2010). Hence, the distribution process of task allocation is concerned with achieving the right dynamics among people, and developing social trust, an essential precondition for development and learning for change (Mulford & Silins, 2003).

Abbott and Bush (2013) posit that there is only limited literature on the process of allocating or delegating tasks to team members. They further believe that “there is widespread support for the notion of clarifying roles and responsibilities but much less guidance on how tasks should be distributed” (ibid:591). Northouse (2016) agrees that, in most structures of any organisation, leaders at many levels are assigned with tasks that come with the position. However, when others perceive an individual as the most influential member of the organisation, albeit not assigned with any title or position, the person is exhibiting emergent leadership. Emergent leadership is one of the key values in distributed leadership (Bennett et al., 2003; Bolden et al., 2009).

Linked to Gronn’s (2002) concept of concertive action, emergent forms of leadership could strengthen how principals distribute leadership through the three concertive actions of spontaneous collaboration, intuitive working relations, and institutionalised practices. Woods et al. (2004), in emphasising distributed leadership as an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals, agree that concertive action is helpful in explicating and elaborating the emergent property within the organisation.

Distributed leadership processes

While instructional and transformational leadership are often conceptualised through the theoretical framework or models offered by Hallinger and Leithwood respectively, distributed leadership is translated into processes or ways for it to work. Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) also caution against assuming that distributed leadership is premised upon a specific model or framework. They believe that too much conceptual overlap can lead to confusion. Rather, they suggest that it is more useful to consider the conditions, strategies and approaches that would support positive distributed leadership in practice and that would allow for distributed leadership to work most effectively.

Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) agree that the process by which distributed leadership is enacted has been interpreted in several different ways. For example, Spillane (2006) suggests that distributed leadership consists of two components; the leadership-plus aspect and the practice aspect. The leader-plus aspect recognises that leadership work involves multiple leaders, both formally designated and informal leaders, who do not necessarily always pull in the same direction (Spillane, 2005). The leader-plus aspect “potentially involves more than the work of individuals in formal leadership positions – principal, assistant principal, and specialists; it can also involve individuals who are not formally designated leaders" (Spillane et al., 2008: 191). The practice aspect of distributed leadership, on the other hand, foregrounds the practice of leadership in a particular way. It sees leadership practice as a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situations (Spillane, 2006).

Gronn and MacBeath also suggest ways in which distributed leadership could be enacted. Gronn (2002) explains that distributed leadership could occur in several ways. He believes that distribution could be in the form of numerical action or concertive action. The former "allows for the possibility that all organisation members may be leaders at some stage" as the collective or aggregate leadership of an organisation "is dispersed among some, many, or maybe all, of the members" (Gronn, 2002: 429). The numerical form of distributed leadership "represents the aggregated effect of a number of individuals contributing their initiative and expertise in different ways to a group or organization" (Woods et al., 2004: 441). The latter, on the other hand, represents the process by which distributed leadership could be understood in a holistic sense rather than simply as the aggregation of individual contributions (Bolden, 2011). Concertive action assumes "that the sum of leaders' work adds up to more than the parts" (Leithwood et al., 2006b). Bolden et al. (2009: 267) posit that advocates of the concertive action approach would argue that distributed leadership should lead to greater cohesion and a sense of common purpose.

Gronn (2002) explains that there are three forms of concertive action linked to distributed leadership: (i) spontaneous collaboration; (ii) intuitive working relations; and (iii) institutionalised practices. Gronn's understanding of how distributed leadership works is summarised in Figure 2.4.

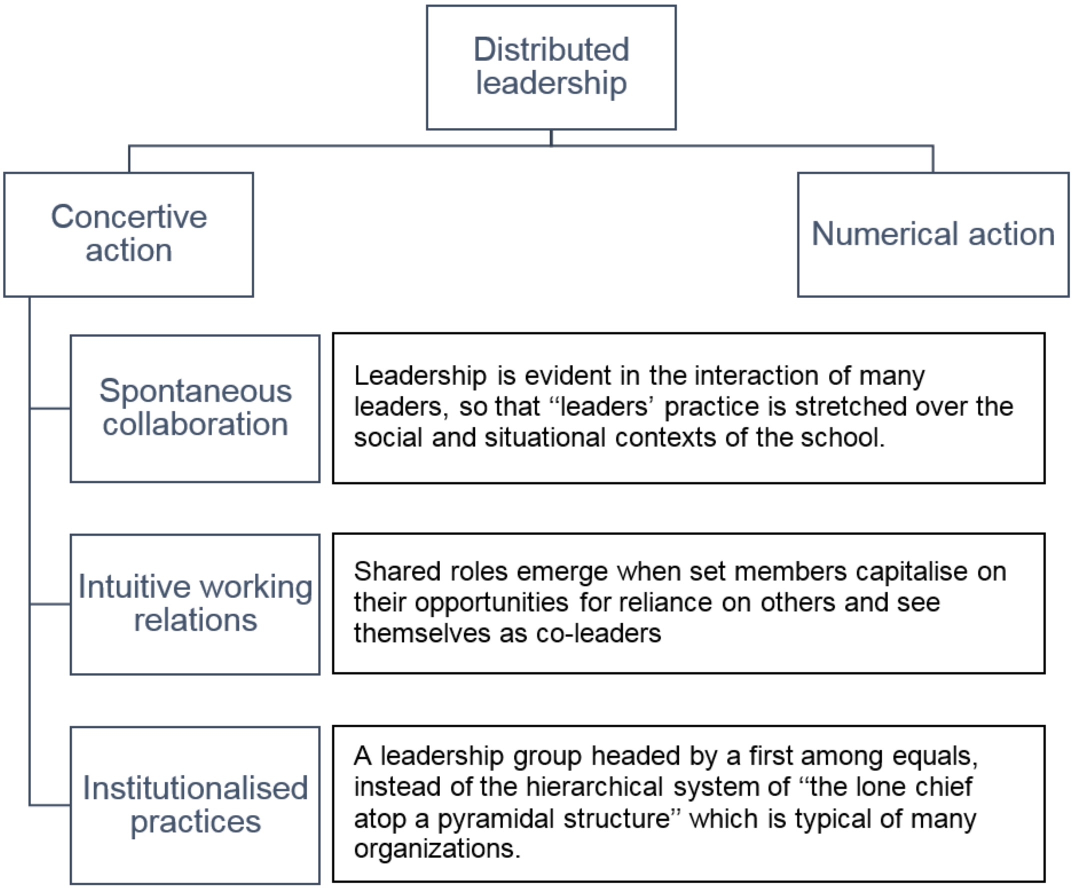


Figure 2.4: Distributed leadership concepts (Gronn, 2002)

Printy et al. (2009) agree that concertive action in distributing leadership demonstrates a more holistic approach, as the efforts of principals and teachers are synergised towards school improvement.

Apart from Gronn's concept in distributing leadership, MacBeath (2005) and colleagues (MacBeath, Oduro, & Waterhouse, 2004), identify six ways that represent the process of distributed leadership. This is represented by the taxonomy of distribution as presented in Figure 2.5.

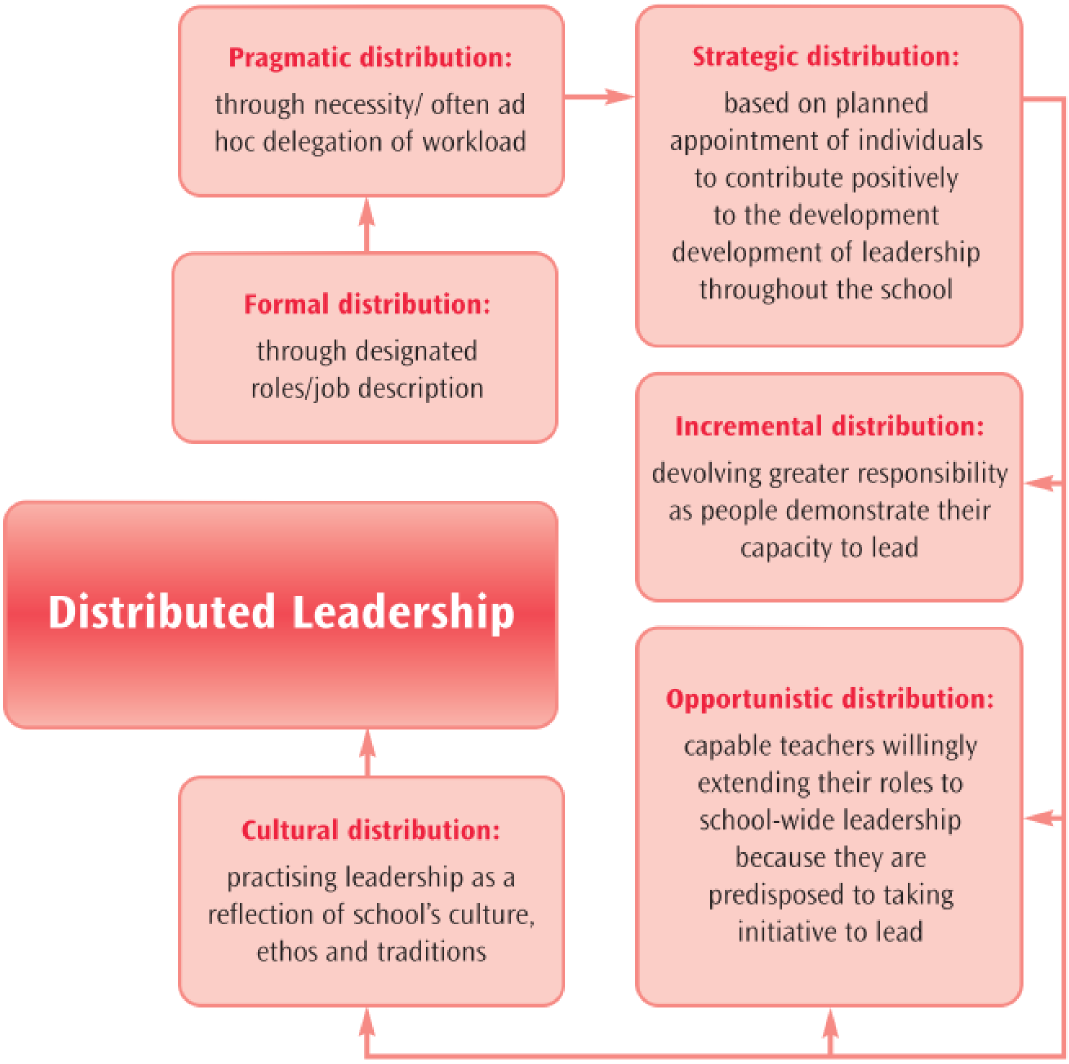


Figure 2.5: Taxonomy of distributed leadership (adopted from MacBeath et al., 2004: 35)

Formal distribution refers to the process by which tasks and activities are distributed to people with formal positions in the school. Although this process is a normal occurrence in any hierarchical organisation, the sense of 'ownership' and 'empowerment' are two important elements that differentiate formal distribution from mere task allocation based on designated positions (MacBeath et al., 2004).

Pragmatic distribution, according to MacBeath (2005: 358), is characterised by its ad hoc quality. MacBeath believes that, "in an environment of increasing demands, decisions about the ‘the right people’ is a pragmatic one, informed by a knowledge of staff capable of sharing the burden and judging how far individual capacity can be further squeezed”.

Strategic distribution promotes a distributed leadership process that has a long-term target in view. MacBeath (2005: 349) maintains that, “if formal leadership adheres to structure and protocol and pragmatic leadership is ad hoc, the distinguishing feature of strategic distribution is its goal orientation. It is not about pragmatic problem solving but is focused on a longer-term goal of school improvement”.

Central to incremental distribution is the notion that the capacity of the person with the task, role or responsibilities distributed by their leader is nurtured to grow. “Its distinctive purpose is sponsored growth. Its orientation is essentially a professional development one in which, as people prove their ability to exercise leadership, they are given more” (MacBeath, 2005: 350).

MacBeath (2005) views the opportunistic distribution process as akin to dispersed leadership. He further explains that leadership capacity “is taken rather than given. It is assumed rather than conferred. It is opportunistic rather than planned. It suggests a situation in which there is such strength of initiative within the school that capable, caring teachers willingly extend their roles to school-wide leadership (MacBeath, 2005: 361).

The final mode of distribution based upon MacBeath’s taxonomy explains that distributed leadership is already embedded in the school ethos. MacBeath et al. (2004: 43) believe that, once schools have built distributed leadership into their culture, “the conscious process is no longer applicable because people exercise initiative spontaneously and collaboratively with no necessary identification of leaders or followers”.

Key considerations for making distributed leadership work in Malaysia

The adoption of distributed leadership by the MEB is seen as a positive step towards acknowledging the impact that it could bring to the schooling organisations in Malaysia. The MEB acknowledges that, in order for principals to lead effectively, their leadership roles must be supported and distributed to other senior leadership team members.

> Research also shows that top performing school systems are moving away from the idea of one “heroic” leader to one of “distributed leadership” where assistant principals and other members of middle management, such as subject heads, have a greater share in decision making in schools (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-13).

In making the connection to the literature, the author identifies two areas which distributed leadership must consider. First, the distributed leadership approach espoused in the MEB suggests that distribution is limited to the senior leadership team members only. However, the essence of distributed leadership goes beyond the normal circle of school administrators to include other teachers. It is the notion that distributed leadership allows for leadership capacity to be extended beyond positional power. Harris (2012) highlights the importance of distributing leadership to teachers and how it could impact positively on student learning and teacher efficacy. She also agrees that distributing leadership to teachers can support positive instructional change. Hence, the Ministry of Education division, responsible for drawing up guidelines and suggestions as to how Malaysian principals can carry out distributed leadership effectively, must take into consideration that leadership distribution goes beyond the administrative team and is “stretched over [many] people” (Diamond & Spillane, 2016: 148) in the organisation.

Secondly, similar to the arguments of instructional leadership being the focus of policymakers, the adoption of distributed leadership as a policy initiative in a highly centralised system must be taken with caution. Middlewood and Abbott (2017) question the positive impact that distributed leadership brings to school if the practice is forced upon the principals. Whilst the principals have the prerogative to ‘distribute’ and delegate the task in order to support any policies introduced by the government, often it is carried out at the expense of the teachers. “The pressure that teachers have been placed under… in order to deliver centrally directed policies, have created an increased workload and often placed teachers in difficult positions” (Middlewood & Abbott, 2017: 9).

Hallinger and Walker (2017) also discuss the challenge of implementing distributed leadership within a strong hierarchical educational system such as that in Malaysia. They believe that principals in Malaysia, as with other countries such as China and Vietnam, “continue to struggle to find the right balance between unitary decision-making and teacher involvement in decisions that affect teaching and learning” (Hallinger & Walker, 2017: 136). Consideration must be given to the strict hierarchical nature of Malaysian schools. While it is considered as an emerging leadership approach, as acknowledged in the MEB, distributed leadership must consider the extent to which control and autonomy are ceded by principals to others exercising leadership.

Previous research on distributed leadership

Lumby (2016: 161) argues that, because there is “no adequate definition of distributed leadership to identify it as a distinctive way of leading”, distributed leadership has “no credible way of promoting it as action or of assessing its impact” on students’ learning. Her argument is supported by Hairon and Goh (2015: 694) who “[remain] agnostic about its impact on student achievement because of insufficient empirical data”. Hence, Harris (Harris, 2004; Harris & DeFlaminis, 2016) believe that more attempts should be made to measure how distributed leadership impacts on organisational outcomes.

Torrance (2013) carried out small-scale empirical research involving three head-teachers in Scotland. The study suggests that the head-teachers and their staff perceived a number of benefits arising from operating a distributed perspective in practice. They believed that a distributed perspective impacted positively on pupils’ school experience, through achieving both a faster pace of change as well as more embedded and sustainable change. Teachers felt this to be the case, particularly, in relation to curricular matters and to teaching, learning and assessment.

Supovitz and Tognatta (2013) carried out research to understand the impact of distributed leadership on collaborative team decision-making in 16 schools involved with the Distributed Leadership Project. Their study suggests that trust between principals and school members was positively associated with collaborative team decision-making. Trust is considered as the most powerful and positive predictor of collaborative decision-making teams.

The study of distributed leadership is also extended to senior leadership team members. For example, Abbott and Bush (2013), in their study of high performing senior leadership teams in several outstanding schools, found that distributed leadership is represented by senior leadership team members broadening the capabilities of other team members, as one aspect of career development, as well as taking them out of their comfort zones. Their findings support Pearce’s (2004) assertion that high performing teams display more dispersed leadership patterns, such as shared leadership. However, they did not find that distribution of tasks to senior leadership team members was based on their skills and expertise.

Mulford (2007) conducted research on five high performing schools in Tasmania, Australia, and found evidence that the success of those schools is related to the extent to which leadership opportunities are distributed throughout the school community, utilising the skills and experience of the school’s staff. Mulford (2007) asserts that the study of leadership in those schools provided evidence of the importance of distributed leadership. Similarly, Kondakci and Sivri (2013) carried out a study in nine high performing schools in Turkey and discovered that strong shared leadership is one of the pertinent characteristics in creating a climate of effectiveness in the schools selected for the study. Whilst their study focused on shared leadership, it could be seen to represent a broader construct of distributed leadership. The principals in the studied schools demonstrate their administrative authority by providing teachers and other stakeholders with opportunities for decision-making (Kondakci & Sivri, 2013).

Research on distributed leadership in Malaysia is sparse. Some of the limited research appears to contend that the distributed practices subsume dimensions of transformational leadership, particularly the dimension of redesigning the organisation. In addition, most locally published articles on Malaysian school leadership focus on instructional leadership. However, there are a few studies that reflect the distributed leadership practices of school principals.

Jamallulail, Aida Hanim, Surayati, and Md Fuad (2013) surveyed the relationship between principals' distributed leadership practices and teachers' motivation, with responses from 243 teachers. A mean analysis of the questionnaires used to measure the principals' distributed leadership practices suggests that the principals were perceived to enact a high degree of distribution. A linear Pearson correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the distributed leadership practices of the principals and the motivation of the teachers. Although the study established that there is a significant relationship between distributed leadership practices and the motivation level of the teachers, the relationship is statistically weak.

Zuraidah, Yahya, and Siti Noor (2014) seek to understand the relationship between the emotional competencies of school leaders and distributed leadership. Their emotional competency was measured using the Emotional Competency Inventory (Boyatzis, 1982), while distributed leadership practices were measured using the Leadership Practices Inventory (Kouzes & Posner, 2012). Their study suggests that there was a significant correlation, albeit at a moderate level, between the emotional competencies of the school leaders the extent to which they enact distributed leadership practices.

The Theoretical Framework that Guides this Study

The penultimate section of this chapter outlines the theoretical framework that guides this study. The author acknowledges the challenge of seeking to understand leadership practices which are construed from broad concepts such as instructional, distributed or transformational leadership. This is supported by Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004: 4) who assert that, in order to study leadership activity, “it is insufficient to generate thick descriptions based on observations of what school leaders do…[but instead]… we need to observe from within a conceptual framework if we are to understand the internal dynamics of leadership practice”.

Hence the author believes that, a theoretical framework which allows for the overlapping leadership models to be linked with each other is beneficial in negotiating and identifying key leadership practices without the rigidity of classifying each practice wholly in respect of one of the three models. As a result, the theoretical framework that guides this study, suggests that the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing involve elements from instructional, transformational and distributed leadership models. The theoretical framework also reinforces Wang et al’s. (2013) assertion, that linking several models, is an important approach because it draw on research findings collectively. More importantly, a theoretical framework that links several models together is able to make sense and explain complex ideas and relationships between the multitudes of leadership practices enacted by the principals.

The theoretical framework of this study, as explained in Figure 2.6, suggests that the principal leadership practices are examined from the perspectives of three leadership models.

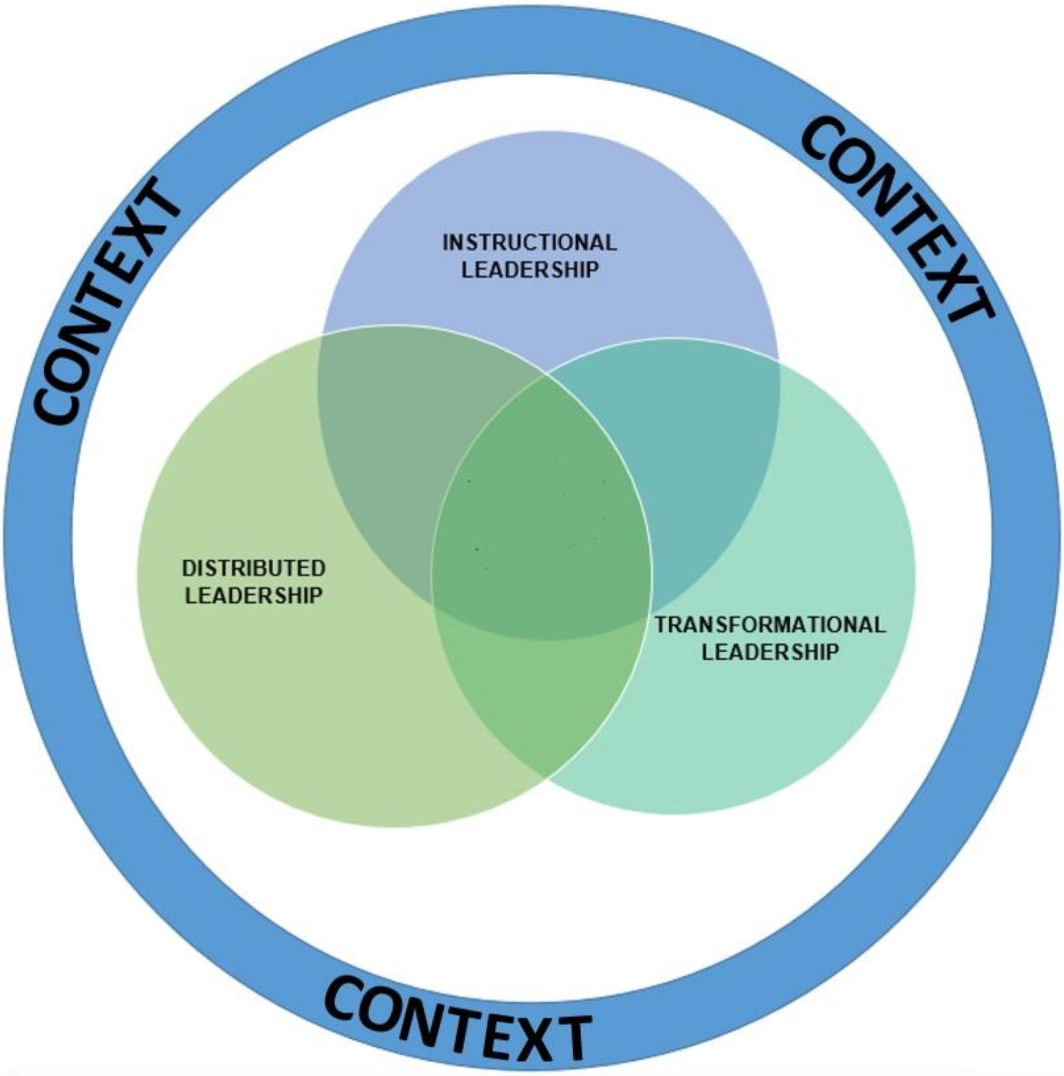


Figure 2.6: Theoretical framework for conceptualising the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing

The three circles represent each of the three leadership models and as the framework suggests, each of the model overlaps with each other. The theoretical framework is also supported by an outer blue ring that represents the context within which leadership is exercised. The context is an important element in understanding and studying educational leadership. It also supports Hallinger's (2007) assertion that an integrative model of educational leadership would link leadership to the needs of the school context. Without such specificity of leadership practices that transcends across the three leadership models, practitioners have little guidance for how they might be informed on the exact leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing and more importantly, contextualised in a local setting.

Gaps in the Literature

The aim of this study is to explore the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing in Malaysia. This study is set against the backdrop of the MEB which aims to place high performing principals in all schools. One of the challenges in reviewing the literature pertinent to this study is the lack of extensive research on educational leadership and management from Malaysian sources. The few empirical studies carried out since the publication of the MEB have yet to provide any meaningful comparison between the quality of school leadership pre and post-implementation. Current information about the implementation of the first wave (2013 – 2015) of the MEB is little more than an annual report published by the Ministry of Education. Hence, a gap exists in empirical research about whether, and to what extent, Malaysian school principals adopt instructional, transformational and distributed leadership differently since the introduction of the MEB.

Another gap in the literature is that school leadership models in Malaysia are still reliant upon theory and empirical findings from western socio-cultural contexts (Hallinger, 2011a). Western world-views tend to dominate the local literature on leadership (see for example, Ghafar & Arbak, 2008; Ibrahim & Wahab, 2012; Tahir & Abd Rahman, 2011; Zaidatol Akmaliah, 2012). The local literature on educational leadership and management is described by Bajunid (2008a: 226) as "descriptive and analytic but not critical since the tradition of criticism, publicly or openly expressed, is not yet acceptable to politicians, bureaucrats or even some academics". MacBeath and Townsend (2011: 2) argue that leadership is a concept "that has travelled across continents, its meaning in differing cultures deceptively similar but essentially different". However, the review reveals that "indigenous literature" (Bajunid, 1996) on how Malaysian scholars and thinkers construct the idea of leadership, in particular, school leadership, is barely visible and mostly absent from the international literature (Harris et al., 2017).

The review of local research also suggests that leadership practice is mostly studied through a single theoretical lens, therefore offering a uni-dimensional perspective (see for example, Ghavifekr, Lim, Hee, and Tan, 2014; Jamelaa and Jainabee, 2011a; Rahimah, Ali Jubran, and Simin, 2017; and Sharifah et al., 2008). The author believes that there is a significant gap in exploring leadership practices which are guided by the three leadership models highlighted in the MEB. These clear gaps in the literature show that the present study could serve as an important addition to the limited research in the Malaysian context.

Overview

This chapter highlights that the MEB has placed a stronger emphasis on school leadership, with a focus on instructional leadership and a lesser, but still significant, emphasis on distributed and transformational leadership. The MEB has an ambitious aspiration for high performing leadership in all schools, but this is not defined in the MEB. The author identifies principals who are deemed high performing as those who have received the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. The MEB foreshadows a new selection process that would ensure a pool of talented, well trained (via the compulsory NPQEL) candidates to fill future principalship positions. However, the gap in understanding what is meant by high performing leadership provides a clear warrant for the author's research.

The chapter also critically analyses the existing literature on the three leadership models that underpin this study. There is also a review of the literature on high performing leadership. This review provides examples of how the leadership of high performing principals (including 'successful' and 'effective' principals) is enacted. The next chapter explains the methodology and methods used in this study.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

Introduction

The central aim of this study is to explore the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing. To achieve this aim, the author employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the leadership practices of principals who are deemed to be high performing. This methodology chapter is divided into several sections. This chapter begins by explaining this study's paradigm as well as the rationale for using a mixed methods approach. The second section details the research design. Subsequently, the research instruments and sampling are explained. Next, the data collection process, including access, is discussed. This is followed by a section detailing how the analysis was carried out. The final section examines the reliability and validity of the research. The research questions that guide this study were presented in Chapter 1 (see p. 23) and are reprised later in this chapter (see p. 90).

Justification for Using Mixed Methods Research

Studies that combine qualitative and quantitative research methods in a single study are referred to as mixed methods research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Morse & Niehaus, 2009; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Both quantitative and qualitative research techniques are important in gaining a complete understanding of a phenomenon (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Tashakkori and Newman (2010) posit that researchers who employ both methods often find answers to their research questions by integrating the inferences from their qualitative and quantitative findings.

Mixed methods research has experienced a rise in popularity across several discipline areas and has been particularly popular in the areas of applied social research (Bergman, 2008; Bryman, 2006b; Cameron, 2009; Hesse-Biber, 2010). In addition, Sammons, Davis, Day, and Gu (2014: 585) maintain that mixed methods approaches are increasingly being used in educational leadership research as it “enables a broader picture to emerge of successful leadership” in schools. Although Bryman (2004) believes that mixed methods research is still limited, previous mixed methods studies have contributed empirically to enhanced understanding of leadership from multiple perspectives (for example: Day et al., 2016; Liu & Hallinger, 2017; Sammons et al., 2014; Spillane & Hunt, 2010).

There are several justifications for choosing mixed methods research as this study’s research approach. Firstly, there is a significant gap in local Malaysian research carried out via mixed methods, notably in studies related to high performing leadership. The local research that has employed mixed methods is relatively small (for example: Aziah & Abdul Ghani, 2014; Ghavifekr et al., 2014; Harris et al., 2014; Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011b; Tahir et al., 2017), compared to researchers who utilised either a quantitative or a qualitative approach. Therefore, the strategy of adopting mixed methods research not only adds to the local body of knowledge in leadership research but also responds, on a wider level, to a call for more systematic educational leadership research that utilises mixed methods (see Day et al., 2016; Sammons et al., 2014).

Another justification for using mixed methods is the advantage of one method complementing the strengths of the other and vice versa. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods in this study is a useful strategy that adds rigour, breadth and deeper insights that emerge from studying leadership phenomena in schools (Day et al., 2016; Denzin, 2012). The author believes that multiple perspectives of leadership practices, enacted by principals who are deemed high performing, are best obtained through multiple methods. This allows for a more complete, balanced and authentic view of leadership practices acquired from the lenses of policymakers, principals and teachers, using multiple modes of inquiry.

For example, the quantitative strand of this study enabled the author to examine how leadership practices were enacted by the principals, measured against several contextual variables. The exploration of the leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing were further guided by the qualitative strand of this study. The qualitative portion employed in this study enabled the author to explore the understanding of high performance in relation to the two awards conferred on the principals in this study. In addition, the qualitative strand also enabled the author to understand how the leadership practices and activities of the principals in this study were captured authentically through the lenses of the principals themselves, as well as through the teachers. Hence, the use of mixed methods in this study "are likely to provide finer grained, more nuanced evidence based understandings of the leadership roles and behaviours of principals who achieve and sustain educational outcomes in schools than single lens quantitative analyses, meta-analyses, or purely qualitative approaches" (Day et al., 2016: 222).

The next justification for using mixed methods research relates to triangulation (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Morrison, 2007). Triangulation is the term given when the researcher seeks convergence and corroboration of results from different methods used in studying the same phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Triangulation allows the author to compare many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of the information (Bush, 2012). Triangulation is especially useful when studying leadership because it allows the views of both leaders and followers to be understood. In other words, leadership practices are not confined to the leader but are defined by how they influence others.

Mixed methods researchers often attempt to triangulate their data, using what is commonly referred to as methodological triangulation, involving the use of multiple methods within a study (Bush, 2012; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). This is also referred to as design triangulation (Creswell, 2014). Methodological or design triangulation enabled this study to collect quantitative and qualitative data and to cross-check the data to establish its validity (Bush, 2012). Thus, the three phases involved in this study (the three phases are elaborated further in this chapter) allowed the author to determine whether the data or evidence obtained in the quantitative phase was present in the qualitative phase.

Mixed methods also enabled the author to employ respondent triangulation (Bush, 2012). Citing the work of McFee (1992), Bush explains that respondent triangulation allows for data to be collected from different participants, and in the case of this study, the viewpoints of teachers and principals were collected in both the quantitative phase (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews). As the aim of this study is to explore the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing, the data from the teachers and principals in both phases provided rich comparisons from different standpoints. First, the questionnaires utilised in this study required the responses of both principals and their teachers. The data from the questionnaires enabled the author to examine and compare the principals' perception of their leadership practices with the views offered by their teachers. Similarly, the data from the interviews with principals and their teachers were compared and contrasted to triangulate respondents' opinions. Hence, respondent triangulation can substantially increase the credibility or trustworthiness of the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Triangulation and complementarity both address the use of different methods as a means of affirming or complementing the findings of each. Mixed methods, therefore, provides more resilient foundations on which to draw conclusions which stem from both data triangulation and complementarity (Sammons et al., 2014: 570).

Philosophical Underpinnings and Research Approach

Whilst the previous section explains the reasoning behind the author's motivation in adopting mixed methods approach, it is also useful to unpack the philosophical underpinnings for this approach. Hesse-Biber (2010) explains that methodologies, including mixed methods, are derived from a researcher's assumptions about the nature of existence which is referred to as ontology. Ontological assumption is basically concerned with the essence of realities

(Cohen et al., 2011) and about “what the world is like—what the world consists of and why” (Strega, 2005: 201). In order to understand the ‘realities’ within the ontological assumption, Bryman (2012) suggests two positions: objectivism and constructionism. Bryman (2012: 32) explains objectivism as an “ontological position that implies that social phenomena confront us as external facts that are beyond our reach or influence”. Constructionism, on the other hand, is asserted by Bryman (2012: 33) as a “social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors and that they are in a constant state of revision”. Within the study of educational leadership, Eacott (2017) explains that the ontological position of objectivism views the organisation as a knowable reality which is rigid in its structure and objectivity. Contrastingly, the reality as espoused by the ontological position of constructionism is created and shaped by social, political, cultural and gender-based forces (Eacott, 2017).

The ontological assumptions, in turn, lead to a set of philosophies on the nature of knowledge building which is referred to as epistemology (Hesse-Biber, 2010). Whilst ontology deals with the essence of reality, epistemology tries to give an answer to the question of how our mind can acquire acceptable knowledge of a material world outside our mind (Biesta & Bubules, 2003; Bryman, 2012). Strega (2005: 201) further explains that epistemology represents a “philosophy of what counts as truth”. Similar to ontology, epistemology is often viewed on two different continuums or positions positivism and interpretivism (Bryman, 2012). Postivism advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond (Bryman, 2012). In contrast, interpretivism is the competing position of positivism. Interpretivism “respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman, 2012: 30).

Bryman (2006a) posits that when quantitative and qualitative research are combined in a study, it tended to be associated with an uncoupling of research methods from strict philosophical positions that neither leans towards a positivist/objectivist end nor an interpretivist/constructivist end. Bryman adds that researchers often argued that “the association of particular methods with philosophical stances was based on convention and that the connections between them were more contingent than is often assumed” (ibid: 114). Given the richness in exploring this study’s data, the author views that it is not suitable to adopt a strict positivist stance to portray the leadership practices of principal who are deemed high performing as such stance requires theory testing as well as generating hypothesis. On the other side of the continuum, the author maintains that a strict constructivist stance on interpreting the qualitative data would devoid the data with much of the objective reality, and therefore undermines any idea of an absolute truth, leading to a debatable notion that one truth is as good as any other (i.e. positivist).

Hence, the author believes that pragmatism, which is the primary philosophical orientation associated with mixed methods research is best suited in understanding and exploring the practices of principals in this study. By adopting pragmatism enables the author “to break away from attempts to emulate “scientific” research in the natural sciences, and from the never-ending paradigm debate between so-called quantitative and qualitative approaches to research” (Bachman, 2009: 147). This is further reiterated by Feilzer (2010: 8), who reasons that “pragmatism allows the researcher to be free of mental and practical constraints imposed by the forced choice dichotomy between positivism and constructivism and researchers do not have to be the prisoner of a particular research method or technique”. The following section explains and justifies the author’s approach in adopting pragmatism.

<u>Pragmatism</u>

Pragmatism can be defined as practical and applied research that utilises and supports both qualitative and quantitative methods, mixing the two methods when beneficial (Hewson, 2006; N. L. Leech, Dellinger, Brannagan, & Tanaka, 2010; Maxcy, 2003; Teddlie, 2005). Pragmatism rejects the traditional conception that the paradigms underlying quantitative and qualitative approaches (positivism and constructivism, respectively) are essentially incompatible and in conflict (Hewson, 2006). Instead, pragmatists argue that both quantitative and qualitative methods have their own distinctive strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, researchers should utilise the strengths, as well as complementing both methods, in order to understand the phenomena (Hewson, 2006; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005: 384) believe that, while “quantitative research is typically motivated by the researcher’s concerns”, and “qualitative research is often driven by a desire to capture the participant’s voice”; pragmatic researchers on the hand are able to merge these two emphases within a single study. Because pragmatic researchers utilise mixed methodologies within the same inquiry, they are able to delve further into a dataset to understand its meaning and to use one method to verify the findings from the other method (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Researchers are “able to utilise quantitative research to inform the qualitative portion of research studies, and vice versa” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004: 384). Therefore, “pragmatism offers an epistemological justification and logic (i.e., use the combination of methods and ideas that help frame, address, and provide tentative answers to one’s research question[s]) for mixing approaches and methods” (Johnson et al., 2007: 125).

Linking the research approach with the research questions

One of the advantages of mixed methods is their effectiveness in answering each of the research questions formulated in a study by employing qualitative or quantitative methods for each of the questions (Tashakkori & Newman, 2010; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). According to Tashakkori and Creswell (2007), a strong mixed methods study starts with a strong mixed methods research question or objective. Mixed methods are useful because the combination of quantitative and qualitative designs is able to provide the best opportunity to address the main research question and also specific sub-questions (Morrison, 2007). This argument is supported by Creswell and Clark (2011) who maintain that the notion of what method works best in addressing the research questions stems from their pragmatic philosophical foundations. Pragmatism, therefore, subscribes to the philosophy that research questions should drive the methods that should be used in a particular study (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005).

While Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010: 16) explain that pragmatism is useful for researchers to identify which specific method works in a study, most proponents of mixed methods agree that the criteria for choosing specific methods should take into consideration of what fits the research questions (Bryman, 2006b; Lodico et al., 2010; Mertens, 2012; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Hence, the pragmatic philosophy that underpins mixed methods research is able to provide the most suitable methods for addressing this study's research questions and specific sub-questions.

In linking pragmatism with the mixed methods approach of this study, three research questions and one sub-research question were guided by the qualitative method. Quantitative methods guided another three research questions, and two sub-research questions. The final research question utilised data obtained from both methods. The combination of methods "effectively link the components or strands (qualitative and quantitative) and objectives and questions of the study and set the stage for comprehensive mixed methods inferences and conclusions at the end" (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007: 210).

The author believes that it is useful to highlight the strands (whether qualitative or quantitative) and instruments utilised in answering the research questions. Table 3.1 shows the research questions and sub-questions, and the research approaches and methods used to answer those questions.

Number	Questions	Strand	Instrument utilised
RQ 1	How are principals deemed to be high performing identified and selected?	Qualitative	Interview & document analysis
RQ 2	What are the leadership practices most performed by the principals who are deemed high performing as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?	Quantitative	Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS)
Sub RQ2a	How do principals who are deemed high performing perceive their own leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?	Quantitative	
Sub RQ2b	How do teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?	Quantitative	
RQ3	How do the principals perceive their own leadership practices?	Qualitative	Interview
Sub RQ3a	How do the teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices?	Qualitative	Interview
RQ4	To what extent is instructional leadership practiced by principals who are deemed high performing?	Qualitative & Quantitative	Interview & PIMRS questionnaire

Table 3.1: Research questions and the methods as well as instruments used to answer the questions

Research Design

This study adopted Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2009) iterative sequential mixed design as the author feels that this design is best suited to answering the research questions. The iterative sequential mixed design is one of the three sequential designs suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009). An iterative sequential mixed design involves more than two phases in one particular study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This allows flexibility in the number of strands (either qualitative or quantitative) for the author to adopt in one particular study

(Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The multiple phases of an iterative sequential design provide this study with data from each of the phases to answer the various research questions, which would be answered less well in a one-phase design (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The design of this study is illustrated in Figure 3.1:

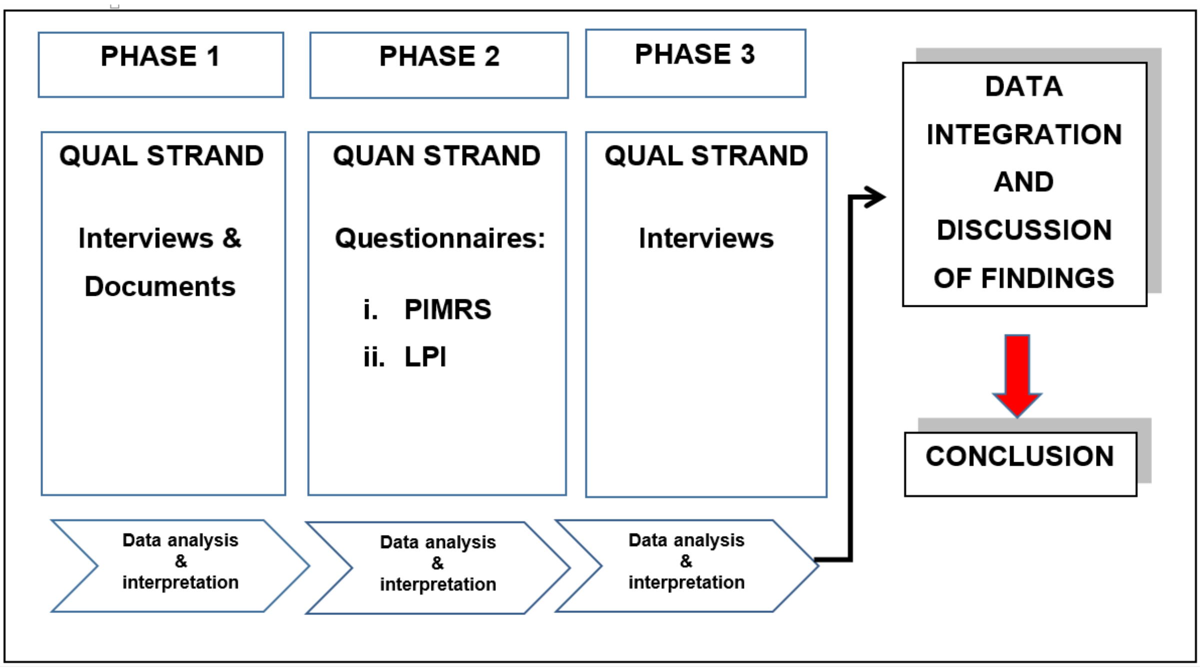


Figure 3.1: Research design of this study

Since an iterative sequential design is a sub-category of the wider sequential mixed methods design, most of the advantages of sequential mixed designs are mutually shared. For example, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 153) believe that a sequential mixed method design is "less complicated to conduct by solo investigators… because it is easier to keep the strands separate and the studies typically unfold in a more predictable manner". The author agrees that the iterative sequential design allows the data collected from an earlier phase to be elaborated and interpreted more vividly in later phases using another strand.

Research Methods

This study employed several methods of inquiry in gathering data to answer the research questions. Pragmatism gives flexibility to the author to integrate the quantitative and qualitative methods at different stages of the research process to best answer the research questions (Bryman, 2006b), and ultimately achieve the research aims and objectives. The methods of inquiry, which were driven by the research questions, were questionnaires, interviews and analysis of documents.

Analysis of official documents

According to Creswell (2012: 223), “documents consist of public and private records that qualitative researchers obtain about participants in the study”. Prior (2008: 490) believes that documentary analysis “can form an excellent starting point for researchers [by] illustrating how things are described and linked”. Several official documents were selected to reflect the Ministry’s intention when selecting Excellent Principals as well as the New Deals recipients. Fitzgerald (2012: 297) explains that official documents can provide a wealth of information for the researcher “to read between the lines of [the] official discourse and then triangulate information through interviews [and] questionnaires”.

Questionnaires

This study’s overarching aim is to understand the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing not only from their perspectives but also from the perspectives of their teachers. Most school leadership-related questionnaires collect data from teachers as well as the principals’ own opinions about their perceptions of the leadership provided by the school principals (for example, see Boberg & Bourgeois, 2016; Sammons, Gu, Day, & Ko, 2011). In order to gather the perspectives of both principals and teachers, 360-degree-type questionnaires were utilised as one of the research tools in this study. Hence, the Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), and the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) were selected. An overview of the two questionnaires is given in a later section of this chapter.

Muijs (2012) asserts that questionnaires have a number of advantages that have made it one of the most popular research tools in social science research. One of the advantages relates to its efficiency as it generally takes less time to complete compared to other research tools or methods (Hallinger, 2012). In addition, the "use of standardised questions in questionnaires allows for easy comparability" (Muijs, 2012: 152), not only between respondents in this study (i.e., teachers and principals), but also between different leadership constructs (i.e., instructional, distributed and transformation).

The choices of answers afforded to participants in the form of Likert scales is also advantageous as the "strength or intensity of a person's response" (Newby, 2014: 306) is reflected by the choice of scales in the questionnaires. Hence, the scales are particularly suited to differentiating, determining and acquiring the opinions of the respondents on a particular matter (Muijs, 2012). In relation to this study's pragmatic paradigm, questionnaires can provide reliable and valid data on the behaviour of the principals (Hallinger, 2012), hence enabling the author to answer the research questions assuredly.

Interviews

The iterative sequential design of this study allows the author to employ multiple methods, therefore the use of interviews in this study complements the data obtained from the quantitative strand. Brundrett and Rhodes (2014) maintain that interviews are undoubtedly one of the most popular research tools for research in educational leadership. Sammons et al. (2014), for example, used interviews in a mixed methods study as a means of gaining additional insights into the nature and impact of particular leadership practices. Day et al. (2016: 230), in their mixed methods study, claim that interviews with other members of the school are able to provide "insights into their perceptions of the nature and impact of the [leadership] practice and the effectiveness of the school leadership and its distribution".

The author utilised a semi-structured interview for the qualitative strand of the study. Coleman (2012) posits that semi-structured interviews are probably the most common type of interview adopted in a mixed methods approach. The semi-structured interview involves the interviewer engaging in an interview session with a standardised interview protocol (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). In this approach, the interviewer asks the questions exactly as written on the interview schedule (Johnson & Christensen, 2008), hence creating a general consistency in terms of the questions that are asked of each interviewee (Coleman, 2012). The strength of the semi-structured interviews generated by the standardised questions would increase the comparability of the responses across all participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). This also helps the interviewer to facilitate better data organisation and analysis (Cohen et al., 2011). The interviews were able to yield important data that could be used to compare the leadership features as perceived by the principals themselves, and as perceived by the teachers (from the data obtained from both the LPI and PIMRS). Another advantage of using a semi-structured interview compared to a fully structured interview is that it allows the interviewer to use prompts in the form of probes in trying to extract more information on a topic (Coleman, 2012).

Research Instruments

Several instruments were used to gather evidence in this study. The instruments were two questionnaires and three sets of interview protocols.

<u>Questionnaires</u>

This study's framework is guided by the three models of leadership: instructional, transformational and distributed. Hence, the author had to consider questionnaires that were able to discern the principals' practices according to the three leadership models. Whilst there are specific surveys used by scholars and researchers to gauge each of the three leadership models, the author considered that using three separate surveys to explore how principals enact the three leadership practices was impractical, for the author as well as for the respondents.

The use of PIMRS was targeted at examining the instructional leadership practices of the principals in this study. The use of the LPI was helpful to explore the extent to which the principals claim or perceive to enact practices which were reflective of transformational and distributed leadership (a similar strategy was employed by Jones et al., 2015). Further, the utilisation of both the PIMRS and the LPI questionnaires in this study also enabled principals' instructional leadership practices to be compared against practices that are reflective of transformational and distributed leadership.

Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

The first of the two survey instruments was the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2012). The LPI has been used in more than 350 doctoral dissertations and academic research projects on leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2007b). The LPI was developed based on what was perceived to be the five practices of exemplary leadership: model the way; inspire a shared vision; challenge the process; enable others to act; and encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2007b).

While the LPI was developed to measure leadership in public and private organisations (Berry, 2007), it has been adopted by many school leadership researchers (Condon & Clifford, 2012; Leithwood & Sun, 2012). Niemann and Kotze (2006) further assert that the LPI can be a valuable instrument in dissecting school leadership. Even though the LPI is not specifically designed to measure specific leadership styles or traits, it has been adopted to measure the extent to which transformational leadership is enacted by school principals (Fields & Herold, 1997; Jones et al., 2015; D. W. Leech & Fulton, 2002; Xu, Caldwell, Glasper, & Guevara, 2015; Zagorsek, Stough, & Jaklic, 2006). Leithwood and Sun (2012) agree that the dimensions of the LPI match three of the transformational leadership dimensions suggested by Leithwood and colleagues. These include similarities with '*holding high performance expectations*' which is a subset of '*setting directions*'. They also believe that the LPI is similar to '*providing individualised consideration, support, and* *intellectual stimulation'*, which forms part of the transformational leadership dimension of '*developing people*'.

The properties of the LPI are also useful in suggesting evidence of distributed leadership. Jones et al. (2015), for example, claim that the questionnaire reflects the properties of distributed leadership via one of its five leadership dimensions: 'enable others to act'. Leithwood and Sun (2012: 399) also highlight the similarities that the LPI has with the dimension of "enabling others to act". Taylor et al. (2007), who also adopted the LPI as one of the two questionnaires in their study, acknowledge that the properties of the LPI were useful in providing information on the extent to which the principals in their study show distributed leadership. In a local study, Zuraidah et al. (2014) employed the LPI as the tool to examine the distributed leadership practices of senior leadership team members in selected Malaysian schools and correlated the findings with their emotional competencies.

The LPI requires the principal to complete one 30-item self-form questionnaire, and their teachers are also required to answer the LPI observer-form assessing their principals. The principal and teacher versions are identical except for the beginning of each item. The principal's copy begins with "I" followed by a description of their practices. The items on the teachers' copy, on the other hand, begin with "My principal…" and are followed by the exact same descriptions of leadership practices as the principal's copy. A summary of the items that represent each of the five components of the LPI is presented in Table 3.2.

Leadership practices	Item numbers
Model the way	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26
Inspire a shared vision	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27
Challenge the process	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28
Enable other to act	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29
Encourage the heart	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30

Table 3.2: Items numbers for each of the five leadership practices

All the items were assessed on a ten-point Likert scale. The ten-point scale allows the principals and teachers the opportunity to indicate the degree or extent to which the leader enacts each five practices as described. The scale ranges from 1 (almost never) to 10 (almost always). The author obtained permission from Wiley, the proprietor of the questionnaire, to use and reproduce it for this study. The permission letter is attached as Appendix 1. Due to the copyright control over the questionnaire, the author is only able to affix the first five items of the questionnaire in Appendix 2.

Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS)

Whilst the LPI does not measure components of instructional leadership, this is compensated for by the utilisation of the second survey instrument, namely, the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985). Hallinger (Hallinger, 2008, 2011c; Hallinger et al., 2013) maintains that the PIMRS appears to have provided a reliable and valid means of assessing the instructional leadership of school principals over the years. Hallinger and Lee (2014: 11) also emphasise that the PIMRS has been widely applied in empirical studies in “at least 22 different countries” over the last three decades, including Malaysia (for example, see Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011b; Mohamad Johdi, 2014; Muhamad Latip & Robiah, 2008; Tahir et al., 2013).

The PIMRS questionnaire is comprised of 50 items that identify principals' leadership practices associated with instructional leadership functions. The PIMRS is grounded in the instructional leadership conceptual framework introduced by Hallinger and Murphy (1985). Hallinger (2011c) stresses that it is vital to note that the PIMRS is intended to measure the perceptions of instructional leadership practices and not the quality of instructional leadership. Hence, all the components and items in the PIMRS measure the frequency with which the principal enacts a behaviour or practice associated with the specific instructional leadership functions suggested in the framework (Hallinger, 2008). The instructional leadership components in the PIMRS correspond to the three main dimensions as suggested in the instructional theoretical framework and explained in Figure 2.2 in Chapter 2. These three dimensions are further delineated into 10 instructional leadership practices (Hallinger, 2008). The PIMRS questionnaire enables each of the 10 instructional leadership practices to be measured according to how frequently it is enacted. Each of the 10 instructional leadership practices includes five items.

Similar to the LPI, the PIMRS requires the principal to complete the 50-item self-form questionnaire and their teachers are also requested to answer the observer-form assessing the instructional leadership of their principal. The principal and teacher versions are identical except for the stem "*To what extent do you…*" (principal-copy) and "*To what extent does your principal…*" (teacher-copy). A summary of the items that represent each of the ten components of the PIMRS is presented in Table 3.3.

Dimensions	Instructional Leadership practices	Item numbers
Defining the School Mission	Framing school goals	1 to 5
	Communicating school goals	6 to 10
Managing the Instructional Programme	Supervising and evaluating instruction	11 to 15
	Coordinating curriculum	16 to 20
	Monitoring school progress	21 to 25
Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate	Protecting instructional time	26 to 30
	Maintaining high visibility	31 to 35
	Providing incentives for teachers	36 to 40
	Promoting professional development	41 to 45
	Providing incentives for learning	46 to 50

Table 3.3: Items numbers for each of the ten instructional leadership practices

All the items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale. As in the LPI, the Likert scale used in the PIMRS measures the strength of agreement towards a set of statements indicating the principals' instructional leadership practices. Each item is rated on a scale ranging from 1 (Almost never) to 5 (Almost always). The author has obtained permission from Philip Hallinger, the proprietor of the questionnaire, to use and reproduce it for this study. The permission letter is attached as Appendix 3. The first five items of the PIMRS used in this study are provided in Appendix 4.

Translating and piloting the survey instruments

As both of the surveys were designed in English, the author had to consider a Malay version of each as the intended participants are Malaysian. The author carried out the translation/back translation process with the help of two Malaysian doctoral researchers, who are majoring in linguistics and TESOL

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) in two universities in the United Kingdom. The translation/back translation technique provides high “informativeness” and “source language transparency” whilst ensuring a medium level of “security” and “practicality” (Behling & Law, 2000: 20). Fromm, Hallinger, Volante, and Wang (2017) utilised similar approach in translating and validating a Spanish version of the PIMRS.

In order to test the reliability of the translated version, the author carried out a pilot test. Apart from allowing the author to test the reliability of the translated questionnaires, pilot testing also enabled the author “to find out whether it [i.e., the survey instruments] operates properly before using it in a research study” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008: 128). In addition, Muijs (2004) posit that the single most effective strategy to minimise problems in survey instruments is to ensure that the instruments are piloted.

The Malay and English versions of the LPI and PIMRS were piloted with ten former colleagues of the author who were attached to the Aminuddin Baki Institute (of educational leadership and management). This is consistent with the advice of Johnson and Christensen (2008), and Muijs (2004), who recommend that piloting survey instruments could be done with colleagues or friends of the author. The author believes that these colleagues were suitable for the pilot testing as they were familiar with the leadership constructs and terms used in the survey instruments.

Data obtained from the pilot study were used to determine whether the translated items were reliable in terms of internal consistency when matched against the original form of the questionnaires. Creswell (2014: 161) posits that “scores from an instrument are reliable and accurate if the individual’s scores are internally consistent across the items on the instrument”. Coefficient alpha, popularly referred to as Cronbach’s alpha, is one of the widely used measurements to calculate the internal consistency of the items in questionnaires (Cramer & Howitt, 2004). IBM SPSS Statistics were used to compute the coefficient alpha of both the Malay and original versions of the LPI and PIMRS. The results of the reliability coefficients using Cronbach’s alpha for the both the Malay and English versions of the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires are presented in Table 3.4.

Questionnaires	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha
LPI Malay	30	.982
LPI English	30	.951
PIMRS Malay	50	.937
PIMRS English	50	.948

Table 3.4: Reliability statistics of Malay and English versions of both the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires

Johnson and Christensen (2008: 149) maintain that the size of the coefficient alpha “should generally be, at a minimum, greater than or equal to .70”. The results of the test as depicted in Table 3.4 suggest that both the original and translated items exhibit strong reliability.

Interview protocols

Semi-structured interviews were carried out in phases one and three of this study. The participants consisted of ministry officials (in the first phase); while principals, senior leadership team members and teachers were the participants for the third phase of this study. Three sets of interview protocols were developed. The first set was intended for the ministry officials. The second set of interview protocols was developed to generate data from the principals, while the final set was for the teachers. The interview questions developed for each of the protocols focused on generating the “knowledge required” (Cohen et al., 2011: 354) in aiding the author to answer the research questions in phases one and three respectively.

The first set of interview protocols, intended for the three ministry officials, contained five questions. The questions focused on understanding their roles in selecting the recipients of the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. Questions were also asked to draw out their opinions on whether the two awards represent a sign of high performance.

The interview protocol for the teachers, including the senior leadership team members, comprised similar questions to those for their principals, but with slightly modified wording. For example, one of the interview questions in the interview protocol for principals reads:

> How often do you engage with the senior leadership team or other teachers?

While the question posed to the teacher or senior leadership team member was fairly similar:

> How often does your principal engage with the senior leadership team or other teachers?

Drawing on the approaches of Cohen et al. (2011), and Brundrett and Rhodes (2014), the author developed interview questions with the focus of eliciting respondents' opinions on what they believe to be the most important leadership practices, styles and skills enacted by principals who are deemed high performing. In addition, questions were developed to draw out respondents' views on the principals' leadership strengths and deficits, how they motivate others and how significant their roles were in the organisation. Further, the author developed questions asking their opinion on whether instructional leadership is the most important leadership approach for principals in Malaysia. These questions were important in providing evidence on the extent to which the principals enact instructional leadership as this particular leadership model is advocated strongly by the MEB. The two sets of interview protocols are attached as Appendix 5 and Appendix 6.

Translating and piloting the interview protocols

The questions in all three sets of protocols were constructed originally in English. A similar technique of translation/back translation, as discussed above, was employed in translating the questions into Malay. The same translators who assisted the author in translating the questionnaires were involved in translating the interview questions.

The interview protocols were then piloted to assess if they were sound. Creswell (2012) and Merriam (2009) agree that piloting interview questions is the most suitable way to eliminate and reconstruct questions which might be too long or confusing. Merriam (2009: 267) further suggests that piloting interview questions could be tried out with a friend or colleague who could "qualify to be included in the study". Based on her suggestion, the author piloted the first interview protocol with one colleague working in the Ministry of Education, while the other protocol was trialled with one senior leadership team member and one teacher in one of the schools involved in the quantitative phase of the study. The data from the pilot interviews were not used to inform the larger study; rather the pilot was intended to assess whether the interview questions, including the translated versions, had any content validity issues. The pilot study assisted the author in making minor changes to the questions, especially in eliminating questions that were redundant, before the main fieldwork was carried out.

Sampling

This study adopted several non-random sampling techniques for each of the three phases. Figure 3.2 shows the sampling strategies adopted for each phase.

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
QUAL STRAND **Document analysis** **Interview**	**QUAN STRAND** **Survey instruments:** **i. LPI** **ii. PIMRS**	**QUAL STRAND** **Interviews**
SAMPLING STRATEGY **Interview – Purposive sampling of three Ministry of Education officials** **Document analysis – purposive sampling**	**SAMPLING STRATEGY** **Level I – Purposive Sampling of 20 principals** **Level II – Quota sampling and convenience sampling of SLTs, subject heads and teachers**	**SAMPLING STRATEGY** **Level I – Purposive sampling of 6 principals** **Level II – Convenience sampling of SLTs and teachers**

Figure 3.2: Sampling strategy adopted in this study

The sampling technique adopted by the author was purposive sampling. Kemper, Stringfield, and Teddlie (2003) posit that purposive sampling is relatively common in mixed methods studies. Kemper et al. (2003) add that researchers who use purposive sampling techniques are able to focus and to minimise the sample size so that it might best reflect the purpose of the research. In addition, Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007: 287) stress that, if the goal of the research is not to generalise to a population but rather to obtain insights into a phenomenon (as in this study), then "the researcher purposefully selects individuals, groups and settings that maximise understanding of the underlying phenomenon".

Quota and convenience sampling were utilised in phases two and three respectively alongside purposive sampling. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), quota sampling refers to the selection of samples based on the identification of sub-groups of interest. Quota sampling was necessary for the author to obtain a fair representation of senior leadership team members, subject heads and teachers when answering the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires. Once the quota was determined by the author, participants were then identified through convenience sampling.

The principle behind convenience sampling is the willingness of the participant to be selected for the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Hence this sampling technique was used to determine the teachers who participated in answering the questionnaires and in the interviews. Although convenience sampling is not an optimal method for generalising the results of the study, quite often researchers are “forced to use convenience samples because of practical constraints” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008: 238). One of the constraints in this study was the limited time available to collect all the data. Tracy (2013) agrees that convenience sampling is appropriate when time is limited, and adds that this mode of sampling is also useful when the budget available to carry out the research is limited.

The procedure involved in selecting the samples for each phase of this study is explained in the following subsections:

Sampling for Phase 1

Lodico et al. (2010: 134) refer to key informants as “the persons who have some specific knowledge about the topic being investigated”. Merriam (2009) also believes that qualitative researchers recognise that key informants are “richer” than others and that they are more likely to provide valuable insights and understanding. Since the total population of possible key informants is limited, it was necessary for the author to employ a purposive sampling approach.

Sampling for Phase One was important in determining the key informants who would provide information on how Excellent Principals and New Deals recipients are selected. Further information was also required to understand the significance of these awards in relation to the aim of placing high performing principals in all schools, as advocated by the MEB. Hence, three participants, working in three different divisions of the Ministry of Education, were selected for the interviews. One of the divisions is responsible for the selection of the Excellent Principals; another division manages the verification process for selecting New Deals award recipients, while the final division oversees the overall implementation of the Malaysian Education Blueprint, which includes the aspiration of placing high performing principals in all schools by 2025. All three officials are considered to be key senior managers in their respective divisions, based on their current positions, service grades and portfolio or job scope. They have been selected purposively based on their senior positions.

Several official documents were also purposively selected as the primary source of analysis. The documents selected for this part of the analysis are shown in Table 3.5.

Documents selected	Type of document	Purpose of the documents
Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013 – 2025 (Ministry of Education, 2013) Supplemented by: i. Malaysian Education Blueprint Annual Review 2013 (Ministry of Education, 2014) ii. Malaysian Education Blueprint Annual Review 2014 (Ministry of Education, 2015)	Policy document	Comprehensive document that guides the education reform in Malaysia
Service Circular about the selection process of New Deals recipients (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014b)	Service circular	Official government document that explains the purpose of the New Deals award
Official guidelines for awarding New Deals awards (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014a)	Addendum	An addendum to the above-mentioned service circular. This addendum documents in detail how new deals recipients are selected.
Official policy statement on the implementation of the Excellent Principals award (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013)	Policy document	An official government document that explains the purpose of the Excellent Principals award.
Letter notifying all principals of the vacant positions of Excellent Principals (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2010; Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2017)	Letter	Letters announcing the vacancies of Excellent Principals, which were published in 2010 and 2017 respectively.
Malaysian Quality Standards for Education (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2012)	Standards document	This document acts as an assessment tool for all school principals to evaluate against the five standards' elements proposed in the document

Table 3.5: Documents included in the analysis

These documents were selected as they represent the official published literature on understanding how principals, who are deemed high performing, are recognised via these two awards. In addition, the official policy documents provide valuable information about the expectations of the government regarding the selection of Excellent Principals and New Deals award recipients.

Sampling for Phase 2

As indicated in Figure 3.2, two levels of sampling strategy were adopted for this phase.

Level I

As of December 2014, there were 2,376 secondary schools out of a total of 10,134 schools in Malaysia (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014c). In order for the author to narrow down the focus of this study, principals who were the recipients of both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards who were serving in high performing secondary schools were purposively selected for this study. The total number of high performing secondary schools, as of February 2015, was 63. Twenty-eight of the principals serving in these high performing secondary schools were recognised as Excellent Principals. Twenty of these had also received the New Deals award. Hence, the first level of the second phase's sampling strategy has purposively determined and selected 20 principals who were the recipients of both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards in secondary schools. The PIMRS and LPI principal questionnaires were distributed to these 20 principals.

Level II

The second level of the sampling strategy involved steps to determine the 30 participants who would be the respondents for the LPI and PIMRS teacher questionnaires. Fifteen teachers were sampled to answer the LPI questionnaire while another 15 were selected to answer the PIMRS questionnaire. As highlighted in Figure 3.2 of the sampling strategy, quota sampling was adopted to ensure that a fair representation of teachers, subject heads, and senior leadership team members, would participate in answering the questionnaires. This rationale ensured that the leadership practices of the principals were captured by the viewpoints of teachers with different positions within the schools.

The selection of the teachers was based on the quota allocation of a minimum of two senior leadership team members[7] (including assistant principals and heads of department), three subject leaders, and ten other teachers. Quota sampling determined the number of participants needed, based on the respective quotas, and the author then proceeded using convenience sampling.

Sampling for Phase 3

Similar to Phase Two of this study, two levels of sampling were applied to determine the interview participants for this phase.

Level I

Like the first level of the second phase, level I of the sampling strategy in the final phase was essential in determining the principals who would be purposively selected for this study. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009: 240), qualitative interviews that follow survey instruments are gathered from “a relatively small number of participants, who generate in-depth information in response to queries from the interview”. Hence, six principals out of the 20 who had participated in answering the questionnaires in the second phase of this study were selected.

However, the author applied pre-determined criteria to achieve a fair and balanced representation of the principals. The criteria include a combination of several types of high performing secondary school types[8]; a balanced gender representation; as well as a balanced representation of urban-rural schools. The six principals purposively identified for this phase were

[7] All secondary schools in Malaysia have a minimum of three assistant principals, and in some secondary schools that offer a Sixth Form, an additional assistant principal is appointed. In addition to the assistant principals, the senior leadership team members are also made up of between four to five heads of department depending on the cluster of subjects offered in the schools. For example, the head of the language department is responsible for all language subjects including Malay, English, Mandarin and Tamil.

[8] Secondary schools in Malaysia are categorised into 12 types (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2015). All of the schools at which the interview participants work have been awarded the status of a high performing school.

approached personally by the author whilst in the process of distributing the questionnaires.

Level II

In addition to the interviews with the six principals, interviews with one senior leadership team member and one teacher from each school were also conducted. The senior leadership team members and teachers who were involved in the interview were sampled using convenience sampling. However, the author also specified certain characteristics for these samples. One of these was that the senior leadership team members and teachers who were willing to take part in this study must also have a working professional relationship with the principal of at least two years. This is because teachers who work with the principals for a period of two years or less might not have sufficient experience of their leadership features or the impact shown by the principals.

Access and Ethics

The following section explains how the author secured access for the research and how ethical considerations were addressed.

Gatekeeper's access

Lodico et al. (2010) explain that, before embarking on data collection, access to the study site, as well as the people, must be established with the appropriate gatekeepers. Gatekeepers include persons with official or unofficial roles who manage access to people and places at the site (Lodico et al., 2010). The primary locations in which data collection was conducted consisted of three divisions of the Ministry of Education, and 20 high performing secondary schools.

Dimmock (2007) stresses the importance of understanding the culture and system in which the fieldwork or data collection will take place. For this study, the author understood the many layers of permission required to gain access.

The first layer was approval from the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), Prime Minister's Department. EPU acts as the government's gatekeeper for any overseas-based researchers who intend to carry out any form of research in Malaysia. This is in line with the regulation for conducting research in Malaysia, as stipulated in the General Circular Order No. 3 of 1999 (Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 1999). All the necessary information regarding the research was provided to the department. Permission to conduct the research in Malaysia was granted by the Economic Planning Unit in March 2015 (see Appendix 7).

Following agreement from the EPU, it was also important to seek permission to gain access to the selected schools and to the three divisions of the Ministry. Letters to the three divisions' respective directors were sent together with the approval letter from EPU, seeking permission to interview the officers for this study. All three directors allowed the author to proceed with the interviews for the first phase of this study. Subsequent telephone calls were made to each of the divisions to ensure that the correct personnel were identified for the interviews.

As the education system in Malaysia is highly centralised, permission to gain access to the 20 schools had to be sought from the Fully Residential and Excellence Schools Division which oversees the operation of high performing schools in Malaysia. This permission allowed the author to gain access to sites which were involved with phases two and three of this study. The Fully Residential and Excellence Schools Division (BPSBPSK) approved the author's application to gain access to the selected schools and carry out the data collection procedures with the principals and teachers (see Appendix 8).

Although permission from the EPU and BPSBPSK had already been obtained, the final layer of gatekeeper's access lay with the principals in all 20 schools. Merriam (2009) notes that gaining entry into multiple sites (as in the case of this study) requires the author to obtain the permission from each of the sites' gatekeepers, i.e., the principals. Negotiation and approval to gain access to schools should be conducted with the principals before any fieldwork could commence (Scott & Morrison, 2005). Taking into consideration Scott and

Morrison's advice, the author sent letters seeking permission to all principals in 20 schools together with approval letters from the EPU and BPSBPSK (the letter is appended as Appendix 9).

Follow-up telephone calls were made to all 20 schools seeking confirmation of approval to gain access. All 20 principals agreed that the author could proceed with data collection in their schools.

<u>Ethical considerations</u>

Creswell (2014) explains that ethical considerations are vital in any research while Hesse-Biber (2010: 56) maintains that "ethics plays a role throughout the entire research process, and all researchers must be vigilant in checking themselves at every stage of their investigations". In addition, ethical considerations impact on the authenticity and quality of the research overall (Bush, 2012). Hence, the main ethical considerations which the author addressed before embarking on the study were: ethical approval; informed consent; avoiding harm; confidentiality and anonymity.

Ethical approval

This study required ethical approval from the University of Nottingham, UK. The author understood that he must adhere to the University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics, which adopts the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011). Ethical approval was received from the University of Nottingham School of Education Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 10).

Informed consent

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008), informed consent indicates willingness to participate in the study after being informed of its purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and limits of confidentiality. It was vital for the author to obtain the consent of all research participants before they took part in this study. It was also important for the author to explain to the participants what the study was about and how their involvement would impact on the study (Cohen et al., 2011; Newby, 2014).

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) suggest that an informed consent form should be distributed to the participants. They (ibid: 199) add that the “consent form may also include provisions related to the participants’ right to privacy, which include the related issues of anonymity and confidentiality”. All the participants in this study were provided with the questionnaire and/or the interview participant information sheet, detailing the names of the people responsible for the study, what the study was about and how the information obtained from the interview would be highly beneficial to the study. Copies of both the questionnaire and the interview participant information sheet are included as Appendices 11 and 12. All participants were also given the questionnaire participant consent form and/or the interview participant consent form to sign. Copies of the questionnaire and interview participant consent forms are included as Appendices 13 and 14.

However, Newby (2014) argues that informed consent is more than getting the signature of the research participants on the informed consent form. This is because the onus is on the researcher to fully explain to the participants what might be the potential risk of participating in the research. Hence, the author made it clear that the participation was voluntary and that the participants would have a period of time in which to consider the invitation. The participants were also told that they could withdraw at any stage of the study without having to give any reasons to the author and that their withdrawal would not have any implications for them, their schools or this study.

Avoiding harm

Cohen et al. (2011: 171) maintain that “a general principle of educational research is that no individuals should be harmed”. While Johnson and Christensen (2008: 118) argue that “educational research seldom, if ever” runs the risk of inflicting mental and physical harm on participants, Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) insist that it is the fundamental responsibility of every researcher to ensure that participants are protected from physical or mental harm at all stages of the research.

The study took place in 20 Malaysian high performing secondary schools. The author had established in the literature review that Malaysian schools are very hierarchical in nature and that power distance between the principals and their subordinates may be significant. Hence, in order to avoid potential harm or conflict arising from different levels of power within the selected Malaysian schools, the author paid careful attention to the various levels of power within the organisation, as suggested by Scott and Morrison (2005).

In addition, the author ensured that the outcomes and results of the research would not harm the participants within that organisation (Newby, 2014). The participants were also assured that they had the right to withdraw from participating in this study at any stage. None of the participants withdrew from the interviews. The only risks or potential discomfort associated with this study were the time required to answer the questionnaire and to participate in the interview. Hence, participants were reminded of the time required to participate in this study through the information sheet. The author also ensured that participation in this study would not disrupt the instructional time of the participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Two major steps in overcoming any potential harm to participants were to ensure their anonymity, as well as preserving the confidentiality of the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Scott & Morrison, 2005). Cohen et al. (2011) insist that anonymity is often vital in research so that participants are untraceable. Johnson and Christensen (2008: 119) add that “anonymity is an excellent way of protecting privacy because anonymity means that the identity of the participants is not known to the researcher”.

In this study, the participants maintained their anonymity by not identifying themselves when responding to the questionnaires. Both questionnaires advised participants not to write their names on the survey instrument. In addition, before each interview session began, the participants were given the assurance that all information gathered from the interview would be analysed in such a way as to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Audio-taping interview sessions can pose a threat to the confidentiality of the interview sessions as well as jeopardise the anonymity of the participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). In order to overcome such a threat, Creswell (2007) suggests that it is important for the researcher to emphasise the importance of preserving confidentiality to the participants, both before and after conducting the interview. The author also sought the approval of all interview participants before audio-taping the interviews. All of the participants agreed for the interviews to be audio-taped.

Confidentiality also extends to the data obtained from the study. Fraenkel et al. (2012: 64) explain that “once the data in a study have been collected, researchers should make sure that no one else has access to the data”. All data collected were kept confidential and used for this study only. All data that were analysed electronically were kept secure at all times on a secure, password protected data storage folder available on the author’s desktop. The author also ensured that the anonymity of the participants, and their schools, was protected when presenting data. This was done through using pseudonyms for schools and participants.

Data Collection

This section explains the data collection process.

<u>First phase: interview with the Ministry officials</u>

There were two phases of interviews. The interviews that were carried out in the first phase targeted Ministry officials who were directly involved in the formulation of policies related to the Excellent Principals award, the New Deals award, and the shift towards 'ensuring high performing school leaders in schools', as advocated in the MEB. Interviews with the officials took place over three separate days. Each of the interviews lasted between 35 and 45 minutes.

Second phase: distribution and collection of the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires

Principals from 20 high performing secondary schools were selected for this study based on the purposive sampling strategy, as highlighted in the previous section of this chapter. Once permissions were given by all principals, the author informed the principals of the 20 selected schools, via letter, of the time when the author intended to distribute the questionnaires.

The author explained the need for the principals to complete the LPI and PIMRS principal-copy themselves. The author also sought permission from the principals to distribute the questionnaires to the senior leadership team members, including the subject heads, as well as to other teachers. The distribution of the questionnaires to these individuals was carried out by adhering to the pre-determined quota.

The author personally distributed the questionnaire to the senior leadership team members, subject heads and teachers in 17 schools. However, principals in three schools requested that the author leave the questionnaire-pack for the assistant principals for distribution at a later time. This was because the author had visited the schools during the midterm examinations and most of the teachers were on examination duty. In order for the distribution of the questionnaires to adhere to the quota determined, the author had enclosed in the questionnaire pack specific instructions regarding distribution.

The principals and teachers were given between four and eight days to complete the questionnaires. All participants were provided with an envelope. The author requested that the principals and teachers enclose the completed questionnaires in the envelopes provided. In doing so, the author ensured that the confidentiality of the survey participants was not compromised. The author sent another letter to notify the schools of the dates on which the questionnaires would be collected. This was followed by phone calls to inform the schools of the collection dates. The author successfully revisited all schools to collect the questionnaires.

In total, 20 LPI principal questionnaires, 20 PIMRS principal-copies, 300 LPI teacher-copies and 300 PIMRS teacher-copies were distributed to the participants in 20 schools. To further break it down, 15 LPI and 15 PIMRS teacher-copies respectively were distributed to 30 teachers, including senior leadership team members, at each school. Further, one copy of the LPI principal-copy and PIMRS principal-copy were distributed to each of the 20 principals.

Third phase: interviews with principals and teachers

In this phase, principals were purposively selected to be part of the interviews. The author approached the six principals personally whilst distributing the questionnaires. All six principals agreed to be interviewed at a time which was convenient for them. In addition, one teacher and one senior leadership team member from the selected principals' schools were also selected for the interviews. This was to enable the author to obtain important data that could be used to compare the leadership features as perceived by the principals themselves with that perceived by the teachers.

In total, 18 interviews with principals, senior leadership team members and teachers were successfully carried out. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and one hour. All interviews were recorded with the participants' approval.

Data Analysis

This section explains how the quantitative data, obtained from the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires, as well as the qualitative data derived from the interviews and documents, were analysed.

Interviews

Out of the total of 21 interviews, six were carried out in English while the remaining interviews were carried out in Malay upon the request of the interviewees. All the recorded interviews were stored electronically. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim. Transcription is the process of converting audio tape recordings into text data (Creswell, 2012). Merriam (2009) maintains that verbatim transcription of recorded interviews would ideally provide the best database for analysis.

In order to ensure the validity of the transcriptions, as well as reducing the risk of systematic bias, the author employed one doctoral researcher, who is a Malay native speaker, to validate the interview transcriptions in Malay. Another doctoral researcher, who is also a Malay native speaker but who majored in TESOL, was also employed to verify the interview transcriptions in English. This procedure is in line with the advice of Flick (2007), who argues that transcriptions should be examined several times to ensure that they do not contain any obvious mistakes and to improve the reliability of the transcripts.

The transcripts of the interview which were conducted in Malay were then given to the same doctoral researcher, who majored in TESOL, for translation. Concurrently, the author also translated the Malay language transcript. Later, results of the translations were compared. Any differences in terms of the meaning and translation were resolved with the agreement of both the author and the doctoral researcher. This technique of translation is called the parallel blind technique (Behling & Law, 2000). This technique of translation has its advantages in the form of its speed and practicality. Behling and Law (2000: 23) argue that this technique is much faster than the "conventional translation/back translation technique because the two translators work in parallel rather than in sequence". They add that the parallel blind technique provides "an element of security" (ibid:23) because the two translated texts are examined against one another.

Once the transcriptions, including the translated version, were agreed upon to the satisfaction of the author and both of the doctoral researchers; the transcriptions were then analysed via thematic analysis. Willig (2014) recognises thematic analysis as a process of identifying themes in data sets "which capture meaning that is relevant to the research", and are also able to make links between themes, whilst analysing several data sets. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) add that thematic analysis is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where themes emerge and become the categories or focus for analysis. However, Guest, Macqueen, and Namey (2012: 10) posit that thematic analysis "requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher … [as] it moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, that is themes". Ritchie and Spencer (1994: 180) caution that thematic analysis should not be an "automatic or mechanical process", but rather involves "making judgements about meaning, about the relevance and importance of issues, and about implicit connections between ideas" that appear in the data sets. Themes which are identified as similar or identical across all the interviews were extracted and referenced into several categories.

<u>Documentary analysis</u>

The documents analysed included current circulars on the selection of Excellent Principals and recipients of the New Deals award. The circulars were analysed to explore the fundamental aspects of selecting Excellent Principals as well as recipients of the New Deals award and how those selection processes are related to high performing principals. The author also compared the selection processes for the Excellent Principals and the recipients of the

New Deals award with the criteria for high performing principals outlined in the Malaysian Education Blueprint.

Questionnaires

The data obtained from the questionnaires were computed into the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21 for analysis. The analyses included:

i. Cronbach Alpha – to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.
ii. Descriptive analysis – to analyse the demographics and background of the participants.
iii. Analysis of means – to analyse principals' perception of their leadership as well as the teachers' view on the leadership practices of their principals, as measured through the two questionnaires.
iv. T-test – to determine any statistically significant differences between the leadership practices of the principals based on their grade of services when measured using the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires
v. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test – to determine whether the leadership practices of the principals, measured by the two questionnaires, differ on the aspect of 'years serving as principals'. ANOVA was also carried out to determine whether there was any significant difference among the views of the teachers on the leadership practices of their principals based on the teachers' position.

Reliability and Validity

Creswell (2012: 159) posits that the terms reliability and validity overlap with each other, and at other times, these terms are mutually exclusive. However, he believes that they are bound together in complex ways. The following section discusses how reliability and validity were addressed in this study.

Reliability

Scholars believe that the key to successfully applying a notion of reliability in a study is that the scores and data obtained from a research procedure are consistent over time (Bush, 2012; Creswell, 2012; Scott & Morrison, 2005). As this mixed methods study utilised two questionnaires, the internal consistency of the items on both questionnaires had to be measured to determine whether the scores from the items "are reliable and accurate" (Creswell, 2012: 161). Fromm et al. (2017: 425) agree that researchers have most frequently employed Cronbach's alpha test of internal consistency in checking the reliability of the questionnaires and it "has become so ubiquitous in survey research that it has almost become synonymous with the concept of reliability". Hence Cronbach's alpha was used via the statistical software SPPSS to assess internal reliability. The results are presented in Table 3.6.

Leadership practices	**LPI Principal-copy**	**LPI Teacher-copy**
Model the way	.92	.94
Inspire a shared vision	.83	.95
Challenge the process	.72	.94
Enable others to act	.79	.95
Encourage the heart	.91	.96
Overall consistency	.95	.98

Table 3.6: Reliability statistics of LPI principal-copy and LPI teacher-copy

The results of the analysis indicate a high reliability coefficient for both the LPI principal and teacher copies. All items that measured the five leadership practices completed by the teachers showed a high reliability coefficient with each of the behaviours scoring ≥.90. However, the reliability coefficient of the five leadership practices in the LPI principal-copy shows a lower range of 72 to .92.

A similar test was conducted on the PIMRS principal and teacher copies to measure their reliability coefficients. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.7.

Instructional Leadership domains	**PIMRS Principal-copy**	**PIMRS Teacher-copy**
Framing the school's goals	.69	.90
Communicate the school's goals	.71	.87
Supervise and evaluate instruction	.76	.86
Coordinate the curriculum	.70	.89
Monitor students' progress	.73	.86
Protect instructional time	.60	.85
Maintain high visibility	.81	.85
Provide incentives for teachers	.68	.86
Promote professional development	.76	.92
Provide incentives for learning	.68	.90
Overall consistency	.94	.96

Table 3.7: Reliability coefficient of PIMRS principal and teacher copy

Overall, the reliability coefficients for both the PIMRS principal-copy and the PIMRS teacher-copy are high scoring at .94 and .96 respectively. The items contained in the ten instructional leadership practices of the PIMRS teacher-copy also suggest that the reliability coefficient is high. However, four leadership domains contained in the PIMRS principal-copy showed a lower reliability coefficient than the general acceptance level of .70. However, Creswell (2014: 606) explains that a score of ".60 is an acceptable level for determining whether the scale has internal consistency".

The reliability of the interviews was maintained by using standardised open-ended structured interviews. Bush (2012) maintains that the reliability of interview procedure depends on the type of interview utilised by the researcher. Hence, the open-ended structured interview, in which all the questions had been pre-determined and standardised for all participants, served to increase reliability in this study.

Validity

Validity is used "to judge whether the research accurately describes the phenomenon that it is intended to describe" (Bush, 2012: 81). However, Cohen et al. (2011: 133) believe that validity should be seen as "a matter of degree rather than as an absolute state…hence [the researcher must] strive to minimize invalidity and maximize validity". Bush (2012) argues that one of the potential sources of invalidity is interview bias, especially in the characteristics of the interview participants. All six senior leadership team members and six teachers were approached personally by the author rather than selected by their principals. This approach enhanced the validity of the interviews, as the principals did not select the senior leadership team members or teachers whom they might favour for the interviews. This approach reduced the risk of any potentially biased responses from the senior leadership team members or teachers who might feel "obliged" to participate in the interviews as they were selected personally by their principals.

Validity also refers to the accuracy of the inferences or interpretations generated from the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Hence, the data have to be representative of the issue that is being investigated (Newby, 2014). The mixed methods design enabled multiple perspectives on how principals who are deemed high performing enact their leadership practices. The data obtained from the participants was not restricted to the evidence provided by the principals alone, but also included the perspectives of their teachers and senior leaders. As a result, the involvement of a "range of participants" via the mixed methods design assisted the author to improve the data validity of this study (Bush, 2012: 86).

Overview

This chapter highlights the methodology and research methods adopted in this study. The mixed methods approach enabled the author to explore and understand how leadership practices of principals who are deemed to be high performing were understood from a range of perspectives obtained from different research tools. Further, the mixed methods approach has enabled the author to triangulate the data obtained from all phases in this study. The evidence obtained from each phase has enabled the author to explore and synthesise key leadership practices that are associated and (perceived to be) enacted by principals who are deemed high performing.

The author agrees with the assertions of Antonakis et al. (2004), and Teddlie (2005), who both recommend that researchers skilfully blend several methodological approaches in order to capture the contextual and complex nature of school leadership. The mixed methodology utilised in this study has provided the author with rich data that were obtained from various sources. The wealth of data might not be possible if the author had employed just one method. The wealth of data yielded from all three phases of this study is discussed in the following three chapters.

Chapter 4 – Qualitative Findings and Analysis – Phase I

Introduction

One of the aims of this study is to identify the leadership features practised by principals, especially those who are deemed to be high performing. The analysis in this first phase focuses first on how the Ministry of Education identifies and selects Excellent Principals and New Deals award recipients. The analysis of the selection process for the two awards helps to provide a better understanding on how high performing principals are selected and recognised in Malaysia. It further emphasises the opinion of the author that principals who are the recipients of both awards could be deemed to be high performing. This chapter also analyses key leadership practices which are viewed as important and essential from the perspectives of the policymakers, via the ministry officials as well as the policy documents. The key leadership practices highlighted in the analysis of the interviews and documents may indicate leadership practices which could be essential for high performing principals.

The first phase employed a qualitative method of inquiry. Data obtained in this qualitative phase include findings from interviews as well as documentary analysis. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with three Ministry of Education officials who were directly involved in the selection process of identifying principals for the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. The interview findings are supported by, and integrated with, the analysis of important documents pertaining to the selection process of both Excellent Principals and New Deals awards' recipients. The inclusion of documents in this phase of the study allows the author to complement the data obtained from the interviews. In addition, the analysis of the documents related to the selection process of excellent principals is carried out to ascertain what the key selection criteria are, and whether these aspects were emphasised by the interview participants.

Demographic Data of the Interview Participants

Three participants working with three different divisions of the Ministry of Education Malaysia were selected for the interviews. All three officials are considered key senior managers in their respective divisions based on their current positions, service grades and portfolio or job scope. They have been selected purposively based on their senior positions. The demographic features of the three interviewees are shown in Table 4.1.

Interviewee	Division and its responsibility	Position	Grade	Gender
MoE A	Schools Management Division (BPSH) – Leads the committee for the selection process of Excellent Principals	Senior Principal Assistant Director	DG52	M
MoE B	Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) – Oversees the implementation of the Malaysian Education Blueprint	Executive Director	JUSA C	F
MoE C	Schools Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Division (JNJK) – Leads the verification team for the selection process of New Deals recipients	Principal Assistant Director	DG52	M

Table 4.1: Demographic data of the interview participants

Documents Used

As highlighted in Table 3.5 of the previous chapter, several official documents were purposively selected for analysis. The analysis of documents aims at gaining added perspectives on the key selection process of Excellent Principals and New Deals Recipients, as well as complementing the interview data. The documentary analysis would enable a better understanding of the parameters used for selecting Excellent Principals and New Deals award recipients which might not be addressed in the interviews.

Findings

As elucidated in Chapter 3, the interviews and documents were subjected to thematic analysis. Themes which have been considered as 'a priori', such as the selection process of Excellent Principals and New Deals award recipients, as well as the roles played by the Ministry's officials, are presented first. This is followed by analysis of emerging themes that include the leadership practices which are deemed high performing from the perspectives of the policymakers.

<u>The roles of the divisions in selecting the Excellent Principals and the New Deals award recipients</u>

The Excellent Principals award was first introduced in 1994 as part of the government's initiative to reward principals who were deemed high performing as well as "improving the progression opportunities for principals" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-16). Being a highly centralised and structured organisation, the task of administering the selection process of Excellent Principals was assigned to the Schools Management Division (BPSH). BPSH is designated as the secretariat for the selection process. MoE A clarifies:

> Our main role as the secretariat for the Excellent Principals award is to issue a letter to all schools informing them that the Ministry is offering the position of excellent principals. Once the application period is closed, we would process the application forms. The process entirely is quite confidential, that is why I do not involve many people when processing the applications. (MoE A)

The introduction of the New Deals award in 2010 created another opportunity for principals who are deemed high performing to be accorded such recognition. The task of overseeing the implementation of the New Deals award was allotted to the Performance and Management Unit (PADU) while the Schools' Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Division (JNJK) was assigned with the task of being the secretariat that organises a joint working committee in selecting recipients of the New Deals award (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014b).

JNJK is also tasked to visit and verify the shortlisted principals and their schools before it could be awarded. MoE C explains:

> Basically, our job is to carry out the verification as one of the requisites for the principal to be shortlisted for the incentives. (MoE C)

Whilst the operational aspects of selecting and verifying Excellent Principals and the New Deals award recipients are carried out by BPSH and JNJK respectively, the Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) was tasked specifically "to drive delivery of all Blueprint initiatives across the Ministry and schools" (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-27). MoE B, who is one of the executive directors in PADU, clarifies:

> PADU is a performance and delivery unit, so our role is to make sure that whatever is planned is also being delivered rightly. (MoE B)

BPSH and JNJK have been part of the Ministry's divisions since the1950s. The former's central role is to manage over 10,000 schools nationwide, while the focus of the latter's role is on the inspection and quality assurance of education in all schools. PADU, on one hand, was established as an oversight agency in 2013 to oversee the overall implementation of the MEB. The MEB (Ministry of Education, 2013: 8-11) stresses that whilst "PADU play a supporting role, the accountability for delivering [the overall transformation] remains with the key people in the Ministry".

<u>Selection process for the Excellent Principals and the New Deals award</u>

The premise of this study identifies principals who are deemed high performing as those who have been awarded both the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. In the introductory chapter, the author highlighted that, while these two awards are different in nature, their objective is rather similar, namely, to recognise principals who are able to demonstrate performance which is exceptional compared to that of their peers. The analysis of the selection process for both awards helps to address the premise of this study and will also answer the first research question of this study: How are principals deemed high performing identified and selected?

Selection process for the Excellent Principals

The interview with MoE A indicates that there is no specific circular that governs the selection process of Excellent Principals. As MoE A explains:

> For the appointment of Excellent Principals, we do not have a dedicated circular but we abide by the selection criteria that were approved by the Ministry of Education. (MoE A)

Although the Excellent Principals award was introduced in 1994, an official policy statement was only published by the Ministry of Education in 2013 to give details on the selection criteria that govern Excellent Principals. The selection criteria that were "approved by the Ministry of Education" (MoE A) could be found in the Official Policy Statement on the Implementation of the Excellent Principals Award (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013) published by the Schools Management Division.

The analysis of the Official Policy Statement reveals that there are two sets of prerequisite requirements which all Excellent Principals candidates would have to adhere to before submitting their application. The requirements are presented in Table 4.2.

Common requirement	i. Achieved an excellent level of performance based on the annual appraisal review for the past three years ii. Free from any disciplinary action iii. Declared assets iv. Pass MACC integrity screening v. Not a loan defaulter/excessive borrower vi. Approval from the Head of Department
Specific requirement	i. Candidates applying for the DG54 Excellent Principal position must at present be in the DG52 grade when applying ii. Candidates applying for the JUSA C Excellent Principal must at present be in the DG54 grade when applying

Table 4.2: Common and specific requirement for the Excellent Principals award application

A cross analysis with the MEB reveals that the common requirement for selecting Excellent Principals is similar to the new selection criteria for all new principals as proposed in the MEB (Ministry of Education, 2013). The only difference is that the minimum score of 85% on the annual appraisal review marks for the previous three years is specified and required for all new principals as stipulated in the MEB. However, the exact score of the annual appraisal review or the "level of performance" required for Excellent Principals candidates is not explicitly stated. Although the requirement of 85% on the annual appraisal review marks was introduced and made compulsory as part of the new selection policy for all new principals beginning 2013 (see Ministry of Education, 2014: 62), the latest letter of announcement to all principals who wish to apply for the Excellent Principals award published by the BPSH in 2017 has yet to adopt the minimum specific annual appraisal marks in the common requirement.

MoE A clarifies that the allocation of the Excellent Principals award is based on the quota agreed upon by the Public Service Departments and the Ministry of Education. The selection process of Excellent Principals is only carried out when there is a vacancy in the given quota due to other Excellent Principals retiring. Hence, BPSH will only carry out the selection process when there are a considerable number of vacant Excellent Principal positions that need to be filled, as explained by MoE A:

> The selection process would commence based on the quota given. For example, let's say the existing quota for an excellent principal for the grade of JUSA C is 15 at any one time, and during that time, only two or three vacant positions were made available because of retirement, then we feel that it is not quite worth the effort and resources to start the selection process only to fill two or three positions. (MoE A)

In order to understand the quota for excellent principals clearly, the author referred to the Education Development Plan 2006 – 2011 report card (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2008) which explains the exact quota for Excellent Principals. A further documentary enquiry reveals the quota system for Excellent Principals was increased by the Ministry of Education in 2009 (BERNAMA, 2009; Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2008). The current quota for excellent principals is presented in Table 4.3.

Principal Grade	**Quota**
JUSA C	20
DG54	475
DG52	400

Table 4.3: Quota for Excellent Principals nationwide (Source: BERNAMA, 2009; Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2008)

Qualified candidates who apply for the Excellent Principals award are subjected to a first round of assessment and selection headed by their respective state education directors. The candidates are assessed based on specific evaluation criteria as presented in Table 4.4.

Criteria	Proportion of score (%)
i. Last three years of annual appraisal review marks	40
ii. Academic qualification and length of service	15
iii. Specific contribution and achievement	20
iv. Evaluation by panel of assessor *(only to be carried out when candidates have succeeded in the first round of evaluation)	25

Table 4.4: Assessment criteria used for selecting excellent principals (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2017)

MoE A believes the professional contributions of the candidates in their field of principalship have a significant impact when assessments of the candidates are carried out:

> The most significant criterion that we assess is how much the principal has contributed and to what level is the contribution.
> (MoE A)

In order to understand the significance of "the level of contribution" (MoE A), a cross-reference with the assessment criteria contained in the Official Policy Statement on the Implementation of the Excellent Principals Award (Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian, 2013) document was carried out. The analysis reveals that there are seven different levels of contribution on which the candidates are assessed. The seven levels are:

- professional contribution in academia;
- consultancy to peers;
- research and development;
- membership in professional bodies;
- awards received based on the contributions given;
- contributions to the schools' co-curricular achievement; and,
- contributions to the schools' academic achievement.

The candidates who have successfully passed the first round of assessment will then be visited and observed by a panel of assessors:

> So the first aspect that we assess of that candidate is leadership. Then we would assess how the principal manages the school's finances, [and] his or her involvement in the school's academic and extra-curricular performance. (MoE A)

The author probed further into the focus of 'leadership' as stated by MoE A. However, he briefly (without being specific) explained that the panel of assessors would evaluate general leadership skills and attributes. A cross-reference with the assessment criteria, (specifically stated in the latest letter of notification of vacant excellent principal positions), reveals that there are nine overall aspects which the candidates are evaluated upon by the panel of assessors. These include:

- curriculum management;
- students' affairs management;
- co-curricular management;
- human resource management;
- financial management;
- administrative skills;
- public relations;
- personal quality; and,
- principalship skills.

Due to the sensitivity of the specific content of the school visit assessment, MoE A declined to elaborate on the specific focus of each of the nine components. Six out the nine criteria suggests that the emphasis on evaluation by the evaluators are in the area management.

As the next selection step, the overall results of the evaluation and assessment of the Excellent Principals candidates, which includes the school visit observation, is taken into consideration by the secretariat before a shortlist of candidates is produced. The list of the shortlisted candidates is then submitted to the Director General of the Malaysia Ministry of Education for further approval:

> The shortlist is based on the quota of Excellent Principals that are being made available for that year. For instance, if the quota needs 10, we will shortlist 15 candidates. However, we also have to ensure that the shortlisted candidates are approved by the Director General of Education. Any changes to the list of candidates suggested by the Director General will be taken into account and we will come up with a revised shortlist. But rarely this happens. (MoE A)

Next, the approved and revised shortlist will be passed to the Human Resources Division of the Ministry. The Human Resources Division will carry out background checks on the candidates. The background check is carried out to ensure that the candidates are free from any recorded history of misconduct:

> Once the candidates have gone through the background checks, the candidates will be requested to attend an interview chaired by the Director General of Education. (MoE A)

The Director General of Education, with the consultation of the other panel of interviewers, would finalise and select the candidates for the award. Successful candidates will then be notified by BPSH.

Selection process for the New Deals awards recipients

Whilst the selection of Excellent Principals is carried out based on an agreed quota nationwide, the New Deals award is given to any principals and schools that show exceptional performance on a yearly basis. The New Deals initiative was designed to improve overall student outcomes throughout the system by incentivising principals to innovate, improve upon and deliver high performance in the schools they lead (Ministry of Education, 2013). The Service Circular on the implementation of the New Deals award (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014b) states that this award was introduced as a form of acknowledgement of the important role that principals play in improving and sustaining performance of their schools. The service circular was referred and analysed together with the interview findings in order to better comprehend the selection process of the New Deals award recipients.

The eligibility of the principals to receive the New Deals award hinges upon the composite score[9] and the ranking of the school. Unlike the application process for Excellent Principals, the Performance and Delivery Unit (PADU) would first shortlist schools that would make the first round of selection. New Deals recipients can only be considered if the schools have exceeded their original targets and the schools have shown significant improvement in the overall ranking of the schools (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014a). MoE C states:

> We receive the list from PADU. PADU is responsible for the shortlisting of the schools based on the criteria which are: 70% of Grade Point Average plus 30% of the score for SKPM[10]. Based on the composite score, they [PADU] will rank and band the schools. (MoE C)

Principals of the schools which have exceeded the target and achieved a significant leap in the ranking would then be notified of their eligibility for selection by PADU. The Official Guidelines for Awarding New Deals (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014a) document states that, a leap of 200 places in the ranking system would qualify the school to be considered for selection. The principals and their schools are then subject to a verification

[9] Composite score refers to the combination of a 70% grade points average obtained from the results of the school's public examinations and a 30% score obtained from the SKPM assessment tool which is completed annually by the principal of the school.

[10] SKPM or the Malaysian Education Quality Standards is a standards' document that is used as a benchmark of the educational quality standards for all Malaysian schools (Hussein, 2013a). The document consists of five standards' elements which are considered important for the school. The document also requires all principals to self-assess their performance as well as their schools' performance based on the five standards' elements (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2012).

process carried out by the Schools Inspectorate and Quality Assurance Division (JNJK).

MoE C clarifies that, once JNJK has received the shortlist of schools from PADU, they would organise a panel of evaluators to evaluate the shortlisted schools. The purpose of the verification process is to validate the self-assessed SKPM score completed by the principals of the schools. MoE C explains:

> Our job is to visit the school and verify the schools' self-assessed SKPM marks. This is guided by the five elements as explained in the standards' document. (MoE C)

The verification process allows the principals to be assessed against five important elements of standards in SKPM. The verification process determines and validates the self-assessed SKPM score completed by the principals. The five elements of standards and the proportion of scores for each element are shown in Table 4.5.

Standards' elements	Proportion of score (%)
Leadership and vision of school	10
Organisational management	15
Curriculum, co-curricular and students' affair management	20
Teaching and learning	20
Students' outcome	35

Table 4.5: Five elements of standards and the proportion of score for each of the standard (Source: Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2012)

In 1998, the then Director General of Education instructed all principals to teach a minimum of five periods per week (Ketua Pengarah Pendidikan Malaysia, 1998). The instruction applies to all principals and it is still presently in place. The letter of instruction issued by the Director General of Education has been adopted as one of the requirements for the principals and schools to be considered for the New Deals award. MoE C reaffirms that, apart from the verification of SKPM score, the panel of evaluators would also evaluate the principals based on their teaching and learning activities which take place in the school. MoE C explains:

> We also evaluate the teaching and learning carried out by the principals in their schools because the principals need to comply with one of the main requisites for the award which states that they must teach a minimum of five periods per week…and we must make sure that the minimum teaching time is adhered to by the principals. (MoE C)

The inclusion of the principal's classroom practice suggests that instructional practices, as well as the instructional leadership of the principals, are being evaluated. Nonetheless, neither the interviews with MoE C and MoE B nor the selection documents explain the essential components for effective instructional leaders in the classroom when carrying out the evaluation. In addition, key instructional leadership practices, could not really be assessed based solely on a minimum of five lesson periods per week.

Once the verification process is completed, principals must provide evidence to qualify them for the final selection phase of the New Deals award. This evidence is based on the specific requirement determined by the Ministry of Education. The requirements are presented in Table 4.6.

Common requirement	i. Achieved a minimum of 90% score on the previous year's annual appraisal review ii. Rated 'good' in the annual financial performance and management review iii. Rated 'good' in the annual financial audit review iv. No prior disciplinary action
Specific requirement	i. Principals must teach a minimum of five periods per week ii. Principals of high performing schools must show evidence that their schools have exceeded the specific high performing school's key performance indicator

Table 4.6: Common and specific requirement for the New Deals award application (Source: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2014a; 2014b)

The final selection process involves a selection committee co-chaired by the Secretary General as well as the Director General of the Ministry. Candidates who have provided evidence that they fulfil the common and specific requirements set out for the award, in addition to the ability to justify the self-assessed SKPM score to the satisfaction of the panel of assessors, shall be recommended for the New Deals award.

As one of the policymakers in the Ministry, PADU understands the meticulous process of selecting the recipients of the New Deals award. MoE B states that:

> The principals who are shortlisted for the New Deals award have to go through an all-round selection process. First, they have to prove that they can transform the school and they can improve the school's performance. That is why we have decided that the ability of the principal to improve the school's ranking is considered as one of the main criteria for selection. (MoE B)

In addition, MoE B agrees that the verification process carried out by the JNJK is all-encompassing because the instrument used for verification is the SKPM, believed to be "a holistic assessment tool" (MoE B).

Differences in the selection processes for the two awards

The main difference in terms of the selection practice for Excellent Principals award recipients and their New Deals counterparts is the initial opportunity afforded to the principals themselves. For example, principals who are interested in applying to become an Excellent Principal are able to do so once the application period is open. However, all Excellent Principals' candidates are still subjected to an early stage of selection and endorsement conducted by their respective State Education Directors.

Conversely, principals who wish to compete for the New Deals award would only be able to do so once their schools are shortlisted based on the aggregate composite score; hence the eligibility even to be considered for the award is not within their control but hinges upon other external factors such as the schools' ranking. In addition, schools are only considered for the New Deals awards if they have been shortlisted by PADU.

The interviews also suggest that the respective overseers of these two awards have differing opinions when asked about the similarities or differences in the selection processes of Excellent Principals and the New Deals award. For example, MoE B argues that the selection process for Excellent Principals is not as comprehensive as the selection process for New Deals award recipients:

> …the assessment for Excellent Principals is done at that time and at that moment…selecting excellent principals is just through a process determined by a one-time observation, the process to me is not valid and reliable enough. (MoE B)

MoE B maintains that the instrument used in the assessment and verification of New Deals recipient is "holistic". In addition, MoE B believes that JNJK's inspection allows for the overall performance of the principals, as well as the schools, to be assessed comprehensively.

The selection process for the New Deals award is criticised by MoE A because of the absence of the interview component. Excellent Principals candidates who have succeeded to the final stage have to go through an interview with a panel chaired by the Director General of Education. As MoE A recalls:

> Excellent Principal candidates need to be interviewed at the final stage; they must prove to the panel of interviewers chaired by the Director General of Education that they are worthy of the award as compared to other candidates. This is because the award is given based on a set quota per year and sometimes the quota available is very few and therefore competition is very tight. (MoE A)

Analysis of the selected documents further expands the understanding of the differences between the selection processes of those two awards. The documents that guide the selection process of each award respectively reveal one significant difference pertaining to the annual appraisal review score. Whilst the annual appraisal review is mandatory for both awards, the minimum score that qualifies the candidate to apply for the Excellent Principals award is not clearly specified. Further examination of the documents reveals that, although the minimum appraisal score is not explicitly stated for all excellent principals' candidates, the biggest proportion of marks is given to the annual appraisal review which accounts for 40% of the total evaluation score, as compared to the other three components (see Table 4.4). This indicates that the performance of the candidates, as reflected in their annual appraisal review score, is one of the biggest features when selecting Excellent Principals. On the other hand, principals who are vying for the New Deals award must score a minimum of 90% on the annual appraisal review. This is 5% more than the score required for all new incoming principals, as suggested by the MEB (Ministry of Education, 2013).

Despite the differing opinions on which selection process is better, all interview participants agree that recognition, in this case through the New Deals awards and the Excellent Principals award, is needed for high performing principals who show greater qualities and capabilities as compared to their peers. The analysis also suggests that, despite the differences in the selection processes for the two awards, the performance of the principals, and how they guide their schools' achievements, are key markers for both awards. The selection process for both awards, which are quite lengthy and involve multiple stages, would give weight to the premise that Excellent Principals who are also recipients of the New Deals award could indeed be considered as high performing.

<u>Key leadership practices</u>

A central aim of this study is to understand key leadership features which are associated with the leadership practices of high performing principals. In carrying out the analysis, the conception of high performing leadership is first examined through the lenses of the policymakers. The analysis then seeks to compare the leadership practices which could be considered essential for high performing principals, as viewed by the interview participants, with those identified in the MEB.

The definition of high performing leadership at the policy level

One of the main aims of the MEB is to improve the current education system to a level which is "comparable to [any] high performing education system" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 2-2). Hence, the terms 'high performance' or 'high performing' are highlighted extensively in the MEB. 'High performance' or 'high performing' are used to refer to five different contexts or aspects in the MEB. Content analysis was carried out to discover the frequency of the term high performing in those different contexts. Table 4.7 shows the number of instances that the term 'high performing' appears in the MEB.

Context	Number of times appears/use in the Malaysian Education Blueprint
High performing education system	31
High performing schools	17
High performing students	10
High performing leaders	12
High performing teachers	8

Table 4.7: Number of times the phrase "high performing" appears in the Malaysian Education Blueprint

The MEB identifies high performing principals or leaders as key to improving the schools' performance. The analysis indicates that the term high performing leader, referring specifically to school leaders or principals, is used 12 times in the MEB. The analysis also reveals that, while the MEB aspires to have high performing principals in all schools, it does not describe clearly how 'high performing principal' is defined. In the absence of a specific definition of high performing leadership, further analysis of the MEB was carried out to ascertain any leadership practices, qualities and attributes that directly refer to high performing leadership.

The analysis suggests that one of the qualities that could be attributed to high performing principals or leaders relates to the performance of the school. This is evident when the MEB states that: "The Ministry aims to ensure that every school has a high-performing principal capable of improving the school's performance regardless of its starting point" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-6). Hence, school performance is one of the key qualities that could be attributed to high performing principals, as stated in the MEB.

Analysis of the interviews correspondingly suggests that performance of schools is important when acknowledging high performing principals. For example, MoE B identifies the performance of the schools as one of the key criteria of New Deals recipients:

> If we look at the school outcomes, they are considered as high performing because they can change the school's performance and they can reach certain targets that we have set for them to meet. Meeting the targets, I do consider them as high performing. (MoE B)

In addition, MoE A also identifies the performance of schools as one of the key criteria for high performing principals. MoE A believes that any school, especially the low performing ones, would be able to be turned around if it is led by a high performing principal. MoE A claims that a high performing principal would push any ailing school to greater heights, by challenging the teachers to perform better and to improve the school's performance together.

The MEB claims that "research shows that replacing an average principal with an outstanding one can improve outcomes by up to 20 percentile points" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-13)[11]. MoE A and MoE B correspondingly agree that, if a high performing principal is placed in a challenging context, the principal would be able to match his performance with the ability to improve the school successfully. Despite the assertion in the MEB, and the comments made by MoE A and MoE B, there is no official policy of moving high performing principals, particularly Excellent Principals or New Deals recipients, to low performing schools.

Instructional leadership

The MEB maintains that: "In high-performing school systems, principals are more than just administrative leaders – they are instructional leaders who focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning in their schools" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-13). Hence, the MEB (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-24) adopts the belief that in order for "the transformation of the Malaysian education system to be effective and sustainable", schools leaders

[11] The assertion made in the MEB was based on a meta-analysis of 69 studies on school leadership conducted between 1978 and 2001 by Marzano et al. (2005).

must, therefore “become excellent instructional leaders and act as agents of change”. Instructional leadership, therefore, is given greater focus as compared to other leadership practices. This is evident when instructional leadership is highlighted 22 times in the MEB, as compared to other leadership practices namely administrative leadership (seven times), distributed leadership (four times) and transformational leadership (once).

All interview participants, to some extent, highlight the importance of instructional leadership as the main leadership practice. For example, MoE A maintains that “an excellent school is always headed by a very good instructional leader". MoE A adds:

> When a principal practices good instructional leadership, then that principal would be able to lead effectively. In order for a school to be excellent, the presence of a good instructional leader is very important. If a principal does not practice good instructional leadership, it would be difficult for them to lead the teaching and learning in the school and indirectly, the teachers would not be able to learn much from the principal. (MoE A)

MoE C expresses a similar sentiment on the need for principals to lead teaching and learning as they are the role models for teachers in schools. MoE C adds that high performing principals should also be able to “come up with new ideas, be innovative and motivating the teachers…[as well as] introducing new ways of teaching and learning and especially introducing 21st-century skills to the teachers”. Likewise, MoE B asserts that principals “need to know and possess the ability to become instructional leaders”. MoE B also identifies instructional leadership as an effective practice when schools need to be improved academically. MoE B adds that, when improvement requires the content of the teaching and learning to be amended, “then they [the principal] should focus on instructional leadership”.

Administrative leadership

The analysis of the MEB identified administrative leadership as the second most frequently mentioned leadership practice. However, references to administrative leadership in the MEB are mostly made in comparison with instructional leadership. This is evident when administrative leadership is pictured as less effective than instructional leadership in four different places in the MEB. Whilst the interviews with the Ministry officials did not elicit any references to administrative leadership, the analysis of the selection process of Excellent Principals indicates that administrative and managerial skills are overwhelmingly adopted as the key aspects assessed by the panel of evaluators. For example, based on the components of assessing Excellent Principals candidates during the school visit, up to 50% of the overall assessment is allocated to administrative and management skills.

Transformational and distributed leadership

Whilst other leadership features, notably transformational and distributed leadership, are given lesser focus than instructional leadership in the MEB, the interviews indicate otherwise. Analysis of the interview responses reveals that the conception of high performing principals rests in the ability of the principal to lead the transformation of the schools. For example, MoE B believes that a high performing principal is somebody who is “able to transform the performance of the school”. MoE C echoes this sentiment, that principals who are able to transform the performance of schools are considered as high performing.

The MEB asserts that education systems “that improve rapidly place strong transformational leaders in the most pivotal roles at every level in the education system, be it national, state, district, or educational institution” (Ministry of Education, 2013: 8-10). This belief, therefore, supports MoE B’s view that transformation of any schools could only be achieved by the transformational practices of the principals:

> …if the schools need transformation or to be transformed, I guess the principals should have the knowledge of transformational leadership. (MoE B)

MoE B adds that transformation of the school does not only focus on one particular area, such as academic performance, but it must include “the whole transformation of the school”. MoE B emphasises that the ability of a high performing principal to transform the school would ultimately lead to all students benefiting from the transformation. Drawing on the aspiration of the MEB, MoE B supports the notion that if principals “are able to turn over the school and transform the school, they have actually achieved the aspiration of the MEB and that principal could be considered as high performing” (MoE B).

One of the qualities that would enable leaders to enact transformational leadership is the ability to motivate and inspire people to do what needs to be done in order to achieve the goals. This is reflected in the interview when MoE A believes that a good principal is able to challenge his subordinates to perform better, as well as sustaining the excellence of the school. MoE A explains that principals who are able to challenge their subordinates to change would ultimately contribute to the success of the schools. In addition, MoE A considers that the “principal who dares to change and motivate their teachers” is more effective as compared to principals who wish to be “populist”.

Elements of distributed leadership are also highlighted in the interview with MoE B, who maintains that the relationship between principals and their subordinates is paramount because principals rely on their teachers and support staff to manage the schools. MoE B stresses that any high performing principals are not able to function well if they do not have the support of their subordinates. MoE B points out that any principals “can't be high performing if they do not have team work from their subordinates and their teachers”. The MEB acknowledges the need for principals to move “away from the idea of one of heroic leadership to one of distributed leadership” (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-13). However, “the transition towards a distributed leadership model involving assistant principals and subject heads” (Ministry of

Education, 2013: 5-16) will only be implemented and focused upon in Wave 2 of the MEB.

The importance of understanding key leadership practices

The analysis of the interviews also suggests that focusing on one leadership practice or model is not sufficient. However, of all the three interview participants, only MoE B reflects the need for high performing principals to "have to know and understand other kinds of leadership because instructional leadership alone is not enough". MoE B adds that:

> …principals need to exhibit more characteristics of an instructional leader and, at the same time, they need to have other kinds of leadership. (MoE B)

MoE B also argues that:

> …it doesn't necessarily mean that one leadership is effective because they need to combine the leadership practices. The emphasis on the type of leadership depends on the principal themselves; they should know better what works. They should be more flexible and not be using one type of leadership. (MoE B)

Despite recognising that many types of leadership practices are relevant in schools, MoE B insists that principals should be aware of the differing situations in schools before applying one type of leadership practice.

Overview

This chapter analyses the interview findings of three senior Ministry of Education personnel, linked to key documents, notably the MEB as well as documents pertaining to the selection process for the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. Several conclusions can be drawn from the analysis. First, the process of selecting both the Excellent Principals and the New Deals award recipients involves several stages. As a result, the principals (including all the principals who were purposively selected for this study) have experienced two different selection processes to qualify them for the two awards. Although the selection process for the two awards is different, the objectives of the awards are similar, namely, to recognise the performance of the principals at the highest level. The multi-layered selection process of those awards would lend credibility to the premise of this study, which identifies Excellent Principals who are also New Deals recipients as high performing.

Another conclusion that arises from the analysis involves leadership practices of principals identified at the policy level. The MEB identified four leadership practices in which the focus is very much given to instructional leadership as compared to distributed, transformational and administrative leadership. The Ministry's officials, on the other hand, focused more on instructional leadership and transformational leadership as the two practices which are essential for principals in Malaysia. In addition, one of the Ministry's officials also acknowledged distributed leadership as an important practice for high performing principals.

The analysis has aided the author to better understand the process involved when selecting principals who are deemed high performing via the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. The analysis of the interviews and the documents also contributes towards understanding the key leadership parameters essential for high performing principals, from the perspective of policymakers. The key leadership features identified in the interviews, linked to those identified in the selection process, are discussed and synthesised together with other data in the penultimate chapter. The next chapter presents findings from the surveys of teachers and principals.

Chapter 5 – Quantitative Findings and Analysis – Phase II

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the analysis focused on the selection process of principals who are deemed high performing via the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. This chapter presents the analysis of the data pertaining to the second phase of this study, which was obtained through a quantitative method of inquiry. This method enabled the author to provide evidence of those leadership practices of the principals which were most observed by the principals themselves as well as by their teachers. These leadership practices were confined to the leadership components or domains produced by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS).

Within the scope of this study, the demographic data of the respondents, especially the position, grades of service and years of experience, were recognised as a critical source of information. Hence, the analysis seeks to determine if the selected demographic variables had any impact on the perceived leadership practices of the principals. For example, the analysis was extended to identify any significant differences in the principals' leadership practices as perceived by their teachers based on the teachers' position. The finding was particularly useful, as the position of the teachers was also adopted when selecting the respondents in the qualitative phase of this study. Hence, the perception of the leadership practices as viewed by the teachers with different positions held in their schools, was later compared with the interview findings in the discussion chapter.

The selected demographic variables chosen for analysis were restricted to only the principals' grades of services and years served as principals. In addition, the teachers' current position in the schools was also considered as another demographic variable for analysis. The reason that this study limits the analysis to the aforementioned demographic variables is because of the sheer volume of data that would be generated should other demographic variables such as gender and academic qualifications of principals and teachers be included in the in this study. In addition, given the limited space of this study, consideration was given to the qualitative analysis which follows in the next chapter. Nevertheless, other demographic variables, in particular gender, could be looked into further in future studies.

The data obtained from the questionnaires were entered into the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21 for analysis. This chapter begins with an overview of the response rate. This is followed by the descriptive statistics of the respondents.

Response Rate

The author distributed to the 20-selected high performing schools the following questionnaires: 20 LPI principal-copies, 20 PIMRS principal-copies, 300 LPI teacher-copies and 300 PIMRS teacher-copies. The response rate of the questionnaires is presented in Table 5.1.

Questionnaire	Distributed	Returned	Response rate (%)
LPI principal-copy	20	18	90
PIMRS principal-copy	20	18	90
LPI teacher-copy	300	256	85.33
PIMRS teacher-copy	300	246	82

Table 5.1: Response Rate of the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires

Johnson and Christensen (2008) maintain that response rates of 70% or higher are considered acceptable. The response rate for this study indicates a high return for all the distributed questionnaires. The high response rate could be attributed to the approaches employed by the author when administering the questionnaires as suggested by Creswell (2014). Creswell (2014) suggests that a pre-notification letter is one effective strategy to inform potential respondents of the impending research. When the questionnaires were distributed, the author utilised the follow-up procedure through letters and telephone calls to the schools. Creswell (2014) considers this strategy useful and complementary to the pre-notification strategy needed to yield a good response rate.

Descriptive Statistics – Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The following section analyses the demographic data obtained from the questionnaires. The principals and the teachers' demographics are presented separately for ease of reading.

Principals' profiles

The first section of the principal questionnaires consists of demographic information. The following section explains the demographic details of the 18 excellent principals who took part in the survey.

Grade of service

Table 5.2 indicates the breakdown of the principals' profile based on their service grade. Of the respondents, 88.9% are of the DG54 grade of service.

Grade of service	**N**	**%**
JUSA C	2	11.1
DG 54	16	88.9
Total	18	100

Table 5.2: Principals' grades of service

Gender

Almost half (44.4%) of the respondents are male while female respondents account for more than half (55.6%). This implies a fairly balanced distribution of the questionnaires based on the gender of the respondents. Table 5.3 shows the breakdown of the respondents according to gender.

Gender	**n**	**%**
Female	10	55.6
Male	8	44.4
Total	18	100

Table 5.3: Gender demographics of the respondents

Age[12]

The MEB states that the previous "tenure-based appointment of principals has resulted in an ageing cohort, with 40% of principals due to retire within the next five years" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-13). This comment is evident in the age distribution of the principals involved in the study. The great majority (83.3%) of the respondents are within their last five years of service while another 16.7% of the respondents are in the 51 to 55 age bracket. None of the respondents is 50 or below. Table 5.4 shows the age breakdown of the respondents.

Age bracket	**N**	**%**
56 to 60	15	83.3
51 to 55	3	16.7
Total	18	100

Table 5.4: Age demographics of the respondents

Academic qualifications

More than half (55.6%) of the respondents hold a master's degree qualification while the remaining group (44.4%) have a bachelor's degree. Table 5.5

[12] The compulsory retirement age for all Malaysian civil servants is 60.

presents the breakdown of respondents based on their highest academic qualifications.

Qualification	**N**	**%**
Master's degree	10	55.6
Bachelor's degree	8	44.4
Total	18	100

Table 5.5: Academic qualification of the respondents

Number of years served as principals

This group of principals is very experienced. Almost half (44.4 %) had served as principals for more than 15 years while only two respondents had less than ten years' experience. Table 5.6 shows the overall number of years the respondents have worked as principals.

Number of years of working experience as principals	**n**	**%**
More than 15 years	8	44.4
Between 11 to 14 years	8	44.4
Between 5 to 10 years	2	11.2
Total	18	100

Table 5.6: Overall years of experience as principals

<u>Teachers' profiles</u>

There were 503 responses in total to the teachers' surveys. Of these, 256 teachers answered the LPI teacher questionnaire while 246 teachers responded to the PIMRS teacher-copy. The following section presents the demographic details of the respondents.

Grade of service

Table 5.7 shows the comparison of teachers answering the PIMRS teacher-copy questionnaire with those who answered the LPI teacher-copy questionnaire. The table reveals that four responses to the surveys are of the

DG54 grade which is the same as most (88.9%) of the principals who participated in this study.

Grade of service	**PIMRS teacher-copy**		**LPI teacher-copy**		**Overall**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
DG 54	1	0.4	3	1.2	4	0.79
DG 52	4	1.6	7	2.7	11	2.20
DG 48	73	29.7	63	24.6	136	27.09
DG 44	93	37.8	89	34.8	182	36.25
DG 41	71	28.9	91	35.5	162	32.27
DG 34	4	1.6	3	1.2	7	1.40
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.7: Distribution of respondents based on grades of service

In general, 96.4% of teachers of the grades DG 41 to DG 48 answered the PIMRS teacher-copy questionnaire. Similarly, 95.61% of grades DG 41 to DG 48 answered the LPI teacher-copy form. Figure 5.1 further illustrates the comparison of the respondents who answered the questionnaires according to the grades of service.

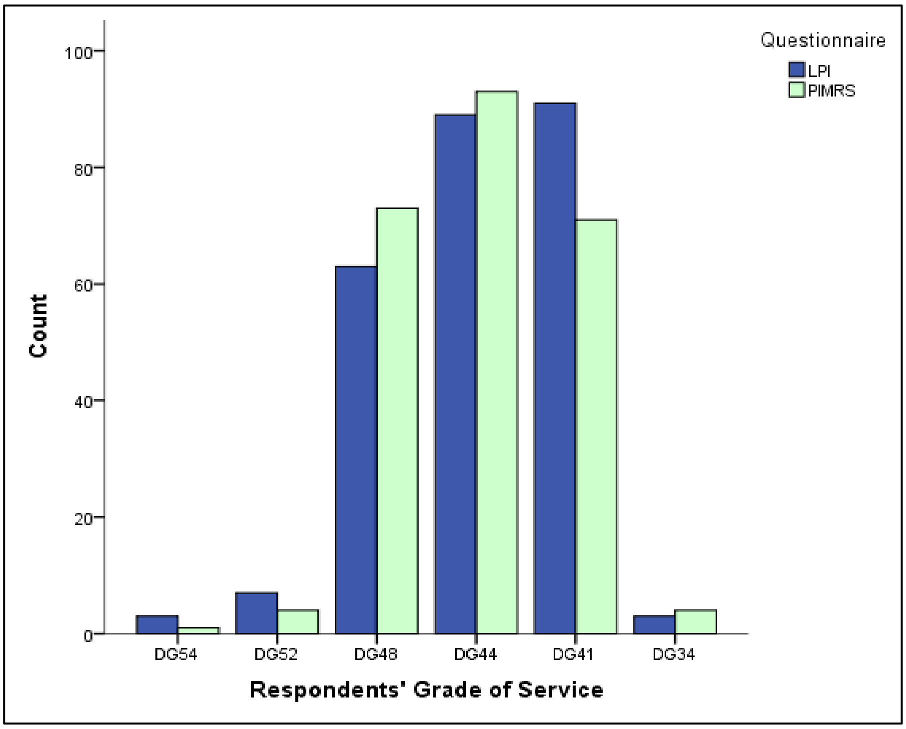


Figure 5.1: Distribution of respondents based on the grades of service

The frequency of the grade of service of the respondents between the two questionnaires is considered fairly evenly distributed. The distribution of respondents also indicates that not only were both questionnaires fairly distributed in terms of the number of responses, but the grades of service of the respondents were also evenly dispersed.

Position in school[13]

Table 5.8 indicates the positions held by the respondents. Almost three-quarters (72.5%) of the total respondents were ordinary teachers who did not hold any leadership positions. A total of 17.4% of the senior leadership team members answered the PIMRS teacher-copy questionnaire while 14.9% of senior leadership team members answered the LPI teacher-copy questionnaire.

[13] This study identifies assistant principals and heads of department as the senior leadership team members of the schools. The subject heads, on the other hand, are considered to be middle-level positions. Teachers who are appointed as subject heads are often rotated with their other colleagues in a three-year cycle.

Position	PIMRS teacher-copy		LPI teacher-copy		Overall	
	N	%	n	%	N	%
Assistant Principal I	3	1.2	4	1.6	7	1.4
Assistant Principal for student affairs	2	0.8	3	1.2	5	1.0
Assistant Principal for Co-Curricular	5	2.0	4	1.6	9	1.8
Head of department	33	13.4	27	10.5	60	12.0
Subject heads	35	14.2	22	8.6	57	11.4
Teachers	168	68.3	196	76.6	364	72.5
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.8: Demographics of respondents based on the position held in schools

Figure 5.2 further presents a comparison of the respondents who answered the questionnaires according to position. The frequency of the positions of the respondents between the two questionnaires is considered fairly evenly distributed.

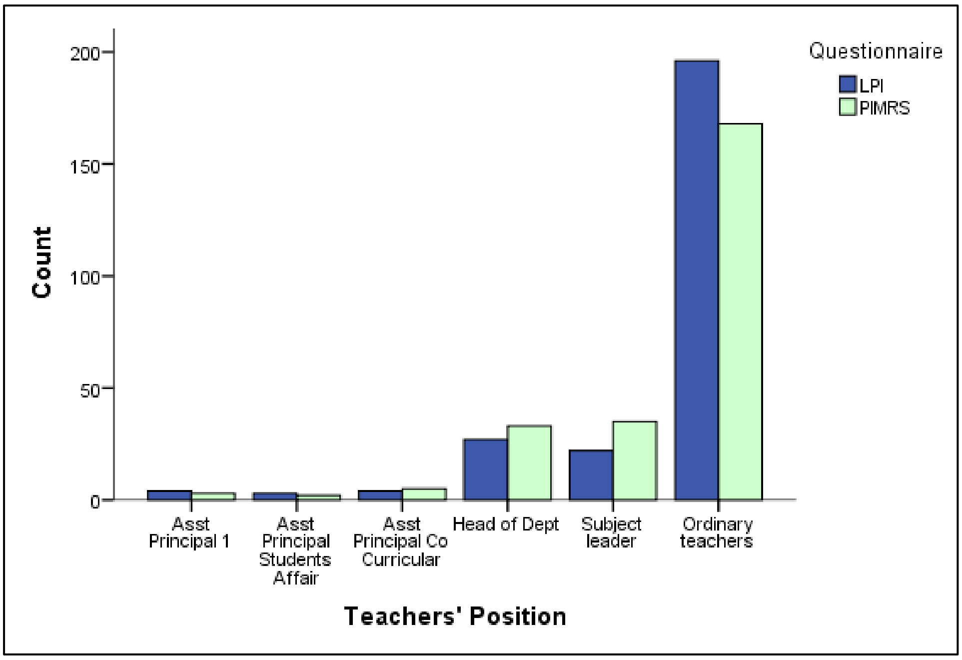


Figure 5.2: Distribution of respondents based on the positions held in schools

Gender

Table 5.9 shows that more than half (62%) of the respondents who answered the questionnaires were female. A minority (7.17%) of the respondents did not indicate their gender.

Gender	**PIMRS teacher-copy**		**LPI teacher-copy**		**Overall**	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Female	155	63.0	159	62.1	314	62.55
Male	76	30.9	76	29.7	152	30.28
Not stated	15	6.1	21	8.2	36	7.17
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.9: Gender demographics of the respondents

Age

Table 5.10 indicates the age distribution of the respondents based on the questionnaires answered.

Age bracket	PIMRS teacher-copy		LPI teacher-copy		Overall	
	n	**%**	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
56 – 60	7	2.8	5	2.0	12	2.5
51 – 55	44	17.9	38	14.8	82	16.3
45 – 50	51	20.7	50	19.5	101	20.1
41 – 44	20	8.1	29	11.3	49	9.8
36 – 40	46	18.7	36	14.1	82	16.3
31 – 35	43	17.5	52	20.3	95	18.9
24 – 30	35	14.2	46	18.0	81	16.1
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.10: Age demographics of the respondents

Teachers in the age bracket of 45 – 50 were the largest number of respondents to answer the PIMRS teacher-copy with a total count of 20.7%. Only a small minority (2.8%) of the teachers who answered the PIMRS teacher-copy questionnaire belongs to the 56 – 60 age bracket. The largest group of respondents answering the LPI teacher-copy could be found in the 31 – 35 age bracket with the total number of 20.3%. Similar to the PIMRS teacher-copy, teachers from the age bracket of 56 – 60 years were the least number of respondents answering the LPI teacher-copy, at only 2%.

Academic qualifications

Table 5.11 indicates that the largest number of respondents answering the LPI teacher-copy, and the PIMRS teacher-copy, hold a bachelor's degree with a very similar figure of 88.3% and 88.6% respectively. A total of 10.16% of the respondents hold a master's degree while two respondents are PhD-holders.

Qualification	PIMRS teacher-copy		LPI teacher-copy		Overall	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
PhD	1	0.4	1	0.4	2	0.40
Master’s	25	10.2	26	10.2	51	10.16
Bachelor’s	218	88.6	226	88.3	444	88.44
Diploma/ certificate	2	0.8	3	1.2	5	1.0
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.11: Academic qualifications of the respondents

Years of experience

Table 5.12 shows the overall years of experience of the respondents. More than 19% of teachers with more than 25 years of service responded to the PIMRS teacher-copy and LPI teacher-copy questionnaires. However, teachers with experience of between 6 to 10 years were the largest group to complete the two questionnaires, with 24.8% and 19.9% respectively.

Number of years	PIMRS teacher-copy		LPI teacher-copy		Overall	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
More than 25 years	49	19.9	50	19.5	99	19.7
Between 21 to 24 years	31	12.6	23	9.0	54	10.8
Between 16 to 20 years	37	15.0	38	14.8	75	14.9
Between 11 to 15 years	39	15.9	46	18.0	85	16.9
Between 6 to 10 years	61	24.8	51	19.9	112	22.3
Between 2 to 5 years	23	9.3	44	17.2	67	13.3
1 year or less	6	2.4	4	1.6	10	2.0
Total	246	100	256	100	502	100

Table 5.12: Demographics of respondents based on years of experience

Principal and Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices Based on the Mean Scores of the LPI and PIMRS Questionnaires

Principal perceptions of their leadership as well as teacher views on the leadership practices of their principals, as measured through the two questionnaires, were tabulated and ranked based on the mean scores obtained. As indicated in the methodology chapter, whole scale single scoring is not a valid use for either the LPI or the PIMRS. Hence, scores for each of the five leadership practices in the LPI are made up of a combination of six different questions. On the other hand, five questions make up each of the ten instructional leadership practices in the PIMRS.

Hallinger (2008) asserts that calculating the mean scores for the items that comprise each subscale is a useful technique that yields data on the perceptions of principals' leadership practices. Mean scores for the five leadership practices of the LPI and ten instructional leadership practices of the PIMRS were obtained for analysis. The mean scores were analysed to establish the preferred leadership practices enacted by the principals as generated by the scores from the two questionnaires respectively. The analysis included ranking the leadership practices based on the perceptions of the principals as well as their teachers. The mean scores of the principals and the teachers were then compared in terms of the ranking of the leadership practices as viewed by the principals and teachers respectively. The comparison would support any significant trend in terms of which are the most performed leadership practices of the principals from the perspectives of the principals themselves as well as the teachers.

Principals' leadership practices as rated by principals and teachers on the LPI questionnaire

Table 5.13 ranks the mean scores for each of the five dimensions of the LPI as rated by 18 principals.

Leadership practice	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min^ score given**	**%**	**Max^ score given**	**%**	**Rank**
Encourage the heart	8.96	.956	7.00	16.7	10.00	16.7	1
Inspire a shared vision	8.86	.693	7.00	16.7	9.00	50.0	2
Enable others to act	8.85	.779	7.00	16.7	10.00	11.1	3
Model the Way	8.67	.836	7.00	22.2	10.00	5.6	4
Challenge the process	8.48	.814	7.00	22.2	9.00	33.3	5

^The minimum and maximum score for each of the questions in the LPI questionnaire is 1 (Almost never) and 10 (Almost always) respectively.

Table 5.13: Normative mean scores for the leadership practices as measured by the principals on the LPI questionnaire

Table 5.13 suggests that all of the principals rated themselves highly on all of the five leadership practices. None of the principals rated themselves below seven on any of the scales in the LPI questionnaire. This indicates that most of the leadership practices as stipulated in the LPI were claimed to be carried out fairly often by the principals. A minority (5.6% to 16.7%) of the principals rated themselves the highest (ten on the scale) on three of the leadership practices which were: '*Encourage the heart'*, '*Enable others to act*' and '*Model the way*'. This suggests that these principals claimed to be carrying out these three leadership practices almost always.

The normative mean scores also suggest that the principals rated the leadership practice of '*Encourage the heart'* (M=8.96, SD=0.956) as the most performed leadership practice, followed by the '*Inspire a shared vision*' (M=8.86, SD=0.693) leadership practice. The leadership practice of '*Model the way*' (M=8.67, SD=0.836) was ranked the second lowest by the principals while '*Challenge the process'* (M=8.48, SD=0.814) was ranked the lowest of all the five leadership practices as measured by the LPI questionnaire.

The mean scores for each of the five dimensions of the LPI as rated by 256 teachers are ranked in Table 5.14.

Leadership practice	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min^ score given**	**%**	**Max^ score given**	**%**	**Rank**
Inspire a shared vision	7.34	1.773	2.00	0.8	10.00	1.6	1
Enable others to act	7.25	1.767	2.00	2.0	10.00	0.8	2
Challenge the process	7.11	1.773	2.00	1.6	10.00	2.0	3
Encourage the heart	7.06	1.872	1.00	0.4	10.00	1.2	4
Model the Way	7.04	1.801	1.00	0.4	10.00	0.8	5

^The minimum and maximum score for each of the question in the LPI questionnaire is 1 (Almost never) and 10 (Almost always) respectively.

Table 5.14: Normative mean scores for the leadership practices of the principals as measured by their teachers on the LPI questionnaire

The mean scores presented in Table 5.14 appear to suggest that the teachers rated their principals much lower than the principals rated themselves. The minimum scores given by the teachers were one and two which suggests that a small number (0.4%) of the teachers also rated their principals as almost never or rarely enacting the leadership practices as stipulated in the LPI. Conversely, a small number (0.8% to 2%) of the teachers rated their principals as almost always enacting the leadership practices as stipulated on the LPI questionnaire.

The normative mean scores for each of the five leadership practices indicate that '*Inspire a shared vision*' (M=7.34, SD=1.773) was perceived by the teachers as the most performed by the principals. The teachers also identified '*Enable others to act*' (M=7.25, SD=1.767) as the second most attributed leadership practices of their principals. The principals' leadership practice of '*Model the way*' (M=7.04, SD=1.801) was perceived by the teachers to be enacted the least. '*Model the way*' requires the leaders to set personal examples that are exemplary to their subordinates. Although this leadership practice was perceived by the teachers as the least practised by the principals, the mean score of 7.04 still denotes that this practice is carried out fairly often by the principals.

The findings obtained from the normative mean scores are summarised in Table 5.15 to further illustrate the comparison of the leadership practices of the principals as viewed by them, as well as perceived by their teachers.

Leadership practice	**Rated by Principals**		**Rated by Teachers**	
	Mean	**Rank**	**Mean**	**Rank**
Encourage the heart	8.96	1	7.06	4
Inspire a shared vision	8.86	2	7.34	1
Enable others to act	8.85	3	7.25	2
Model the way	8.67	4	7.04	5
Challenge the process	8.48	5	7.11	3

Table 5.15: Comparison of the normative mean scores of the principals' leadership practices as measured by the principals and teachers on the LPI questionnaire

The comparison table generated by the mean rankings of both principals and teachers suggests that all principals rated themselves higher on all five of the leadership practices as compared to how the teachers rated them. The high mean scores of between 8.48 to 8.96 for the five leadership practices, as rated by the principals, imply that they consider themselves to be performing those leadership practices regularly. However, the lower mean scores of between 7.04 to 7.34 indicate that the teachers observe their principals as carrying out those five leadership practices fairly often. This indicates that the principals believed that they performed the leadership practices as stipulated in the LPI questionnaire more often than the teachers believed their principals were performing these practices.

The findings indicate comparatively high mean scores for both '*Enable others to act*' and '*Inspire a shared vision*' as rated by principals and teachers. '*Enable others to act*' and '*Inspire a shared vision*' were both ranked in the top three leadership practices by the principals and the teachers. '*Enable others to act*' links to distributed leadership practices. The data suggest that both principals and teachers view this leadership practice as strongly manifested. The delegation of tasks to teachers is presumed to be constantly carried out by the principals due to the nature of high performing schools which require continuous efforts from all parties to maintain its high performing status.

Hence, the effective way to maintain the performativity of the school is through the collective effort of all teachers and, in doing so, principals must trust their teachers to carry out their tasks without any reservations.

'*Inspire a shared vision*' is closely linked to the '*building a school vision*' component of transformational leadership, as suggested by Leithwood and Jantzi (2000). Both principals and teachers view maintaining and sharing a vision as an important element in the practice of principals who are deemed high performing. This practice requires the principals to formulate and execute the vision so that it would be beneficial for the school's long-term success. The high means obtained from both principals and teachers for this leadership practice could be because 88% of these principals had been serving for more than 10 years. The number of years of experience would possibly have a significant impact on developing a long-term vision throughout their long tenure as principals. Hence the principals place a high value in delivering the vision as a means for the school to succeed.

The data also suggest that principals and teachers seem to view the leadership practice of '*Model the way'* as the least practised variable compared to other five practices. The mean scores obtained from the principals rank this particular leadership practice fourth while the mean scores obtained from the teachers placed this leadership practice last. The basic tenets surrounding '*Model the way*' concern the ways leaders create examples which will directly influence others to follow. Nonetheless, given the high mean scores of this practice, it is considered that this practice is highly visible from both the principals and teachers.

Principals’ instructional leadership practices as rated by principals and teachers based on the PIMRS questionnaire

The mean scores for each of the ten instructional leadership functions or practices, as rated by the 18 principals, are presented in Table 5.16.

Instructional Leadership practice	**Mean**	**SD**	**Min^ score given**	**%**	**Max^ score given**	**%**	**Rank**
Communicate the school’s goals	4.71	.345	4.00	61.1	5.00	38.9	**1**
Framing the school’s goals	4.63	.324	4.00	77.8	5.00	22.2	**2**
Promote professional development	4.60	.376	4.00	66.7	5.00	33.3	**3**
Monitor students’ progress	4.60	.400	3.00	3.8	5.00	27.8	**4**
Coordinate the curriculum	4.45	.320	4.00	88.9	5.00	11.1	**5**
Supervise and evaluate instruction	4.42	.405	3.00	5.6	5.00	16.7	**6**
Protect instructional time	4.36	.473	3.00	16.6	5.00	5.6	**7**
Provide incentives for learning	4.32	.407	3.00	11.1	5.00	5.6	**8**
Provide incentives for teachers	4.28	.510	3.00	22.2	5.00	22.2	**9**
Maintain high visibility	4.02	.578	3.00	38.9	5.00	11.1	**10**

^The minimum and maximum score for each of the question in the PIMRS questionnaire is 1 (Almost never) and 5 (Almost always) respectively.

Table 5.16: Normative mean scores for the leadership practices as measured by the principals on the PIMRS questionnaire

The mean scores for all ten instructional leadership practices indicate that the principals rated themselves to be performing instructional leadership practices frequently, as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire. Between 3.8% to 38.9% of the principals rated themselves with a minimum score of three on six of the instructional leadership practices, which implies that they carry out those instructional leadership practices sometimes. Similarly, between 5.6% to 38.9% of the principals claimed to be ‘*almost always*’ carrying out the instructional leadership practices as measured on the PIMRS questionnaire. The analysis also indicates that none of the principals had rated themselves as ‘almost never’ or ‘seldom’ performing any of the instructional leadership practices as stipulated in the PIMRS questionnaire.

‘*Communicate the school goals*’ (M=4.71, SD=0.345) was claimed to be the top instructional leadership practice enacted by the principals. Of all the principals, 38.9% rated themselves as almost always performing this dimension of instructional leadership practices. This is followed by ‘*Framing the school’s goals*’ (M=4.63, SD=0.324). Even though the instructional leadership practices of ‘*Promote professional development*’ (M=4.60, SD=0.400) and ‘*Monitor students’ progress*’ (M=4.60, SD=0.320) share the same mean, the former was ranked third based on the larger number of principals (33.3%) who had rated themselves to be performing this practice ‘almost always’. In addition, the minimum score rated on the ‘*Promote professional development*’ practice was four, which indicates that two-thirds (66.7%) of the principals claim to carry out this particular instructional leadership practice frequently. In addition, a small number (3.8%) of the principals indicated that they perform the ‘*Monitor students’ progress*’ leadership practice sometimes, with only 27.8% of the principals suggesting that they were carrying out this practice almost all the time.

Ranked sixth to tenth respectively were the instructional leadership practices of ‘*Supervise and evaluate instruction*’ (M=4.42), SD=0.405), ‘*Protect instructional time*’ (M=4.36, SD=0.473), ‘*Provide incentives for learning*’ (M=4.32, SD=0.407), ‘*Provide incentives for teachers*’ (M=4.28, SD=0.510), and ‘*Maintain high visibility*’ (M=4.02, SD=0.578). The data also appear to suggest that the instructional practice of maintaining high visibility was the least enacted. This is indicated by a large number of principals (38.9%) who claim to be performing this practice sometimes while only 11.1% of the principals reported performing this practice ‘almost always’.

Table 5.17 ranks the mean scores of the instructional leadership practices of the principals as perceived by the teachers.

Instructional Leadership practice	Mean	SD	Min^ score given	%	Max^ score given	%	Rank
Communicate the school's goals	4.23	.562	2.00	0.4	5.00	19.1	1
Framing the school's goals	4.17	.617	1.00	0.4	5.00	15.4	2
Promote professional development	3.98	.738	1.00	2.0	5.00	11.8	3
Monitor students' progress	3.97	.674	1.00	0.4	5.00	10.2	4
Coordinate the curriculum	3.88	.668	1.00	0.8	5.00	4.5	5
Protect instructional time	3.85	.682	1.00	1.2	5.00	5.7	6
Provide incentives for learning	3.82	.798	1.00	2.4	5.00	13.4	7
Supervise and evaluate instruction	3.69	.649	1.00	0.8	5.00	1.6	8
Provide incentives for teachers	3.52	.846	1.00	6.5	5.00	2.8	9
Maintain high visibility	3.28	.753	1.00	5.2	5.00	0.4	10

^The minimum and maximum score for each of the question in the PIMRS questionnaire is 1 (Almost never) and 5 (Almost always) respectively.

Table 5.17: Normative mean scores for the instructional leadership practices of the principals as measured by their teachers on the PIMRS questionnaire

The data generated in Table 5.17 suggest that a very small proportion (0.4% to 6.5%) of the teachers indicated that their principals had 'almost never' performed nine out of ten instructional leadership practices as stipulated in the PIMRS. Hence the minimum score of one appeared in all but one (*Communicate the school's goals*) of the instructional leadership practices score. The mean scores also suggest that, apart from '*Communicate the school's goals*' and '*Framing the school goals*', all of the other eight instructional leadership practices had mean scores between 3.28 and 3.98. This indicates that the teachers generally perceived their principals as carrying out those eight instructional leadership practices 'sometimes' rather than 'frequently' or 'almost always'.

The means scores also imply that the principals' instructional leadership practice of '*Communicate the school's goals*' (M=4.25, SD=0.561) was claimed as the most performed leadership practices by the teachers. A closer look at the data indicates that none of the teachers had rated their principals as ‘almost never’ performing the ‘*Communicate the school goals*’ instructional leadership practice. Nevertheless, a low total of 0.4% of the teachers had rated their principals as carrying out this particular practice infrequently. On the other hand, 19.1% of the teachers had rated their principals as almost always performing the ‘*Communicate the school goals*’ practice. This represents the largest response on the maximum scale of the PIMRS as compared to the other nine instructional leadership practices.

The mean scores and ranking of the instructional leadership practices also show that ‘*Framing the school’s goals*’ (M=4.17, SD=0.617), ‘*Promote professional development*’ (M=3.98, SD=0.738), ‘*Monitor students’ progress*’ (M=3.97, SD=0.674) and ‘*Coordinate the curriculum*’ (M=3.88, SD= 0.668) were ranked among the highest by the teachers.

Conversely, the instructional leadership practices of ‘*Provide incentives for teachers*’ (M=3.52, SD=0.846) and ‘*Maintain high visibility*’ (M=3.28, SD=0.754) were ranked the lowest by the teachers. A small minority (5.2% to 6.5%) of the teachers indicated that their principals had never performed these two leadership practices respectively. The percentage of teachers’ responses also suggests that these two leadership practices had attracted the most number of minimum ratings of 1 (‘almost never’) as compared to the responses given to the other eight instructional leadership practices. In addition, ‘*Maintain high visibility*’ also attracted the least number of teachers (0.4%) who perceived that their principals were enacting this particular instructional leadership practice as “almost always”.

The findings obtained from the normative mean scores are summarised in Table 5.18 to further illustrate the comparison of the instructional leadership practices as viewed by the principals as well as by their teachers.

Instructional Leadership Practice	Rated by Principals		Rated by Teachers	
	Mean	**Rank**	**Mean**	**Rank**
Communicate the school's goals	4.71	1	4.23	1
Framing the school's goals	4.63	2	4.17	2
Promote professional development	4.60	3	3.98	3
Monitor students' progress	4.60	4	3.97	4
Coordinate the curriculum	4.45	5	3.88	5
Supervise and evaluate instruction	4.42	6	3.69	8
Protect instructional time	4.36	7	3.85	6
Provide incentives for learning	4.32	8	3.82	7
Provide incentives for teachers	4.28	9	3.52	9
Maintain high visibility	4.02	10	3.28	10

Table 5.18: Comparison of the normative mean scores of the principals' leadership practices as measured by the principals and teachers on the PIMRS questionnaire

Table 5.18 shows that teachers rated their principals as performing the instructional leadership practices to a lesser extent than did their principals. This would suggest that principals claimed that they were performing the instructional leadership practices more often than was perceived by the teachers. This trend is similar to the LPI questionnaire in which the principals had rated themselves higher on all of the five leadership practices compared to the teachers. The evidence of higher mean scores, as rated by the principals, indicates that they associate their leadership roles and practices closely with instructional leadership. However, teachers did not rate their principals to be carrying out theses instructional leadership practices frequently, apart from '*Communicate the school's goals*' and '*Framing the school's goals'*. This may suggest that principals and teachers recognise the importance of the instructional leadership practices of communicating and framing the schools' goals.

Interestingly, the five top instructional leadership practices of the principals as perceived by the teachers are exactly the same as the ranking of the instructional leadership practices by the principals themselves. This suggests that principals and teachers share the same view on the extent to which these five instructional leadership practices were performed by the principals, although teacher ratings were lower than those of the principals.

A closer look at the top two instructional leadership practices, as rated by the teachers and principals, namely, '*Communicate the school's goals*' and '*Framing the school's goals*', suggests that goal setting and achieving goals are perceived to be paramount for principals who are deemed high performing. Whilst these two instructional leadership practices fall under the wider dimension of '*Defining the school's mission*', as suggested by Hallinger and Murphy (1985); these two leadership practices also bear a resemblance to the components of developing specific goals and priorities under the transformational leadership framework proposed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2009).

Despite the reaffirmation of the policy of protecting instructional time, published by the Ministry of Education (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013), the instructional leadership practice of '*Protect instructional time*' was ranked seventh and sixth by the principals and teachers respectively. These data give rise to the assumption that, despite the official directive from the Ministry of Education for principals and teachers to maintain and protect instructional time in all instances, this practice was not considered essential enough to be rated highly by either principals or teachers.

A closer look at the comparison table reveals that the principals' instructional leadership practice of '*Supervise and evaluate instruction*' was rated lower by the teachers as compared to their principals. Essential to this instructional leadership practice is the need for the principals to regularly evaluate teachers' instructional activities in the classroom. The evaluation includes informal observations and pointing out specific strengths and weaknesses of the teachers' instructional practices. Based on the mean scores of the teachers, this specific instructional leadership practice was ranked eighth as compared to the ranking of sixth when based on the mean scores of the principals. The difference in the ranking suggests that, whilst the principals indicated that they do supervise and evaluate instructional practices of the teachers in the classroom, the teachers felt otherwise. This also suggests that, whilst the principals felt that they frequently give feedback based on their evaluation of teachers' instructional practices, the teachers indicated this practice occurred only sometimes. One possible explanation might be that the teachers have limited awareness of any activities outside their own classroom; hence visits by principals to teachers in other classrooms may go unnoticed by the teachers.

The data also suggest that principals and teachers comparatively share the same opinion on the occasions in which the instructional leadership practices of '*Provide incentives for teachers*' and '*Maintain high visibility'* were carried out by the principals. These two instructional leadership practices were ranked ninth and tenth respectively. Some of the aspects covered in the '*Provide incentives for teachers*' practice are acknowledging the good performance of the teachers, rewarding teachers with opportunities for professional growth, and complimenting teachers for their efforts. Many of the instructional practices covered under '*Provide incentives for teachers*' are reflective of the principals' action in rewarding teachers accordingly. One possible reason for the lower mean score of this instructional leadership practice could be the overtly dependent view on the annual excellent service award[14] as the overarching means of providing incentives to teachers. Hence, the practice of incentivising teachers beyond selecting teachers for the award was adjudged by teachers and principals as something that is quite inconsequential.

The lowest mean score of the instructional leadership practices encompasses the area of visibility. '*Maintain high visibility*' encompasses taking time to talk to teachers and students, visiting classrooms to discuss issues with teachers

[14] All Malaysian civil servants would be considered for the annual excellent service award which offers a certificate of excellence and RM1000.00 in monetary reward. Every year a maximum of 8% of the total personnel in the school will receive the award. The award is awarded to teachers and support staff with the endorsement and recommendation of the principal.

and students, covering classes in the absence of teachers, and providing direct tutoring to students. As the mean scores indicate, both principals and teachers felt that this instructional leadership practice was considered the least performed by the principals. Perhaps this could be attributed to the fact that principals serving in high performing schools often feel overwhelmed with administrative duties. As a result, they are seen less by teachers and students alike. In addition, given the size of the schools, students and teachers, it would be impossible for the principals to be constantly visible to all.

Principal and Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices Based on the Principals' Grades of Service

Independent t-tests were administered on the data from the LPI Principal-copy's questionnaire and PIMRS Principal-copy's questionnaire to determine any significant differences in the means scores of leadership practices based on the principals' grades of service. The independent t-test was utilised to test the independent variable of principals' grade of service against the five leadership practices contained in the LPI questionnaire. The principals' grades of services are JUSA C and DG54. The results of the independent t-test would determine if there were any statistically significant differences between the leadership practices of JUSA C principals and DG54 principals when measured using the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires. The independent t-tests were also administered to the LPI and PIMRS teachers' copies. This would allow this study to compare whether leadership practices of JUSA C and DG 54 principals were different from the perspectives of their teachers.

Principals’ perception of leadership practices based on their grades of service as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory questionnaire

Table 5.19 summarises the results of the independent t-tests conducted on all five leadership practices of the Leadership Practices Inventory.

Leadership Practices	**Mean scores and differences**			**T-test for Equality of Means**		
	JUSA C	***DG54***	***Mean diff.***	**T**	**df**	**^Sig. (2-tailed)**
Model the way	8.58	8.72	-0.14	-.212	16	.834
Inspire a shared vision	8.59	8.90	-0.31	-.589	16	.564
Challenge the process	8.25	8.51	-0.26	-.416	16	.683
Enable others to act	9.08	8.82	0.26	.435	16	.670
Encourage the heart	8.92	8.97	-0.05	-.070	16	.945

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.19: T-test for the five leadership practices of the principals based on their grades of services

The independent t-test analysis conducted on all five of the leadership practices as measured through the LPI questionnaire reveals no statistical significance between the mean scores of the JUSA C principals and DG54 principals. Therefore, JUSA C and DG54 principals reported very similar perceptions of their principals' leadership practices.

While no significant differences were discovered in terms of the leadership practices of the principals based on their grades, the mean scores did indicate that DG54 principals rated themselves higher than their counterparts in four areas. Only the leadership practice of ‘*Enable others to act*’ had indicated a higher mean score from JUSA C principals. Interestingly, this leadership practice was also rated the highest by JUSA C principals compared to other leadership practices. This suggests that JUSA C principals value empowering their subordinates to carry out duties in schools more compared to the other four leadership practices.

The independent t-test was also carried out to determine whether the leadership practices of the principals of the two grades of service differ when rated by their teachers. Table 5.20 shows significant differences on how the leadership practices of the principals with different grades of service were perceived by the teachers.

Leadership Practices	**Mean scores and differences**			**T-test for Equality of Means**		
	JUSA C	***DG54***	***Mean diff.***	**T**	**Df**	**^Sig. (2-tailed)**
Model the way	5.91	7.27	-1.36	-3.60	49.8	.001*
Inspire a shared vision	6.33	7.55	-1.22	-3.32	50.3	.002*
Challenge the process	6.03	7.33	-1.30	-3.31	48.4	.002*
Enable others to act	6.23	7.50	-1.27	-3.35	50.1	.002*
Encourage the heart	5.76	7.33	-1.57	-4.31	51.4	.000*

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.20: T-test for the five leadership practices of the principals based on their grades of services as rated by their teachers

DG54 principals were rated significantly higher by their teachers in all five leadership practices. The mean scores of between 7.27 to 7.55 for DG54 principals indicate that their teachers view them as carrying out the five leadership practices 'fairly often'. However, as the mean scores in Table 5.20 suggest, JUSA C principals were perceived by their teachers as performing the leadership practices of '*Model the way*' and '*Encourage the heart*' occasionally. The leadership practices of JUSA C principals in the areas of '*Inspire a shared vision*', '*Challenge the process*' and '*Enable others to act*' were perceived to be carried out 'sometimes'.

<u>Principals' perception of instructional leadership practices based on their grades of service as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire</u>

Table 5.21 summarises the results of the independent t-tests conducted on the all ten instructional leadership practices of the PIMRS questionnaire. The independent t-test compares the leadership perception of the principals with the grade of service of JUSA C against DG54 principals.

Instructional Leadership Practices	Mean scores and differences			T-test for Equality of Means		
	JUSA C	***DG54***	***Mean diff.***	**t**	**df**	**^Sig. (2-tailed)**
Framing the school's goals	4.70	4.63	0.07	.301	16	.768
Communicate the school's goals	4.70	4.71	-0.01	-.047	16	.963
Supervise and evaluate instruction	4.40	4.43	-0.03	-.080	16	.937
Coordinate the curriculum	4.40	4.47	-0.07	-.253	16	.804
Monitor students' progress	4.40	4.63	-0.23	-.740	16	.470
Protect instructional time	4.20	4.38	-0.18	-.482	16	.636
Maintain high visibility	3.20	4.13	-0.93	-2.42	16	.028*
Provide incentives for teachers	3.50	4.36	-0.86	-2.67	16	.017*
Promote professional development	4.30	4.64	-0.34	-1.21	16	.242
Provide incentives for learning	3.90	4.38	-0.48	-1.63	16	.122

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.21: T-test for the ten instructional leadership practices of the principals based on their grades of services

Data generated from the independent t-test indicate a significant difference in the mean scores of JUSA C principals and DG54 principals in two instructional leadership practices: '*Maintain high visibility*' (t(16)= -2.42, p=0.28) and '*Provide incentives for teachers*' (t(16)=2.42, p=0.17). These results indicate that principals of the two grades of services show statistically significant differences on how they perceived these two types of instructional leadership practices.

JUSA C principals' mean scores for '*Maintain high visibility*' (M=3.20, SD=0.283) and the mean scores for '*Provide incentives for teachers*' (M=3.50, SD=0.141) suggest that they rated these instructional leadership practices significantly lower than their DG54 counterparts. This data, therefore, provide convincing evidence that DG54 principals understood the importance of making themselves approachable and visible to teachers and students as compared to their JUSA C peers. Similar to the trend exhibited by principals when measured by the LPI questionnaire, DG54 principals rated themselves higher in all but one instructional leadership practices compared to their JUSA C counterparts.

Instructional Leadership Practices	Mean scores and differences			T-test for Equality of Means		
	JUSA C	***DG54***	***Mean diff.***	**t**	**Df**	**^Sig. (2-tailed)**
Framing the school's goals	3.97	4.20	-0.23	-2.23	244	.023*
Communicate the school's goals	4.04	4.27	-0.23	-2.44	244	.015*
Supervise and evaluate instruction	3.35	3.77	-0.42	-3.35	54	.001*
Coordinate the curriculum	3.54	3.96	-0.42	-3.09	51	.003*
Monitor students' progress	3.62	4.04	-0.42	-3.80	244	.000*
Protect instructional time	3.65	3.89	-0.24	-1.73	51	.089
Maintain high visibility	2.89	3.37	-0.48	-3.88	244	.031*
Provide incentives for teachers	3.00	3.63	-0.63	-3.73	51	.000*
Promote professional development	3.61	4.05	-0.44	-2.71	49	.009*
Provide incentives for learning	3.51	3.89	-0.38	-2.33	51	.024*

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.22: T-test for the instructional leadership practices of the principals based on their grades of services as rated by their teachers

Table 5.22 shows the results of a further independent t-test to determine any significant differences on how teachers perceive the instructional leadership practices of their principals with different grades of service. The results show that there were significant differences in the JUSA C and DG54 principals' instructional leadership practices as perceived by their teachers. Apart from '*Protect instructional time*' (t(51)=-1.73, p=0.89), all the other nine instructional leadership practices showed significant differences in terms of the instructional leadership practices between DG54 principals and JUSA C principals as perceived by their teachers. DG54 principals showed significantly higher mean scores compared to their JUSA C peers in those nine instructional leadership practices. Similarly, teachers of the JUSA C principals also rated their principals lower in all ten instructional leadership practices compared to the teachers who rated the DG54 principals.

Another similarity could be found with the instructional practice of '*Maintain high visibility*'. This practice was rated the lowest by JUSA C principals. In addition, their teachers (M=2.89, SD=0.836) also rated this instructional leadership practice as the least performed compared to the other nine instructional leadership practices. The similarity reaffirms the assumption that JUSA C principals and their teachers feel that visibility – such as visiting classrooms, talking to students and teachers informally; covering classes for teachers and participating in extracurricular activities – are less prioritised by the principals.

Principals and Teachers' Perception of Leadership Practices Based on the Principals' Overall Number of Years Served as Principal

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilised to determine whether the leadership practices of the principals, measured by the two questionnaires, differ on the aspects of years serving as principals. For the purpose of the analysis, the principals were grouped into three working-experience brackets: more than 15 years (n=8); between 11 to 14 years (n=8) and between 5 to 10 years (n=2). The results of the ANOVA would determine if there were any statistically significant differences between the leadership practices of the principals based on their tenure when measured using the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires.

<u>Principal perceptions of leadership practice based on the number of years served in that position as measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory questionnaire</u>

A one-way ANOVA was carried out to determine whether principals with different years of service have any differing opinions on how they carry out their leadership practices. The results of the ANOVA analysis for the between-groups and within-groups results are presented in Table 5.23.

Leadership Practices		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	^Sig.
Model the way	Between Groups	.954	2	.477	.673	.525
	Within Groups	10.632	15	.709		
	Total	11.586	17			
Inspire a shared vision	Between Groups	.517	2	.259	.506	.613
	Within Groups	7.663	15	.511		
	Total	8.181	17			
Challenge the process	Between Groups	.164	2	.082	.111	.896
	Within Groups	11.108	15	.741		
	Total	11.272	17			
Enable others to act	Between Groups	1.595	2	.797	1.369	.284**
	Within Groups	8.733	15	.582		
	Total	10.327	17			
Encourage the heart	Between Groups	2.659	2	1.330	1.550	.244**
	Within Groups	12.872	15	.858		
	Total	15.531	17			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

*** Equal variance not assumed when tested with Levene's test of equal variances*

Table 5.23: ANOVA for the five leadership practices of the principals based on their years of serving as principals

The results of the ANOVA test presented in Table 5.23 were found to be statistically non-significant at the 0.05 alpha level ($p<.05$) for all five leadership practices when tested against the principals' years of serving in that position. This suggests that the principals' perceptions of their leadership practices do not differ significantly when measured against their total number of years served as principals.

A one-way ANOVA was also carried out to determine whether teachers have differing opinions on the leadership practices of their principals if measured against the number of years they served as principals. The results of the ANOVA analysis for the between-groups and within-groups results are presented in Table 5.24.

Leadership Practices		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	^Sig.
Model the way	Between Groups	8.147	2	4.073	1.249	.289
	Within Groups	825.253	253	3.262		
	Total	833.400	255			
Inspire a shared vision	Between Groups	9.873	2	4.936	1.578	.208
	Within Groups	791.661	253	3.129		
	Total	801.534	255			
Challenge the process	Between Groups	13.418	2	6.709	2.153	.118
	Within Groups	788.353	253	3.116		
	Total	801.771	255			
Enable others to act	Between Groups	23.614	2	11.807	3.869	.022*
	Within Groups	772.161	253	3.052		
	Total	795.775	255			
Encourage the heart	Between Groups	3.887	2	1.944	.553	.576
	Within Groups	889.722	253	3.517		
	Total	893.609	255			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)
*** Equal variance not assumed when tested with Levene's test of equal variances*

Table 5.24: ANOVA for the five leadership practices of the principals based on their years of serving as principals as rated by their teachers

Table 5.24 shows that there was a significant difference in the leadership practice of '*Enable others to act*' (F=3.869, p=0.022) as rated by the teachers. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test were carried out to ascertain which number of years served as principals showed the significant difference. The post hoc Tukey's HSD revealed that those principals who had served for more than fifteen years (M=7.58, SD=1.722) were perceived by their teachers to be significantly performing this practice more often compared to the principals who had served for a period of 11 to 14 years (M=6.95, SD=1.835). The results suggest that the number of years served as principals would influence the way teachers view their principals' leadership practices. The significantly higher means in the leadership practice of '*Enable others to act*' for principals who had served for more than fifteen years also imply that these principals would act upon empowering their teachers more compared to the principals who had served for a lesser period.

Principal perceptions of instructional leadership practice based on the number of years served in that position as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire

A one-way ANOVA was carried out to determine whether principals with different years of service have any differing opinions on how they carry out their instructional leadership practices as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire.

Instructional Leadership Practices		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**^Sig.**
Framing the school's goals	Between Groups	.125	2	.063	.566	.579
	Within Groups	1.655	15	.110		
	Total	1.780	17			
Communicate the school's goals	Between Groups	.028	2	.014	.105	.901
	Within Groups	1.990	15	.133		
	Total	2.018	17			
Supervise and evaluate instruction	Between Groups	.711	2	.356	2.564	.110
	Within Groups	2.080	15	.139		
	Total	2.791	17			
Coordinate the curriculum	Between Groups	.384	2	.192	2.120	.155
	Within Groups	1.360	15	.091		
	Total	1.744	17			
Monitor students' progress	Between Groups	.130	2	.065	.376	.693
	Within Groups	2.590	15	.173		
	Total	2.720	17			
Protect instructional time	Between Groups	.349	2	.175	.759	.485
	Within Groups	3.455	15	.230		
	Total	3.804	17			
Maintain high visibility	Between Groups	.071	2	.036	.095	.910
	Within Groups	5.600	15	.373		
	Total	5.671	17			
Provide incentives for teachers	Between Groups	.041	2	.021	.071	.932
	Within Groups	4.370	15	.291		
	Total	4.411	17			
Promote professional development	Between Groups	.180	2	.090	.608	.557
	Within Groups	2.220	15	.148		
	Total	2.400	17			
Provide incentives for learning	Between Groups	.216	2	.108	.625	.549
	Within Groups	2.595	15	.173		
	Total	2.811	17			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.25: ANOVA for the ten instructional leadership practices of the principals based on their years of serving as principals

The results of the ANOVA test as presented in Table 5.25 indicate that there were no significant differences in the mean scores of all principals on the ten instructional leadership practices based on the number of years of the principals serving in that position. An ANOVA test was also carried out to determine whether the principals' length of tenure would influence the way in which teachers view their principals' leadership practices.

Instructional Leadership Practices		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**^Sig.**
Framing the school's goals	Between Groups	5.573	2	2.786	7.731	.001*
	Within Groups	87.581	243	.360		
	Total	93.153	245			
Communicate the school's goals	Between Groups	5.774	2	2.887	9.816	.000*
	Within Groups	71.470	243	.294		
	Total	77.244	245			
Supervise and evaluate instruction	Between Groups	2.894	2	1.447	3.504	.032*
	Within Groups	100.339	243	.413		
	Total	103.233	245			
Coordinate the curriculum	Between Groups	2.655	2	1.328	3.024	.050*
	Within Groups	106.686	243	.439		
	Total	109.341	245			
Monitor students' progress	Between Groups	1.737	2	.869	1.927	.148
	Within Groups	109.496	243	.451		
	Total	111.233	245			
Protect instructional time	Between Groups	.493	2	.247	.528	.591
	Within Groups	113.582	243	.467		
	Total	114.075	245			
Maintain high visibility	Between Groups	.814	2	.407	.713	.491
	Within Groups	138.767	243	.571		
	Total	139.581	245			
Provide incentives for teachers	Between Groups	.262	2	.131	.181	.834
	Within Groups	175.280	243	.721		
	Total	175.541	245			
Promote professional development	Between Groups	5.393	2	2.697	5.120	.007*
	Within Groups	127.999	243	.527		
	Total	133.393	245			
Provide incentives for learning	Between Groups	4.587	2	2.293	3.680	.027*
	Within Groups	151.446	243	.623		
	Total	156.033	245			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.26: ANOVA for the five instructional leadership practices of the principals based on their years of serving as principals as rated by their teachers

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.26 indicates significant differences in how teachers perceive the instructional leadership practices of their principals in six areas. The six instructional leadership practices are: '*Framing the school goals*' (F=7.731, p=0.001); '*Communicate the school goals*' (F=9.816, p=0.000); '*Supervise and evaluate curriculum*' (F=3.504, p=0.032); '*Coordinate the curriculum*' (F=3.024, p=0.05); '*Promote professional development*' (F=5.120, p=0.007) and '*Provide incentives for learning*' (F=3.680, p=0.027).

The post hoc Tukey's HSD test was carried out to identify where the mean differences of the six instructional leadership practices exist. Principals who served for more than 15 years were perceived by their teachers to be performing all six instructional leadership practices significantly more than the principals who had served between 11 to 14 years. The results suggest that principals with longer experience do influence the way in which they carry out the instructional leadership practices compared to their peers with a fewer number of years at the helm.

Teacher Perceptions of Their Principal's Leadership Practices Based on the Position Held in School

The final set of analyses would determine whether there are any statistically significant differences in the leadership practices of the principals as perceived by their teachers based on the teachers' position. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was any significant difference among the views of the teachers on the leadership practices of their principals based on the teachers' positions. The following analysis displays the results of the ANOVA tests of the LPI and PIMRS when assessed against the teachers' positions. The positions of the teachers include assistant principals, heads of department, subject heads and ordinary teachers.

<u>Teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership practices based on their position as measured by the LPI questionnaire</u>

The results of the ANOVA analysis for the between-groups and within-groups results for each of the five leadership practices are presented in Table 5.27.

Leadership Practices		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	^Sig.
Model the way	Between Groups	34.838	5	6.968	2.181	.057
	Within Groups	798.562	250	3.194		
	Total	833.400	255			
Inspire a shared vision	Between Groups	38.661	5	7.732	2.534	.029*
	Within Groups	762.873	250	3.051		
	Total	801.534	255			
Challenge the process	Between Groups	28.502	5	5.700	1.843	.105
	Within Groups	773.269	250	3.093		
	Total	801.771	255			
Enable others to act	Between Groups	36.000	5	7.200	2.369	.040*
	Within Groups	759.775	250	3.039		
	Total	795.775	255			
Encourage the heart	Between Groups	36.829	5	7.366	2.149	.060
	Within Groups	856.780	250	3.427		
	Total	893.609	255			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.27: ANOVA for the five leadership practices of the principals as rated by the teachers based on their position

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine any significant differences in terms of the perception of leadership practices of the principals by their teachers when measured against the teachers' position. The results of the ANOVA indicate that there is statistical significance at the $p<.05$ level on the perceived leadership practices of the principals in two areas: '*Inspire a shared vision*' ($F=2.534$, $p=0.029$) and '*Enable others to act*' ($F=2.369$, $p=0.040$).

Post hoc comparisons using Tukey's HSD test was carried out to ascertain which position of the teachers showed the significant difference specifically on the two leadership practices: '*Inspire a shared vision*' and '*Enable other to act*'. The post hoc Tukey's HSD indicates no further significant differences in those two leadership practices. Even though the post hoc Tukey's HSD failed to determine at which level the differences occur, the ANOVA test has nevertheless satisfied the assumption that teachers of different positions do perceive the leadership practices of their principals differently on two of the leadership practices as measured by the LPI.

Teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership practices based on their position as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine any significant differences in terms of the perception of instructional leadership practices of the principals by their teachers when measured against the teachers' position. The results of the ANOVA analysis for the between-groups and within-groups results for each of the instructional leadership practices are presented in Table 5.28.

Instructional Leadership Practices		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	^Sig.
Framing the school's goals	Between Groups	3.784	5	.757	2.032	.075
	Within Groups	89.370	240	.372		
	Total	93.153	245			
Communicate the school's goals	Between Groups	2.699	5	.540	1.738	.127
	Within Groups	74.545	240	.311		
	Total	77.244	245			
Supervise and evaluate instruction	Between Groups	6.056	5	1.211	2.991	.012*
	Within Groups	97.176	240	.405		
	Total	103.233	245			
Coordinate the curriculum	Between Groups	5.660	5	1.132	2.620	.025*
	Within Groups	103.681	240	.432		
	Total	109.341	245			
Monitor students' progress	Between Groups	4.152	5	.830	1.861	.102
	Within Groups	107.081	240	.446		
	Total	111.233	245			
Protect instructional time	Between Groups	4.477	5	.895	1.961	.085
	Within Groups	109.598	240	.457		
	Total	114.075	245			
Maintain high visibility	Between Groups	4.188	5	.838	1.485	.195
	Within Groups	135.393	240	.564		
	Total	139.581	245			
Provide incentives for teachers	Between Groups	6.893	5	1.379	1.962	.085
	Within Groups	168.648	240	.703		
	Total	175.541	245			
Promote professional development	Between Groups	8.191	5	1.638	3.140	.009*
	Within Groups	125.201	240	.522		
	Total	133.393	245			
Provide incentives for learning	Between Groups	4.077	5	.815	1.288	.270
	Within Groups	151.956	240	.633		
	Total	156.033	245			

^Significance level 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 5.28: ANOVA for the instructional leadership practices of the principals as rated by the teachers based on position held

The results of the ANOVA indicate that there is statistical significance at the p<.05 level on the perceived leadership practices of the principals in three areas: '*Supervise and evaluate instruction*' (F=2.991, p=0.012), '*Coordinate* *the curriculum*' (F=2.620, p=0.025) and '*Promote professional development*' (F=3.140, p=0.009).

The post hoc analysis using specifically the Tukey's HSD was carried out to compare the means scored by the teachers based on their position on each of the three instructional leadership practices. The data from the post hoc Tukey's HSD analysis found that the mean score for assistant principals (M=4.48, SD=0.415) was significantly greater than the mean score of ordinary teachers (M=3.62, SD=0.658) in the area of '*Supervise and evaluate instruction*'. The results suggest that assistant principals had rated their principals to be carrying out this particular instructional leadership practice more than the other teachers. The data generated from the post hoc Tukey's HSD also suggest that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the heads of department (M=4.33, SD=0.689) with that of ordinary teachers (M=3.90, SD=0.738) for the '*Promote professional development*' instructional leadership practice. This result suggests that heads of department recognise their principals as someone who would ensure that teachers benefit from ongoing professional development. However, the lower mean scores as rated by ordinary teachers imply that principals perform this particular instructional leadership practice 'sometimes'.

The post hoc Tukey's HSD indicates no further significant differences in the '*Coordinate the curriculum*' instructional leadership practices. Even though the post hoc Tukey's HSD failed to determine at which level the differences occur, the ANOVA test has nevertheless satisfied the assumption that teachers who hold different positions do perceive the leadership practices of their principals differently on three of the instructional leadership practices as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire.

Review of the Key Leadership Practices of the Principals

Overall, the analysis has identified several leadership practices that were perceived as being practised significantly differently, based on the principals' grades of service as well as the number of years served. The mean scores and subsequent mean ranking had also suggested which of the leadership practices were perceived by the principals and teachers to be carried out more compared to the other. In summary, Table 5.29 presents the overview of the results.

Leadership Practices based on the LPI	**Mean ranking Principal**	**Mean ranking Teacher**	**Sig. diff. based on Principals' Grades**	**Sig. diff. based on Principals' tenure**	**Sig. diff. based on teachers' position**
Model the way	4	5	*		
Inspire a shared vision	2	1	*		*
Challenge the process	5	3	*		
Enable others to act	3	2	*	*	*
Encourage the heart	1	4	*		
Instructional Leadership Practices based on the PIMRS	**Mean ranking Principal**	**Mean ranking Teacher**	**Sig. diff. based on Principals' Grades**	**Sig. diff. based on Principals' tenure**	**Sig. diff. based on teachers' position**
Framing the school's goals	2	2	*	*	
Communicate the school's goals	1	1	*	*	
Supervise and evaluate instruction	6	8	*	*	*
Coordinate the curriculum	5	5	*	*	*
Monitor students' progress	4	4	*		
Protect instructional time	7	6			
Maintain high visibility	10	10	+*		
Provide incentives for teachers	9	9	+*		
Promote professional development	3	3	*	*	*
Provide incentives for learning	8	7	*	*	

+Significant differences as perceived by the principals
*Significant differences as perceived by the teachers

Table 5.29: Summary of key findings

Principals and teachers view the leadership practice of '*Inspire a shared vision*' as the most frequently performed. This component of leadership practice relates to transformational leadership. Similarly, the objective of sharing the same school vision is projected in two of the instructional leadership practices, as identified in the PIMRS questionnaire. The two instructional leadership practices are: '*Communicate the school's goals*' and '*Framing the school goals*'. These two components of instructional leadership were rated as the most frequently performed, both from the perspective of the principals and that of their teachers. The components of these two instructional leadership practices could be associated with the importance of sharing the same mission and vision of an organisation, suggesting that the principals believe in strong transformational leadership practices. The findings also suggest a strong relationship between the practices of sharing a clear vision with setting the school's goals. The findings imply that principals who are deemed high performing value the vision of the school and strive to achieve their school's goals. One implication of these findings is that principals who are deemed high performing are very clear on how they communicate and share the schools' vision and goals.

The summary of the key findings in Table 5.29 also indicates that '*Enable others to act*' was one of the more pronounced leadership practices. Both teachers and principals rated this leadership practice highly. Significantly, principals of the DG54 grade of service and principals who have served for more than 15 years were also perceived by their teachers to be enacting this leadership practice more than their JUSA C peers. The act of enabling others would directly foster collaboration and empowerment between principals and the teachers. This leadership practice has a lot of similarities with the qualities of distributed leadership. One possible reason why this leadership practice is perceived to be practised more often than the rest is because of the extra work load that high performing schools have faced as compared to any other schools. In addition, high performing schools must meet the extra yearly key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the Ministry of Education in order to retain the high performing status. Hence, principals would not be able to meet the KPIs, as well as the daily running of the school, if teachers are not empowered and trusted to carry out the tasks. This also suggests that this approach is akin to 'allocated' distributed leadership, in contrast to 'emergent' distributed leadership, which is more often discussed in the literature. Enabling other to act was also perceived to be significantly enacted by respondents who hold leadership positions in the schools compared to the teachers. This suggests that the senior leadership team members acknowledge the leadership practice which is reflective of distributed leadership significantly more than the teachers do.

Apart from '*Enable others to act*' and '*Inspire a shared vision*', principal perspectives on which of the other leadership practices performed the most or the least were quite different from that of their teachers. For example, principals view the leadership practice of '*Encourage the heart*' highly while the teachers perceived this practice as something that was carried out to a lesser extent. '*Encourage the heart*' relates to how frequently leaders acknowledge and recognise the performance and achievement of their subordinates. This practice was rated as the most performed by the principals while their teachers perceived otherwise. The differing views on how often this leadership practice is enacted by the principals indicate that the degree of recognition and acknowledgement was perceived differently by teachers and principals. The principals might indicate that they do encourage the teachers through personalised recognition and acknowledgement; in contrast, the teachers found this practice less apparent, compared to others.

While the LPI has suggested that perceptions of the leadership practice of the principals differ from that of their teachers in three areas, the same could not be said with the instructional leadership practices as measured by the PIMRS. Both teachers and principals were consistent in their views on which of the instructional leadership practices that were most performed as well as the least carried out by the principals. For example, both teachers and principals had similar perceptions of the extent to which the top five ranked instructional leadership practices were enacted by the principals. In addition, the two instructional leadership practices of '*Maintain high visibility*' and '*Provide incentives to teachers*' were similarly rated the lowest by both principals and teachers. These instructional leadership practices were the only two which yielded any significant difference in the perceptions amongst principals of different grades of service.

One possible reason for this finding is that principals and teachers acknowledged that maintaining visibility is something that could not be practically carried out on a consistent basis due to the principals' other workload. Some of the practices identified as '*Maintain high visibility*' include taking time to talk informally to students and teachers, visiting classrooms to discuss issues, covering classes and tutoring students. Perhaps, the principals and teachers feel that, due to the workload of the principals, these practices were carried out by their assistants or other senior teachers. Whilst the practice of maintaining high visibility is rated as one of the least performed by principals and teachers, this could be counterbalanced with the leadership practice of '*Enable others to act*' which was perceived to be performed more. Hence, one possible implication of this study is that principals may rely on the distributed leadership practice of '*Enable others to act*' to empower their subordinates to carry out the instructional leadership practices as stipulated under '*Maintain high visibility*'. As a result, they are seen less by the teachers as they do not carry out the instructional practices which would allow them to remain visible all the time.

Leithwood and Riehl (2003: 6) posit that leaders provide incentives to promote changes, as well as the means for monitoring progress toward improvement. The low scores for '*Provide incentives to teachers*' suggest that principals do not view incentivising teachers; whether via private and personal compliments, or rewarding teachers with opportunities to grow and develop professionally; as something that is often practised. The apparent lesser view of this instructional leadership practice implies that opportunities to be recognised are quite limited. Another implication of this analysis is that teachers perceive their principals to rarely recognise their work efforts that contribute to the accomplishments of the students.

Apart from '*Maintain high visibility*' and '*Provide incentives to teachers*', the different grades of service, as well as the number of years served as principals, have no significant bearing on how these principals view their leadership practices. This could be attributed to the highly centralised systems in which the training, preparation and professional development of the principals are dictated by the Ministry of Education. The top down policies from the Ministry of Education would also impact how the principals carry out their leadership practices. One example would be how the Ministry of Education requires principals and teachers to protect instructional time.

While no significant differences could be found in the majority of the leadership practices, as perceived by the principals, the same could not be assumed with the teachers. The findings indicated that teachers perceived DG54 principals' leadership practices to be significantly different from the JUSA C principals. For example, the findings reveal that DG54 principals showed a greater tendency to perform the leadership practices, as stipulated by the LPI and PIMRS, more than their JUSA C counterparts.

The teacher perspectives also differed from those of their principals in terms of their years in service. While the principals of different years in tenure exhibit no significant differences in how they view their leadership practices, the perceptions obtained from the teachers suggests otherwise. The findings indicate that principals who had served for more than 15 years displayed a significantly greater tendency to empower their teachers. In addition, the same group of principals also displayed several instructional leadership practices significantly more than did their peers who had served for a lesser number of years.

Statistical evidence also shows that teachers perceived the leadership practices of their principals differently based on the position held by the teachers in schools. The mean scores of the principals, as rated by their assistant principals, were generally high compared to the mean scores rated by teachers in other positions. This suggests that the constant interactions that the assistant principals had with their principals influenced the way in which they perceive the leadership practices of the principals.

Finally, the comparison of the responses gathered from the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires suggests that instructional leadership practices were perceived to be enacted quite modestly when compared to transformational and distributed leadership practices. The teachers rated the principals as enacting eight out of ten instructional leadership practices ‘sometimes’. In contrast, they rated their principals as enacting five leadership practices (which represent transformational and distributed leadership) as measured by the LPI ‘fairly often’.

Overview

Central to the objectives of this study is the need to establish, identify and understand the key leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing. This chapter has analysed the leadership practices of the principals who are deemed high performing from the perspectives of the principals themselves as well as from that of their teachers, drawing on survey findings. Data gathered from the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires were used to identify the leadership practices of the principals which were perceived to be performed the most and the least. The use of both the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires has enabled the author to measure and gauge perceptions leadership practices as carried out by principals who are deemed high performing. The analysis has aided the author to deduce and understand which practices were performed more frequently by the principals. These leadership practices are then compared with the evidence found in the other two phases of this study. As a point of iteration, the outcome of the analysis of the questionnaires, however, does not measure the quality of leadership of these principals. The next chapter presents findings from the third phase which includes interviews with principals, senior leadership team members and teachers from six schools.

Chapter 6 – Qualitative Findings and Analysis of Interviews with Principals and Teachers – Phase III

Introduction

The analysis in Chapter 5 was based on the questionnaires distributed to principals who are deemed to be high performing, as well as their teachers, from 20 selected high performing schools. This chapter, which draws upon qualitative data, further explores the leadership practices of six principals who also participated in the earlier phase of this study. The purpose of the qualitative data analysis is to identify specific leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing from the perspectives of the principals themselves as well as from that of their teachers. The leadership practices identified from the qualitative data will triangulate the findings obtained from the quantitative phase of this study. This chapter begins with the demographic data of the interview participants, followed by the exploration of themes identified from the interviews.

Demographic Data of the Interview Participants

This study identifies principals who are deemed high performing as those who have received both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. Six recipients of the two awards were purposively selected for this study. The strategy of obtaining teacher perceptions of their principals' leadership practices, employed in the quantitative phase, was also adopted in this final phase. Hence, six senior leadership team members (SLTMs), and six teachers who work with the selected principals were also involved in the interviews. The SLTMs and the teachers were conveniently selected for the interviews based on their availability.

The demographic breakdown of the interview participants is displayed in Table 6.1. In order to maintain confidentiality for the participating schools, as well as all the interview participants, the names of the schools and the participants were anonymised.

School type	Location	Interviewee	Grade	Gender
Fully residential school (co-ed)	Rural	principal 1	DG54	M
		SLTM 1	DG48	M
		teacher 1	DG44	M
Fully residential school (co-ed)	Rural	principal 2	DG54	F
		SLTM 2	DG48	F
		teacher 2	DG44	M
Regular day school (all-girls)	Urban	principal 3	DG54	F
		SLTM 3	DG48	F
		teacher 3	DG48	F
Religious school (all-girls)	Rural	principal 4	JUSA C	F
		SLTM 4	DG48	F
		teacher 4	DG44	F
Regular day school (co-ed)	Urban	principal 5	DG54	M
		SLTM 5	DG48	F
		teacher 5	DG41	F
Regular day school (all-girls)	Urban	principal 6	DG54	F
		SLTM 6	DG48	F
		teacher 6	DG41	F

Table 6.1: Demographic data of the interview participants

Five of the SLTMs involved in the interviews held the position of assistant principal while one SLTM was a head of department. Nonetheless, this SLTM held the position of an assistant principal in her previous school.

Background of the principals and their schools

This section provides background data on the six principals and their schools.

Principal 1

Principal 1 heads a fully residential school situated in the east coast of Malaysia. He has been a principal for more than 12 years, with seven years spent in the current school. His school was awarded high performing school status in 2012. The number of students enrolled is 415 and the school has a teaching force of 59. The school offers many subjects, which are grouped into technical subjects, science, religious education, and economics.

Principal 2

Principal 2 is the head of a fully residential school located in one of the southern states in Malaysia. Principal 2 has been the principal at the current school for nine years. Overall, she has spent more than 15 years as a principal. Her school was recognised as a high performing school in 2012. The school has close to 800 students and 68 teachers. The school opened in 1973 as part of the second Malaysian Development Plan. The school was also one of the first fully residential schools in Malaysia that offers only the science stream to their upper secondary students.

Principal 3

Principal 3 is a long-serving principal with more than 10 years at her current school and overall experience as a principal of more than 15 years. Her school is a regular day school. An all-girls school. Located in the northern peninsular of Malaysia, it is one of the oldest former missionary schools in Malaysia, with more than 1400 students and 122 teachers. The school was one of the first recipients of the high performing school award.

Principal 4

While Principal 4 has been the head at her current school for less than five years, she has 15 years' overall experience as a principal. Unlike the other principals who had experience of serving as assistant principals, principal 4 was appointed, having previously been a senior lecturer in a teacher training college. Principal 4's school is an all-girls religious school. It is located in one of the southern states in Malaysia. The school has 69 teachers with a total of 722 students.

Principal 5

Principal 5 began his teaching career in the current school 30 years ago. His first appointment as a principal was in a regular day school located in the capital city of one of the southern states in Malaysia. He later returned to head his current school. Overall, he has been a principal for more than 15 years and spent close to ten years as the head of his current school. One of the first few regular day schools to be built in the district, the school was awarded the high performing school status in 2014. It has close to 1,200 students with a teaching force of 75.

Principal 6

Principal 6 has been a principal for 15 years in various schools. She has been the principal of her current school for eight years. Principal 6's school was the first English medium school built in that state. It dates from the 1920s. Located in the state capital of a northern region of Malaysia, the school has always been an all-girls school. The current enrollment stands at 705 and the total number of teachers is 68. The school was one of the earliest recipients of the high performing school award.

Findings

The focus of the analysis was on the instructional, distributed and transformational leadership practices of the principals. These three leadership practices were very much central to this study. Similar to the data analysis strategy employed in Chapter 4, thematic analysis of the interviews was carried out. Emerging themes related to these three leadership practices of the principals, which were identified as similar or identical across the interviews, were extracted for analysis. The section begins with the analysis of instructional leadership practices followed by the transformational and distributed leadership practices of the principals.

<u>Instructional Leadership</u>

Four of the six principals agree that instructional leadership could be considered as one of the most effective leadership practices for principals as compared to other leadership practices.

> Even though there are other leadership styles, such as transformational leadership, I strongly believe that instructional leadership is the most important attribute that a principal should possess. (principal 4)

Similarly, principal 6 opines that "instructional leadership is ranked as the top trait for principals as compared to other leadership practices. It should be on top because the success of a principal relies heavily on their instructional leadership and practices".

Two of the principals view a strong link between instructional leadership and classroom practices. For example, principal 1 believes that instructional leadership should be practiced by all principals because of the emphasis on classroom activities.

> To me, principals must always be instructional leaders. Principals must lead the learning and teaching in the school. (principal 1)

Principal 3 also considers classroom instructional practice as the most important activity in the school. In order to ensure that learning and teaching are carried out effectively, the role of the principal as instructional leader is pivotal.

> The whole thing about teaching and learning is basically what is happening in the classroom. Principals must look at what is happening in the classroom, hence instructional leadership is an important practice that a principal should have in order for them to understand, and be responsible for, what is happening in the classroom. (principal 3)

Principal 2 believes that, among the myriad of leadership practices, a school leader should never dismiss the importance of instructional leadership. Principal 2 stresses that only with instructional leadership would a principal be able to lead teachers' instructional practices.

> In order to lead the teachers' instructional practices, the knowledge of the instructional practices of the principals must be ahead of the teachers. (principal 2)

Although the principals agree that instructional leadership is a "must-have" approach for Malaysian principals, they also agree that the full enactment of instructional leadership can be challenging. For example, although principal 5 named instructional leadership as one of the most important leadership practices a principal should possess, he is nevertheless unconvinced that this type of leadership practice could be performed effectively by the principals on a consistent basis. Principal 5 argues that instructional leadership could only be carried out effectively if the administrative burden of the principals is greatly reduced.

> If the administrative workload could be reduced significantly, I would always consider instructional leadership as the most effective leadership practices compared to the rest… however, this leadership practice is very much less effective when principals spend too much time on other administrative matters. (principal 5)

Principal 4 believes that instructional leadership must also focus on students' learning but she admits that the demands of heading a high performing school requires her to reassess the situation as a leader of learning.

Three of the SLTMs also point out the importance of instructional leadership as one of the leading practices that principals should carry out. SLTM 3, for example, believes that:

> Instructional leadership is very much effective if it is effectively done. This means that principals must be able to carry out most of the aspects identified in the domain of instructional leadership. (SLTM 3)

SLTM 2 argues that, only with strong instructional leadership, would a principal be able to lead teachers into enjoying the teaching profession.

> As an instructional leader, a principal could ensure that teachers are enjoying the teaching profession. If a principal does not practice instructional leadership, then it would be very difficult to provide good examples to teachers that the core business for teachers is to carry out effective instructional activities in the classroom. (SLTM 2)

SLTM 4 also agrees that instructional leadership practice is considered effective:

> Instructional leadership stresses the importance of teaching and learning… however as we move into 21st century learning, the classroom dynamics shift from being teacher centred into student centred, hence I feel that instructional leadership is fairly balanced in negotiating that shift. (SLTM 4)

Whilst SLTM 1 observes that his principal does carry out roles as an instructional leader, he stops short of acknowledging instructional leadership as one of the most effective leadership practices.

The analysis also reveals that only one teacher specifically mentioned the need for principals to enact instructional leadership. Teacher 3 asserts:

> I think all principals should practice instructional leadership, in order to bring the school forward. (teacher 3)

The rest of the teachers did not articulate in detail the specific types of leadership practices which they believe are effective. Nonetheless, the responses from the teachers do suggest that they agree that other leadership practices, apart from instructional leadership, are considered more prominent and this will be highlighted later in this chapter.

Questions are also asked to seek examples of how instructional leadership is enacted by the principals. This enables a better understanding of the extent to which instructional leadership is enacted and practiced by principals who are deemed high performing. Analysis of the findings identified seven themes that represent the instructional leadership practices of the principals. These themes are adopted from the dimensions of the instructional leadership framework proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) which underpins this study. Although Hallinger and Murphy’s instructional leadership framework suggests ten functions or practices, the author limits the practices to only seven as these are strongly evident in the interviews. In addition, it is important to note that one practice that is related to instructional leadership, but is not directly categorised under Hallinger and Murphy’s instructional leadership’s framework, is providing instructional support. Although this specific practice is claimed by Leithwood (2010) as part of the revised transformational leadership practice under the banner of ‘*Providing teaching support*’, the author considers this practice as part of instructional leadership.

Framing and communicating school goals

The data from the interviews appears to suggest that three principals view goal setting as key to achieving excellence in their schools. These principals’ views are endorsed by their teachers and SLTMs. For example, principal 1 maintains that a principal must frame the school’s goals and mission so that they reflect the success which the school wants to achieve and sustain.

> When I was transferred here, the school’s mission and goal were to be one of the high performing schools by the year 2014. We achieved that goal in 2012. That was our success. We discussed what to do next… what we want to achieve and what is the next goal. So, we framed a new goal which is by 2018 we would become one of the most excellent high performing schools. (principal 1)

Teacher 1 agrees that his principal clearly articulates the school's goal and mission to all teachers.

> We know that, to achieve the goal by 2018, we need to prepare the current crop of students especially those who started in form one last year. Ultimately this group of students will be sitting for the SPM examination in 2017 and their results will determine whether we can achieve the target of becoming the top high performing school in Malaysia. (teacher 1)

Principal 2 on the hand, develops a new goal and mission for the school as she considers the previous goal of the school was inappropriately framed as it does not have a clear timeline for the school to achieve it.

> When I was transferred to this school, I noticed that the previous school's goal had no timeline. Mission and goals especially must have a timeline; if we do not have a timeline then we are unsure of the duration for us to accomplish the goal. So, with the new goal, we have a target. The teachers and the students work towards achieving the goal of the school. So, I emphasise the word "we" because this is our school and we are clear of the goal that we need to achieve. (principal 2)

Teacher 2 nevertheless explains that principal 2 needs to amend the current school's goal which is to be the top school by 2015. Teacher 2 feels that, even though the school is a high performing school, it has not yet achieved its goal as the top high performing school in Malaysia. Correspondingly, SLTM 2 concedes that the goal framed by principal 2 and school members has fallen short of its target.

> The goal is often communicated by the principals to teachers especially, and we often work towards achieving the goal. But

> sometimes we have to admit that there are multiple factors that stopped us from achieving the goal. (SLTM 2)

Framing the school goals is not restricted to the overarching goal and mission statement of the school but also includes yearly academic goals. This includes using data on students' performance when developing the school's academic goals. An effective instructional leader would develop a focused set of schoolwide goals. In order for this goal to be realised, the leader must communicate the school's goal effectively to the school community. This is evident from principal 6's interview:

> My goal was conveyed strongly to all teachers and students. If the teachers do not know the aim and goal that we have set, then there is no sense of direction. We have to inform the teachers that we aim to be the number one school in this state. [Therefore] Goal setting is very important. I made sure that all teachers and students know the goal of this school from the beginning of the year and from time to time I would constantly remind them of this goal. (principal 6)

Principal 6 is very firm on her school's academic goals. She maintains that her school's annual academic goal contributes strongly to the school's long-term goal. She understands that, if a school's goal is to be the best school in the state, the academic achievements of the students are one of the key determinants. SLTM 6 reinforces principal 6's belief about how teachers need to be certain of their students' current performance so that effective and achievable academic goals can be framed.

> She guides us first by telling us what should be the goal. When we are very clear on the goal that we need to achieve, it gives us clarity and helps us work toward achieving the goal. (SLTM 6)

SLTM 6 maintains that principal 6 adopts a technique called the GROW system in setting yearly academic targets for students:

> At the beginning of every year, the senior leadership members would discuss and set a target based on the previous years' grade point average (or GPS[15]) of the school. We do not simply put any numbers, but we would study the trend and look at our current strengths and weaknesses before setting this year's GPS. (SLTM 6)

Teacher 6 also agrees that principal 6 would often discuss the matter with teachers before agreeing on the school's GPS. Based on the targets, principal 6 would further discuss with the teachers the plans they might adopt in order for the targeted GPS to be realised.

The data generated from the interviews show that three of the principals are clear on their school's defined goals. Their emphasis on a schoolwide goal is focussed and there is a clear target deadline. Hence, attention to one solid goal, rather than multiple goals, might perhaps enable the teachers and other resources to be mobilised more efficiently and effectively.

Nonetheless, principals 3, 4 and 5, together with their SLTMs and teachers, do not highlight the practice of framing and communicating goals in their interview responses.

Supervising and evaluating instructions

The practice of supervising and evaluating instruction is highlighted by five principals in the interviews. For example, principal 4 believes that the supervisory skill of a principal is important so that the principal would be able to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional activities that take place in the

[15] GPS or *Gred Purata Sekolah* literally means the school's grade point average. GPS is used to monitor the schools' performance in nationwide examination namely the PT3 (for Form 3), SPM (for Form 5) and STPM (for Form 6). The target of each school's GPS is often fixed at the beginning of every school calendar year.

classroom. Principal 4 adds that, when a principal can supervise well, then she is capable of providing the required support, especially for the teachers:

> We would assist the teachers in all manners possible so that they would perform better even to the extent of requesting for a teacher mentor from another school… just as long as the teachers would benefit from it. (principal 4)

Principal 1 believes that it is crucial for him to conduct observations and supervise how the teachers are teaching. Based on the supervision, he is able to provide the type of support for teachers. SLTM 1 agrees that principal 1 often provides feedback or gives demonstrations of how effective teaching is carried out, even during staff meetings. Principal 1, according to SLTM 1, would demonstrate and give multiple examples of how to carry out classroom instruction.

> Sometimes, he would invite up to three teachers to observe how he carries out a lesson. (SLTM 1)

Principal 3 also stresses the importance of supervision and observations of classroom instructional activities:

> So, we involve the whole senior leadership team members to carry out observations of teachers. I need to know what is happening in the classroom because, if the teaching and learning in the classroom are not happening, then there is no point basically. So, very important to the practice of instructional leadership is to make sure that the classroom practices are delivered accordingly. (principal 3)

Principal 2 identifies the crucial role of the principal in supporting teachers' instructional delivery in the classroom.

> I would provide the teachers support. I would observe and evaluate how teachers teach. Then I would point out to them

> the strengths and weaknesses. I would also suggest alternatives on how they could improve their teaching. (principal 2)

Principal 2 adds that:

> As a leader, we must know how to provide instructional support for the teachers. We have the added pedagogical skills and knowledge. Therefore, we must use that skills and knowledge to assist and support the teachers… because sometimes they might forget which technique or approach is the most effective in the classroom. (principal 2)

Principal 6 feels that, by supervising teachers through the activities carried out by their students in their workbooks, she is able to make a fair judgment on the quality of tasks given by different teachers teaching a particular subject.

> When I inspect students' workbooks, I am able to make comparisons of the different teachers teaching that subject in the same grade level. For example, I noticed that in one class, this particular teacher has been teaching a lot of comprehensions. In addition, students were made to do a lot of essays. In one of the other classes, I noticed that another teacher has not been giving students a lot of activities to do in their workbooks. So, when I investigated further, only then was I made aware that the teacher who rarely gives students' tasks to do in their workbooks was a newly qualified teacher. (principal 6)

Principal 6 explains that her action of reviewing student activity worksheets had assisted her in identifying not only the quality of instruction but also the support that could enhance the teachers' delivery. She explains:

> I had then instructed the English Language subject head, together with the head of department, to provide extra support

> for the teacher. Bearing the teacher in mind, I would then carry out further observation to establish any progress made by the teacher. (principal 6)

Principal 6's actions are a prime example of how an instructional leader would supervise and evaluate instruction through reviewing students' work, and also ensuring that the specific strengths and weaknesses of the teachers' instructional practices are conveyed.

The practice of supervising and evaluating instruction is neither highlighted by principal 5 nor his SLTM and teacher.

Coordinate the curriculum

One example of how this aspect of instructional leadership practice is carried out is through the active participation of principals in reviewing curricular materials. SLTM 5 comments on how principal 5 had allowed for a bigger allocation to be given to the science department to purchase instructional materials. The bigger allocation is given after principal 5 discusses with the faculty members of the science department on how they could improve students' performance in the science subjects. Hence the review of instructional materials is based on the students' performance and the need to improve it.

Similarly, principal 3 allows a bigger allocation to be spent on curricular materials if it could contribute to the students' performance. Principal 3 also does not dictate the purchase of any curricula materials but instead allows the teachers and subject heads to suggest relevant curricula materials to be procured.

SLTM 2 agrees that principal 2 allocates extra funding in obtaining teaching and learning materials that could further aid the students' performance. SLTM 2 maintains that her principal "would encourage teachers to fully utilise information and communication technology (ICT) when delivering lessons whenever it is possible".

An instructional leader who coordinates the curriculum is also clear on who is responsible for coordinating and delivering the curriculum across all grade levels. For example, SLTM 5 explains that her principal would ensure that there would not be a mismatch of teachers teaching subjects which are not their specialisation. In addition, SLTM 5 explains that principal 5 assigns senior and excellent teachers to teach subjects in examination year grades (forms three and five).

Similarly, principal 6 believes that she has the final decision on which teachers are best to teach examination year grades.

> It is routine that, every year, all the senior leadership team members would propose which teachers teach each subject. The first thing that I would consider before giving the approval is to identify the teachers, which the leadership team have proposed to teach exam classes. Sometimes, the same teacher would teach one examination subject in form 5 [one of the examination grade years] for many years; and that teacher has requested to teach other forms apart from forms three and five. But if I feel that her request would affect the outcome of the students' performance, then I would have to turn down the teacher's request. (principal 6)

Coordinating the curriculum also involves using examination results when making curricular decisions. Principal 5, for example, recognises that the students had not performed well enough in the previous public examination and this is further highlighted by teacher 5. Whilst teacher 5 agrees that the academic performance of the students had declined, she maintains that the students' academic progress has always been the principal and school's main priority.

> The principal and the whole school did not dwell on the results too much, instead, we stepped up our efforts and we improved

> our academic programme. Hopefully, this would help to improve the students' performance. (teacher 5)

Principal 4 also admits that public examination results often vary from year to year. Principal 4 believes that the best way to address any decline in the students' performance in public examination is by advocating teachers to implement additional academic programmes for the students. Nevertheless, principal 4 reiterates that "whatever programme we carry out, we must make sure that it is contributing to the students' performance… we must show that the programme is benefiting the students' academic progress" (principal 4).

The analysis suggests that there is no evidence of this specific instructional leadership practice being highlighted by principal 1.

Monitor students' progress

Some of the principals reiterate the importance of constantly discussing students' academic performance with teachers. For example, SLTM 1 mentions how principal 1, being a mathematics teacher himself, would often review and discuss the academic progress of the students with fellow mathematics and science teachers:

> Principal 1 himself will often participate in discussions and meetings over the progress of the students. Even though he is the principal of the school, but because he also teaches maths, he would attend meetings conducted by the head of department to discuss any academic issues related to the subjects. (SLTM 1)

Three of the principals adopt performance dialogue sessions with teachers when discussing students' academic progress. The performance dialogue session was adopted from the new initiative introduced by the MEB which encourages district education supervisors to carry out dialogues with principals within their district, focussing mainly on schools' academic performance. For example, principal 3 carries out the performance dialogue sessions monthly to discuss specific strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance.

SLTM 3 adds that, apart from the performance dialogue, principal 3 also monitors students' academic progress constantly through the online monitoring system.

> Everything is now online, even students' marks. My principal monitors the students' marks all the time. She checks personally and ensures that teachers update the marks whenever there are changes. I know some other principals won't do that but my principal does. Even in other schools, the principals would ask their senior assistant principal to do the online monitoring, but she is not like them. (SLTM 3)

The approach of using performance dialogue to discuss and monitor students' progress is also adopted by principal 2 during staff meetings. Principal 2 believes that teachers should be honest and frank, not only with the students' progress, but also the teachers' performance as well.

> With the performance dialogue, the discussion between the subject heads and the teachers is very open and frank. We need to really consider any problems concerning the students' performance and discuss the steps needed to improve the performance. (principal 2)

SLTM 6 explains that her principal also carries out performance dialogue sessions with teachers in order for them to understand the current performance and the expected performance of the students. Teachers will present and discuss the possible target of the students based on the results of the previous assessment:

> We [the principal and the senior leadership team members] would give time for teachers to analyse the current performance of the students, then we carry out performance

> dialogue with them to discuss the possible target that the students can achieve. (SLTM 6)

An effective instructional leader would constantly discuss the school assessment's results with members of the faculties to identify the strengths and weaknesses. This practice is exemplified through regular meetings carried out by the principals with their teachers. Principal 2, for example, conducts weekly meetings with her three senior assistant principals, in addition to the monthly meeting with the rest of the SLTMs (heads of department) which she calls the G8 meeting.

> I would call for the G8 meeting from month to month to monitor and discuss the current students' performance. If I was informed that the performance of the students is in decline or unsatisfactory in certain subjects, I would then share this information with subject head and teachers teaching that subject and discuss what would be the best possible steps to tackle this decline. (principal 2)

Another example of the practice of monitoring students' progress could be typified by the principal's sharing students' academic progress with the students themselves. Principal 4 demonstrates this action through the lens of SLTM 4, who stresses that principal 4 would ensure detailed analysis of students' performance is carried out at the end of every school level test and assessment. The analysis is later shared with teachers and students.

> She (principal 4) will share the analysis of the students' school level assessment's results with all the students so that students know the academic goal of the school. So, I think that her practice of sharing the results and analysis with the students is fascinating. It means that she is clear on what the students need to achieve… and directly she is informing the school members of what needs to be done in order to achieve the academic goal of this school. (SLTM 4)

Teacher 4 acknowledges that principal 4 constantly informs students of their academic progress. Teacher 4 reports that her principal would personally meet students who are not making good progress or showing signs of failing. Principal 4 would then arrange for a special session together with the school's counsellor.

Principal 6 adopts a different method of monitoring students' progress. She believes that monitoring students' work via their workbooks is an effective tool of supervision. Principal 6 explains that, instead of asking teachers to select a few of the students' workbooks to be assessed by the principal, she would instead visit the class and request all the students in the class to hand in their workbooks for assessment. By doing this, principal 6 feels that she can achieve four objectives. First, she can understand the quality of activities given by the teachers. Secondly, she is able to establish whether the teachers are carrying out a fair assessment of the work given to their students. Principal 6 is also be able to determine whether students are doing the work assigned by the teachers. And finally, principal 6 can gauge how students are progressing academically with different teachers.

The analysis reveals that five principals demonstrate instructional leadership practice through monitoring students' progress. The examples suggest that principals monitor the progress of the students through meeting and discussion with teachers; sharing academic performance with the students; and observing the progress of the students through their academic work and tasks. The analysis nevertheless suggests that there is no evidence of this specific instructional leadership practice being highlighted by principal 5.

Protect instructional time

Key to any effective instructional leadership practices is the ability to protect the instructional sessions that are taking place in the school. For example, SLTM 1 recounts how principal 1 sometimes notices that, if classes were left unattended during his routine supervisory walkabout, he would ask one of the students to summon the teacher from the staffroom.

Teacher 3 explains that every time a teacher would have to leave the classroom for other official matters, principal 3 would ensure that the teacher prepares activities beforehand.

> Let's say, our department… English. If we were to go on official duty, we must get a booklet of activities prepared. Whenever we go out of class, we will ask our students to go over to our relief teacher and they can get it (the booklet of activities). So, whenever a teacher is assigned to relieve that class, the teacher will monitor that the students complete the activities. (teacher 3)

Teacher 3's view on how classes should not be left without any instructional activities is also addressed by principal 3. Principal 3 is adamant that instructional activities in the classroom must come first above anything else, including personal matters. However, principal 3 acknowledges that sometimes it is inevitable for teachers to leave the class for personal matters, such as attending to family members who are unwell.

> I do entertain, I do allow and I think I have allowed all these things over the years… like emergency leave, going off early, coming in late. But I always tell them: "Take care of your classes if you know you need to go off early, you make sure that your classes are covered". And the teachers know about that. So, they do it, and I allow this. I always tell them, whatever personal business that they need to do, lesson time is the most important thing. So don't leave the students at the expense of their problem. So, they make arrangements. (principal 3)

Principal 6 realises the importance of instructional time for the students. Even though she tries to limit interruptions of the instructional time, she understands the task at hand in negotiating the instructional time of students who are actively participating in extracurricular activities during school time. For example, principal 6's school is renowned for their marching band team. The team competes in national and international competitions on a regular basis. It is quite common for the marching band team members to leave classes during competitions.

In order to 'replace' the instructional time of the students, one designated teacher is appointed to keep track of the number of instructional contact hours missed by each of the students. Principal 6 adds that, once the competition is over, the designated teacher would have a complete record of the number of instructional hours missed by the students. She later explains that the teacher, together with the SLTMs, would organise a meeting to coordinate extra classes or lessons to make up for all the lost instructional time.

> So now we have to replace these students' missed lessons. For example, if cumulatively the student has missed three hours' worth of Science, then we will make sure that the three hours will be replaced.

Principal 6 believes that they are duty bound to ensure that the students who participated in the extracurricular activities are not left behind in their lessons.

> These students have sacrificed their time for the school; in return, we have to sacrifice our time to make sure that whatever lessons they missed are covered. We can't expect to ask students to compete without giving them the proper support academically. (principal 6)

Principal 6's practice of protecting instructional time is supported by SLTM 6. SLTM 6 argues that because of its high performing school status, the school often receives visitors and guests. SLTMs are tasked to receive and entertain the visitors to the extent of cancelling their scheduled lessons. Nevertheless, because of the strong practice of protecting instructional time in the school, SLTM 6 explains that all the cancelled lessons are replaced outside of the normal school hours.

Principal 5 considers protecting instructional time as one of the most important elements for an effective instructional leader. Nevertheless, principal 5 laments the problem faced in ensuring that his instructional time with his students is protected. Even though he teaches a minimum of 6 periods of civic education, the constant calling of other administrative duties, such as meetings, have really affected his responsibility in protecting the instructional time for those lessons.

Principal 5 notes that added administrative responsibilities for teachers, such as updating the student assessments' performance in the nationwide online monitoring system, is too burdensome. Indirectly, principal 5 believes that this issue is affecting teachers' instructional time with students.

> The infrastructure is just too poor for teachers to use in terms of keying in the marks online… [Therefore] they had to wake up in the middle of the night so that they would be able to key in the marks because the [internet] traffic would not be that bad. But in the end, this is taking too much toll for my teachers, they suffer and they get depressed… how do you expect me to protect instructional time when teachers are greatly affected by this? (principal 5)

As recounted in the previous chapter, the Ministry of Education has a strong commitment to the policy of protecting instructional time. Teacher 4 explains that her principal stresses this policy regularly to the teachers, especially during meetings.

> In meetings, teachers are often reminded of the Ministry's agenda [the policy of protecting instructional time]. She reminds them of the importance of instructional time in classrooms. (teacher 4)

While the practice of protecting instructional time is enforced by the principals, partly due to the directive of the Ministry of Education, the response from teacher 2 indicates that this practice is not implemented forcefully by his principal. Teacher 2 attributes the lack of protection of instructional time to the overlay of too many activities:

> Sometimes there are too many disruptions during lesson time… too many activities and programmes. We talk about the ‘protecting instructional time’ policy but at the same time we are carrying out extra programmes during lesson time. (teacher 2)

The analysis reveals that this particular instructional leadership practice is carried out, or perceived to be carried out, by five principals. While agreeing that protecting instructional time is important, one of the five principals also believes that school leaders must negotiate between administrative duties and other external factors that would contribute to teachers not being able to protect their instructional time. Principal 2, in contrast, was perceived by the teacher to be unable to enact this type of instructional leadership. This indicates that not all principals share a similar view on the extent to which this instructional leadership practice should be enacted in schools, despite its being enforced as a directive by the Ministry.

Maintain high visibility

As shown in the previous chapter, maintaining high visibility was rated as the least performed instructional leadership practice as observed by principals and teachers. However, several of the interview participants indicated that their principals do maintain their presence in the school. For example, teacher 5 mentions how principal 5 would frequently “round the classes” and this in itself reflects the constant presence of the principal in the school.

The action of “round the classes” was also mentioned by teacher 1:

> Principal 1 likes to be on the ground… round the classes for example. He would take time to always remind teachers to

> discuss any problems that occur. Principal 1 does not want teachers to form cliques amongst themselves. (teacher 1)

SLTM 3 acknowledges the impact that the high visibility of her principal, as well as other SLTMs, have on teachers and students.

> …principal 3 and the administrative team would constantly do the walkabout…meaning that we are noticed. Teachers and students see our presence… we are seen in school. (SLTM 3)

Principal 6 reaffirms the belief that principals should always be seen in school. She admits that, even though she would sometimes have to be out of the office attending meetings, she would not depart from the school in her car.

> Sometimes when I go for meetings, I would not use my car. Teachers would notice that my car is in the school…and they would think that I am in school. I would like them to think that I am in school. (principal 6)

Maintaining high visibility also involves the principal attending, and participating in, extra and co-curricular activities. SLTM 3 mentions that principal 3 takes time to provide motivational support to students representing the school in any co-curricular activities. This action, according to SLTM 3, helps to maintain a healthy rapport between principal 3 and her students. Quite similarly, teacher 1 recalls how principal 1 would spend time with students who are participating in extracurricular activities even if they are conducted away from the school.

Even though principals in four of the schools were seen as maintaining visibility in their school, principal 2 and principal 4 were perceived otherwise. For example, SLTM 2 laments the fact that her principal often attends meetings involving the cooperative movement, therefore SLTM 2 would have to deputise for principal 2 during her time away from school. She comments that, because the school organises quite a number of activities that coincide with the principal being away attending meetings, other SLTMs would then have to stand in for the principal 2. SLTM 2 feels that the presence of a principal taking part in such activities is very important as “teachers and students would feel excited and motivated if their principal attends any school program” (SLTM 2).

Teacher 4 also agrees that principal 4 is often away at meetings. Teacher 4 nevertheless concedes that it is imperative for a principal in a high performing school to be attending meetings organised by the Ministry.

Providing instructional support

Some of the teachers and principals talk about the importance of providing additional instructional support towards improving learning and teaching in school. Most of the respondents mentioned how the extra funding received as part of being a high performing school has helped in providing extra instructional support for the school. One of the areas of instructional support highlighted by the interview participants involves the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in schools.

For example, teacher 4 mentions how principal 4 has allocated the largest sum of the high performing school budget to academic programmes:

> This year, the portion allotted for academic programmes is quite a lot… RM160,000. This sum will be spent towards improving academic programmes in the school. (teacher 4).

SLTM 4 agrees that principal 4 would allow additional spending if that would help to improve the teaching and learning activities in the school. SLTM 4 adds:

> Principal 4 has procured more computers… she hopes that the teachers would increase the use of ICT in their classroom lessons. (SLTM 4)

While principal 4 believes that it is not viable financially to equip each class with computers, she encourages teachers to use their own laptops to aid lessons by incorporating elements of information and communication technology. She also hopes that teachers and students would fully utilise the upgraded computer lab during lessons.

Similarly, teacher 5 comments on how her principal has allowed for extra funding to upgrade the ICT facilities in the school, thereby enabling teachers and students to benefit from the recently launched Frog Virtual Learning Environment (Frog VLE) programme. Frog VLE enables lessons to be carried out in and out of the classroom via a dedicated online platform.

SLTM 2 mentions how her principal values 21st century learning which was highlighted in the MEB. In order to fully support the 21st century learning, principal 2 has invested the extra high performing school funding towards upgrading the school's information and communication technology infrastructure. SLTM 2 added that, once the infrastructure was in place, principal 2 encouraged teachers and students to fully utilise ICT in education.

Apart from improving the computer facilities in the school, SLTM 5 mentioned that principal 5 allowed for the extra high performing school funding to be allocated to support subjects that have shown a decline in the previous public examination results. The extra financial support would give the teachers who are teaching these subjects the opportunity to purchase additional instructional materials to support teaching and learning. The extra funding comes on top of the already allocated per capita grant for each subject given by the Ministry of Education.

Teacher 6 commends on the way in which principal 6 handles any difficulties faced by teachers if the support materials used for lessons are malfunctioning.

> Sometimes we are faced with the situation where some of the instructional support materials are broken and not functioning properly, like the LCD projector for instance. So, it is difficult for teachers to carry out lessons which need to be carried out using the computer and projector. We spoke to principal 6 and she was quick to help to resolve the problem. (teacher 6)

Teacher 6 adds that principal 6 is always positive about improving instructional materials to aid the learning and teaching process in the classroom. SLTM 6 agrees that principal 6 would provide any financial support towards improving the academic performance of the school.

Principal 3 believes that a principal should always facilitate the teachers in procuring any instructional support materials.

> I don't make it difficult, it's a simple procedure. For the teachers to purchase, we have to make it easy… they just have to complete the order note… very fast. I am not very fussy, if the subject heads feel that the materials are what they and the teachers want… so we facilitate, we make it easy and they are happy. That is one way that we can help and support the teachers. Let them know that whatever they need, we can provide it. (principal 3)

Most of the responses associate instructional support with financial and physical aids that could promote learning and teaching in the schools; however, this instructional leadership practice was not highlighted by principal 1.

Transformational leadership

The analysis of the interviews also suggests that transformational leadership is perceived to be practiced by the six principals. Transformational leadership per se was not mentioned by interview participants as one of the leadership practices enacted by the principals. Nevertheless, the responses suggest that the practices of the principals are representative of the tenets of transformational leadership. The practices of transformational leadership are analysed based on themes centred upon the relevant components of the transformational leadership model proposed by Leithwood et al. (1999). Whilst the transformational leadership framework introduced by Leithwood et al. (1999) consists of three main dimensions each with its own corresponding sets of practices, the themes that emerged from the analysis focus only on the most relevant and clear sets of transformational practices identified by the principals, SLTMs as well as the teachers. The author also did not consider analysing the added dimension of '*Managing instructional program*' as part of the transformational leadership practices of the principals. This is because instructional leadership practices were analysed extensively in the previous section.

Setting direction

Vision and mission are identified as the key components of setting the school's direction, as proposed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2009). The practice of sharing the school's vision and mission might overlap with two of the components of instructional leadership, namely, communicating and framing the school's goals, but the focus here is on how the principals engage in sharing and conveying the schools' vision and mission to the teachers and students. Further, by framing the schools' vision and mission, the principals directly build and create the expectation of high performance. The expectation of high performance is also part of the components of setting direction.

The analysis suggests that all the principals would use the school assemblies to convey and remind students of their schools' vision and mission. In addition, either teachers or SLTMs from the six schools agree that their principals would often share the vision and mission during staff meetings. For example, SLTM 4 underscores how principal 4 constantly emphasises the school's vision and mission in the weekly assembly.

> The school's vision and mission are quite visible everywhere in the school but principal 4 loves to reinforce them in the assembly. Assembly is the best avenue for her to convey the school's vision and mission because all the students and teachers are present. (SLTM 4)

In addition to sharing the vision and mission during assembly, teacher 4 also observes that principal 4 often reiterated and reminded teachers of the vision during staff meetings. In addition, teacher 4 reaffirms how the school's vision and mission were visible in many locations in the school. Teacher 4 adds that "whatever action that we plan must be in line with the school's vision". Principal 4 agrees that school assembly and staff meetings are the best avenues for her to remind teachers and students of the school's vision and mission.

Teacher 1 agrees that the constant communicating and reminding of the school's vision and mission by his Principal benefits the students. Teacher 1 partly attributes the success of the school in obtaining high performing status to the belief and trust that the students and teachers have towards the school's vision to be the top performing school in Malaysia. SLTM 1 adds that principal 1 had requested that all flyers for any school programmes must include the school's vision and mission statement.

Apart from sharing the school's mission and vision through school assemblies and staff meetings, principal 3 uses another approach in conveying her school's vision. According to SLTM 3, principal 3 encourages her students to exhibit their talent and potential, which is truly reflective of the school's vision, in international conferences. The vision of the school is to be renowned internationally. In order for the vision to be realised, principal 3 has been organising international conferences led by teachers and students of that school.

> I think we have achieved the vision because of the annual international conference that we organise. So, we are well known in that respect… and despite the success of the conference, principal 3 would constantly remind us of the vision to be known internationally. (SLTM 3)

Principal 3's vision of becoming a well-known school internationally is aided by their participation in events organised by schools in other countries.

> We have put a mark in many countries all over the world. If you look at the school's corridor, we have put a flag where the students of this school have been, and it's like all over the world… whether we go to participate, or we go to attend seminars and conferences, or whether they come to us. So this is not to say that we have achieved our vision 100% but I am confident we are moving towards it. (principal 3)

Principal 3 reveals that the school's vision of becoming well known internationally has influenced the ways in which teachers approach international competitions. As a result, the teachers try to find avenues for the school to be recognised internationally especially through international level competitions. Hence, principal 3 acknowledges the role that a school leader plays in influencing and encouraging the teachers to work for the common vision and mission of the school.

> Even though I say that the implementation of a lot of the activities that involve international participation is done by the teachers… but if you don't steer them or put them in the right direction, then you will not be able to get the teachers together in achieving the vision and mission of the school. (principal 3)

Teacher 3's comments support the assertion made by her principal in relation to realising the vision of the school. Teacher 3 claims that the vision of the school is often highlighted by the principal and as result translates into the commitment of the teachers to realise the vision together:

> When we obtained the high performing school award, principal 3 had increased students' participation overseas…previously we don't use to send (sic) students overseas. I guess we are working towards the vision. (teacher 3)

Principal 6 argues that adhering to the vision and mission of the school must be an ongoing effort of a school leader. However, principal 6 believes that it is imperative for the teachers and students to understand the vision of the school. In doing so, the vision of the school is often highlighted in the weekly assembly with teachers and students. Both SLTM 6 and teacher 6 acknowledge weekly assembly as the platform for their principal to share the school's vision. Teacher 6 reaffirms her principal's action:

> Every time during assembly, she would stress the school's vision of becoming a global standard… so the students' attitude must also be reflective of that. (teacher 6)

Principal 2 also mentions the important role a leader plays in "disseminating the vision among the students, staff and teachers" (principal 2). The essence of the vision is incorporated in the school's anthem. When she first took over the leadership in the school, principal 2 states that the school's vision was slightly modified, together with the teachers:

> We build the vision with the concept proposed by the teachers. We need a vision… the vision, in turn, is our direction… without a direction then the school will be in disarray. So, the vision guides us in the right direction. (principal 2)

Principal 5 adopts a similar method to principal 2 by sharing and disseminating the school's vision through the school's anthem and motto.

> We use a tagline that reflects the vision and the culture of the school which is: 'the champions of everything'. The winning mentality has rubbed off perfectly on all the students until the point that we feel winning is normal but losing is something that is extraordinary! (principal 5)

This is further emphasised by SLTM 5. SLTM 5 explains that the vision of the school was slightly modified in line with the status of a high performing school.

SLTM 5 and teacher 5 both agree that principal 5 often reminded students of the vision during school assemblies.

Developing people

Another important element of school transformational leadership is the ability of the principals to develop teachers' "dispositions, motivations, bodies of knowledge and skills" (Leithwood et al., 1999: 71). Two practices under this dimension evident in the analysis are: modelling best professional practices and values, and providing individualised support.

i. Modelling best professional practices and values

Leithwood et al. (1999) posit that principals who set an example for teachers to follow may enhance the teachers' beliefs about their own capacities. However, it is imperative for the principal to be the "models of behaviour (before) they expect of others" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007a: 63). For example, principal 2 declares that it is important for her to be able to "walk the talk" in order to set a good example for the teachers and students.

> You must lead by example… you must be a good model. If you want teachers to be at school by seven in the morning, then I must be in school by seven as well. So the most important thing for me is that I am able to walk what we talk and talk what we walk. (principal 2)

Setting a good example is also exhibited by principal 1. The responsibility of being a principal in a fully residential school is often greater than principals of regular day schools which do not have boarding facilities. Principal 1 believes that being a principal in a fully residential school requires full-time attention because all of the students are boarding in the school. Hence, principal 1 understands that his role as a leader is not confined only to the normal schooling hours but extends beyond that.

> I am a leader, and as a leader, I have to carry out my duties and responsibilities all the time. To me, I work 24 hours. (principal 1)

SLTM 1 and teacher 1 both agree that their principal does not adhere to normal working hours because of the nature of a fully residential school. They also highlight how principal 1 often carries out his responsibilities beyond official school hours. SLTM 1 gives an example of an incident when a landslide occurred near one of the hostels in the school. The hostel was declared unsafe until works to rectify the land structure near the hostel were completed. SLTM 1 affirmed that principal 1 worked tirelessly around the clock to ensure that temporary accommodation for the students affected was arranged. Another example is given by teacher 1. He recognised principal 1 as someone who would often spend time doing rounds at the hostels even though hostel wardens are on duty all the time.

Leaders who model the way would lead by doing rather than by just by telling (Leithwood et al., 1999). Principal 3 personifies this statement. Principal 3 believes that, as a high performing school, they need to be doing things which are extra and out of the ordinary. However, principal 3 admits that “it was difficult at first to convince the teachers to do something extra”. In order for the teachers to believe that the “extra” work is beneficial to the school, principal 3 believes that a principal must in return display a high level of enthusiasm and confidence that it would benefit all. Principal 3 gives an example how she responded to two invitations to compete in an international education best-practices award. Principal 3 submitted the applications and was awarded second place at the Commonwealth level and third at the South East Asian level.

> So all these extras, if you as the principal don't bring it into the school, then the school will just move normally. Nothing extra and nothing different than any other school. I feel it is important for you to find the opportunities for the school. (principal 3)

Principal 3’s method of displaying such enthusiasm has influenced the teachers. For example, teacher 3 agrees that her principal is able to convince teachers to carry out tasks without being domineering:

> Well, one thing I can say about my principal, very dynamic. She is very good in this leadership, in the sense that... I don’t know, she's got this some kind... she's very charismatic. Whenever she asks someone to do something, she has those, some super power, she can get you to do it. (teacher 3)

Leaders who model important values and practices engage in practices intended to reinforce key and basic values such as respecting others or trusting in the judgement of others (Leithwood et al., 1999). The analysis reveals that such practice is displayed by the principals through respecting and listening to other people’s ideas and suggestions. Principal 5 provides an example of how this practice is modelled and exemplified. Principal 5 always maintains that he is open to any ideas and comments given by any members of the school.

> In my time leading this school, I would never reject any ideas given… even if the school janitor has an idea, I would listen. The same goes for the school’s security person. Because their ideas are sometimes beneficial to the school… so we must listen to their ideas. (principal 5)

Principal 5’s practice of being open to any suggestions and ideas are supported by SLTM 5 and teacher 5. For example, teacher 5 views her principal as someone who is “open-minded”. SLTM 5 adds that principal 5 is always open to any ideas and suggestions:

> If we have an idea, thoughts or suggestions… so far, he would never say no. He will ask us to discuss the ideas and suggestions. So we feel appreciated because our ideas are being heard by him… even after discussing the idea and he

> feels that the idea or suggestions are not viable, he will decline in a professional manner. (SLTM 5)

Similar to principal 5, teacher 6 believes that her principal exudes qualities that are reflective of a leader who values the ideas of other teachers. Teacher 6 compares principal 6 with her previous principals:

> With previous principals, we [the teachers] felt afraid to express our thoughts and ideas to her, but now we are free to give ideas. (teacher 6)

Principal 6 reinforces teacher 6's comment:

> In being a leader, I always believe in practising two-way communication. I give ideas and they can give feedback on that idea. Ideas are flexible… can be changed and discussed. (principal 6)

Another way in which school leaders could model important best professional practice is by modelling problem-solving techniques that others could adapt for their own work. This is exemplified by principal 4, whom SLTM 4 explains, uses the GROW approach to strategize ways of overcoming problems:

> Like the GROW programme… she is an expert. She takes great care in implementing the programme, especially when dealing with problem-solving strategies. She explains and guides teachers on how to adopt this programme with the students. (SLTM 4)

Teacher 2 also saw principal 2 as someone "who is quick to solve problems". Nonetheless, teacher 2 did not elaborate on how principal 2 solves the problems.

The analysis provides examples of various practices of the principals that reflect the principals' modelling of important values and practices as a component of transformational leadership.

ii. Providing individualised support

Leithwood et al. (1999) believe that one of the ways in which school leaders provide individualised support is through encouraging teachers and staff to engage in professional development. This facet of transformational leadership resembles the component of '*Promote professional development*', as proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985).

The analysis indicates that four of the six principals engage in the practice of providing support for their teachers, especially in terms of professional development. For example, principal 4 believes in "providing the avenue and opportunity for all teachers to benefit from new knowledge", especially those gained by attending professional development courses. Principal 4 also encourages new knowledge to be shared with other teachers. Principal 4's views were shared by SLTM 4. SLTM 4 considers principal 4 as someone who provides opportunities for teachers to gain new knowledge by attending professional development courses. For example, any teachers who have completed professional development course are required by principal 4 to conduct in-house training for other teachers. Principal 4 ensures that all teachers would benefit from the added knowledge shared by their colleagues who have attended any courses. Teacher 4 adds that principal 4 has allocated a figure of RM30,000 to be spent specifically on teachers' professional development in the current year.

Principal 6 states that, in order for the teachers to be engaged in continuous professional support, she appoints a senior teacher of the DG48 grade to be specifically in charge of facilitating any in-house courses for the teachers. This would enable her to focus on other matters while keeping a close view on the progress of professional development activities taking place in the school.

Teacher 6 agrees that her principal supports any activities that would facilitate better instructional practices as carried out by the teachers.

> She has a lot of ideas… when we proposed to conduct PLC [professional learning community], she gave a lot of advice

> and ideas on how PLC could encourage teachers' professional knowledge. She then suggested that we record the teachers' carrying out lessons in the classroom, and the videos can then be shared with others. (teacher 6)

Principal 1 promotes cooperative teaching as a way to encourage professional development amongst teachers. Principal 1 also believes that cooperative teaching would benefit newly qualified teachers because "they have less experience". Hence, principal 1 considers that cooperative teaching would be one of the ways in which more experienced teachers could show exemplary instructional practices.

> I am all for cooperative teaching and that is the culture that we practice here. Sometimes I would allow up to two teachers to team-teach a class. It helps to create team work and promote good development for the teachers. (principal 1)

Principal 3 believes that one way of developing professional capacity is through "pushing the teachers" to be involved with activities that could benefit the school, especially at the international level. Principal 3 argues that teacher involvement with international-level activities is something that could not be gained in other schools.

> There are a lot of instances where I pushed teachers, especially when we talk about competitions and all that. If I do not tell them to do it, nobody does it because these are extras. And of course, the teachers, they were very reluctant initially. But you then as the principal keep doing the normal things, then how do you say your school is high performing. So, to find all these extras things and I strongly feel that the principal must play the part. In the end, the teachers will benefit with the added knowledge which is so valuable. (principal 3)

While principal 3 believes in “pushing the teachers” to carry out extra duties, teacher 3 explains that she always guides and assists the teachers in carrying out the duties.

> She may ask you to do work and all that but she doesn't leave you alone. I mean that's my opinion. When she asks you to do something, when you go to her for some help, she will try her best to help. (teacher 3)

Another facet of providing individualised support culminates in the form of “having an open door policy as well as being approachable, accessible and welcoming” (Leithwood et al., 1999). The analysis identifies such an approach being practiced by three principals. For example, principal 6 maintains that teachers are free to see her without having to make prior appointments:

> Let’s say, for example, I am at the canteen having my breakfast… then a teacher would come up to me and ask for my signature for an official document or letter. I would have no problem at all signing the document provided that the document is in order. I don’t mind doing it in the canteen and the teacher doesn’t have to worry about making an appointment to get the document signed. We need to understand that the teacher is sometimes in a rush to attend a lesson. (principal 6)

Principal 2 believes it is important to preserve a positive interpersonal bond with the teachers whilst maintaining the professional relationship at the same time.

> In the professional context, yes, I am the head but, relationship and communication between humans should go beyond that context. So, teachers are free to see me… to share any personal matters. They can share their thoughts or

> any personal feelings. So far, if they have any problem, they are free to WhatsApp [sic] me. (principal 2)

Similarly, principal 5 believes that he is open to discussing any personal matters brought up by the teachers. This indicates that principal 5 is open to any form of communication and is not restricted to official matters only:

> I am open to all… if a teacher approaches me with a personal grievance, for instance, I would try to be in the teacher's shoes for that moment. I would try and understand the teacher's problem. If the teacher needs help, then we should provide the teacher with the necessary assistance. (principal 5)

Principal 5's method of open communication is well received by teacher 5. Teacher 5 claims that she is more comfortable in communicating ideas with her principal which is something that was not possible with her previous two principals.

Redesigning the organisation by creating and maintaining shared decision-making structures and processes

The final dimension of the transformational leadership practice which is evident in the interviews is how the principals redesign the organisation through creating and maintaining shared decision-making structures and processes. Leithwood et al. (1999) posit that this dimension of transformational leadership aims at providing "both formal and informal opportunities for members of the school to participate in the decision making" process. This component of transformational leadership shares similar qualities with distributed leadership.

The findings reveal that principals agree that the decision-making process in their schools is based on collective agreement amongst the SLTMs. Principal 4, for example, believes that her G9 group can offer multiple perspectives before any decisions are made.

> In the [G9] meeting, we all make decisions. Say if there is an issue or if there is a matter that needs to be resolved, we make a collective decision. Either you agree or disagree on that matter, the decision is ours. I don't want the teachers to say that all decisions are made by me… so whenever a decision is needed, it must be a decision based on all of our agreement. (principal 4)

Principal 2 considers decision-making as a process that should be exactly right. The decision made "should not hurt anyone" and should be beneficial to all. Using a similar structure to principal 4, principal 2 identifies meetings with G4 (a group consisting of the principal and three assistant principals) as well as the G9 (an extension to the G4 that includes five heads of department) as the critical platform when making curriculum decisions.

Principal 5 frequently highlights his decision-making practice via school meetings. He maintains that he seldom uses his capacity as the principal when making decisions but instead he adheres to any decision that arises from the meeting.

> In many things we do, most of the decisions come from consensus in meetings. I like to give suggestions and views. Then we would further discuss and debate the matter. I truly believe and I am totally confident that the consensus reached at the end shall be supported and backed by all members of the meeting. (principal 5)

Principal 5 added that "being a principal is easy but the toughest part is to make decisions". Hence, principal 5 felt that, if a decision needs to be made, he must ensure that the "he would be able to sleep on the decision" without any worries.

> I am sure that the decision made will be backed by the members of the meeting especially if it's criticised by external

> parties. I am confident we can defend the decision as a shared decision. (principal 5)

However, principal 5 is adamant that, if a decision is made amongst the leadership team in the school, any disagreement on the decision later should not be displayed in front of the teachers. Principal 5 does not want the teachers to have the perception that the leadership team is not united in agreeing on any decisions made.

Similarly, principal 6 also believes that a collective decision made, especially by the leadership team, should always be upheld. Nevertheless, principal 6 also believes that, if a decision made by the leadership team leads to further complications, especially towards the teachers, then she would review the decision. Principal 6 gives an example of how the leadership team has decided to separate students into set groups. The students' ability and current performance determines the set groups. The teachers had to make adjustments in terms of their teaching strategy because students were placed in groups that are based on their abilities. Principal 6 says that some of the teachers complained of the set system because it was introduced halfway through the term. The teachers felt that both teachers and students had difficulties in readjusting to the different approaches in the lessons which were dependent on students' abilities.

Hence, principal 6 felt that the decision about the set system needs to be re-examined. However, she maintains that, for her to backtrack on the collective decision made by the leadership team, would require solid reasoning from the teachers.

> We decided to go back to the normal arrangement. This means that when a decision has been made, it could be re-considered especially when teachers can prove to me that the decision made was not beneficial to the students and teachers. I can accept that… so there is no point in holding on

> to the decision when it's affecting teachers and students. (principal 6)

The scenario explained by principal 6 implies that she allows the teachers to suggest and make changes when clearly the original decision was not benefiting students and teachers. Hence, the decision-making process does not end at the senior leadership level but was extended to teachers for consideration and amendment when it was deemed necessary.

Principal 1 exemplifies another shared decision-making process. He maintained that school-based decisions must come from everyone.

> It is not only us and certainly it does not come solely from me. We must discuss with all parties concerned. We have to listen to teachers' opinions before we can decide. (principal 1)

Similarly, principal 3 affirmed her belief that any major decisions in school should be agreed by everyone.

> You see, when you want to do anything, it is not easy to get the consent of everyone, so at least I will get the consensus of the senior leadership team. So, we do discuss before any big decisions are made. (principal 3)

The analysis of interviews also reveals how the SLTMs and teachers observe their principals carrying out decision-making. For example, SLTM 1 maintains that "so far, whatever decisions that need to be made by the principal are referred to the leadership team".

Principal 3's practice of making decisions together with all the SLTMs is acknowledged by SLTM 3.

> When it comes to decisions, she likes to discuss them in the leadership meeting. She asks our opinions and she offers her opinions. Then we discuss what to do before coming to a decision. (SLTM 3)

SLTM 2 asserts that one of the most effective traits of her principal is how principal 2 would discuss any matters with the SLTMs before making any decision. SLTM 2 insists that “if we want to make any decisions, it would not be her decision or our decision…it must be a collective decision”.

Similarly, SLTM 5 explains that her principal chairs weekly meetings with other SLTMs. The weekly meetings facilitate making school based decisions collectively.

> So far, we [the principal and other SLTMs] meet every Wednesday. Quite often, decisions are made in that meeting. (SLTM 5)

In addition, the decision-making process is also extended to other members of the school, especially in meetings.

> Principal 5 will make decisions based on what was discussed in meetings. If there is a problem caused by the decision made, we will discuss the decision together and try to reach the best possible solution. (teacher 5)

SLTM 4 concurs with her principal’s practice of involving SLTMs before making any key decisions:

> Principal 4 would always discuss with us [the SLTMs] before making any decisions. She would never make a decision without consulting us. If we all agree, only then is the decision imparted to the teachers and students. (SLTM 4)

While principal 4 and SLTM 4 both agree that all school-based decisions are made collectively by the leadership team, teacher 4 argues that the decisions are often finalised without any room for further discussion with the teachers.

> If we [the teachers], do not agree with the decision, she [principal 4] will defend it. She feels that the decision comes from the agreement of the leadership team. It has been

> discussed and agreed upon collectively. Therefore, the decision must be carried out… because all the decisions made by the G9 is final. (teacher 4)

Teacher 4’s sentiment on how firm her principal was in every decision made is in direct contrast to principal 1 and principal 6. Both principal 1 and principal 6 would allow teachers’ opinions to be considered in relation to the decisions made. Principal 4 however, makes decision at the higher level without giving the opportunities to teacher to review or discuss the decisions made.

The analysis suggests that the transformational leadership component of creating and maintaining a shared decision-making process is identified as one of the more prominent leadership practices enacted by all principals. The evidence demonstrates that all the principals involved their SLTMs when making decisions. SLTMs and teachers also acknowledged that their principals involved others in making decisions, especially the senior leadership. Whilst the analysis confirms the dynamics of the decision-making process between the principals and their SLTMs, the analysis also reveals that three principals involve other teachers when making key decisions in schools.

Distributed leadership

Similar to transformational leadership, the practice of distributed leadership was not explicitly mentioned by any of the interview participants. However, their comments do indicate that the six principals display practices that are consistent with distributed leadership. The themes that emerged from the analysis are aligned with the distributed leadership framework, as suggested by MacBeath (2005), Harris (2008) and Spillane (2006).

Distribution or delegation to the senior leadership team

All Malaysian secondary schools have a minimum of three assistant principals. Some schools that offer form six education have an additional assistant principal, as in the case of principal 3’s school. In addition to the assistant principals, most secondary schools have between three to five heads of department that would make up the rest of the senior leadership team. All six SLTMs interviewed acknowledged that their principals delegate and share leadership responsibilities with all SLTMs in their schools. Nevertheless, the analysis is careful in distinguishing between distributed leadership and the mere practice of delegating tasks. This is linked to the suggestion by Harris (2004: 20) that “it will be important to ensure that distributed leadership is not simply misguided delegation”.

The interviews with the senior leadership members suggest that the devolution of power to the senior leadership team is sometimes hierarchical. Even though there are three or four assistant principals in a secondary school, quite often assistant principal I is considered as the de facto first deputy principal. This is typified by SLTM 2. Whilst there are three assistant principals in the school, SLTM 2 acknowledges the clear devolution of power by the principal whenever she is away from school.

> So, whenever she has to attend meetings or any other matters away from school, I would deputise for her… meaning I would take over the running of the school during her absence. She allows me to carry out my task in the fullest of capacity… meaning I can make any decision in her absence. Nevertheless, if I feel that the decision requires her discretion, then I would contact her. Otherwise, she allows me to deputise her with full authority whenever she is away. (SLTM 2)

SLTM 4 observes that, since the current principal took over the school, many of the leadership responsibilities are distributed and delegated to all assistant principals in the school, especially the first assistant principal. SLTM 4, being an assistant principal for co-curricular activities, believes that the first senior principal is often tasked not only with academic matters but also with the welfare of the teachers.

> Teachers would often consult the first assistant principal and therefore the principal herself allows for the first assistant

> principal to make any decision. Nonetheless, if the first assistant principal feels that any matters brought up by the teachers require the principal's attention, only then would principal 4 would provide her opinion, assistance and decision where necessary. (SLTM 4)

The analysis above indicates that leadership is distributed or delegated formally to school members who occupy senior or formal roles (MacBeath, 2005). The analysis also suggests that principals delegate or distribute leadership tasks pragmatically to "the right people" (MacBeath, 2005). This practice is illustrated through the responses from SLTM 1, who states that principal 1 "always allocates roles and responsibilities to all SLTMs according to its suitability".

Spillane et al. (2001) posit that distributed leadership could occur when leadership tasks and functions are enacted and stretched across the school. As a result, delegation of duties and tasks are carried out by multiple members of the school. SLTM 3 provides an example of how her principal extended leadership responsibilities to all SLTMs. SLTM 3 clarifies that there are four assistant principals and four heads of department altogether in the school. SLTM 3 explains that all SLTMs are assigned with the roles of "carrying out daily supervision and observation of classroom activities". A distributed perspective of delegating tasks to members of the senior leadership team, especially in the supervision of instruction, has enabled principal 3 to 'stretch' her instructional duties to others, hence ensuring that the quality of instruction is supervised collectively in the school.

SLTM 3's assertion is corroborated by Principal 3. Principal 3 believes that good instructional practices could be carried out effectively when they are distributed to other members of the school.

> As the principal, your most important responsibility is to look at what is happening in the classroom but you cannot do it by yourself. It depends on the size of the school; I am talking

> about this school. So, to me... I must empower my team to help me… to make sure that the instructional practice is carried out well. (principal 3)

The act of empowering others, as stated by principal 3, leads this analysis to examine the practice of delegating duties and tasks to others through empowerment. The analysis identifies how three principals, including principal 3, empower SLTMs in carrying out roles and responsibilities. For example, SLTM 6 believes that her principal's empowerment of the SLTMs has allowed for greater flexibility in carrying out roles and responsibilities:

> The senior leadership team members have monthly meetings with the principal. She empowers us to carry out the roles and responsibilities assigned according to our needs and suitability. So, in between the monthly meetings with the principal, I would carry out meetings with the heads of department as often as possible… because I would like to be on top of things if possible. (SLTM 6)

SLTM 5 also uses the word "empowerment" to describe how their principal delegates or distributes responsibilities in their school. SLTM 5 argues that "there are two types of principal; one who likes to direct and order, and another who empowers". SLTM 5 believes that her principal is the latter.

> He [principal 5] empowers. We [the SLTMs and the principal] would constantly meet and have discussion. He engages us in the meeting before making any decision. (SLTM 5)

The comments from the SLTMs suggest that they acknowledge that leadership capacity in the schools is stretched across other senior leadership members through task delegation and empowerment. This analysis exhibits evidence about which tasks are distributed and delegated by the principals to other SLTMs. The analysis is careful in interpreting and analysing the act of delegating duties as a form of distributed leadership. Nevertheless, the above analysis does suggest that the practice of distributed leadership is grounded in the act of delegating and empowering SLTMs in the school. In addition, through task delegation, the influence of the principal is exercised through their SLTMs.

Collaboration with senior leadership members

The practice of collaboration identified here also overlaps with the element of collaborative school culture under the transformational leadership dimension of '*Redesigning the organisation*'. The interview participants were asked how often principals collaborate with SLTMs. Most of the responses illustrate patterns of collaboration between the principals and their teachers and senior leaders. The pattern of collaboration supports the understanding that distributed leadership could also be carried out through collaborated distribution (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

For example, principal 6 values the teamwork and collaboration that she has with other SLTMs. In order for the teamwork to work efficiently, principal 6 uses the group function on the social media application, WhatsApp. The group function enables her to communicate in real time with all her SLTMs. Principal 6 explains that any matters that need urgent attention are relayed in the WhatsApp application. All the members of that specific group would then be able to discuss the solution to the matters raised.

Similarly, principal 3 uses WhatsApp to connect with all her SLTMs. This form of communication has allowed for an effective collaboration amongst the leadership group in the school. As Principal 3 explains:

> You see… when you want to do anything it is not easy to get the consent of everyone, so at least I will get the consensus of the senior leadership team. So, we do discuss. We do meet up… but we can't afford to have meetings every week because there's too much work. We just use WhatsApp before any big decisions are made. (principal 3)

Principal 5 considers meetings with the SLTMs as the best platform for collaboration. In order for the collaboration to be successful, principal 5 would always consider himself as part of the team rather than as head of the team:

> In the meeting with my fellow administrators, I would never consider myself as the principal or the head. I am open to all form of ideas and discussion… because I know they [the senior leadership team members] have a lot of brilliant ideas. (principal 5)

Principal 2 identifies the three assistant principals as the other members of the G4 group. Principal 2 claims G4 as "the four core leaders" of the school. This G4 group carries out weekly meetings to review and resolve any pressing problems. Along similar lines, principal 4 characterises her SLTMs as the 'G9' group. G9 consists of the principal, three assistant principals and five heads of department.

> I have my weekly G9 meeting on Wednesdays. We need the help and support of all the senior leadership team members. (principal 4)

Principal 4 adds that the G9 functions as a platform for all SLTMs to collaborate and understand the roles, duties, and responsibilities of others. In addition, principal 4 views the meeting as a knowledge sharing session amongst the SLTMs.

Collaboration between the principal and the SLTMs is also recognised by several of the teachers interviewed. Teacher 3, for example, acknowledges that principal 3 constantly maintains collaboration with the SLTMs.

> Yeah…I would say the principal and the administrators [the SLTMs]… that they are very close. (teacher 3)

Teacher 1 and teacher 5 also mention how their principals often refer to their SLTMs when dealing with the daily running of the schools. For example, teacher 5 identifies how her principal involves the SLTMs and other staff in making decisions.

> Discussion would be carried out beforehand with the senior leadership team members and other staff. So the opinions of other staff are always taken into consideration. (teacher 5)

Teacher 2 also noted that his principal often collaborates, not only with the assistant principals, but also with the heads of department. However, teacher 2 criticised the way in which the head of department would often find fault with the teachers and report them to the principal. This indicates that, whilst collaboration with other SLTMs is carried out by principal 2, the practice nevertheless creates conflict among the teachers.

Enabling others to act

The examples of distributed leadership discussed so far show the extent to which power and responsibilities are devolved and distributed amongst the SLTMs of the schools. In addition, examples of how principals collaborate with their SLTMs are also highlighted. This section examines the extent to which the distributed leadership practices of the principals are expanded to the teachers.

Teachers in Malaysian schools do carry extra responsibilities apart from the obvious role of teaching. These include being advisors, coaches and managers of the schools' sports clubs. In addition, teachers are also assigned as coordinators and advisors to the clubs and societies in schools. Some of the interview participants state that the principals delegate and assign tasks and responsibilities to teachers based on their capabilities. For example, SLTM 1, SLTM 5, SLTM 6 teacher 4 and teacher 6 all revealed that the delegation of tasks to the teachers at the beginning of every school year hinges upon the principal's trust in the teachers' ability to perform the extra duties.

SLTM 1 comments that the principal "will always delegate and assign tasks to teachers whom he feels are capable". SLTM 5, on the other hand, explained that her principal empowers the SLTMs in selecting and proposing additional tasks or responsibilities to the teachers. SLTM 5 adds:

> Principal 5 allows us [the SLTMs] to select the additional roles and tasks that teachers must carry out apart from the normal teaching responsibilities. So, principal 5 will endorse the selection based on our recommendations. (SLTM 5)

The comments made by SLTM 5 further support the views that teachers who assume additional roles in the school are selected based on their capabilities and talents. This practice supports MacBeath's (2005) suggestion that distributed leadership is carried out strategically by the principal with the expectation that the teachers selected for the roles will contribute to the long-term goal of the school.

Teacher 4 asserts that her principal tries her best to enable teachers to carry out the additional tasks and responsibilities assigned to them. However, teacher 4 admits that sometimes it is quite impossible to delegate the additional tasks to teachers based on the teachers' expertise and additional skills. Teacher 4 explains that some of the teachers have expertise in sports while others do not. Therefore, the sports' club headed by a capable and skilful teacher might yield greater results as compared to other sports clubs that are headed by teachers with lesser knowledge of that sport. Teacher 4 also emphasises that, "when additional roles and tasks are assigned to teachers, it comes with total trust and empowerment… and principal 4 would constantly remind those teachers to make sure that the tasks are carried out".

Similarly, teacher 3 admits that her principal would provide opportunities for other teachers to lead school programmes or carry out duties beyond classroom activities. However, teacher 3 admits that, whilst her principal tries to give opportunities for all teachers to lead in one way or the other, it is quite difficult sometimes to match every teacher with any specific task of leading a programme or duty, as teachers possess different abilities and expertise.

Teacher 6 describes her principal as someone who practices the delegation of power, even to teachers. Teacher 6 explains that the teachers have no problem in collaborating and cooperating with the leadership team of the school. For example, teacher 6 reports that “there are a lot of the school’s subcommittees that are handled and headed by teachers”. Teacher 6 believes that the added responsibilities show that teachers are empowered by their principal:

> She would allow not only the senior leadership team members but also teachers to exercise their authority when needed. So when teachers do carry out their role in exerting their authority, we do not feel apprehensive. (teacher 6)

Apart from the practice of delegating extra tasks and roles to teachers illustrated thus far, two of the participants stressed their principals’ trust when tasks are assigned to them. For example, teacher 1 highlights how principal 1 trusts the teachers to perform the tasks assigned without interfering too much:

> To me… we are clear on the tasks that were given. When he assigns the task… it is not like he would monitor us all the time, but he gives us time and freedom to carry out the task. Because he seldom interferes, we feel that we are obliged to update him on the progress from time to time. So, we value the trust that he puts in us in completing any tasks given. (teacher 1)

SLTM 4 also highlights the value of the trust that is shown by her principal whenever she is assigned with additional responsibilities. SLTM 4 gives an example of how principal 4 had appointed her as the school’s representative to the district athletics meet’s central committee.

> I am quite new to the post of assistant principal for co-curricular, so being appointed to be in the committee is something quite challenging. But principal 4 gave her full trust for me to carry out this role and she did not intervene. But I do feel that it is important for me to update her with the progress… that is how I reciprocate the trust and that is how we collaborate. (SLTM 4)

The analysis thus far has presented examples of how their principals enable teachers and senior assistant principals to act. Several of the principals interviewed offered some examples of how they enabled their teachers to carry out additional tasks in schools. Principal 6, for example, assigns administrative tasks to senior teachers who are of the grade of DG48.

> In my school, I have a lot of senior teachers. Most of them are DG48 grades. By right, their grade of service is even higher than the grade of service of my heads of department. So, they have to contribute. I ensured that these DG48 teachers are on daily duties. These added responsibilities will one day be beneficial to them when are appointed to hold any senior leadership position. (principal 6)

Some of the tasks assigned by principal 6 to the DG48 teachers include coordinating after-school classes for students and doing daily rounds together with other SLTMs.

Similarly, principal 2 believes that empowerment of teachers “happens well in the school”. Principal 2 gives an example of how she assigned the role of coordinator for the school’s co-curricular excellence centre to one of the teachers, instead of the assistant principal for co-curricular.

> If any matters related to the co-curricular activities that need to be carried out at the co-curricular centre, I will refer them to

> the coordinator first. So as a principal we must groom our teachers so as to become future leaders. (principal 2)

The evidence suggests that principal 2, provides avenues for other teachers to carry out extra duties as a way for her “to groom future leaders”.

Summary of Key Findings

The analysis was carried out to capture and understand, from a range of perspectives, a range of leadership practices evident in principals who are deemed high performing. The analysis suggests that the principals enact leadership practices that could be associated with instructional, transformational and distributed leadership.

Key comments that reflect the leadership practices of the principals were extracted for analysis. The comments made by the participants are summarised according to the leadership practices as detailed in Table 6.2:. The comments are specified based on the participants. This indicates the extent to which each of the leadership practices is perceived to be enacted by the principals from the perspectives of the principals themselves, the SLTMs, and the teachers. Nonetheless, it is imperative for the author to emphasise that the leadership practices identified are solely based on the interview evidence. Therefore, while some principals, or their SLTMs and teachers did not provide evidence of the leadership practices being enacted, this does not necessarily mean that the practices were entirely absent from the principals.

	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6
Instructional leadership						
Framing and communicating goals	**P T**	**P** *S *T				**P S T**
Supervising & evaluating instruction	**P S**	**P**	**P**	**P**		**P**
Coordinate the curriculum		**S**	**P**	**P**	**P S T**	**P**
Monitor students' progress	**S**	**P**	**P S**	**S T**		**P S**
Protect instructional time	**S**	*T	**P T**	**T**	**P** *P	**P S**
Maintain high visibility	**T**	**T** *S	**S**	**S** *T	**T**	**P**
Provide instructional support		**S**	**P**	**P S T**	**S T**	**T**
Transformational leadership						
<u>Setting direction</u> – Sharing school's vision and mission	**S T**	**P**	**P S T**	**P S T**	**P S T**	**P S T**
<u>Developing people</u> – Modelling best professional practice and values	**P S T**	**P T**	**P T**	**P S**	**P S T**	**P T**
<u>Developing people</u> – Providing individualised support	**P**	**P**	**P T**	**P S**	**P**	**P T**
<u>Redesigning the organisation</u> – Creating and maintaining a shared decision-making structure and process	**P S**	**P S**	**P S**	**P S T**	**P S T**	**P**
Distributed leadership						
Distribution or delegation of power to senior leadership team	**S**	**S**	**S**	**S**	**S**	**S**
Collaboration with senior leadership members	**T**	**P** *T	**P T**	**P**	**P T**	**P**
Enabling others to act	**S T**	**P**	**T**	**S T**	**S**	**P S T**

P=comments made by principals
S=comments made by senior leadership team member
T=comments made by teacher

*P=negative comments made by principals
*S=negative comments made by senior leadership team member
*T=negative comments made by teacher

Table 6.2: Summary of key findings based on the analysis of interviews

The summary in Table 6.2: illustrates the leadership practices enacted by the principals. In some instances, the principals themselves do not provide examples of the leadership practices, but the comments made by their teachers and SLTMs indicate that the practices were carried out by the principals. As the summary and the analysis suggest, most of the comments made by the teachers and the SLTMs reflect positive perceptions of their principals' leadership. However, it could be argued that the positive comments may arise from Malaysian societal and organisational norms which do not generally criticise leaders openly.

Nevertheless, there were some comments which indicate that some of the leadership practices were perceived to be enacted in a negative manner. For example, the principal in School 2 has received comments from her teacher and SLTM which express a degree of criticism of their principal's leadership practices. The comments made by either teacher 2 and/or SLTM 2 suggest that instructional leadership practices of '*Framing and communicating goals*', '*Protect instructional time*' and '*Maintain high visibility*' pertaining to their principal were perceived to be lacking. Teacher 2 also disagreed with the manner in which his principal collaborates with SLTMs, when carrying out supervision. He felt that the SLTM only criticises the instructional activities rather than giving advice, hence it created conflict between the teacher and SLTM rather than improve the quality of instruction. Whilst there are a few negative comments about principal 2, the analysis found no further evidence that would suggest that the overall leadership practices of principal 2 are ineffective.

The practice by principal 4 of maintaining high visibility also received a degree of criticism from her teacher. Teacher 4 indicated that maintaining visibility is something that could not be practiced by her principal due to the busy schedule that required principal 4 to be away from school most of the time.

The analysis also shows that, whilst principal 5 views the practice of protecting instructional time as something that is very important, it is often thwarted by extenuating factors that limit the practice from being fully implemented.

Overview

The findings presented in this chapter reveal themes or patterns that best represent the practices of principals who are deemed high performing. The analysis has provided important perspectives on how leadership practices are enacted by the principals from the perspective of both the principals and their teachers, including SLTMs. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the analysis was based on the assumptions and approaches of three specific leadership practices, namely instructional, transformational and distributed leadership. While it could be deduced that transformational and distributed leadership practices are exhibited more by the principals than is instructional leadership, this does not necessarily imply that this particular leadership practice is not the preferred type of leadership. The findings rather suggest that principals who are deemed high performing do integrate different types of leadership practices.

The analysis shows patterns of leadership practices which are identified either as instructional, transformational or distributed. It follows that some of the leadership practices are identified as overlapping. The apparent overlap of the leadership practices within the framework of instructional, transformational and distributed leadership will be the main focus of discussion in the next chapter. The next chapter will also present discussion of the findings from all three phases of this study, linked to the literature. The themes drawn from the interview responses in this chapter will be compared with the principal and teacher survey responses and with the policy insights analysed in the two previous chapters.

Chapter 7 – Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

The mixed-method approach enables this study to explore how the leadership practices of principals who are deemed to be high performing are understood from various perspectives. Data were collected in three phases. Findings from all three phases are triangulated in this chapter for discussion. Triangulation of these findings enables the author to identify overarching themes that reflect the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing. In addition, triangulation of the findings enables the author to make stronger claims and conclusions regarding the leadership practices enacted by these principals. Finally, triangulation also allows the author to identify any specific leadership practices enacted by the principals that are consistent with the aspiration of the MEB. Similar to the approaches adopted in analysing the data, the author adopts a unified thematic approach in to achieve the objectives and aims of this study, namely:

I. to identify the leadership features of high performing principals;

II. to establish the notion of high performing within the parameters of the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards;

III. to identify the leadership practices of principals who are deemed to be high performing;

IV. to analyse and compare the dominant principal leadership practices based on the framework of transformational, instructional and distributed leadership models;

V. to understand whether, and to what extent, instructional leadership is practiced among high performing principals.

Key Findings

The data obtained from the LPI and PIMRS show the extent and frequency with which, principals who are deemed high performing are perceived to enact instructional, transformational and distributed leadership practices. Evidence of these three practices was matched and aligned with the evidence obtained in the interviews. The data triangulated from all three phases of this study suggest three salient findings. First, the data indicate that principals in this study not only enact multiple leadership practices that represent all three leadership models, but they also integrate and combine the leadership practices. Secondly, while all principals enact multiple leadership practices that represent instructional, transformational, and distributed leadership, the degree to which the specific practices of each of the three models is enacted varies. The data provide evidence that instructional leadership was enacted or perceived to be enacted modestly when compared to transformational and distributed leadership. The third finding generated from the data supports this study's assumption that principals who have been selected and awarded for both Excellent Principals and New Deals awards could be deemed high performing. The assumption is strengthened by the evidence that the principals have undergone two rigorous selection processes. More importantly, in linking the assumption that these principals could be deemed as high performing by the virtue of the awards they receive, with their leadership practices, it is evident that the principals exhibit similar leadership practices with a strong focus on transformational and distributed leadership.

Principals who are deemed high performing enact and integrate multiple leadership practices

The discussion of the findings begins by acknowledging that the principals enact a multitude of leadership practices. The findings from the present study reveal that principals who are deemed high performing carry out various leadership practices which are reflective of transformational, distributed and instructional leadership. That is, the evidence from the study suggests that the leadership practices of principals in this study did not neatly adhere to one particular model. Although the MEB places a strong emphasis on instructional leadership, the findings indicate that transformational and distributed leadership are equally important. Significantly, the findings present a strong platform for other leadership models or practices to be enacted alongside instructional leadership. The findings therefore support Leithwood and Riehl's (2003: 5) assertion that successful school leaders "exert leadership through constellations of actions that coalesce around different models of leadership".

Hargreaves and Harris (2011: 77), who carried out research in high performance organisations, suggest that high performing leaders "do not try to take on or conform to a single leadership style"; instead, leadership practices that represent high performance are "integrated [and] not fragmented". To a similar extent, Marks and Printy (2003) maintain that strong school performance depends on the integrated leadership of the school leader. Marks and Printy (2003: 377) further believe that, while many leadership dimensions or models are distinct, "they may cohere in practice". The complexity of the roles faced by the principals who are deemed high performing meant that no single leadership theory could explain their existing practice.

Whilst the findings suggest that the principals who are deemed high performing enact multiple leadership practices, each of the leadership practices essentially "share the same primary focus and key assumptions" (Leithwood et al., 1999: 7). Similarly Bush and Glover (2003) posit that, whilst the leadership models are analytically distinct, successful leaders are likely to embody most or all of the leadership approaches in their practice. Hence, the enactment of multiple leadership practices found in this study suggests that, whilst most of the leadership models are partial, school principals who are deemed high performing integrate different models of leadership as the properties of each of the leadership models overlap with each other (Bush, 2007, 2011; Bush & Glover, 2003).

The enactment of the multiple leadership practices reflected in this study strengthen the claim that principals who are deemed high performing do not conform to only one type of leadership practice. This is consistent with the claim made by Leithwood et al. (2013: 255) who believe that successful principals carry out “the same repertoire of core leadership practices, [but] they enact these practices in different ways to fit the context of the school”. Gurr (2015: 138) further explains that the data obtained from the International Successful Schools Principal Project (ISSPP) also indicate that

> “no single model of leadership satisfactorily captures what successful principals do. To take what possibly remain the two dominant views of educational leadership, for example, these principals are neither transformational nor instructional leaders, but show elements of both”.

Evidence from the ISSPP parallels the findings from this study which shows that principals who are deemed to be high performing integrate different leadership practices. From the perspective of the policymakers, one of the Ministry of Education officials interviewed acknowledged the overlapping features of effective leadership practices. The policymaker recognised that whilst there are many types of leadership practices and approaches, Malaysian principals must be able to adopt and adapt the leadership practices that are suitable to sustain the performance of the schools. Hence, the data from the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study support the claim that principals who are deemed high performing do not conform to one particular leadership practice but, instead, portray many different forms of leadership practice.

The findings of this study also correspond with other studies conducted in the Malaysian context which show that principals, who are considered to be high performing, enact multiple leadership practices. For example, Chan and Sidhu (2009), who examined the leadership practices of recipients of the Excellent Principals award, claim that such principals carried out a variety of leadership practices that the principals felt were most sustainable in improving the schools’ performance. The leadership practices cited by Chan and Sidhu (2009) include autocratic, distributed, collaborative and participative approaches. The combination of multiple leadership practices amongst principals in a high performing context is further illustrated by Perera et al. (2016: 130) who carried out a pilot study to ascertain the daily leadership practices of principals serving in the three best performing schools in one of the states in Malaysia. They note that, “despite having undergone fairly rudimentary training courses in principalship, these principals spoke of the various leadership styles – a combination of transformational, instructional and distributed styles” (ibid).

The findings from the third phase of this study also reveal that the leadership practices of the principals in the selected schools are similar to one another. The data from the interviews with principals, and their senior leadership team members and teachers, are consistent across the whole sample. The analysis suggests that the principals exhibit similar leadership practices with a stronger focus on transformational and distributed leadership. Further, the analysis from the LPI questionnaire also suggests that there were no significant differences in how the principals perceive their transformational and distributed leadership practices. These findings show similarities to the study carried out by Day et al. (2016) on the impact of successful school heads. They found strong evidence that successful school heads integrate transformational and instructional leadership through a “layering” process over a period of time. They also found that distributed leadership is enacted as one of the leadership strategies and practices to promote performance sustainability.

Gronn (2010: 852) asserts that all leadership practices are contextualised. Within the context of this study, the demands of heading high performing schools in Malaysia, which require sustained excellent performance, could be one of the reasons why the principals enact multiple leadership practices. This is in line with Leithwood (2005: 622), who claims that “successful principal leadership practices are common across contexts in their general form but highly adaptable and contingent in their specific enactment”. The findings also support the claim made by Hallinger (2005) who posits that, contextually, the characteristics and features of the schools shape the practice of principal leadership.

Hence, the evidence of multiple leadership practices enacted by the principals is partly a consequence of the need to sustain the performance of high performing schools[16], in line with the expectation of the Ministry of Education (PEMANDU, 2012b). The demands of heading high performing schools in Malaysia, which require sustained excellent performance, could be one of the reasons why the principals enact multiple leadership practices. The pressure of delivering the Ministry's aim of maintaining the elite status of those schools has seen the principals employing various leadership practices. This resonates with the comment of Leithwood et al. (2013), who believe that principals combine leadership strategies and approaches to best meet the particular needs of the school.

This section has established that principals who are deemed high performing enact different sets of leadership practices which are consistent with instructional, transformational and distributed approaches. The following section discusses the extent to which each of the three leadership practices was perceived to be enacted by these principals.

<u>Principals who are deemed high performing enact instructional leadership practices modestly compared to other leadership models</u>

In the opening chapter, the author highlighted how the Ministry of Education underlines the importance of instructional leadership in driving school performance. This is evident in the MEB, which identifies instructional leadership as one of the key leadership practices that principals in Malaysia should focus upon. The documentary analysis of the MEB reveals that instructional leadership is highlighted 22 times, more than other leadership practices such as administrative, distributed and transformational leadership. Hence, such focus only emphasises the aim of the MEB for principals to

[16] This initiative from the GTP 1.0 was continued in GTP 2.0, but the focus shifted on maintaining the standards of all HPS. This means ensuring that HPS do not decline in performance and maintain their high quality standards. In addition, HPS must fully utilise their additional autonomies to continue to innovate and raise standards. All schools should continue to strive to significantly improve their performance levels and to aspire to eventually become HPS (PEMANDU, 2012b).

become “excellent instructional leaders” (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-24). The emphasis on instructional leadership informed one of the objectives of this study which is to understand whether, and to what extent, instructional leadership is practiced among principals deemed to be high performing in Malaysia.

The data from the interviews suggest that, the policymakers and four principals believe in the importance of instructional leadership as one of the leading practices which Malaysian principals should adopt. The four principals also state that instructional leadership is an effective approach that supports teaching and learning in schools. In addition, three of the senior leadership team members acknowledge that instructional leadership is one of the more important leadership practices that a school leader should adopt. The responses of the teachers interviewed imply that only one of them understands what instructional leadership means. Only one teacher made a minor comment on the effectiveness of instructional leadership.

Whilst instructional leadership is explicitly identified as one of the effective leadership approaches in the MEB, the evidence nonetheless suggest that it was enacted moderately compared to transformational or distributed leadership. For example, in the interviews with the senior leadership team members, and teachers suggest that, the practice of instructional leadership was perceived to be less evident than the enactment of distributed and transformational leadership. Further evidence from the interviews with the principals, senior leadership team members, and teachers show that many comments reflect the principals’ transformational leadership practices. More than half (58%) of the comments which indicate examples of the transformational leadership practices of the principals were made by the teachers and senior leadership team members respectively[17]. Strikingly, 95% of the comments made by the principals in the interviews provide further

[17] The percentage of the comments was calculated based on the number of instances in which the teachers and senior leadership team members gave evidence of their principals’ transformational leadership practices. The overall comments were aggregated based on the summary of key findings from the analysis of interviews which appear in Table 6.2 of the previous chapter.

evidence of their enactment of transformational leadership. The mean scores from the quantitative analysis also indicate that the principals were perceived to be demonstrating transformational leadership practices ‘fairly often’ by the teachers. In addition, the principals themselves claim that they ‘usually’ perform leadership practices which reflect transformational leadership.

Similar inferences were obtained when comparing the results of the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires. The results of the LPI questionnaire, which analyses the transformational and distributed leadership practices of the principals, suggest that both leadership practices were perceived to be enacted ‘usually’ by the principals and ‘fairly often’ by their teachers. In contrast, the mean scores of the PIMRS suggest that teachers view their principals to be enacting eight out of ten instructional leadership practices only ‘sometimes’.

The ensuing discussion addresses the possible reasons for the modest enactment of instructional leadership amongst the principals in this study. In addition, the following sub-section discusses some of the suggestions as to why distributed and transformational leadership were deemed more appealing to the principals in this study.

Negotiating time to carry out instructional activities

One of the possible suggestions as to why instructional leadership is perceived to be enacted only modestly pertains to the demands of school activities. Mulford (2008: 40) posits that while “principals express a preference for spending more time on instructional leadership, [the] analyses of daily activities have consistently shown that the time dedicated to it is limited”. Mulford’s position resonates well with the outcome of this study. Although principals aspire to enact the roles and carry out practices which are identifiable as instructional leaders, the reality and demands in Malaysian schools system make instructional leadership difficult to realise. For example, principal 5 and principal 4 explain that the barrier for principals in Malaysia to fully enact the practice of instructional leadership is their workload which takes them away from conducting instructional leadership practices such as supervision. A similar claim is highlighted by Azlin (2008), who found that six principals who are deemed excellent[18], spent only 0.3% of their time supervising instructional activities in their schools. These principals also allocated only 1% of their time teaching. Azlin reveals that these principals spent almost half of their time meeting with teachers, support staff, visitors and students. The principals spent 20% of their time attending and chairing meetings, and a similar amount of time is used for administrative work. The only instructional activity in which the principals engage in the most is walking about which takes up 9% of their total time in a week.

Policy aspiration and reality

Whilst, at the policy level, instructional leadership is considered one of the paramount leadership practices for Malaysian principals, the results of the quantitative analysis, as well as the interviews with principals, senior leadership team members and teachers, suggest that principals were perceived to show a lesser focus on instructional leadership than intended by the Ministry. The interviews even identified several instances in which some of the instructional leadership practices of three principals were perceived negatively by their teachers (see Table 6.2). This is in contrast to the perceived enactment of transformational and distributed leadership by the principals. For example, comments which reflect negative practices, or indicate the absence of transformational leadership, did not arise from the interviews. In addition, only one teacher remarked negatively about one of the aspects of distributed leadership practice by his principal. Hence, evidence from the interviews suggests that instructional leadership is enacted to a lesser degree, and in some instances, is perceived to be enacted negatively by these principals, as compared to distributed and transformational leadership.

One insight from the findings is that, whilst the emphasis on instructional leadership comes from a defined and prescribed set of policies, the enactment

[18] These six principals were deemed excellent by the researcher on the basis of their service track record, excellent appraisal review and recommendation from the State Education Department.

of instructional leadership, in reality, is less significant than expected. Despite instructional leadership being consistently highlighted in the MEB (Ministry of Education, 2013) as the preferred leadership approach for principals in schools, the adoption of this approach seems to be challenging. Bajunid (2008b: 275) argues that the focus of educational leadership in Malaysia is often on “policy leadership, rather than practice leadership”. The Ministry of Education dictates and expects the principals to exhibit qualities of managerial leadership and instructional leadership (Bajunid, 2008b) but the practice may be different from the prescription.

Bajunid (2008b) believes that educational leadership in Malaysia often focusses on policy rather than practice. Hence, leadership model, such as instructional leadership, is often viewed as the “province of key personnel from the Ministry of Education” (Bajunid, 2008b: 278). Bajunid further explains that policymakers tend to champion policies and practices which they feel are appropriate without really understanding the needs of the principals and their schools. As a result, there is often a gap between policy rhetoric and actual ground reality (Ng, 2008).

A further example is illustrated by Ang and Abdul Razak (2013). They agree that, in order for Malaysian principals to achieve the aims to improve the performance of the schools, the principals must possess knowledge and skills in instructional leadership, especially in the domain of monitoring students’ progress. In order to support the principals’ knowledge in that area, the Aminuddin Baki Institute (for educational leaders) has offered courses for the principals to develop and increase their understanding of instructional leadership. However, Ang and Abdul Razak (2013) reveal that the level of knowledge of instructional leadership gained by the principals from these courses is questionable. They claim that there is no willing party from the Ministry of Education who would be able to carry out ongoing supervision to ascertain the extent to which instructional leadership is carried out and practiced by the principals once they have completed the courses. Ang and

Abdul Razak's (2013) insights reveal the complex nature of the implementation of top-down policy in the Malaysian education system.

Similarities can also be found in Greece where the education structure is comparable to that of Malaysia. Kaparou and Bush (2015) carried out research to identify the enactment of instructional leadership practices between two Greek principals leading high performing schools. Kaparou and Bush (2015: 335) note that the principals' instructional leadership practice is "not given a high priority in Greece due to system policy and school expectations for principals to act as government administrative servants with top-down implementing skills". Kaparou and Bush (2016) further identify that principals in the high performing Greek schools enact only limited instructional leadership and that this might be the outcome of a tightly prescribed organisational system.

The centralised system is one of the possible barriers to the full enactment of instructional leadership

The evidence from this study confirms that the principals across the sampled schools show more similarities in their enactment of leadership practices than stark differences. Similarities might be attributable to Malaysia's centralised system that offers limited room for differentiation in terms of how principals apply curriculum and instruction in schools. Hence, the specific practices of principals who are deemed high performing are likely to be influenced by the contextual setting. For example, the modest enactment of instructional leadership could be attributed to Malaysia's hierarchical and centralised education system. This finding supports the evidence from Hallinger and Lee (2014), who found that principals in developing countries with hierarchical cultures tend to spend less time on instructional leadership. Previous research shows that principals in highly centralised countries tend to display a lesser disposition towards instructional leadership (see Cheong, 2000; Gumus & Akcaoglu, 2013; Hallinger & Lee, 2014; Hallinger, Taraseina, & Miller, 1994; Kaparou & Bush, 2015, 2016).

The quantitative findings for example, show that the teachers perceived their principals to be enacting eight out of ten instructional leadership functions ‘sometimes’. The mean scores of this study range between 3.28 to 3.98 on eight of the ten instructional leadership practices as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire. The findings are similar to those of Gumus and Akcaoglu’s (2013), who assessed the instructional leadership practices of principals in selected Turkish schools. The mean scores of between 3.27 to 3.57 (with 1 indicating ‘almost never’ and 5 ‘almost always’) denote that the Turkish principals were perceived by their teachers as “generally not strong in their instructional leadership skills” (Gumus & Akcaoglu, 2013: 297). Gumus and Akcaoglu (2013) believe that the centralised structure of the education system in Turkey leads to the principals being expected to remain at the managerial level (for example, keeping the school physically in good shape), hence making it difficult for the principals to carry out instructional leadership duties effectively. Another example is provided by Cheong (2000). Cheong’s review of previous studies on the leadership practices of Hong Kong school principals indicates that teachers only agree that their Hong Kong principals were enacting the roles of instructional leaders occasionally. Cheong (2000: 80) attributes this partly to “the centralized curriculum structure in Hong Kong” as one of the possible reasons why the importance of the principal as an instructional leader is greatly reduced.

The findings of this research, together with examples found in other studies discussed above, are consistent with the suggestion offered by Lee and Hallinger (2012) who found that principals in countries where a hierarchical culture dominates tend to spend less time on instructional leadership compared to organisational management. Kaparou and Bush (2016) further posit that the constraints of the hierarchy and highly administrative nature of a centralised education system would prevent principals from focusing on instructional activities. Instructional leadership requires more than just an imposed-upon policy practice but instead needs the commitment of both the principals and the policymakers to understand the impact that instructional leadership has on the performance of the schools (Bendikson et al., 2012; Robinson et al., 2008).

The appeal of transformational leadership to school members

The quantitative and qualitative analyses highlight that teachers observe their principals carrying out tasks that mirror transformational leadership. Mulford et al. (2008: 464) maintain that transformational practices shown by successful principals, “are likely to have appeal to teachers… because they promote collegial co-construction of vision, structures, problem-solving [and] learning requirements”. In addition, transformational leadership “focuses on the people involved – relationships between them, in particular – and requires an approach that seeks to transform staff feelings, attitudes and beliefs” (Gold et al., 2003: 128). The points made by Mulford et al. (2008), and Gold et al. (2003) could be one of the reasons why the transformational leadership practices of the principals in this study are more noticeable and observable by the teachers.

Hence, transformational leadership is perceived to be more apparent compared to instructional leadership in this study because it focuses on the processes by which principals seek to influence the activities and outcomes of the organisation, by actively involving the teachers (Bush, 2015a). The argument is further supported by Barker (2007), who evaluated 20 high-performing specialist schools in England. He found that, “rather than implementing a shopping list of improvements, successful multi-skilled heads were encouraging a greater ‘‘interconnectedness’’ with fellow teachers” (ibid: 23). The recognition of transformational leadership qualities by the teachers and senior leadership team members in this study suggests that the principals have successfully employed leadership practices that promote efficacy and motivation amongst the teachers.

Transformational leadership appears to have the greatest potential for principals to influence teachers’ motivation (Geijsel et al., 2003). For example, the quantitative analysis shows that principals claim to enact the leadership practice of '*Encourage the heart*' the most. Kouzes and Posner (2007b) believe that positive encouragement, as well as feedback, are more likely to influence the followers' abilities to progress together towards achieving the organisation's goals. The findings of this study show that, by displaying a high level of transformational leadership, such as encouraging the teachers, the principals who are deemed high performing are able to exert their positive influence on their teachers. Indirectly, this should contribute to the success of the schools. In addition, transformational leadership practices are helpful for the principals in this study as they are perceived to inspire, as well as to motivate, their teachers to perform at their best. Leithwood et al. (2008) claim that school leaders are able to improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on teachers' motivation and commitment. One of the policymakers interviewed in this study also identified the importance of the principals' being able to motivate and inspire teachers to maintain and sustain the performance of the schools.

Transformational leadership practices, which are perceived highly by the principals and teachers, imply that the principals in this study are successful in creating an expectation of high performance. This is line with one of the tenets of transformational leadership stipulated by Leithwood et al. (1999). The findings indicate that expectations of sustaining excellence and high performance are often elucidated by the principals. The qualitative interviews indicate that the principals have high expectations in terms of their schools' performance. Leithwood et al. (1999: 68) posit that the high expectations envisaged by the principals will be motivational for the "teachers to see the challenging nature of goals being pursued in their school". The expectations set by the principals who are deemed high performing encourage teachers to really understand their roles and responsibilities of sustaining the already high performing schools.

The practice of maintaining high expectations by the principals who are deemed high performing is also affirmed through the quantitative analysis via the LPI questionnaire. Principals rated themselves as carrying out the practice of '*Encouraging the heart*' most frequently compared to the other four leadership practices. This particular leadership practice aligns well with the transformational leadership model because, embedded in this particular act, successful leaders place high expectations on themselves and their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2007b). These authors believe that leaders who rate themselves high on the dimension of '*Encouraging the heart*', as in the case of the principals in this study, have high expectations in the abilities of their followers. Kouzes and Posner (2007b: 282) add that leaders set high expectations because "they know that they are much more likely to get high performance if they expect high performance than if they expect low performance". Even though this particular leadership practice is ranked fourth by the teachers, the mean scores nevertheless indicate high agreement that their principals are enacting this particular leadership practice fairly often. Hence, the findings of this study elucidate that principals who are deemed high performing are very clear on the high expectations of maintaining academic excellence and that these expectations are understood by the teachers.

The demands of reality require principals to distribute leadership

Whilst the evidence in this study points toward the appeal of transformational leadership as more evidently practised compared to instructional leadership by the principals in this study, a similar assumption can be made about distributed leadership. Bush and Glover (2014) explain that the limitations in a hierarchical system, such as that of schools in Malaysia, have led to a plethora of practices such as distributed leadership, which is designed to broaden leadership and to stress lateral as well as vertical relationships. This is further emphasised by the contextual setting of the schools which the principals in this study are heading. The principals in this study exhibit similar approaches to the practices of successful principals found in a study carried out by Day et al. (2016). The successful principals used combinations of leadership practices, that include distributed leadership, as the approach that was "fit for purpose" (Day et al., 2016: 226).

For example, in the quantitative analysis, evidence of the distributed leadership practices of the principals is provided through the dimension of '*Enable others to act*'. The elements of distributed leadership embedded in this construct include sharing information and resources, supporting norms of reciprocity, promoting joint effort, as well as fostering collaboration (Kouzes & Posner, 2007b). Kouzes and Posner (2007a: 68) maintain that exemplary leaders enable others to act "not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away". This leadership practice was ranked third as perceived by the principals, and second highest as perceived by the teachers, according to the survey data. The mean scores of this particular leadership practice indicate that the principals claim to 'usually' distribute leadership to others. Conversely, the teachers view their principals as carrying out this leadership practice 'fairly often'.

To frame the discussion contextually, while it is acknowledged that the principals in this study are deemed high performing by the virtue of the awards that they have received, the context of the schools which they are leading is also an important factor as to why distributed leadership is perceived to be enacted strongly. The principals are heading schools with a high performing status. High performing schools in Malaysia are required to meet specific key performance indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are divided into four main categories, namely, academic performance, co-curricular performance, school networking, and school's character and ethos. Failing to meet the desired KPIs could result in the high performing status being the revoked by the Ministry of Education. Hence, this would be one of the possible reasons why the principals in this study deploy multiple leadership practices. Meeting each of the KPIs may require different leadership strategies or approaches. For example, practices that are reflective of instructional leadership could be seen as a practical approach in sustaining the academic performance of the school. On the other hand, the enactment of transformational leadership is particularly useful for the principals in getting the teachers and the school staff to understand the high performance expectations of the schools, especially in maintaining its KPIs. The principals also distribute and share responsibilities with senior leadership team members, as well as teachers, in working towards achieving the KPIs.

As argued in the previous chapter, delegation of tasks and responsibilities is considered as evidence of leadership practices amongst the principals. Delegation may be seen as a form of distributed leadership instead of a “manifestation of management rather than leadership” (Bush & Glover, 2012: 29). Nonetheless, what may distinguish the practice of delegation, as a mere management tool, from distributed leadership is the degree of mutual trust, reciprocity and interaction that is perceived to occur between the principals and the senior leadership team members and teachers when tasks are delegated or allocated. The evidence presented in the previous chapters suggests that the principals who are deemed high performing delegate roles, tasks and responsibilities to senior leadership team members as well as to teachers. Teachers and senior leadership team members indicate collective agreement that their principals rely on other teachers when tasks are delegated or allocated. One of the positive outcomes that derive from delegation of tasks is that it indirectly builds the leadership capacities of others in the schools. This is supported by Day, Harris, and Hadfield (2001a), who found that successful heads delegate and allocate more routine tasks and responsibilities to others as a means of developing their leadership potential.

Lumby (2013) believes that distributed leadership enables teachers with no formal position to be empowered by their principals. Although some of the tasks or activities allotted by the principals might be routine, “they are suggested to be part of a different distributed leadership system because they are not allocated through a bureaucratic hierarchy, instead, they arise by means of encouraging/appointing those with no formal responsibility to undertake them” (ibid: 587). The principals who are deemed high performing claim that they alone could not maintain the day-to-day running of the schools. The Ministry of Education’s expectation of high performing schools is that their principals should act with all the resources available to them, including all the teachers. To complete their tasks, the principals actively enlist the assistance of other school members. For example, the interview data suggest that senior teachers without any formal position of power are also involved in day-to-day school supervision. Principal 3, principal 4, principal 5 and principal 6 were acknowledged by their teachers and senior leadership team members when appointing ordinary teachers to head new initiatives rather than selecting members of the senior leadership team. The senior leadership team members might have more experience than the teacher identified by the principals, and perhaps the new initiatives are more appropriately linked to their portfolios. However, the findings suggest that the appointment of ordinary teachers to head new tasks and initiatives show that the principals not only believe in the capabilities of their teachers but are also seen as maximising the human resources available in the school. The evidence supports Harris' (2004: 13) view that "distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role".

<u>Excellent Principals who are also the recipients of the New Deals award could be deemed as high performing</u>

High performing principals in this study were identified because they are recipients of both the Excellent Principals award and the New Deals award. While this study has analysed and discussed the leadership practices of the principals in relation to transformational, instructional and distributed leadership, it is also important for this study to establish that the two awards represent a form of performativity. One of the prime motivations for these two awards is to acknowledge principals who have contributed towards the performance of their schools.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 indicate similarities and differences in terms of the selection process for these two awards. Table 7.1: summarises the leadership criteria present in the selection processes for both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards.

Excellent Principals Award	New Deals Award
• curriculum management; • students' affairs management; • co-curricular management; • human resource management; • financial management; • administrative skills; • public relations; • personal quality; • principalship skills	Leadership and school direction: • Leadership approach and style • Goal and direction setting • Communication skills • Planning skills • Motivational skills and the ability to lead the organisation • Problem-solving skills • Instructional leadership • Shared leadership Organisational management • Human resource management • Facilities management • Financial management • Information management • Instructional material and ICT in education management • School environment • Strategic collaboration • Boarding and hostel management Curriculum, co-curricular and students' affair management • Ensuring the implementation of the curriculum • Managing classroom instructions • Managing students' performance • Managing timetable and school- based assessment • Ensuring the implementation of sports and extra-curricular activities • Managing clubs and societies • Managing performance sports • Managing students' affair Instructional activities • Students' participation during instructions • Students' learning mastery • Teachers' instructional planning and preparation • Instructional delivery • Communicational skills • Using instructional materials • Assessment • Classroom management • Teachers' content knowledge and mastery Students' outcome • Students' mastery of communication, spiritual, values, STEM and appearance • Students' academic outcome

Table 7.1: Summary of the criteria used by assessors when selecting and observing candidates for the Excellent Principal award and New Deals award

Whilst the selection processes are distinct, they both include selection criteria that emphasise the candidates' leadership qualities. The leadership qualities identified in the selection process for the Excellent Principals award are drawn from the evaluation criteria when the panel of assessors conduct field observations of the candidates. In contrast, the leadership qualities identified in the selection process for the New Deals award are based on the elements manifested in the self-rated SKPM, or the Malaysian Education Quality Standards document. Unlike the leadership criteria for the Excellent Principals award, each of the elements of the SKPM is further divided into several aspects.

The summary of leadership criteria as presented in Table 7.1: is useful in understanding the leadership qualities that policymakers feel are relevant when assessing candidates for the awards. The leadership criteria reflect the assumption that principals in Malaysia, who are going to receive such prestigious awards, should display such qualities in their leadership practices. The summary provided in Table 7.1: shows that the criteria used when selecting recipients for the New Deal award are more extensive than those used by assessors when they observe Excellent Principal candidates.

As was evident in Chapter 4, the policymaker who is directly involved in the selection process of Excellent Principals declined to elaborate on the specific focus of each of the nine criteria due to the sensitivity of the specific content of the school visit assessment. On the other hand, the criteria used by the assessors for the New Deal recipients are based upon the standards contained in the SKPM standards document. Hence, the New Deals selection process could be seen as more current as well as keeping up with the policy changes introduced by the Ministry. For example, the verification visit to the schools is guided by the SKPM standard documents of practice which the principals would have to complete annually. On the other hand, the verification checklist and guidance adopted by the assessors when they observe the candidates for the Excellent Principals award remains unchanged. This is based on a comparison of the letters notifying all principals about the vacant

Excellent Principals positions, published in the pre-MEB period (see Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2010), with that of the most recent letter published in 2017 (see Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2017).

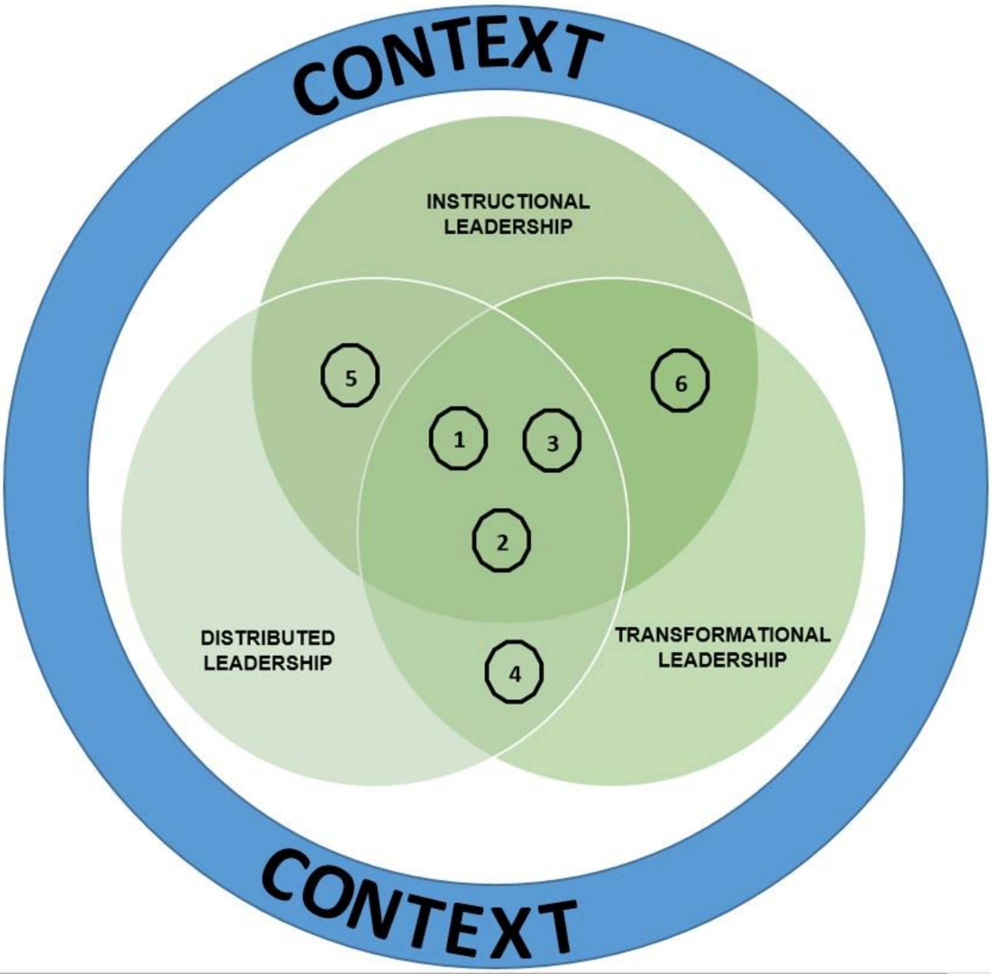
The leadership elements in the criteria for selecting New Deals award recipients are more evident than those for selecting the Excellent Principals aware recipients. Elements that reflect the candidates' transformational, distributed as well as instructional leadership qualities are more visible in the New Deals selection criteria. However, several of the criteria used by the assessors when they observe Excellent Principals candidates reflect the need for the candidates to practice managerial leadership. The emphasis on managerial leadership might stem from "a strategy deployed at the level of policy-making" (Hoyle & Wallace, 2007:13). Bush (2011) cautions that managerial leadership is a model that has the greatest risk of a 'managerialist' approach in schools. In addition, this leadership model does not include the element or dimension of vision, which is central to many leadership models (Bush, 2011).

While the criteria for the Excellent Principals award focus mainly on the managerial skills of the candidates, the focus of the New Deals award is on other value-based leadership approaches. Bush (2011:62) maintains that "managerial leadership is an essential component of successful schools but it should complement, not supplant, values-based approaches". The Excellent Principals award, on its own, is adjudged more on principals' management capabilities but recipients of both awards could be viewed as those who exhibit the qualities that are highly valued from both leadership and management perspectives. Hence, the appropriateness of assuming that recipients of both awards are high performing. The assumption derives from the view that the criteria used by the Ministry of Education when assessing the candidates for both awards balance the focus on management with a more holistic approach to leadership.

Putting It Together: Summary of Core Leadership Practices of Principals Who Are Deemed High Performing

The discussion thus far has indicated that principals who are deemed high performing were perceived to enact instructional, transformational and distributed leadership. Whilst the preceding chapters provide a helicopter view on the extent to which the principals enact each of the three leadership models, it would be useful for this study to pinpoint exactly the leadership practices employed by principals who are deemed high performing. Hence, the data obtained have aided the author in identifying leadership practices, which the author labels as “core,” enacted by the principals who are deemed high performing in this study. The core leadership practices represent this study’s contribution to knowledge and understanding about the core practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing.

The core leadership practices identified embody qualities and elements of at least two of the three main leadership models featured in this study. Hence, the representation of the multitude of leadership practices, reflect the diverse, and often competing as well as overlapping, perspectives of leadership practices. In addition, the representation of the leadership practices provides a finer distinction to the theoretical framework that guides this study (see Figure 2.6). The representation of the core leadership practices of the principals who are deemed high performing is shown in Figure 7.1.



Legend:

1. Sharing schools' goals, vision and mission
2. Creating an environment that supports collaboration
3. Providing support
4. Maintaining a shared decision process
5. Supervise, monitor, and evaluate students' performance
6. Modelling good values

Figure 7.1: Summary of core leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing

The summary of core leadership practices presented in Figure 7.1 increases the degree of specificity necessary for understanding how leadership practices are enacted by principals who are deemed high performing. The specificity of the leadership therefore addresses one of the main assumptions offered by Bush (2011), who states that each of the leadership models is partial and overlaps with each other.

The identification of the core leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing is based on the evidence discussed in the preceding qualitative and quantitative chapters. The analysis identifies several practices which are interrelated to the three leadership models. For example, the theme of “providing individualised support” was analysed within the scope of transformational leadership but this links to the instructional leadership practice of promoting professional development. The leadership practices which are numbered One to Three in Figure 7.1 represent practices which share its properties with the three leadership models. The leadership practices which are numbered Four and Five indicate practices that are linked to both distributed leadership and transformational leadership. The leadership practices of supervising, monitoring, and evaluating students’ performance (which are represented as number Five) share similar distributed and instructional leadership properties.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2009: 49) maintain that the leadership dimensions introduced under the banner of transformational leadership are “similar to the categories that have emerged from other leadership research [which are] not specifically conceptualised as transformational leadership”. Along similar lines, Hallinger (2003, 2007) identifies conceptual similarities and differences between the components of transformational and instructional leadership. Printy et al. (2009: 511) maintain that it is quite challenging for researchers to “disentangle a transformational behaviour from an instructional one”. They argue that the challenge underscores the interdependent nature of the leadership models. Hallinger (2003) further positioned distributed leadership as one of the elements that exist within the practice of transformational leadership. Hallinger (2003: 337) maintains that the “transformational leadership model does not assume that the principal alone will provide the leadership that creates these conditions… [instead] leadership may well be shared, coming from teachers as well as from the principal”.

Sharing schools’ goals, vision and mission

The principals who are deemed high performing provide evidence that they value, emphasise and share their schools’ vision, mission and goals. These leadership practices are combined to form the first synthesis that reflects the leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing. Leithwood et al. (1999: 64) assert that "vision building and the development of consensus about goals are closely related sets of leadership practices". They add that "the conceptual difference lies in the time frame and the scope of the direction-setting activities that both sets of practices entail. Vision-building is intended to create a fundamental, ambitious sense of purpose, one likely to be pursued over many years. Developing a consensus on goals focuses organisational members on what will need to be accomplished in the short term, this year, in order to move towards the vision" (ibid:64). Mission on the other hand "serves as a source of identification and motivation for a group of participants" (Hallinger & Heck, 2002: 13). Hallinger and Heck (2002) maintain that the power of a mission lies in the motivational force that it brings in engaging others to share a quest to accomplish something special. In a distributed perspective, the process by which the schools' goals, vision and mission need to be realised encourages the leaders to involve and enable others in sharing the aims and being committed to their achievement.

The principals in this study ensure that their teachers understood, and were committed to achieving, the schools' vision and mission. For example, based on the evidence found in the qualitative analysis, three principals claim that they often share the vision and mission of their schools through various avenues such as school assemblies and staff meetings. Principal 5, for example, emphasises the vision of the school by adopting it in the school's motto and anthem. Principal 1, on the other hand, includes the school's vision and mission in all flyers and programmes conducted in the school. In addition, principal 3 discusses how she influences her teachers to achieve the vision and mission of the school to be well known internationally. She achieves this by supporting her teachers to actively participate in international events such as conferences and seminars. In addition, the principal also encourages her teachers and students to organise events that would attract overseas participation. This discussion provides evidence to support the argument that teachers in this study understand the vision and mission emphasised by their principals. The analysis indicates that principals who are deemed high performing emphasis on accomplishing the vision and mission of their schools.

This is further supported by the quantitative data. The PIMRS questionnaire indicates that the practice of communicating and framing the schools' goals is the most enacted leadership practice as perceived by both teachers and principals. Achieving the goals is considered a step in the right direction in realising the vision and mission of the schools. The findings of this study are similar to those of Mohamad Johdi (2014), who carried out research to identify the extent to which the principals in selected Malaysian cluster schools enact the dimensions of communicating and framing schools goals. The results of his study show that principals were perceived to be enacting the two instructional leadership dimensions "at a very high level" (Mohamad Johdi, 2014: 466). The data from the LPI questionnaire appears to suggest that teachers feel strongly about their principals' action of inspiring a shared vision. This is evident through the mean scores of the principals' leadership practices as perceived by the teachers which rank '*Inspire a shared vision*' first. Similarly, the analysis of the LPI questionnaire also indicates that the principals claim this particular leadership practice as the second most enacted practice. The leadership practice of '*Inspire a shared vision*', as measured by the questionnaire, indicates that the leader "enlist[s] others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007a: 71).

Hallinger and Heck (2002) further explain that a goal represents the gap between the current status and the desired outcome which the schools would like to accomplish. This is exemplified in the evidence from the interviews with principals 1, 2 and 6, who identify the goals of their schools as time-specific. The goals were framed with a clear indication that they could be achieved within a specific time frame. The goals which the principals framed are related to their academic targets. Robinson et al. (2008: 661) found that, in high achieving schools (such as the high performing schools in this study), "academic goal focus is a property of leadership". The principals in this study also spoke about how they ensure that the teachers and students work together towards realising the goals. Leithwood et al. (2013: 261) add that principals in high performing schools build a "cultural norm that reinforces an expectation that exceptional goals are achievable". This is exemplified by principal 1, who argued that achieving the target of becoming a high performing school is possible. In fact, the school managed to obtain 'high performing school' status two years earlier than targeted.

Murphy et al. (2010: 746) assert that effective school leaders are "masters in keeping vision, mission, and goals in the forefront of everyone's attention and at the centre of everyone's work". The findings show that teachers and senior leadership team members understood clearly the schools' goals, vision and mission as the principals often take time to share and communicate it to the school members. To accomplish this, all the principals claim and are perceived by their teachers and senior leadership team members, to share the schools' vision and mission through various avenues such as school assemblies, staff meetings, school anthems, as well as visible banners in the schools.

Successful leaders are expected to engage with staff and other stakeholders to produce higher levels of commitment to achieving the goals of the organisation which, in turn, are linked to the vision (Bush & Glover, 2014). Leithwood et al. (2004: 24) add that principals and teachers "are motivated by goals which they find personally compelling, as well as challenging but achievable". The principals demonstrate that, by making sure their teachers understand the schools' vision and mission, they can create short-term academic goals that are clear and would contribute to the long-term vision and mission of the schools. The principals' emphasis on the schools' vision, mission and goals parallel the findings of Day et al. (2009), and Leithwood and Day (2007b), which suggest that successful heads build and share vision, in addition to having clear goals for the schools.

From a policy perspective, the selection of principals for the New Deals award also involves the elements of vision sharing and building of the principals. The leadership and vision element are the first of the five elements contained in the SKPM standards documents, on which the principals are assessed before they are awarded the New Deals award. Hence the emphasis on vision by the principals, as well as the policymakers, resonates well with the assertion made by Bush and Glover (2014: 555) who believe that vision has been considered “an essential component of effective leadership for more than 20 years”. However, they caution against the assumption that school leaders can develop a vision that is tailor-made for the school, rather than developing a school vision that must conform to the government’s expectations.

Creating a collaborative environment

Sustaining and maintaining the high performing status of the schools are underpinned by the collaborative effort that the principals practice with their teachers. The principals in this study show that collaboration with other teachers, especially senior leadership team members, is regarded as crucial to their leadership practice. The current working climate in high performing schools suggests that the principals adopt the strategy to collaborate with their followers in ensuring that tasks are shared. This implies that distributed leadership could also be carried out through collaboration with others (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). The tenets of transformational leadership also indicate that the process of collaboration nurtures mutual respect and trust among those who are involved in collaborating (Leithwood, 2010). Collaboration could also represent one form of instructional leadership. Marks and Printy (2003), for example, suggest that instructional leadership should be shared. They describe instructional leadership as being collaborative rather than hierarchal in nature. This could be carried out through active collaboration between principals and teachers on matters related to curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Marks and Printy (2003) assert that collaboration is important in ensuring continuous teaching and learning. One example that typifies Mark and Printy’s comment is how principal 6 ensures that teachers work together to ensure that the lessons for students who are involved in the school’s marching band team would be replaced. In order to do this, teachers who are appointed as coaches with the marching band notify a designated teacher who is in charge of coordinating the replacement lessons. The designated teacher will then liaise with the subject teachers of the students involved. Replacement classes will then be carried out upon the agreement of the subject teachers, students and the designated teacher. The principal ensures that these teachers collaborate with each other to ensure that, not only is the band fully prepared for competitions, but also that they will get the additional instructional support from teachers to cover the instructional time missed due to band commitments.

Another example of how collaboration can improve the quality of instruction in school is demonstrated by principal 1. Principal 1 believes that collaboration through the team or cooperative teaching would enable teachers in the school to improve the quality of instruction. Hence, collaboration that is deemed essential for distributed leadership and transformational leadership may also be embedded when reinforcing the instructional leadership practices of the principals. The example afforded by principal 1 fits well with the aspiration of the MEB. The MEB notes that education transformation would develop educators who “will be immersed in a culture of collaboration and professional excellence” (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-23). The culture of collaboration which is championed by principal 1 also supports one of the MEB’s ambitions in ensuring that teachers “collaborate with one another to tackle issues and share best practices… in a quest that every student learns” (Ministry of Education, 2013: E-23).

Spillane et al. (2004) explain that collaboration between multiple leaders in schools occur when activities are performed separately to produce common results. One example could be through the sharing of key instructional duties. By enabling the senior leadership team members to act, principals, as well as the senior leadership team members in this study, provide evidence that key instructional activities such as lesson evaluation could be performed separately by the principals and senior leadership team members; but inter-dependently, they support the common goal of ensuring that instructional activities are carried out effectively. Principal 3, for example, expects her senior leadership team members to carry out supervision of the instructional activities in her school. Principal 6, on the other hand, would rely on her senior leadership team members to ensure that the quality of instructions is maintained across the school. Spillane et al. (2004) further explain that when principals rely on and enable their senior leadership team members to perform key instructional duties separately, especially ones that are related to the evaluation of instructional activities, the principals are then able to engage with them to gauge key summative evaluation of the instructional activities supervised by the senior leadership team members.

Hallinger and Walker (2017: 139) attribute that traditional values that honour hierarchy, seniority and status continue to shape perspectives toward power and staff involvement. Hence, the analysis also shows that a pattern of collaboration is evident between the principals and the senior leadership team members. For example, the analysis reveals that collaboration with senior leadership team members is institutionalised through the formation of the senior leadership team management council. For example, principal 2 and principal 4 spoke about having a special group, identified as G9 or G5 depending on the number of senior leadership members in the group. Through the establishment of the institutionalised management council, the principals could be viewed as promoting collaboration. Principals and senior leadership team members spoke highly about how they often discuss and make key decisions within the council. Kouzes and Posner (2007b) posit that, when a leader creates a situation in which people must work collaboratively, it can increase the personal accountability of everyone involved, as well as ensuring that each member of the team takes ownership of the collaborative activity or task. They add that individual accountability is a critical element in every collaborative activity.

The quantitative analysis also shows that the dimension of '*Supervise and evaluate instruction*' had indicated a significant difference between the mean scores of senior leadership team members and those of the other teachers. The results suggest that the senior leadership team members had rated their principals to be carrying out this particular instructional leadership practice significantly more than the other teachers. The data generated from quantitative data strengthen the claim that, whilst the principals in this study believe in a strong collaborative environment, the pattern of collaboration is nevertheless concentrated within the senior leadership circle.

Providing support

The quantitative and qualitative analysis both suggest that principals who are deemed high performing provide support to their teachers. The support may include instructional and professional dimensions as well as being individualised. These are key attributes of transformational and instructional leadership and are also considered pivotal as an aspect of distributed leadership. One of the aspects of support exemplified by the principals in this study is the professional support given to the teachers. Hallinger (2010a) claims that successful school leadership show support through building the teachers' capacities for professional learning and development. Barber et al. (2010: 7) believe that one of the most important skills of a high-performing principal is the focus given to developing teachers. They see the principals' role as vital in improving and supporting the development their teachers.

Joseph Blase and Blase (2000) found that promoting professional development is one of the most important dimensions of effective instructional leadership, as perceived by the teachers in their study. Similarly, the quantitative and qualitative analyses in this study suggest that principals were perceived by their teachers to be supportive of professional development. It is evident from the PIMRS analysis, which highlights '*Promote professional development*' as the third most enacted instructional leadership practice, as perceived by the teachers and the principals themselves. This is further supported by the interviews which identify principals 1, 4 and 6 as those who encourage their teachers to be consistently supported via professional development. The evidence suggests that these principals understand the need for their teachers to be prepared and supported for instructional innovation. This finding also supports the study carried out by Hallinger and Walker (2017: 136) who found that Malaysian principals “are strong advocates of ongoing professional development as a necessity for improved learning, teaching and student outcomes”.

While it could be claimed that principals in this study provide support to their teachers via professional development, the policy of compulsory minimum seven-day professional training and courses which all civil servants have to fulfil yearly (Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam, 2005) could also contribute to such practices being enacted by these principals. Although the policy itself could be seen as an imposition, the analysis suggests that providing support through promoting professional development of the teachers has positive outcomes. The findings suggest that principals who are deemed high performing value the professional development of their teachers. For example, principals 4 and 6 believe that teachers who attend any external professional development courses should carry out in-house training so that the knowledge gained from the professional courses can be shared with other teachers. Hence, not only do the principals support teachers attending professional development courses, but the support is extended and shared with other teachers.

The practice of providing support shown by the principals in this study also corresponds with the assertion offered by Leithwood et al. (2013). They believe that in order to sustain high performance, school leaders especially those who are leading high performing schools “place a premium on teachers’ professional development as a route to improving instructional outcomes” (Leithwood et al., 2013: 259). Further examples of how support is given by principals are evident from principal 3 and principal 4. They allocate a sizeable amount of the schools’ additional budget for teachers’ development. With the extra amount, teachers are afforded the opportunity to attend professional courses which are not usually available to teachers in other schools.

Leithwood et al. (1999: 73) also believe that providing support could be expressed through “recognition of good work and effort”. The principals in this study believe in supporting their teachers via providing recognition and praise.

This is evident in the analysis of the LPI questionnaire, which identified the leadership practice of '*Encourage the heart*' as the practice that the principals claim to enact the most. This particular component of the LPI encompasses practices that measure the extent to which the leader provides recognition for the contributions made by the followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2007a). This dimension also gauges the frequency of the leader in providing motivational and social support to their followers. The evidence from the LPI questionnaire suggests that principals in this study value the contributions made by the teachers. In order to recognise the contribution, they believe in supporting the teachers via public recognition as well as rewards. Similarly, research into principal leadership in 50 outstanding schools in New South Wales, Australia found that the principals often provide appropriate recognition to the teachers (Dinham, 2005).

Finally, evidence from the analysis also highlights how support is provided via school resources. Robinson et al. (2008) explain that strategic resourcing is identified as one of the five dimensions of instructional leadership. They explain that "the word 'strategic' in the description of this dimension signals that the leadership activity is about securing resources that are aligned with instructional purposes, rather than leadership skill in securing resources per se" (Robinson et al., 2008: 661). The findings of this study also indicate that five principals show evidence of providing support in terms of instructional resources. The teachers and senior leadership team members acknowledge that their principals allocate a high proportion of the high performing school's grant for procuring instructional materials. This includes purchasing materials which would support the instructional practices of the teachers as well as encouraging the performance of the students. The provision of instructional support, via securing teaching and learning materials for teachers, suggests that the principals use the resource strategically. The support given by the principals in allowing the teachers to maximise instructional resources contributes to creating an environment that makes learning possible for both teachers and students (Bendikson et al., 2012).

Maintaining a shared decision process

The findings of this study indicate that principals who are deemed high performing provide avenues for decision-making to be shared. The principals indicate that they value decisions which are reached and discussed together rather than making decisions individually. The practice of maintaining a shared decision process represents one of the elements of transformational leadership (Leithwood et al., 1999). Harris (2008) further posits that shared decision-making is one form of distributed leadership that involves many organisational members.

The analysis in the previous chapter reaffirms that all principals involved their senior leadership team members when making decisions. This is evident when all senior leadership team members, except SLTM 6, stated that their principals do carry out the process of shared decision-making. Whilst the analysis confirms the dynamics of the decision-making process between the principals and their senior leadership team members; principal 4 and principal 6 also note the importance of taking into consideration the perspectives of teachers when making decisions. However, only teachers 4 and 5 identified that the practice of shared decision-making is enacted by their principals. These findings support the conclusion of a study carried out by Mulford, Kendall, and Kendall (2004) that high school teachers perceive the level of involvement in decision-making in high schools is hierarchical with the highest involvement between the principal and assistant principal. Nonetheless, the involvement of teachers in making key decisions in schools is equally important. Leithwood et al. (2004: 53) believe that teachers' involvement in decision-making is a "central mechanism for making better use of the intellectual capacities distributed throughout the organization. This, in turn, results in better, and better coordinated, decisions". The evidence from the interviews suggest that principal 5 involves his teachers in some of the decision-making processes.

The qualitative findings indicate a high degree of similarity across the different schools in terms of how the principals focus on creating shared decision-making processes. All the principals interviewed believe in involving others, especially the senior leadership team members, in a shared decision-making process. The findings of this study are similar to those of Tahir et al. (2013), who examined the relationship between instructional leadership and political strategies employed by Excellent Principals in Malaysia. They found that Excellent Principals use the fundamentals of transformational leadership in making decisions. Tahir et al. (2013) assert that Excellent Principals make school-based decisions through collaboration and consultation with others to ensure that the results will benefit all. Similarly, Drysdale et al. (2009) found that the outstanding principals in their study view the decision-making process as collaborative, democratic and consultative.

The evidence of shared decision making also appears in the quantitative analysis. One of the properties of the construct of '*Enable others to act*', as measured through the LPI questionnaire, highlights the ability of the leader to listen to diverse points of views before making any decisions. The high mean scores for this dimension suggest that both teachers and principals view the practice of enabling others through making shared decisions as something that is carried out frequently by the principals. Mulford et al. (2004) believe that the more positively teachers view the decision-making processes in the school, the higher the degree of influence and control they perceived to be exerted by the leaders in the school.

From a policy perspective, the evidence that supports how the principals maintain the shared decision-making process fits the aspiration highlighted in the MEB. The MEB identifies a focus on distributed leadership in the second wave of its implementation (between the years of 2016 to 2020). One of the key highlights identified in this wave is to give schools greater decision-making flexibility over budget and curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2013). However, such flexibility will only be given to schools that "meet certain performance criteria" (Ministry of Education, 2013: 5-18). The analysis certainly gives a positive indication that principals who are deemed high performing, and at the same time heading high performing schools, do show that the decision-making process is something that is shared and essentially support the fundamentals of distributed leadership.

<u>Supervise, monitor and evaluate students' performance</u>

The principals who are deemed high performing all tend to emphasise the performance of the students, both academically and in extra-curricular activities. The quantitative findings indicate that principals and teachers rank the instructional practice of monitoring students' performance highly. The PIMRS data shows that the instructional practice of '*Monitor students' progress*' was ranked as the fourth-most enacted practices by both principals and their teachers. This instructional dimension measures the frequency with which principals discuss students' academic progress and performance with their teachers; use tests and other performance measure to assess progress toward school goals; as well as informing students and teachers of the overall academic progress. The data suggest that principals in this study place a heavy emphasis on student assessments and most importantly how they are progressing.

The findings show that principals place great emphasis on monitoring students' academic performance through assessment results. The use of performance data is one of the ways for the principals in this study set high expectations, especially for high performance. One approach, adopted by principals 4 and 6, is the GROW[19] method as indicated by their senior leadership team members. Another approach implemented by principals 2, 3 and 6, is the performance dialogue. The dialogue, which is akin to a problem-solving session, enables the principals and teachers to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the students' performance, based upon current assessment scores, and to determine the next course of action. The practice of using performance dialogue supports the findings of Blase and Blasé

[19] The GROW model is a coaching and performance tool introduced by John Whitmore in 1992 (see Whitmore, 1992). The Aminuddin Baki Institute (for educational leadership and management) has adopted this model as one its training modules targeting principals in high performing schools.

(2000), who found that effective principals value dialogue that encourages teachers to critically reflect on their learning and professional practices. Conversely, Abbott and Bush (2013) agree with Court's (2007) assertion that effective leadership teams schedule time together for professional dialogue.

The qualitative analysis also indicates that five of the principals, except for principal 5, show evidence that they actively monitor the academic progress of the students. The analysis suggests that these principals utilise formal discussions and meetings with senior leadership team members and teachers to observe the progress of the students. Through the constant monitoring of the students' performance, the principals who are deemed high performing are able to realign and monitor their school's academic performance. The practice of monitoring student progress by the principal in this study links to the study carried out by Belchetz and Leithwood (2007). They found that successful principals in six Ontario schools consistently monitor the academic progress of the students through systematically collecting evidence of the students' performance. The principals then provide ongoing support based on the feedback gained from the teachers.

Although much of this leadership practice represents core instructional activities, the manner in which these activities are carried out by the teachers also highlights its distributive properties. Spillane et al. (2001) explain that distributed leadership is also grounded in the activities or tasks carried out by teachers rather than in position or roles. Tasks include monitoring and supervising students' performance. A distributed element is present when the enactment of tasks is potentially stretched over two or more leaders and followers (Spillane et al., 2004). For example, SLTM 3 claims that her principal has assigned the roles of supervising instructional activities to all the senior leadership team members of the school. The quality of instruction is monitored regularly to maintain its standard and, indirectly, is thought to contribute towards the academic performance of the students. The involvement of senior leadership team members is important for some of the principals in supervising and evaluating the performance of the students. Hence, the evidence points towards the senior leadership team members as a source for understanding how students fare academically. This is carried out through regular discussion and meetings. Overall, the evidence suggests that the principals involve senior leadership team members to ensure that student performance is monitored and sustained, and consequently the school can meet its intended targets. These findings draw parallels with the meta-analysis carried out by Robinson et al (2008: 661) who posit that “there was a greater emphasis in higher performing schools on ensuring that staff systematically monitor student progress”.

While the qualitative and quantitative findings of this study support the evidence that principals who are deemed high performing supervise and monitor students’ progress, importantly it also, counters the claim made by Hallinger and Walker (2017: 138) who note that “in Malaysia, the task of monitoring student progress does not appear to lie within the principals’ responsibility”.

Modelling good values

Bush and Glover (2014) posit that values are one of the three dimensions of school leadership. They further stress that school leaders “are expected to ground their actions in clear personal and professional values” (ibid:555). The principals in this study exude values that represent them as positive role models for the teachers, as well as other principals in Malaysia. Leithwood and Riehl (2003), and Leithwood and Day (2007b) claim that effective and successful leaders articulate good examples and core personal values for the teachers and other staff to follow. In addition, Gold et al. (2003), in their study of outstanding school leaders, identify that effective or outstanding principals are those who are able to articulate their strongly held personal and intrinsic values which are not imposed or restricted by others.

The qualitative analysis indicates that modelling professional values have garnered the most responses from principals, senior leadership team members and teachers compared to the other leadership practices identified in the qualitative analysis. Most (14 out of 18) interviewees indicate that the principals do exhibit leadership practices that are valued by others. The analysis of leadership practices also suggests that the principals have an open-door policy, and are approachable, as well as being empathic to the needs of their teachers. These traits and values are acknowledged as representing the transformational leadership components of modelling important values and practices (Leithwood et al., 1999). The quantitative findings suggest that both principals and teachers are positive about the extent to which the principals ‘model the way’. The mean scores suggest that this particular leadership practice is perceived to be enacted ‘fairly often’ by the teachers. The principals, on the other hand, claim to carry out this practice ‘usually’.

The role modelling enacted by the principals in this study suggests a transformational leadership approach. However, the author believes that it may be appropriate to regard instructional leadership and transformational leadership as an integrated model of leadership practice in respect of modelling good values. For example, Matthews (2009) agrees that successful principals do model good instructional practices to teachers. Jensen and Clark (2013) argue that, to be a good instructional role model, effective principals know that they cannot ask teachers to do something that they do not do themselves. They maintain that school principals must continuously be visibly role-modelling instructional behaviours in schools, such as observing classes and providing feedback to teachers. In this respect, the qualitative analysis suggests that only principals 1 and 6 provide instructional feedback to their teachers.

The Ministry of Education believes that the instructional practices of principals must always be at the fore despite the added task of administering the organisation as a whole. This is exemplified by a directive from the Director General of Education in 1998 which instructed all principals to teach a minimum of five periods per week (Ketua Pengarah Pendidikan Malaysia, 1998). One of the underlying principles behind such directives is the need for the principals to be a role model for teachers especially in the core matter of instruction. While the directive of teaching a minimum of five periods applies to all principals and it is still presently in place, most of the principals in Malaysia were found by Muhamad Latip (2007) to be swamped with administrative duties, hence reducing the five-period teaching activities to subjects such as civic education or moral education. However, the instructional activity of the principal was acknowledged by principals 1 and 3 as one of the best ways to model the commitment of the principal as an instructional leader. Joseph Blase and Blase (2000) support the view that effective principals, who demonstrate their teaching abilities in the classroom are exhibiting one form of modelling that would yield positive effects on teachers' motivation. Principal 1 also believes that principals should continue teaching core subjects instead of non-examination subjects. This indicates that the principal is committed, despite the heavy administrative duties, to teach core subjects, such as physics and mathematics. This practice may also reinforce the principal as a role model in relation to being an instructional leader. This also reiterates the discussion in the earlier section of this chapter which reveals that the continuing practice of principals as an instructional practitioner in the classroom could influence the teachers into considering their principals as role models.

The findings indicate that the principals often elucidate expectations of sustaining excellence and high performance. The qualitative interviews indicate that the principals have high expectations in terms of their schools' performance. Leithwood et al. (1999: 68) posit that the high expectations envisaged by the principals will be motivational for the "teachers to see the challenging nature of goals being pursued in their school". The expectations set by the principals who are deemed high performing encourage teachers to really understand their roles and responsibilities of sustaining the already high performing schools.

The practice of maintaining high expectations by the principals who are deemed high performing is also affirmed through the quantitative analysis via the LPI questionnaire. Principals rated themselves as carrying out the practice of '*Encouraging the heart*' most frequently compared to other four leadership practices. This particular leadership practice aligns well with the transformational leadership model because, embedded in this particular act, successful leaders place high expectations on themselves and their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2007b). These authors believe that leaders who rate themselves high on the dimension of '*Encouraging the heart*', as in the case of the principals in this study, have high expectations in the abilities of their followers. Kouzes and Posner (2007b: 282) add that leaders set high expectations because "they know that they are much more likely to get high performance if they expect high performance than if they expect low performance". Even though this particular leadership practice is ranked fourth by the teachers, the mean scores nevertheless indicate high agreement that their principals are enacting this particular leadership practice fairly often. Hence, the findings of this study elucidate that principals who are deemed high performing are very clear on the high expectations to maintain academic excellence and that these expectations need to be understood by the teachers.

Overview

This study focuses on the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing through receiving both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. The discussion has identified an in-depth account of how these high performing principals enact leadership practices in their schools. The findings of this study offer a different perspective on high performing principalship, linked to the aspiration of the MEB to place high performing leaders in every school.

The analysis identifies that principals who are deemed high performing enact multiple leadership practices which are associated with transformational, distributed and instructional leadership. The findings also strongly support the views of many leading theorists that school leaders do not adhere to only one specific leadership style or practice. Day et al. (2001a: 55) explain that "the complexity of the role they faced and the tensions and dilemmas which they managed meant that no single theory could explain existing practice, but that the leadership practices adopted reflected diverse and often competing theoretical perspectives”.

The study has also identified that principals who are deemed high performing practice instructional leadership modestly compared to distributed and transformational leadership. This finding is significant given that instructional leadership is highly emphasised in the MEB compared to transformational and distributed leadership. While Robinson et al. (2008) meta-analysis found that instructional leadership has a greater impact on student achievement compared to transformational leadership, the modest enactment of instructional leadership by the principals in this study could form a barrier to realising the aspiration of improving the education system in Malaysia. Key indicators of improvement are student academic performance and outcomes. While “transformational leadership is more focused on the relationship between leaders and followers than on the educational work of school leadership, the quality of these relationships [nevertheless], is not predictive of the quality of student outcomes” (Robinson et al., 2008).

The study highlights core leadership practices that represent the properties and elements of instructional, transformational and distributed leadership. The findings of this study also show that the six leadership practices found to be enacted the most by the principals contain an integrated element of all three leadership models. The evidence from the analysis has facilitated this study to identify six core leadership practices which are a combination of at least two leadership models. The findings suggest that the leadership models, translated into the practice of the principals, could not be enacted effectively without the presence or combination of at least two leadership models. Bush and Glover (2003) argue that the leadership models represented in the practices enacted by school leaders are in fact artificial in their distinctions because most successful leaders are likely to embody most or all of these approaches in their work.

This chapter concluded by linking the leadership and management qualities upon which the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards recipients are adjudged by the selectors. The discussion is important as it gives weight to the assumption of this study that high performing principals can be identified as those who have received both awards. The assumption of these principals as high performing is then reinforced by the discussion and analysis of their leadership practices which are found to be similar to the attributes of highly successful and high performing school leaders as identified in the literature. The next and final chapter shows how the research questions are answered, as well as discussing the significance of the study.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

Introduction

The main aim of this mixed methods study is to identify, understand and describe a range of leadership practices enacted by principals in Malaysia who are deemed high performing. The analysis of data obtained through three iterative sequential phases has allowed the author to explore the perceived leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing and serving in selected Malaysian high performing secondary schools. The analysis also assists the author to understand the extent to which instructional leadership is practised by the principals and to compare it with distributed and transformational leadership practices. Three main important findings were discussed, and triangulated, in Chapter 7. This final chapter shows how the research questions have been addressed, and also discusses the significance and implications of this study.

Answering the Research Questions

This study is guided by three main research questions. Sub-questions are also attached to Questions Two and Three. This section shows how all these research questions are addressed through this study.

<u>Research question One: How are principals deemed high performing identified and selected?</u>

The author identifies principals who are deemed high performing as those who have received both the Excellent Principals and the New Deals awards. Both awards are significant in acknowledging the performance of principals in Malaysia. While the Excellent Principals award was launched in 1994, the New Deals award which incentivises “high performing school principals” (Ministry of Education, 2013: A-31) was only introduced as recently as 2011. This study focuses on principals who are deemed high performing by virtue of being recipients of both awards. This means that these principals are regarded as high performing within the Malaysian education system.

The selection process indicates that there are several ‘quality-control’ mechanisms linked to the process. The selection process involves several stages. For example, candidates for the Excellent Principals award first must produce evidence of personal and career contributions and achievements that would qualify them to be shortlisted for the following stage of selection. The annual appraisal review marks of the candidates are also taken into consideration by the panel of selectors when short-listing them for the next stage of evaluation and assessment. The candidates are also assessed on-site by a panel of assessors from the Ministry of Education. The results of the assessment are finalised by the secretariat before being forwarded to the Director General of Education. The final list, approved by the Director General of Education, is later screened by the Human Resources Division of the Ministry to ensure that the candidates are free from any recorded history of misconduct. The final step of the selection process is the interview with the Director General of Education.

Similarly, many layers are apparent when selecting candidates for the New Deals award. Unlike the Excellent Principals award, the first qualifying round is determined by the school’s performance in public examinations. Schools which have demonstrated significant improvement in public examinations and, as a result, have made significant progress in the overall school rankings, will be eligible to be considered for selection. PADU, which monitors the performance and ranking of schools in Malaysia, will then verify and endorse the first list of schools in which the principals can be considered for the New Deals award. Similar to the Excellent Principals award, the selection process for the New Deals award includes on-site assessment of the principals. The on-site assessment includes verification of the self-assess annual SKPM scores. The results of the on-site assessment are then presented to a select-committee chaired by the Secretary General of Education. Being presented to the select committee is also contingent upon the principals meeting the specific requirements of the Ministry (see Table 4.6). The requirement includes a minimum score of 90% in their annual appraisal review score.

The quota system for Excellent Principals represents another ‘quality-control’ mechanism. The quota for Excellent Principals is important in ensuring that the award is privileged to a group of 895 secondary school principals at any one time. While this study shows that the selection process for these awards is multi-layered, it also suggests that the ‘quality-control’ mechanism employed in each part of the process makes it competitive as well as rigorous. The many forms of quality-control imposed on the candidates when vying for these two awards suggest that the quality and performance of the recipients are at the fore. This indicates that those principals who have gained both awards may be deemed ‘high performing’.

<u>Research question Two: What leadership practices are most performed by the principals who are deemed high performing as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?</u>

The overarching aim of this study is to identify the leadership practices of the principals who are deemed high performing. This calls for an in-depth examination of leadership practices enacted by the principals, guided primarily by the instructional, transformational and distributed leadership models. In doing so, the study is able to compare the extent to which leadership practices that are reflective of those three leadership models are enacted the most by the principals.

The second phase of this study involves a quantitative approach, to enable the author to answer the second research question and its two sub-questions. Two questionnaires were utilised, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). While the PIMRS is able to measure the frequency with which the principals claim to enact each of the ten instructional leadership practices, the LPI assesses the extent to which the principals carry out practices which are reflective of transformational and distributed leadership. In addition, the utilisation of these two questionnaires enabled the author to compare which three leadership models are most practiced by the principals.

These two questionnaires were distributed to 20 principals who are the recipients of both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. The questionnaires were also distributed to their teachers. The distribution of the teachers' copies of both questionnaires enabled the author to compare the leadership practices claimed to be carried out by the principals with those perceived by their teachers. The response rates from the principals for both the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires was 90%, suggesting high reliability. Response rates for teachers were also high, at 85% for the LPI and 82% for the PIMRS.

The mean scores of ten instructional leadership dimensions obtained through the PIMRS were tabulated. The mean scores of each of the five leadership practices measured on the LPI questionnaire were also calculated. The mean scores were then ranked to identify which of the leadership practices were claimed to be enacted most frequently. (Comparison of the mean scores between the principals' and teachers' responses are shown in Table 5.29).

The analysis of the PIMRS questionnaire shows that '*Communicate the school's goals*' and '*Framing the school's goals*' were claimed by the principals to be the most performed instructional leadership practices. This is followed by '*Promote professional development*', '*Monitor students' progress*' and '*Coordinate the curriculum*'. The mean scores obtained from the teachers' copy of the PIMRS questionnaire also indicate that they perceived their principals to be carrying out the same five instructional leadership practices. The mean scores from the teachers-copy ranked these five instructional leadership practices in the same order as their principals. Principals and teachers' mean scores suggest that '*Provide incentives for teachers*' and '*Maintain high visibility*' were perceived as the least enacted instructional leadership practices.

A similar approach was adopted when analysing the LPI questionnaire. The mean scores obtained from both the principals and the teachers were ranked. The highest mean scores suggest that the particular leadership practice was claimed to be preferred as well as enacted the most by the principals. The LPI shows that the leadership practice of ‘*Encourage the heart*’ was ranked the highest by the principals. Their teachers, however, perceived the principals to be performing the leadership practice of ‘*Inspire a shared vision*’ the most, while this practice was ranked second by the principals.

Taking both questionnaires together, the instructional leadership practices of communicating and framing the school’s goals, as well as the practice of inspiring a shared vision, were identified as the most performed by the principals. Similar views were expressed by the teachers in relation to the extent to which they perceive their principals to be performing these leadership practices. As discussed in the previous chapter, the results of the quantitative data analysis lead to the synthesised view that the first (out of six) core leadership practices enacted by principals is ‘*Sharing school’s goals, vision and mission*’.

The mean scores from the LPI questionnaire also show that the leadership practice of ‘*Enable others to act*’ was ranked highly by both principals and teachers. This leadership practice specifically advocates collaboration, collegiality and strengthening of others. This suggests a distributed leadership element in their practice. The data obtained from the questionnaire also support the final synthesis of leadership practices enacted by principals in this study. Out of the six core leadership practices synthesised as the most enacted by the principals, the data from this particular dimension of LPI directly supports two of the six leadership practices: ‘*Creating an environment that supports collaboration*’ and ‘*Maintaining a shared decision process*’.

The questionnaire results are able to indicate the extent to which a particular leadership practice was enacted. The questionnaires are also useful in determining, on a macro level, the extent to which instructional, transformational and distributed leadership practices are carried out by the principals in this study. For example, the mean scores of the LPI indicate that the principals, on average, claimed to be enacting the five leadership practices ‘usually’. Their teachers also perceive the principals to be enacting those leadership practices ‘fairly often’. Hence, it could be implied that the principals enact leadership practices that represent the tenets of transformational and distributed leadership on a consistent basis. In comparison, the principals, on average, claimed to be enacting all ten instructional leadership practices (as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire) ‘frequently’. However, their teachers perceived the principals to be carrying out eight of ten instructional leadership practices only ‘sometimes’.

The findings from the two questionnaires lead to the conclusion that the principals who are deemed high performing communicate, frame and inspire the vision, mission and goals of their schools the most compared to other leadership practices. A comparison of both questionnaires also suggests that teachers especially perceive their principals to be enacting leadership practices that are reflective of transformational and distributed leadership more than those related to instructional leadership.

<u>Sub-Research question 2a: How do principals who are deemed high performing perceive their own leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?</u>

Sub-research question 2a was intended to measure the extent to which the principals claim to enact the leadership practices measured against several variables such as grades of service and number of years served. This sub-question also aims to compare the principals’ understanding of their leadership practices when measured against the above-mentioned variables. T-test and ANOVA were employed to identify any significant differences in relation to how the principals perceive their leadership practices based on their years and grades of service.

The analysis identified that all the principals claim to be enacting the leadership practices more frequently than perceived by their teachers. The mean scores show that the principals believe that they carry out the leadership practices, as measured by both the PIMRS and LPI questionnaires, ‘frequently’ and ‘usually’. Hallinger (2011) found that, in numerous PIMRS studies, principals had consistently rated themselves higher on the PIMRS questionnaire when compared to their teachers. This finding is confirmed by this study.

Whilst the mean scores suggest that the principals claim to be enacting all of the leadership practices measured by the PIMRS and the LPI on a frequent basis, the analysis was extended to identify any significant differences found based on the principals’ grade of service as well as their tenure. The principals in this study consist of those with grades DG54 and JUSA C. The t-test carried out suggests that the principals of these two grades differ significantly in terms of how they perceive the instructional leadership practices of ‘*Maintain high visibility*’ and ‘*Provide incentives for teachers*’ as measured by the PIMRS questionnaire. On both accounts, principals of the JUSA C reported that they enact these two instructional leadership practices significantly lower than their DG54 counterparts. The mean scores for these two instructional leadership practices indicate that JUSA C principals believe that they carry out these practices ‘sometimes’, while their DG54 counterparts claim to be enacting them ‘frequently’. However, there were no significant differences in how DG54 principals and JUSA C principals claim to enact leadership practices that represent transformational and distributed leadership, as measured by the LPI questionnaire.

A one-way ANOVA was carried out to determine whether the principals’ tenure had any significant bearing on how they perceive their leadership practices, but no significant differences were found. The results from the ANOVA analysis indicate that the principals with different tenures do not differ significantly in terms of how they claim to enact the leadership practices as measured by both questionnaires.

With the exception of the two instructional leadership practices of ‘*Maintain high visibility*’, and ‘*Provide incentives for teachers*’, the principals do not show any significant differences in terms of how they claim to enact leadership practices when measured against their grades of service as well as their tenure.

Sub-Research question 2b: How do teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices as measured by the LPI and PIMRS questionnaires?

The research question was formulated to determine whether the teachers view their principals' leadership practices differently based on their principals' length and grade of service. One important finding is that the mean scores of the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership practices were lower than those of their principals on both of the questionnaires. The analysis reveals that the teachers perceive their principals to be carrying out almost all instructional leadership practices 'sometimes'. Only '*Framing the school's goals*', and '*Communicate the school's goals*' recorded higher mean scores, indicating that the teachers perceive their principals to be enacting these two instructional leadership practices frequently. The teachers' mean scores aggregated from the LPI questionnaires also indicate that they rated their principals lower on all five of the leadership practices. However, while the mean scores are lower than those of their principals, they do show that they perceive their principals to be enacting the leadership practices which represent transformational and distributed leadership 'usually'.

An independent t-test was used to determine whether the principals' grade of service had any impact on how the teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices. The analysis shows that teachers whose principals have a grade of DG54 rated their principals significantly higher than their counterparts who are working with JUSA C principals, on all five leadership practices as measured by the LPI questionnaire. This suggests that DG54 principals were perceived by their teachers to be performing leadership practices that are reflective of transformational and distributed leadership more than the JUSA C principals as perceived by their teachers.

A t-test was used to further determine whether teachers with JUSA C principals differ from their peers with DG54 principals, in terms of how their respective principals are perceived in enacting instructional leadership. Similar to the findings of the LPI questionnaire, the t-test revealed that teachers with JUSA C principals rated them significantly lower on all instructional leadership practices except '*Protect instructional time*'.

ANOVA was then utilised to determine whether the principals' length of service has any bearing on how their teachers perceive them to be carrying out any specific leadership practices. Principals who had served for more than fifteen years were perceived by their teachers to be enacting the leadership practice of '*Enable others to act*' significantly more than their peers whose principals had been in tenure for a shorter time. As stated in Chapter 5, the analysis suggests that teachers with principals who had served for more than 15 years perceived them to be enacting distributed leadership practices more than those with principals who have less than 15 years in service.

The principals' length of tenure also influenced the way in which the teachers perceive their principals' instructional leadership practices. The ANOVA analysis on the PIMRS shows that principals who had served for more than 15 years were perceived by their teachers to be carrying out six instructional leadership practices significantly more than teachers whose principals had less time in that position. The six instructional leadership practices which the teachers perceived to be carried out more by the more experienced principals were: '*Framing the school goals*', '*Communicate the school goals*', '*Supervise and evaluate curriculum*', '*Coordinate the curriculum*', '*Promote professional development*' and '*Provide incentives for learning*'.

Teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership practices were also extended to measure whether the position that they hold in schools influences the way in which they perceive their principals' leadership practices. The analysis via an ANOVA suggests that teachers with administrative positions perceived their principals to be enacting '*Inspire a shared vision*' and '*Enable others to act*' significantly more than ordinary teachers. The ANOVA also reveals that teachers in a position of power had rated their principals significantly higher in performing the instructional leadership practices of

‘*Supervise and evaluate instruction*’, ‘*Coordinate the curriculum*’ and ‘*Promote professional development*’. The significant findings have led this study to conclude that the closer and constant interaction that senior leadership team members have with their principals might impact on the way in which they perceive their principals’ leadership practices.

The data show that teachers’ perceptions of how their principals enact the leadership practices are significantly influenced by their principals’ grade of service and tenure. Teachers who hold an administrative position in schools also reported that their principals performed several leadership practices significantly more than other teachers.

Research question Three: How do the principals perceive their own leadership practices?

Research question Three was formulated with the intention to further explore how the principals carry out their leadership practices. Specific attention is given to whether the practices reflect and represent the tenets of instructional, transformational, and distributed leadership. This research question was addressed primarily through school-based interviews. The leadership practices identified from the data were then organised according to the subscales of transformational, instructional, and distributed leadership identified from the literature. The qualitative method of inquiry utilised to answer this research question enabled the author to gauge in-depth accounts of the leadership practices from the perspectives of the principals. Six principals who were involved in the quantitative phase were purposively selected for the interviews.

The analysis reveals that the principals claim to be enacting practices that represent instructional, transformational and distributed leadership. The analysis also shows that evidence of transformational and distributed leadership practices was very strong, as compared to instructional leadership. While the principals acknowledge explicitly that instructional leadership is one of the practices that Malaysian principals should focus upon, the interviews with the principals suggest that they perform instructional leadership modestly compared to transformational and distributed leadership practices.

The interviews also provided evidence about the specific leadership practices of the principals. These leadership practices relate to transformational and distributed leadership, as well as to instructional leadership theoretical frameworks. The analysis suggests that the instructional leadership practice of monitoring and evaluating students' performance was claimed to be the most enacted by the principals. This is seen as one of the six core leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed to be high performing.

The interview data also show that transformational leadership practices were claimed to be performed consistently by the principals. Guided by the transformational leadership framework proposed by Leithwood et.al (1999), the evidence from the interviews indicate that the principals claim they model the best professional values; provide individualised support to their teachers, and maintain a shared decision-making process. The transformational practice of inspiring a shared vision is claimed by five of the six principals interviewed.

The leadership practices which are reflective of distributed leadership were also claimed to be enacted by the principals. The practice of collaborating with senior leadership team members was claimed to be carried out the most by the principals. The analyses reveal that collaboration is maintained through active communication between the principals and their senior leadership team members in meetings, as well as through electronic means.

<u>Sub-research question 3a: How do the teachers perceive their principals' leadership practices?</u>

Similar to the quantitative approach to this study, the opinions of teachers are equally important to triangulate the leadership practices claimed to be enacted by the principals. In order to answer this question, one teacher and one senior leadership team member from each of the six schools were interviewed. The findings reveal that the transformational and distributed leadership practices of the principals were more visible to the teachers compared to instructional leadership. The analysis reveals that more comments which indicate examples of transformational leadership practices of the principals were made by the teachers and senior leadership team members respectively, compared to instructional leadership. In addition, two teachers and two senior leadership team members commented negatively on how their principals enact the instructional practices of '*Framing and communicating goals*', '*Protecting instructional time*' and '*Maintain high visibility*'.

All senior leadership team members acknowledged that their principals distribute and delegate authority to other leadership team members in the school. In addition, five of the six principals were recognised by their senior leadership team members or teachers as enabling others to carry out additional tasks and responsibilities.

Almost all teachers and senior leadership team members reported that their principals share the school's vision and mission. This was evidenced through meetings, in school assemblies, and through incorporating them into the school's anthem. The strong support for this particular transformational leadership practice led the author to synthesise it into one of the six core leadership practices found to be enacted by principals: that of sharing the school's goals, vision and mission.

In addition, almost all of the senior leadership team members spoke positively about how their principals empower and trust the leadership team in making decisions. Again, this is a positive perception of the transformational leadership practices of the principals.

While this sub-research question was intended to gauge responses from the senior leadership team members as well as teachers, most of the comments came from the senior leadership team members. This trend is similar to the one observed in the quantitative phase of this study in which senior leadership team members perceived their principals to enact some of the leadership practices significantly higher compared to the perceptions of the teachers. One possible reason might be that the power distance between the principals and the teachers is greater than that of the senior leadership team members, especially in a society that is culturally strongly hierarchical in nature.

However, the findings suggest that most of the shared leadership activities, including instructional, are concentrated within the senior leadership team. For example, the study reveals that distributed leadership by the principals was enacted mainly through empowering senior leadership team members to carry out tasks which are beyond their ordinary roles. The author argues that this is not mere task delegation but also leads to capacity building for the senior leadership team members. Whilst the analysis also shows examples of how the principals empowered teachers to carry out tasks or new initiatives in the school, much of the distribution of power remains within the senior leadership team.

Other significant findings emerging from the interviews with the teachers and senior leadership team members are the two negative comments about principals' visibility, suggesting that the principals are rarely seen in school. The senior leadership team member and the teacher from one of the schools both commented negatively on how their principal is quite unsuccessful in reaching the school's targeted goal. Commenting negatively on the principals' leadership is quite uncommon in Malaysia, given the strict culture and the power distance that exists between a leader and the subordinates.

Research question Four: To what extent is instructional leadership practiced by principals who are deemed high performing?

Another key aim of this study is to understand how far instructional leadership is practiced by the principals who are deemed high performing. Hence, Research question Four was designed to examine the extent to which instructional leadership practices were claimed to be carried out by the principals. Teacher and principal viewpoints were gathered, analysed and discussed in the previous chapters. Data from both the quantitative and qualitative phases of this study indicate that instructional leadership is enacted modestly compared to transformational and distributed leadership.

The average responses from the principals to the PIMRS questionnaire suggest that they claim to be carrying out instructional leadership practices on a frequent basis. However, this claim is not fully supported by their teachers who, on average, reported that their principals carry out instructional leadership practices only ‘sometimes’. The qualitative phase of this study, however, does suggest that instructional leadership practices are carried out by the principals, a claim supported by their teachers and senior leadership team members. However, instructional leadership appears to be less prominent than transformational and distributed leadership practices, as perceived by the principals and their teachers.

Significance of the Research

The following section addresses the significance of this study. This is examined in three respects: contextual, empirical, and theoretical.

<u>Contextual significance</u>

In the opening chapter, the author asserted that there is a very limited body of knowledge on the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing, especially in the Malaysian context. The current study expands the global knowledge-base on the leadership practices of high performing principals by providing indigenous and local knowledge of how these practices are enacted in Malaysian schools. This is also the first major study that explores the leadership practices of principals who are the recipients of both the Excellent Principals and New Deals awards. This research is significant as the first major study in Malaysia that identifies how the term ‘high performing’ is defined and affixed to the recipients of these two awards. Consequently, and importantly, this study further explores the leadership practices enacted by these high performing principals. The study is significant in contributing to our understanding the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing, not only within the Malaysian context but also to the wider knowledge base in developing countries.

The findings also provide significant evidence for the current policymakers involved in implementing the latest education reform. Bush (2007) believes that school principals are often inundated with advice from politicians, officials, academics and consultants on how to lead and manage their schools. However, Bush (2007: 393) argues that many of these prescriptions, be it in the form of advice or policy directives, “are atheoretical in the sense that they are not underpinned by explicit concepts”. In contrast, Malaysian Education policies often adopt and advocate policies which are highly theoretical in nature, but not always underpinned by empirical evidence, which may be more beneficial in practice. Sufean Hussin (2014) believes that Malaysian policymakers must look at the research evidence when formulating any policies. Hence, the evidence from this study seems likely to fill a significant gap and address the compatibility issue arising from adopting an approach drawn from theory and application in other contexts. This is particularly evident in respect of instructional leadership.

While policymakers often advocate specific models of leadership, the detailed elements of each of the models are not specified enough to be contextualised or adopted by the principals. For example, instructional leadership is emphasised tirelessly in the policy documents. However, when policymaker and practitioners “invoke the term instructional leadership to convey what they believe is the preferred form of leadership to drive their improvement efforts forward, they have not said anything very meaningful about the leadership practices they value” (Leithwood & Sun, 2012: 412). References to distributed and transformational leadership are also made albeit not that extensive compared to the former. However, what is truly missing is the explicit understanding of how each of the elements contained in the leadership models could help improve school leadership. Leithwood and Sun (2012: 412) caution against the exclusive use of whole leadership models and test the more specific practices that have emerged as consequential from recent research and reviews of research. Rather they suggest that conceptualisation of school leadership should be “practice-specific”, especially in influencing how students learn. Hence, this study is significant in drawing out key elements of the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing from the lenses of three leadership models.

Empirical significance

Hallinger and Huber (2012) acknowledge that quantitative and qualitative approaches both have clear benefits but add that mixed methods research has great potential for educational leadership. Nonetheless, Heck and Hallinger (2005) suggest that additional empirical research that utilises alternative methodological approaches should be encouraged in order to establish numerous perspectives in understanding educational leadership. Therefore, another significant aspect of this study lies in its adaptation and application of mixed methods in the Malaysian context, but with implications for the wider field of educational leadership and management research. This study has added significantly to the growing number of educational leadership studies which employ a mixed methods approach (notable examples are Day et al., 2016; Hallinger & Lee, 2012; Harris et al., 2016; Kaparou & Bush, 2016; Sammons et al., 2011; Spillane & Hunt, 2010). The mixed methods employed in this study also expands the small number of Malaysian studies that utilised a similar approach (for example: Aziah & Abdul Ghani, 2014; Ghavifekr et al., 2014; Harris et al., 2014; Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011b; Tahir et al., 2017). There is a notable absence of local research carried out on high performing leadership via this specific methodology in the Malaysian context, hence the mixed methods approach adopted in exploring the leadership practices of high performing principals in Malaysia is particularly significant.

In addition, the integration of evidence from the quantitative and qualitative methods has enabled this study to add depth and clarity to know about the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing in Malaysia. This depth could not have been achieved if this study had employed a single method for understanding the leadership practices of the principals. In addition, a single method would inevitably limit the extent of understanding arising from the study. For example, without the case study phase, the importance of providing instructional resources, which the PIMRS does not consider, would not have been identified. Another example would be the leadership practice of '*Inspire a shared vision*'. Results from the quantitative phase via the LPI survey indicate that this practice is perceived to be enacted highly by both teachers and principals. However, without the qualitative interviews, this study would not have been able to identify the ways in which vision is shared with the teachers.

Mixed methods are also useful in providing leadership practices that are referenced against the three leadership models. Six distinct leadership practices emerged from this study that reflect the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing. What is distinct and significant about this study is the consideration given to all three leadership models. Previous mixed methods studies often limit their exploration to one leadership model; for example Hallinger and Lee (2012), and Grissom, Loeb, and Master (2013). The ongoing 7 System Leadership Study (7SLS) (Harris et al., 2014) is the first mixed methods study to identify the leadership practices of principals in Malaysia. The present study complements the Harris et al (2014) research, but with a specific focus on high performing principals.

<u>Theoretical significance</u>

The theories of educational leadership which are applied and adopted in the Malaysian education system are based upon those generated in the West (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013c; Hallinger & Chen, 2015; Harris et al., 2014; Noman et al., 2016). Hallinger and Bryant (2013c: 323) caution against suggesting that the Western knowledge-base is irrelevant in Asia. However, they also believe that this knowledge-base is limited by the extent to which these theories and practices could be fully aligned with the cultural norms and structures of Asian countries.

This study shows that it is feasible to apply leadership practices which are based on the educational leadership theories introduced by Western scholars into a non-western and highly centralised context. However, an adaptation of these leadership models is required, as some of the elements and properties may not fit the Malaysian context. In particular, some of the practices identified within each leadership model may be constrained by the context and structure of an education system which is highly centralised. For example, the distributed leadership practices evident in this study leans towards an allocative, rather than an emergent, model. The emergent property of distributed leadership, in terms of how teachers and senior leadership team members “pool their energies and expertise” (Bennett et al., 2003: 7) on their own terms, was much less evident than allocative distributed leadership in this study. This evidence is beneficial and significant in exposing the value of theory and practice from different cultural perspectives which may challenge, or modify the dominant Western educational leadership paradigms.

Subsequently, this study is significant in applying the distinctiveness of each of the leadership theories in a highly centralised context by introducing a model of core leadership practices. This study is one of the first empirical studies carried out in Malaysia on high performing leadership that sought to conceptualise leadership practices from three different leadership theories.

Leithwood and Sun (2012: 409) believe that the small number of original studies and reviews of evidence exploring the effect of leadership practices on students’ learning are restricted to the effects of transformational leadership and/or instructional leadership. For example, previous studies conducted in Malaysia tend to adopt a single perspective (for example Ghavifekr et al., 2014; Jamelaa & Jainabee, 2011a; Rahimah et al., 2017; Sharifah et al., 2008 to name a few). As previous local research focuses mainly on leadership practices through a single theoretical lens, it restricts the understanding of such practices to only one perspective. This study has successfully synthesised the leadership practices of the principals, guided by the integration of distributed, instructional and transformational models of leadership. What is distinct and significant about this study is the consideration given to all three leadership models. This is a significant milestone in researching leadership practices of principals in Malaysia. This supports the claim by Spillane et al. (2001: 5) that a "conceptual framework for leadership practice is likely to yield more insight into the relations between leadership and innovation in schools than theories that focus exclusively on organizational structures and leadership roles". Significantly, the empirical findings present a strong platform for integrated leadership practice that is based upon multiple leadership models.

Implications

This section addresses the implications of this study. There are several key lessons from this research that could benefit current principals in Malaysia. In addition, the implications from this study may be helpful for policymakers.

<u>Implications for practice</u>

This sub-section discusses three key implications of this study for practitioners.

Leadership models must be synergised together

While this chapter has discussed the significance of the research, there are also several implications of this study for leadership practice. First, this study provides valuable evidence on how principals who are deemed high performing carry out leadership practices, including core leadership practices enacted by the principals. The evidence from this study shows that it would be inappropriate for one specific leadership model to be the focus for Malaysian principals. The leadership practices enacted by the principals who are deemed high performing in this study represent a combination of many leadership models. Importantly, the evidence from this study suggests clues to the leadership practices that matter.

One important implication for current principals is to understand that a focus on instructional leadership practices alone, in the belief that it will contribute to success for students, and enhanced school performance, is certainly insufficient without the presence of transformational and distributed leadership. This highlights the need for Malaysian school principals to view leadership practices not through a single theoretical lens, but rather by integrating several models to meet the needs of the school. The combination of practices adopted by the principals in this study offers current principals examples of how leadership practices can be successfully synergised and enacted by high performing principals.

Further, without such specificity of leadership practices that transcends the three leadership models, practitioners have little guidance on how they might be informed on the exact leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing and more importantly, contextualised in a local setting.

Team work is essential in sustaining school performance, but must be expanded to all

Bush (2014a: 601) posits that “it is difficult to imagine distributed leadership working well without the involvement of middle leaders”. Bush, Abbott, Glover, Goodall, and Smith (2012: 31) further believe that senior leadership teams are “regarded as a vehicle for the implementation of distributed leadership”. However, it is important to stress that the distribution of tasks and duties to senior leadership team members, especially in a hierarchically-laden education system, must go beyond the normative view of task delegation. This study has provided evidence that allocative distributed leadership is practiced by the principals, hence supporting the notion that principals who are deemed high performing distribute leadership among their senior leadership team members.

Harris (2008: 17) claim that while recognition of the importance of the involvement of school leaders in teaching and learning process is widely accepted, “the reality is that many heads are becoming more and more disengaged from classroom practice in their schools because of the weight of other demands” especially related to administration. Malaysian schools are equipped with a strong contingent of designated senior leadership team members. Sharing the leadership roles, and devolving some of the key responsibilities, to the senior leadership team, could ease some of the administrative burdens of the principals. The results of this study reinforce the belief that senior leadership team members are equally important in school decision-making. High performing principals rely on their senior leadership team members to provide support for the ongoing academic progress in the school.

Whilst distributed leadership practices are visible between the principals and the senior leadership team members, evidence of how the principals in this study involve other teachers especially in instructional leadership roles is more limited. The close and constant interactions that the principals retain with the senior leadership team members in many aspects should be expanded to others in the school. Harris et al. (2017) suggest that “broader representation of instructional leadership practice” should be extended to others in schools. Whilst leadership practices are shared amongst senior leadership members in areas such as making school-based decisions, the practice of instructional leadership should be made more transparent and shared with other teachers. This supports Bush’s (2015b: 487) recommendation that instructional leadership needs to be a distributed function, involving senior, middle and teachers. Printy et al. (2009: 508) add that “instructional reform has a better chance of success when teachers fully participate through roles as site coordinators, lead teachers and professional developers”.

The implication from this study is that leadership practices that promote collegiality and team work perhaps are deemed essential for high performing principals to sustain the performance of the school. Team work also creates trust among the school members. Nonetheless, principals must ensure that teamwork generated through their core leadership practices must also reach other members of the organisation alongside the senior leadership team members. The positive evidence of distributed leadership found in this study suggests that greater attention and focus should be given to how distributed leadership could flourish in Malaysian schools by current and future principals, as well as the Ministry. Nonetheless, the strength of distributed leadership must be capitalised upon by engaging other teachers in sharing instructional leadership capacities.

Implications for policy

The findings from this study are important in understanding the key leadership practices enacted by the principals who are deemed high performing, but also in showing that some of the normatively preferred leadership practices are not fully enacted by these principals. This study is also useful in providing policy implications linked to the MEB.

Clarity on high performing leadership

In the opening chapter, the author argued that the concept of ‘high performing school leaders’ championed in the MEB lacks clarity and definition. This study sought to understand what constitutes ‘high performing leadership practices’ as enacted by a group of principals who are deemed high performing. This study identifies that, apart from the normatively preferred instructional leadership practices, the principals also demonstrate practices associated with transformational and distributed leadership. This study’s findings suggest an integrated model of core leadership practices which summarise the most common and similar practices enacted by the principals who are deemed high performing.

One of the key implications for policymakers, arising from this study, is that high performing leadership consists of practices that are informed not only by instructional leadership, but also comprise elements that are distributed and transformational in nature. It would be helpful for policymakers to examine how transformational and distributed leadership could complement instructional leadership. While instructional leadership remains the focus for leading teaching and learning in schools, a reform that demands high performing leadership should also include transformational and distributed leadership. These models should not be side-lined in favour of instructional leadership.

Policymakers should take into consideration that high performing school leadership includes and integrates instructional, transformational and distributed leadership models.

Understanding what limits instructional leadership

The author agrees with Harris et al. (2017: 18) that "more detailed, fine-grained empirical work is necessary to test the findings, particularly concerning role tensions and the practical enactment of instructional leadership in a Malaysian context". Instructional leadership is often advocated in Malaysian policy documents. However, evidence from the qualitative phase of this study suggests that the principals quite often have to leave the school to attend official matters organised at various ministerial levels. In addition, the PIMRS survey suggests that principals and teachers agree that '*Maintain high visibility*' was the least enacted instructional leadership practice. Such evidence strongly suggests that the number of times that principals have been away from the school has reduced the amount of time available for principals to carry out instructional practices sufficiently.

Previous research also indicates that principals spend too much time away from school, leaving the supposedly core instructional leadership duties to senior leadership team members (for example Azlin, 2008; Muhamad Latip, 2007; Murni et al., 2016; Nor, Rahman, Nor, Talha, & Razak, 2016; Sharifah et al., 2008). If principals are not visible, and often away from schools to attend meetings called by Ministry officials, this may be at the expense of effective school leadership. Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) maintain that, when principals increase their visibility, especially in matters related to classroom practice, there are clear benefits, such as improved instruction, improved teacher self-efficacy, and improved teacher attitudes toward professional development. Researchers also believe that maintaining high visibility creates opportunities for high quality interactions between staff and students to happen consistently (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, 2010; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003).

However, the findings of this study show that principals are inhibited in fulfilling their instructional duties because they feel obliged to attend many meetings and other official events organised by the Ministry of Education. Due to the “large power distance that… creates respect for authority” (Hallinger, 2010c: 413), principals in Malaysia adhere to any calls for meetings, seminars or any other matters that are organised by different departments within the Ministry of Education. This creates a paradox in that principals are not able to fully engage in the prescribed practices of instructional leadership due to external events which they are required to attend.

The implication of this finding is that it is important to enable instructional leadership practices to be practiced by principals without unnecessary distractions from the administrators or policymakers. Leithwood et al. (2004) believe that two-way accountability between school leaders, and those from different levels of the organisation (in the case of this study: the many levels and departments within the Ministry of Education), is important and must be emphasised. Hence, while principals are accountable for implementing the policy regarding instructional practices; the district, state and ministry, in return, are also accountable for the “inputs and needs of the principals” (Leithwood et al., 2004: 29).

Limitations

As with other research, this study has several limitations. Firstly, it focused exclusively on the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing in selected Malaysian secondary schools. The sampled schools are advantaged when compared to the majority of schools in Malaysia. This includes a favourable student intake and substantial extra funding awarded by the Ministry of Education. This means that the findings cannot be generalised to the wider population of Malaysian schools.

This study agrees with Muijs (2011: 56) who maintains that longitudinal studies of school leadership are rare. While the findings are important for policymakers and practitioners, this research relied largely upon a cross-sectional mix of surveys and interviews, and a single engagement with case study contexts. Deeper insights would have been possible with a longitudinal study, utilising observations, recurring interviews, and surveys, to track changes in leadership practices over a significant period of time.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study has identified leadership practices enacted by principals who are deemed high performing. The identification of these practices could be a starting point for future studies that would adopt a similar focus and goals, to understand principals' leadership practices. The core leadership practices identified in this study hold promise for the purpose of benchmarking. Because this study was carried out in the light of the MEB, future studies might able to assess whether the leadership practices of the principals change over time by referencing this study as a potential benchmark.

Leadership research is often concentrated in secondary schools (Abbott & Bush, 2013). Hence, another potential study could expand the research to examine the leadership practices of Excellent Principals, and recipients of the New Deals award, in primary schools. It would also be valuable to conduct a study to compare the leadership practices of principals who are deemed high performing and working in high performing schools, with peers serving in schools facing challenging circumstances. This may be useful in establishing whether the core leadership practices enacted by the high performing principals also apply in other settings. If not, this may provide an explanation for the differential outcomes of these schools.

This mixed methods study only measures the presence, and frequency, of how instructional, transformational and distributed leadership are carried out by the principals. Future research could be carried out to identify any links between those practices and teachers' organisational commitment and efficacy. In addition, the adoption of the LPI and PIMRS is considered beneficial in exploring how high performing principals enact specific leadership practices. Significantly, it paves the way for future research to adopt the two surveys in order to understand and compare the leadership practices of principals from multiple leadership models.

Overview

Hallinger (2003) argues that normative leadership conceptions of what is most suitable or correct must be supported with evidence. This study has successfully identified the core leadership practices of high performing leaders in Malaysian secondary schools. The research shows that the leadership practices of the principals who are deemed high performing closely match the features of distributed and transformational leadership but that there is moderate evidence for instructional leadership practices.

As noted earlier, there is no clear definition of high performing leadership in the MEB. The empirical evidence, drawn from multiple data sets, enabled the author to develop and synthesise a model of core leadership practices claimed to be performed by the principals, and supported to some extent by their teachers, thus addressing a gap in understanding as to what is meant by high performing leadership in Malaysia. While the author acknowledges the limitations of the sample size, inevitable within the constraints of a doctoral study, the key findings are helpful for practitioners and policymakers in understanding the successful leadership practices of high performing Malaysian principals.

The three leadership models that dominated the literature and research on school leadership were examined in this study. However, results of the study indicate that no single set of leadership practices can be discerned to be effective to the exclusion of the others. This study agrees that, when compared to transformational and distributed leadership, principals who are deemed high performing in this study show modest enactment of instructional leadership. Nonetheless, while it is acknowledged that the centralised and highly hierarchical nature of the Malaysian education system could limit the enactment of instructional leadership, this study significantly shows that instructional leadership is highly evident in the practices if it is strategically combined with other leadership models. Hence, the reliance on instructional leadership alone, especially in the Malaysian education context, might not be viable; the combination of other leadership approaches as highlighted in Figure 7.1 in the previous chapter significantly shows that instructional leadership could be enacted consistently.

The core leadership practices identified and presented in Figure 7.1 is useful as they provide a conceptual and practical guide to current and future principals. The author believes that once principals have access to that knowledge-base of key leadership practices that are important and effective, they will know what the focus of their leadership efforts needs to be to improve and sustain the performance of their school.

References

Abbott, I., & Bush, T. (2013). Establishing and maintaining high-performing leadership teams: a primary perspective. *Education 3-13: International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education, 41*(6), 586 - 602.

Abdul Ghani, K. A., & Anandan, K. (2009). Pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasi sekolah dan efikasi kolektif guru terhadap komitmen kualiti pengajaran. In S. Som & M. Siti Anidah (Eds.), *Seleksi prosiding Seminar Nasional Pengurusan dan Kepimpinan Pendidikan 2001-2010* (pp. 169-184). Genting Highlands: Institut Aminuddin Baki.

Anderson, S. E., Moore, S., & Sun, J. (2009). Positioning the principals in patterns of school leadership distribution. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascall, & T. Strauss (Eds.), *Distributed Leadership According to the Evidence* (pp. 111 - 136). New York: Routledge.

Ang, J. J. E., & Abdul Razak, A. (2013). Kepimpinan instruksional. In K. P. Malaysia (Ed.), *Melindungi Masa Instruksional (MMI) Kembali Kepada Yang Asas : Pemimpin Instruksional, Guru Mengajar dan Murid Belajar* (pp. 55-64). Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Antonakis, J., Schriesheim, C. A., Donovan, J. A., Gopalakrishna-Pillai, K., Pellegrini, E. K., & Rossomme, J. L. (2004). Methods for studying leadership. In J. Antonakis, A. T. Cianciolo, & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *The nature of leadership* (pp. 48-70). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Aziah, I., & Abdul Ghani, K. A. (2014). Amalan autonomi dan akauntabiliti di sekolah berautonomi dan impaknya terhadap kesediaan guru. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan, 1*(1), 41-52.

Aziah, I., Abdul Ghani, K. A., & Abdullah, S. (2009). Amalan kepimpinan transformasi dan kapasiti kepimpinan di dua buah sekolah kluster di Malaysia. In S. Som & M. Siti Anidah (Eds.), *Seleksi prosiding Seminar Nasional Pengurusan dan Kepimpinan Pendidikan 2001-2010* (pp. 111-121). Genting Highlands: Institut Aminuddin Baki.

Azlin, N. M. (2008). Peranan pengurusan pengetua sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia, 10*, 119-144.

Azuraida, S., & Oliver, R. (2016). Elementary school leaders ' perceptions of their roles in managing school curriculum: A case study. *Educational Research and Reviews, 11*(18), 1785-1789.

Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Harian. (2013). Pemilihan pengetua cemerlang. Retrieved from http://web.moe.gov.my/bpsh/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75&Itemid=91

Bachman, L.F. (2009). Generalizability and research use arguments. In K. Erciken & W. Roth (Eds.), *Generalizing from Educational Research: Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Polarization* (pp. 127 – 148). Routledge: New York.

Baharun, I. (2014). *Anugerah Tawaran Baru Bai'ah dan masalah yang dihadapi di sekolah rendah daerah Muar.* (Master of Education), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Baru.

Bajunid, I. A. (1996). Preliminary explorations of indigenous perspectives of educational management: The evolving Malaysian experience. *Journal of Educational Administration, 34*(5), 50-73.

Bajunid, I. A. (2004). Professional development of school principals for revitalizing schooling in Malaysia. In Y. C. Cheng, K. W. Chow, & M. M. C. Mok (Eds.), *Reform of Teacher Education in the Asia-Pacific in the New Millennium* (pp. 197—217). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Bajunid, I. A. (2008a). The Development of Educational Leaders in Malaysia: The Creation of a Professional Community. In D. Johnson & R. Maclean (Eds.), *Teaching: Professionalization, Development and Leadership* (pp. 215-232). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Bajunid, I. A. (2008b). Leadership for learning in Malaysia: understanding the problems and possibilities. In J. MacBeath & Y. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for Learning: International Perspectives*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Barber, M., Whelan, F., & Clark, M. (2010). *Capturing the leadership premium: How the world's top school systems are building leadership capacity for the future*. London: McKinsey

Barker, B. (2007). The leadership paradox: can school leaders transform student outcomes? *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 18*(1), 21-43.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: The Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*. New York: Free Press.

Behling, O., & Law, K. S. (2000). *Translating questionnaires and other research instruments: Problems and solutions*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Belchetz, D., & Leithwood, K. (2007). Successful leadership: Does context matter and if so, how? In K. Leithwood & C. Day (Eds.), *Successful Principal Leadership* *in Times of Change: An International Perspective* (pp. 117-137). Dordrecht: Springer.

Bendikson, L., Robinson, V. M. J., & Hattie, J. (2012). Principal instructional leadership and secondary school performance. *set, 1*, 2 - 8.

Bennett, N., & Anderson, L. (2003). Introduction: Rethinking educational leadership – challenging the conventions. In N. Bennet & L. Anderson (Eds.), *Rethinking Educational Leadership – Challenging The Conventions* (pp. 1 - 8). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bennett, N., Wise, C., Woods, P., & Harvey, J. A. (2003). *Distributed leadership*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Bergman, M. M. (2008). Introduction: whither mixed methods? In M. M. Bergman (Ed.), *Advances in Mixed Methods Research: Theories and Applications*. London: SAGE.

BERNAMA. (2009, 16 May 2009). Tambahan 2,141 Kuota Guru dan Pengetua Cemerlang - Muhyiddin. *BERNAMA*.

Berry, S. (2007). Leadership practices inventory. In R. A. Reynolds, R. Voods, & J. D. Baker (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Electronic Surveys and Measurements*. Hershey, PA: Idea Group.

Bity Salwana, A., Ahmad Basri, M. Y., Ramlee, M., & Mohammed Sani, I. (2010). Analisis kompetensi pengetua berdasarkan kualiti peribadi , pengetahuan , kemahiran dan amalan dalam bidang pengurusan sekolah menengah Malaysia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia, 35*(2), 31-41.

Biesta, G. J.J. & Burbules, N.C. (2003). *Pragmatism and Educational Research*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.: Lanham.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2000). Effective instructional leadership: Teachers' perspectives on how principals promote teaching and learning in schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 130-141.

Blase, J., Blase, J., & Phillips, D. Y. (2010). *Handbook of school improvement: How high-performing principals create high performing schools*. Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin.

Boberg, J. E., & Bourgeois, S. J. (2016). The effects of integrated transformational leadership on achievement. *Journal of Educational Administration, 54*(3), 357-374.

Bolden, R. (2011). Distributed leadership in organizations: a review of theory and research. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 13*(3), 251 - 269.

Bolden, R., Petrov, G., & Gosling, J. (2009). Distributed leadership in higher education: rhetoric and reality. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 37*(2), 257-277.

Bottoms, G., O'Neill, K., Fry, B., & Hill, D. (2003). *Good Principals are the Key to Successful Schools: Six Strategies to Prepare More Good Principals*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1982). *The competent manager: A model for effective performance*: John Wiley & Sons.

Branch, G., Hanushek, E., & Rivkin, S. (2012). *Estimating the Effect of Leaders on Public Sector Productivity: The Case of School Principals*. Washington: CALDER.

Brannen, J. (2009). Mixing methods: the entry of qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research process. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *8*(3), 173 – 184.

Browning, P. (2014). Why trust the head? Key practices for transformational school leaders to build a purposeful relationship of trust. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 17*(4), 388-409.

Brundrett, M., & Rhodes, C. (2014). *Researching Educational Leadership and Management: Methods and Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

Bryman, A. (2004). Qualitative research on leadership: a critical but appreciative review. *The Leadership Quarterly, 15*(2004), pp. 729 - 769.

Bryman, A. (2006a). Paradigm peace and the implications for quality. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 9*(2), pp. 111 - 126.

Bryman, A. (2006b). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done? *Qualitative research, 6*(1), 97-113.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers Inc.

Bush, T. (2007). Educational leadership and management: theory, policy and practice. *South African Journal of Education, 27*(3), 391 - 406.

Bush, T. (2008a). From management to leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 36*(2), 271-288.

Bush, T. (2008b). *Leadership and Management Development in Education*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bush, T. (2009). Leadership development and school improvement: contemporary issues in leadership development. *Educational Review, 61*(4), 375-389.

Bush, T. (2011). *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management* (4th ed.). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bush, T. (2004). *The performance of leaders: Aims, impact and development*. Keynote paper presented at the British Educational Leadership, Management and Administration Society's Annual Conference, Stone, UK, October. Retrieved January 23, 2006, from http://www.shu.ac.uk/ bemas/bush2004.html

Bush, T. (2012). Authenticity in research: reliability, validity and triangulation. In A. R. J. Briggs, M. Coleman, & M. Morrison (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bush, T. (2014a). Applying distributed leadership across contexts. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(5), 601-602. doi:doi:10.1177/1741143214541369

Bush, T. (2014b). Instructional and transformational leadership: alternative and complementary models? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(4), 443-444.

Bush, T. (2014c). Instructional leadership in centralised contexts: Rhetoric or reality? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(1), 3-5.

Bush, T. (2015a). Organisation Theory in Education: How does it Inform School Leadership? *Journal of Organizational Theory in Education, 1*(1), 35-47.

Bush, T. (2015b). Understanding instructional leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 43*(4), 487-489.

Bush, T., Abbott, I., Glover, D., Goodall, J., & Smith, R. (2012). *Establishing and developing high performing leadership teams*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2002). *School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2003). *School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2004). *Leadership Development: Evidence and Beliefs*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2012). Distributed leadership in action: leading high-performing leadership teams in English schools. *School Leadership & Management, 32*(1), 21-36.

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2014). School leadership models: what do we know? *School Leadership & Management, 34*(5), 553-571.

Bush, T., & Middlewood, D. (2005). *Leading and managing people in education*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Cameron, R. (2009). A sequential mixed model research design: Design, analytical and display issues. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches, 3*(2), 140-152.

Chan, Y. F., & Sidhu, G. K. (2009). Leadership characteristics of an excellent principal in Malaysia. *International Education Studies, 2*(4), 106 - 116.

Cheong, C. Y. (2000). The characteristics of Hong Kong school principals' leadership: the influence of societal culture. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 20*(2), 68 - 86.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education* (7 ed.). Oxon: Routledge.

Coldren, A. F., & Spillane, J. P. (2007). Making connections to teaching practice. *Educational Policy, 21*(2), 369-396.

Coleman, M. (2012). Interviews. In A. R. Briggs, M. Morrison, & M. Coleman (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (Third ed., pp. 255-269). London: SAGE Publications.

Coleman, M., & Earley, P. (2005). *Leadership and Management in Education: Cultures, Change and Context*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Condon, C., & Clifford, M. (2012). *Measuring principal performance: How rigorous are commonly used principals performance assessment instruments?* Illinois: American Institute for Research.

Corrigan, J. (2013). Distributed leadership: rhetoric or reality? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 35*(1), 66-71.

Court, M. (2007). Changing and/or reinscribing gendered discourses of team leadership in education? *Gender and Education, 19*(5), 607-626.

Cramer, D., & Howitt, D. (2004). *The Sage Dictionary of Statistics: A Practical Resource for Students in the Social Sciences*. London: SAGE.

Crawford, M. (2012). Solo and distributed leadership: definitions and dilemmas. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 40*(5), 610 - 620.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (4 ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed)*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Day, C., Gu, Q., & Sammons, P. (2016). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: How successful school leaders use transformational and instructional strategies to make a difference. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 52*(2), 221-258.

Day, C., & Gurr, D. (2014). *Leading schools successfully: Stories from the field*. London: Routledge.

Day, C., Harris, A., & Hadfield, M. (2001a). Challenging the orthodoxy of effective school leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education: Theory and Practice, 4*(1), 39-56.

Day, C., Harris, A., & Hadfield, M. (2001b). Grounding knowledge of schools in stakeholder realities: a multi-perspective study of effective school leaders. *School Leadership & Management, 21*(1), 19-42.

Day, C., & Leithwood, K. (2007). *Successful Principal Leadership in Times of Change: An International Perspective* (Vol. 5). Dordrecht: Springer.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Gu, Q., & Brown, E. (2010). *10 strong claims about successful school leadership*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Gu, Q., . . . Kington, A. (2009). *The Impact of School Leadership on Pupil Outcomes: The Final Report*. Nottingham: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Day, C., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., Hopkins, D., Gu, Q., Brown, E. J., & Ahtaridou, E. (2011). *Successful school leadership: linking with learning and achievement*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Dean, D. R. (2007). Thinking globally: the National College of School Leadership: a case study in distributed leadership development. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education, 2*(1), 1-62.

Denzin, N. K. (2012). Triangulation 2.0. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 6*(2), 80 - 88.

Department of Education and Skills. (2011). *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Among Children and Young People 2011 - 2020*. Dublin: Department of Education and Skills.

Diamond, J. B., & Spillane, J. P. (2016). School leadership and management from a distributed perspective: A 2016 retrospective and prospective. *Management in Education, 30*(4), 147-154.

Dimmock, C. (2007). Cross-cultural differences in interpreting and conducting research. In A. R. J. Briggs & M. Coleman (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (pp. 53-68). London: SAGE Publications.

Dimmock, C., & Goh, J. (2011). Transformative pedagogy, leadership and school organisation for the twenty-first-century knowledge-based economy: the case of Singapore. *School Leadership & Management, 31*(3), 215-234.

Dimmock, C., & Walker, A. D. (2000). Developing comparative and international educational leadership and management: A cross-cultural model. *School Leadership & Management, 20*(2), 143-160.

Dinham, S. (2005). Principal leadership for outstanding educational outcomes. *Journal of Educational Administration, 43*(4), 338-356.

Drysdale, L., Goode, H., & Gurr, D. (2009). An Australian model of successful school leadership: Moving from success to sustainability. *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*(6), 697-708.

Eacott, S. (2017). A social epistemology for educational administration and leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration and History, 49*(3), 196-214.

Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*. Washington: The Albert Shanker Institute.

English, F. W. (2008). *The Art of Educational Leadership: Balancing Performance and Accountability*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Feilzer, M. Y. (2010). Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm. Journal of mixed methods research, 4(1), 6 - 16.

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 1 - 5.

Fields, D. L., & Herold, D. M. (1997). Using the Leadership Practices Inventory to measure transformational and transactional leadership. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 57*(4), 569 - 579.

Fitzgerald, T. (2012). Documents and documentary analysis. In A. R. Briggs, M. Morrison, & M. Coleman (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (Third ed., pp. 296-308). London: SAGE Publications.

Flick, U. (2007). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education (8th edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Fromm, G., Hallinger, P., Volante, P., & Wang, W. C. (2017). Validating a Spanish version of the PIMRS: application in national and cross-national research on instructional leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 45*(3), 419-444.

Fullan, M. (2011). *Choosing the wrong drivers for whole system reform*. Melbourne: Centre for Strategic Education.

Fullan, M. (2014). *Principal : Three Keys to Maximizing Impact*. Somerset, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Garza, E., Murakami-Ramalho, E., & Merchant, B. (2011). Leadership Succession and Successful Leadership: The Case of Laura Martinez. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 10*(4), 428-443.

Geijsel, F., Sleegers, P., Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2003). Transformational leadership effects on teachers' commitment and effort toward school reform. *Journal of Educational Administration, 41*(3), 228-256.

Ghafar, M. N., & Arbak, T. (2008). Kepimpinan yang efektif. In Y. Azizi, H. Shahrin, A. G. Mohamed Najib, & Y. Boon (Eds.), *Isu-isu Kepengetuaan dan Pengurusan Sekolah*. Johor Bahru: UTM Press.

Ghavifekr, S., Lim, A., Hee, F. L., & Tan, M. C. (2014). Head of the departments as transformational leaders in schools: Issues and challenges. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management, 2*(3), 119-139.

Gill, R. (2011). *Theory and practice of leadership*. London: SAGE Publications.

Gold, A., Evans, J., Earley, P., Halpin, D., & Collarbone, P. (2003). Principled principals? Values-driven leadership: evidence from ten case studies of 'outstanding' school leaders. *Educational Management & Administration, 31*(2), 127 - 138.

Grissom, J., Loeb, S., & Master, B. (2013). Effective instructional time use for school leaders: Longitudinal evidence from observations of principals. *Educational Researcher, 42*(8), 433-444.

Gronn, P. (2002). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *The Leadership Quarterly, 13*(4), 423-451.

Gronn, P. (2010). The educational leader's new work. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 852-856). Oxford: Elsevier.

Guest, G., Macqueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE.

Gumus, S., & Akcaoglu, M. (2013). Instructional leadership in Turkish primary schools: an analysis of teachers' perceptions and current policy. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41*(3), 289-302.

Gurr, D. (2002). Transformational leadership characteristics in primary and secondary school principals. *Leading and Managing, 8*(1), 78-99.

Gurr, D. (2015). A model of successful school leadership from the international successful school principalship project. *Societies, 5*(1), 136 - 150.

Gurr, D., & Day, C. (2014). Thinking about leading schools. In C. Day & D. Gurr (Eds.), *Leading Schools Successfully* (pp. 194-208). London: Routledge.

Hairon, S., & Goh, J. W. (2015). Pursuing the elusive construct of distributed leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 43*(5), 693-718. doi:doi:10.1177/1741143214535745

Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 33*(3), 329 - 352.

Hallinger, P. (2005). Instructional leadership and the school principal: A passing fancy that refuses to fade away. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 4*(3), 221 - 239.

Hallinger, P. (2007). *Research on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership: retrospect and prospect.* Paper presented at the ACER Research Conference, Melbourne.

Hallinger, P. (2008). *Methodologies for studying school leadership: A review of 25 years of research using the principal instructional management rating scale*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York.

Hallinger, P. (2009). *Leadership for 21st Century Schools: from Instructional Leadership to Leadership for Learning*. Hong Kong: The Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Hallinger, P. (2010a). Collaborative leadership and school improvement: understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning. *School Leadership & Management, 30*(2), 95-110.

Hallinger, P. (2010b). *Lessons from research on leadership for learning: Yesterday, today and tomorrow*. Paper presented at the Hong Kong School Principals' Conference 2010, The Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Hallinger, P. (2010c). Making education reform happen: is there an 'Asian' way? *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation, 30*(5), 401-418.

Hallinger, P. (2011a). Developing a knowledge base for educational leadership and management in East Asia. *School Leadership & Management, 31*(4), 305-320.

Hallinger, P. (2011b). Leadership for learning: lessons from 40 years of empirical research. *Journal of Educational Administration, 49*(2), 125 - 142.

Hallinger, P. (2011c). A review of three decades of doctoral studies using the principal instructional management rating scale: A lens on methodological progress in educational leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 47* (2), 271-306.

Hallinger, P. (2012). *A data-driven approach to assess and develop instructional leadership with the PIMRS*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.

Hallinger, P., & Bryant, D. (2013a). Accelerating knowledge production on educational leadership and management in East Asia: a strategic analysis. *School Leadership & Management, 33*(3), 202-223.

Hallinger, P., & Bryant, D. (2013b). Mapping the terrain of educational leadership and management in East Asia. *Journal of Educational Administration, 51*(5), 618-637.

Hallinger, P., & Bryant, D. (2013c). Review of research publications on educational leadership and management in Asia: a comparative analysis of three regions. *Oxford Review of Education, 39*(3), 307-328.

Hallinger, P., & Chen, J. (2015). Review of research publications on educational leadership and management in Asia: a comparative analysis of research topics and methods, 1995-2012. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 43*(1), 5-27.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (1996). Reassessing the Principal's Role in School Effectiveness. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 32*(1), 5-44.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2002). What do you call people with visions? The role of vision, mission and goals in school leadership and improvement. In K. Leithwood & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Second International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration (Part One)*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Springer Science+Business Media.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2010a). Collaborative leadership and school improvement: understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning. *School Leadership & Management, 30*(2), 95-110.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2010b). Leadership for learning: Does collaborative leadership make a difference in school improvement? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 38*(6), 654-678.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. H. (2011). Conceptual and methodological issues in studying school leadership effects as a reciprocal process. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice, 22*(2), 149 - 173.

Hallinger, P., & Huber, S. (2012). School leadership that makes a difference: international perspectives. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 23*(4), 359-367. doi:10.1080/09243453.2012.681508

Hallinger, P., & Lee, M. (2012). A global study of the practice and impact of distributed instructional leadership in International Baccalaureate (IB) schools. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 11*(4), 477-495.

Hallinger, P., & Lee, M. (2014). Mapping instructional leadership in Thailand: Has education reform impacted principal practice? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 42*(1), 6 - 29.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1985). Assessing the instructional leadership behaviour of principals. *The Elementary School Journal, 86*(2), 217 - 248.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (2013). Running on Empty? Finding the Time and Capacity to Lead Learning. *NASSP Bulletin, 97*(1), 5-21.

Hallinger, P., Taraseina, P., & Miller, J. (1994). Assessing the Instructional leadership of secondary school principals in Thailand. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 5*(4), 321-348.

Hallinger, P., & Walker, A. (2017). Leading learning in Asia - emerging empirical insights from five societies. *Journal of Educational Administration, 55*(2), 130-146.

Hallinger, P., Wang, W.-C., & Chen, C.-W. (2013). Assessing the measurement properties of the principal instructional management rating scale: a meta-analysis of reliability studies. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 49*(2), 272 - 309.

Hargreaves, A., & Harris, A. (2011). *Performance beyond expectations*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Hargreaves, A., & Harris, A. (2015). High performance leadership in unusually challenging educational circumstances. *Eesti Haridusteaduste Ajakiri, 3*(1), 28.

Harris, A. (2004). Distributed Leadership and School Improvement Leading or Misleading? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 32*(1), 11-24.

Harris, A. (2005). Reflections on distributed leadership. *Management in Education, 19*(2), 10-12.

Harris, A. (2008). *Distributed school leadership: Developing tomorrow's leaders*. Oxon: Routledge.

Harris, A. (2009). Distributed leadership: what we know. In A. Harris (Ed.), *Distributed Leadership: Different Perspectives*. London: Springer.

Harris, A. (2010). Effective leadership in challenging schools. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 777-782). Oxford: Elsevier.

Harris, A. (2012). Distributed leadership: implications for the role of the principal. *Journal of Management Development, 31*(1), 7 - 17.

Harris, A. (2013). Distributed leadership: Friend or foe? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41*(5), 545-554.

Harris, A., & DeFlaminis, J. (2016). Distributed leadership in practice: evidence, misconceptions and possibilities. *Management in Education, 30*(4), 141-146.

Harris, A., Jones, M., & Adams, D. (2016). Qualified to lead? A comparative, contextual and cultural view of educational policy borrowing. *Educational Research, 58*(2), 166-178.

Harris, A., Jones, M., Cheah, K. S. L., Devadason, E., & Adams, D. (2017). Exploring principals' instructional leadership practices in Malaysia: insights and implications. *Journal of Educational Administration, 55*(2), 207-221.

Harris, A., Jones, M. S., Adams, D., Perera, C. J., & Sharma, S. (2014). High-performing education systems in Asia: leadership art meets implementation science. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 23*(4), 861-869.

Heck, R. H., & Hallinger, P. (2005). The Study of Educational Leadership and Management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 229-244. doi:doi:10.1177/1741143205051055

Heck, R. H., & Hallinger, P. (2014). Modeling the longitudinal effects of school leadership on teaching and learning. *Journal of Educational Administration, 52*(5), 653-681.

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2010). *Mixed methods research: merging theory with practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Hewson, C. (2006). Mixed methods research. In V. Jupp (Ed.), *The Sage dictionary of social research methods*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Hewson, C. (2008). Internet-mediated research as an emergent method and its potential role in facilitating mixed methods research. In S.N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Handbook of Emergent Methods*. The Guilford Press: New York.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2008). *Educational Administration: Theory, Research and Practice* (Eight ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Hoyle, E., & Wallace, M. (2007). Educational reform: an ironic perspective. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 35*(1), 9-25.

Huber, S. (2004). School leadership and leadership development: Adjusting leadership theories and development programs to values and the core purpose of school. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(6), 669-684.

Hussein, H. A. (2012). *Mission of public education in Malaysia; the challenge of transformation*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.

Hussein, H. A. (2013a). Developing leadership competencies of teachers and principals: case of Malaysia. In A. G. Muhammad Faizal, M. R. Norfariza, M. Afshari, & A. Ranee (Eds.), *Educational Management in Malaysia* (pp. 55 - 72). Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press.

Hussein, H. A. (2013b). Transformation of Malaysian education: strategic approaches and development. In M. F. A. Ghani, N. M. Radzi, A. Ranee, & M. Afshari (Eds.), *Educational management in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press

Hussein, H. A. (2014a). Cabaran transformasi pendidikan awam Malaysia. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Pendidikan, 15*, 14-42.

Hussein, H. A. (2014b). Implementation of strategic education policy plan at micro-level contexts: management and leadership challenges. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management, 2*(2), 1 - 21.

Ibrahim, M. S., & Wahab, J. L. A. (2012). *Kepimpinan Pendidikan*. Bangi: Penerbit UKM.

Ingvarson, L. (2010). School leadership standards In E. Baker & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 768-776). Oxford: Elsevier.

Jabatan Perdana Menteri. (1999). *Peraturan-peraturan bagi menjalankan penyelidikan di Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Jabatan Perdana Menteri.

Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam. (2005). *Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bilangan 6 Tahun 2005 - Dasar Latihan Sumbaer Manusia Sektor awam*. Putrajaya: Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam.

Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam. (2010). *Buku maklumat skim perkhidmatan pada 1 Januari 2010*. Putrajaya: Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam.

Jacobson, S. (2011). Leadership effects on student achievement and sustained school success. *International Journal of Educational Management, 25*(1), 33-44.

Jacobson, S., & Day, C. (2007). The International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP): An overview of the project, the case studies and their contexts. *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM)), 35*(3), 3-10.

Jamallulail, A. W., Aida Hanim, A. H., Surayati, Z., & Md Fuad, M. R. (2013). The relationship between headteachers' distributed leadership practices and teachers' motivation in national primary schools. *Asian Social Science, 9*(16), 161-167.

Jamelaa, B. A., & Jainabee, M. K. (2011a). Amalan kepimpinan instruksional dalam kalangan pengetua sekolah menengah di negeri Pahang: satu kajian kualitatif. *Journal of Edupress, 1*, 1-13.

Jamelaa, B. A., & Jainabee, M. K. (2011b). Instructional leadership and attitude towards organizational change among secondary schools principal in Pahang, Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 15*(2011), 3304-3309.

Jamilah, A., Yusof, B., Najib, A., Hanifah, J., Norul Huda, I., Sharifah, O., & Shahrin, H. (2017). *Leadership Practices of High Performing Schools Principals in Malaysia*. Paper presented at the International Conference of Applied Counselling and Psychology, Johor Baharu.

Jensen, B., & Clark, A. (2013). *Confident School Leadership: an East Asian Perspective*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. B. (2008). *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches* (Third ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher, 33*(7), 14-26.

Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2007). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research, 1*(2), 112-133.

Jones, M., Adams, D., Joo, M. T. H., Muniandy, V., Perera, C. J., & Harris, A. (2015). Contemporary challenges and changes: principals leadership practices in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 35*(3), 353-365.

Jones, M., & Harris, A. (2014). Principals leading successful organisational change. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 27*(3), 473 - 485.

Kamaruzaman, M., Norasmah, O., & Siti Rahayah, A. (2009). *Program kelayakan profesional kepengetuaan kebangsaan: sejauh manakah keberkesanannya?* Paper presented at the Seminar Nasional Pengurusan dan Kepimpinan Pendidikan 2009, Genting Highlands.

Kaparou, M., & Bush, T. (2015). Instructional leadership in centralised systems: evidence from Greek high-performing secondary schools. *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation, 35*(3), 321 - 345.

Kaparou, M., & Bush, T. (2016). Instructional leadership in Greek and English outstanding schools. *International Journal of Educational Management, 30*(6), 894 - 912.

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia. (2006). *Pelan Induk Pembangunan Pendidikan 2006 - 2010* Putrajaya: Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia. (2008). *Kad laporan pelaksanaan Pelan Induk Pembangunan Pendidikan 2006 - 2010*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia. (2010). *"Urusan Pemangkuan Pengetua Cemerlang Pegawai Perkhidmatan Pendidikan Siswazah (PPPS) Gred DG54*

Dan JUSA C Secara KUP Tahun 2010." Letter to All Principals. . Putrajaya: Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia. (2012). *Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2013). *Melindungi Masa Instruksional: Kembali kepada yang asas; pemimpin instruksional, guru mengajar dan murid belajar*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2014a). *Garis panduan pelaksanaan pemberian tawaran baharu (New Deals) kepada Pengetua dan Guru Besar berdasarkan pencapaian berasaskan penilaian*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2014b). *Pekeliling perkhidmatan Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia Bilangan 2 Tahun 2014* (Vol. KP(PP)0137/47 Jld.2 (14)). Putrajaya: Kementerain Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2014c). *Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2014 (Malaysian Educational Statistics)*. Putrajaya: Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2015). *Buku Perangkaan Pendidikan Malaysia 2015 (Malaysian Educational Statistics)*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2017). *"Urusan Pemangkuan Pengetua Cemerlang Pegawai Perkhidmatan Pendidikan Siswazah (PPPS) Gred DG54 Dan JUSA C Secara KUP Tahun 2017." Letter to All Principals.* . Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kemper, E. A., Stringfield, S., & Teddlie, C. (2003). Mixed methods sampling strategies in social science research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.

Ketua Pengarah Pendidikan Malaysia. (1998). *Surat Siaran KPPM Bilangan 5 Tahun 1998*. Pusat Bandar Damansara: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Kondakci, Y., & Sivri, H. (2013). Salient characteristics of high performing Turkish elementary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 52*(2), 254 - 272.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007a). The five practices of exemplary leadership. In M. Fullan (Ed.), *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership*. San Fransisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007b). *The leadership challenge* (4 ed.). San Fransisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2012). *LPI: Leadership practices inventory self* (4 ed.). San Fransisco: John Wiley & Sons.

Lambert, L. (2002). A framework for shared leadership. *Educational Leadership, 59*(8), 37-40.

Lee, M., & Hallinger, P. (2012). National contexts influencing principals' time use and allocation: economic development, societal culture and educational system. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice, 23*(4), 461 - 482.

Leech, D. W., & Fulton, C. R. (2002). *The leadership practices of middle and high school principals* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, Burlington, VT.

Leech, N. L., Dellinger, A. B., Brannagan, K. B., & Tanaka, H. (2010). Evaluating mixed research studies: A mixed methods approach. *Journal of mixed methods research, 4*(1), 17-31. doi:10.1177/1558689809345262

Leithwood, K. (1994). Leadership for school restructuring. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 30*(4), 498-518.

Leithwood, K. (2005). Understanding successful principal leadership: progress on a broken front. *Journal of Educational Administration, 43*(6), 619-629.

Leithwood, K. (2010). Transformational school leadership. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 158-164). Oxford: Elsevier.

Leithwood, K. (2011). Leadership and student learning: what works and how. In J. Robertson & H. Timperley (Eds.), *Leadership and Learning* (pp. 41- 55). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Leithwood, K. (2012). *The Ontario Leadership Framework 2012: With a Discussion of the Research Foundations*. Ontario: The Institute for Education Leadership.

Leithwood, K., Begley, P. T., & Cousins, B. J. (1994). *Developing expert leadership for future schools*. London: Falmer Press.

Leithwood, K., & Day, C. (2007a). Starting with what we know. In K. Leithwood & C. Day (Eds.), *Successful Principal Leadership in Times of Change: An International Perspective*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Leithwood, K., & Day, C. (2007b). What we learned: a broad view. In C. Day & K. Leithwood (Eds.), *Successful principal leadership in times of change*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006a). *Seven strong claims about successful school leadership*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2006b). *Successful school leadership: what it is and how it influences pupil learning?* Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership & Management, 28*(1), 27 - 42.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Strauss, T. (2010). *Leading school turnaround: How successful leaders transform low-performing schools*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Strauss, T. (2013). How to reach high performance. In M. Grogan (Ed.), *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership* (pp. 225-273). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). The effects of transformational leadership on organizational conditions and student engagement with school. *Journal of Educational Administration, 38*(2), 112 - 129.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2005). A review of transformational school leadership research 1996–2005. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 4*(3), 177-199.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2006). Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17*(2), 201-227.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2009). Transformational leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership (2nd edition)*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times*. Buckingham: Open University Press

Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. L. (2004). *Review of research: How leadership influences student learning*. Minnesota: The Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI).

Leithwood, K., Mascall, B., & Strauss, T. (2009). New perspectives on an old idea: a short history of the old idea. In K. Leithwood, B. Mascall, & T. Strauss (Eds.), *Distributed Leadership According to the Evidence* (pp. 1 - 14). New York: Routledge.

Leithwood, K., Mascall, B., Strauss, T., Sacks, R., Memon, N., & Yashkina, A. (2007). Distributing Leadership to Make Schools Smarter: Taking the Ego Out of the System. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 6*(1), 37-67. doi:10.1080/15700760601091267

Leithwood, K., Patten, S., & Jantzi, D. (2010). Testing a Conception of How School Leadership Influences Student Learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 46*(5), 671-706.

Leithwood, K., & Riehl, C. (2003). *What we know about successful school leadership*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Leithwood, K., & Sun, J. (2012). The nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytic review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 48*(3), 387-423.

Leithwood, K., Sun, J., & Pollock, K. (2017). How School Leaders Contribute to Student Success: The Four Paths Framework. Cham: Springer.

Leonard, J. (2010). *Finding the time for instructional leadership: management strategies for strengthening the academic program*. Maryland: R&L Education.

Ling, T. P., Zaidatol Akmaliah, P. L., Asimirin, S., & Fooi, F. S. (2015). The Influence of Transformational School Leadership on Teacher Efficacy in Malaysian Secondary School Teachers. *International Journal of Social Science Research, 3*(2), 73-85.

Liu, S., & Hallinger, P. (2017). Leading teacher learning in China: a mixed methods study of successful school leadership. In K. Leithwood, J. Sun, & K. Pollock (Eds.), *How School Leaders Contribute to Student Success: The Four Paths Framework* (pp. 279-303). Dordrecht: Springer International Publishing.

Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2010). *Methods in educational research: from theory to practice (2nd edition)*. San Fransisco: Jossey Bass.

Lumby, J. (2013). Distributed leadership: The uses and abuses of power. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 41*(5), 581-597.

Lumby, J. (2016). Distributed leadership as fashion or fad. *Management in Education, 30*(4), 161-167.

MacBeath, J. (2005). Leadership as distributed: a matter of practice. *School Leadership and Management, 25*(4), 349-366.

MacBeath, J. (2008). Leadership for learning: exploring similarity and living with difference. In J. MacBeath & Y. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for Learning: International Perspectives* (pp. 1-16). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

MacBeath, J. (2010). Leadership for learning. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (Third ed.). Oxford: Elsevier Ltd.

MacBeath, J., Oduro, G. K., & Waterhouse, J. (2004). *Distributed Leadership in Action: Full report*. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

MacBeath, J., & Townsend, T. (2011). Leadership and learning: Paradox, paradigms and principles. In T. Townsend & J. MacBeath (Eds.), *International Handbook of Leadership for Learning*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Malakolunthu, S. (2007). Education reform implementation in Malaysian schools: challenges for principals. In M.-S. Giannakaki (Ed.), *The Teacher and The Teaching Profession: Current Research and International Issues*. Athens: Athens Institute for Education and Research.

Marks, H. M., & Printy, S. M. (2003). Principal leadership and school performance: an integration of transformational and instructional leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 39*(3), 370-397.

Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School Leadership that Works: from Research to Results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Matthews, P. (2009). *How do school leaders successfully lead learning?* Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Matthews, P., Rea, S., Hill, R., & Gu, Q. (2014). *Freedom to Lead: A Study of Outstanding Primary School Leadership in England*. Nottingham: National College for Teaching & Leadership.

Maxcy, S. J. (2003). Pragmatic threads in mixed methods research in the social sciences: The search for multiple modes of inquiry and the end of the philosophy of formalism. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 51-89). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd.

McEwan, E. K. (2003). *Ten Traits of Highly Effective Principals: From Good to Great Performance*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

McFee, G. (1992). Triangulation in research: two confusions. *Educational Research, 34*(3), 215-219.

Merchant, B., Ärlestig, H., Garza, E., Johansson, O., Murakami ‚Ramalho, E., & Törnsén, M. (2012). Successful school leadership in Sweden and the US: Contexts of social responsibility and individualism. *International Journal of Educational Management, 26*(5), 428-441. doi:doi:10.1108/09513541211240228

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research : a guide to design and implementation*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mertens, D. M. (2012). What Comes First? The Paradigm or the Approach? *Journal of mixed methods research, 6*(4), 255 - 257.

Middlewood, D., & Abbott, I. (2017). *Managing Staff for Improved Performance*. London: Bloomsbury.

Ministry of Education. (2001). *Education Development Plan 2001-2010*. Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education. (2013). *Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013 - 2025 (Preschool to Post-Secondary Education)*. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Ministry of Education. (2014). *Malaysian Education Blueprint Annual Report 2013*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Ministry of Education. (2015). *Malaysian Education Blueprint Annual Report 2014*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Ministry of Education. (2016). *Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025: Annual Report 2015*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Education.

Minor-Rogan, Y., & Jacobson, S. (2014). Her own words: turning around an under-performing school. In C. Day & D. Gurr (Eds.), *Leading school successfully. Stories from the field* (pp. 9-18). Oxon: Routledge.

Mohamad Johdi, S. (2014). Best practice of framing and communicating school goals by principals of cluster secondary schools Malaysia. *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention, 1*(6), 458-466.

Mohd Izham, M. H., Fuziah, M. Y., Norazah, M. N., & Saemah, R. (2011). School as learning organisation: The role of principal's transformational leadership in promoting teacher engagement. *World Applied Sciences Journal, 14*(Special Issue of Innovation and Pedagogy for Diverse Learners), 58-63.

Moos, L., Johansson, O., & Day, C. (2011). *How School Principals Sustain Success over Time International Perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Morrison, M. (2007). What do we mean by educational research? In A. R. Briggs & M. Coleman (Eds.), *Research methods in educational leadership and management* (pp. 13-36). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Morse, J. M., & Niehaus, L. (2009). *Mixed method design: Principles and procedures* (Vol. 4). Wallnut Creek: Left Coast Press Inc.

Mourshed, M., Chijioke, C., & Barber, M. (2010). *How the world's most improved school systems keep getting better*. London: McKinsey

Muhamad Latip. (2007). *Pelaksanaan Kepemimpinan Pengajaran Di Kalangan Pengetua Sekolah*. Paper presented at the Seminar Penyelidikan Institut Perguruan Batu Lintang, Batu Lintang.

Muhamad Latip, & Robiah, S. (2008). Merubah kualiti pengajaran sekolah: Peranan pengetua. *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia, 10*, 71-88.

Muhamad Latip, & Robiah, S. (2009). Sumbangan kepemimpinan pengajaran pengetua terhadap kepuasan kerja guru. *Jurnal Penyelidikan Pendidikan, 11*, 245-266.

Muhammad Faizal, A. G. (2012). The practices of effective schools in the selected excellent Asian schools: a comparative study. *Global Business and Economics Research Journal, 1*(1), 32-44.

Muijs, D. (2004). *Doing Quantitative Research in Education with SPSS* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Muijs, D. (2011). Leadership and organisational performance: from research to prescription? *International Journal of Educational Management, 25*(1), 45-60.

Muijs, D. (2012). Surveys and sampling In A. R. Briggs, M. Morrison, & M. Coleman (Eds.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (Third ed., pp. 150-163). London: SAGE Publications.

Mulford, B. (2003). *School Leaders: Challenging Roles and Impact on Teacher and School Effectiveness*. Paris: Education and Training Policy Division, OECD.

Mulford, B. (2007). Successful school principalship in Tasmania. In C. Day & K. Leithwood (Eds.), *Successful Principal Leadership in Times of Change* (Vol. 5, pp. 17 - 38). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer.

Mulford, B. (2008). *The leadership challenge: improving learning in schools*. Victoria: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Mulford, B. (2010). Recent developments in the field of educational leadership: the challenge of complexity. In A. Hargreaves, A. Lieberman, M. Fullan, & D.

Hopkins (Eds.), *Second International Handbook Of Educational Change*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Mulford, B., Kendall, D., Ewington, J., Edmunds, B., Kendall, L., & Silins, H. (2008). Successful principalship of high-performance schools in high-poverty communities. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(4), 461 - 480.

Mulford, B., Kendall, L., & Kendall, D. (2004). Administrative practice and high school students' perceptions of their school, teachers and performance. *Journal of Educational Administration, 42*(1), 78-97.

Mulford, B., & Silins, H. (2003). Leadership for organisational learning and improved student outcomes: what do we know? *Cambridge Journal of Education, 33*(2), 175-195.

Murni, M. Y., Mohd Helmi, A. B., Hasny, Y. Z., Zaidatol Akmaliah, L. P., Fooi, F. S., & Ramli, B. (2016). The ideology of instructional leadership among principals on student academic achievement. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research, 2*(3).

Murphy, J., Elliott, S. N., Goldring, E., & Porter, A. (2010). Leaders for productive schools. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 695-703). Oxford: Elsevier.

Neumerski, C. M. (2012). Rethinking instructional leadership, a review: what do we know about principal, teacher, and coach instructional leadership, and where should we go from here? *Educational Administration Quarterly, 49*(2), 310 - 347.

Newby, P. (2014). *Research Methods for Education (Second Edition)*. Oxon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Ng, P. T. (2008). Education policy and reality gap: a reflection. *International Journal of Educational Management, 22*(6), 595-602.

Niemann, R., & Kotze, T. (2006). The relationship between leadership practices and organisational culture: an education management perspective. *South African Journal of Education, 26*(4), 609 - 624.

Noman, M., Awang Hashim, R., & Shaik Abdullah, S. (2016). Contextual leadership practices: The case of a successful school principal in Malaysia. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 1-17.

Nor, M. M., Rahman, M. N. A., Nor, N. M., Talha, N. a. M., & Razak, A. Z. A. (2016). Amalan kepimpinan pengajaran untuk penambahbaikan sekolah: Retrospeksi guru besar sekolah berprestasi tinggi. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan, 3*(3), 44-53.

Norlia, G., & Jamil, A. (2005). *Kajian Pengetua Kanan: Satu Penilaian.* Paper presented at the Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pengurusan dan Kepimpinan Pendidikan kali ke-13 Institut Aminuddin Baki.

Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (7th ed.). London: SAGE Publications.

Nurul Aini, F. (2012). *Amalan kepimpinan instruksional dalam pencapaian sub-NKRA Pendidikan, tawaran baru kepada Guru Besar Sekolah-sekolah Kebangsaan daerah Kulaijaya.* (Master of Education), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Baru.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. *Qualitative Report, 12*(2), 281-316.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2004). Enhancing the interpretation of " significant " findings: The role of mixed methods research. *The Qualitative Report, 9*(4), 770-792.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2005). On becoming a pragmatic researcher: The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 8*(5), 375 - 387.

Pashiardis, P., & Johansson, O. (2016). Introduction: What is successful and effective school leadership. In P. Pashiardis & O. Johansson (Eds.), *Successful School Leadership: International Perspectives* (pp. 1-12). London: Bloomsbury.

Pearce, C. (2004). The future of leadership: Combining vertical and shared leadership to transform knowledge work. *The Academy of Management Executive, 18*(1), 47-57.

PEMANDU. (2010). *Government transformation programme - the roadmap*. Putrajaya: Prime Minister's Department.

PEMANDU. (2011). *Government transformation programme annual report 2011*. Putrajaya: PEMANDU, PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT.

PEMANDU. (2012a). *Government transformation programme annual report 2012*. Putrajaya: PEMANDU, Prime Minister's Department.

PEMANDU. (2012b). *Government Transformation Programme the roadmap 2.0: Catalysing transformation for a brighter future*. Putrajaya: Jabatan Perdana Menteri.

PEMANDU. (2013). About PEMANDU. Retrieved from http://www.pemandu.gov.my/about.aspx

PEMANDU. (2014). *Government Transformation Programme Annual Report 2013*. Putrajaya.

Perera, C. J., Adams, D., & Muniandy, V. (2016). Principal preparation and professional development in Malaysia: Exploring key influences and current practice. In A. Harris & M. S. Jones (Eds.), *Leading futures: a global perspectives on educational leadership* (pp. 125-137). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Printy, S. M., Marks, H. M., & Bowers, A. J. (2009). Integrated leadership: how principals and teachers share transformational and instructional influence. *Journal of School Leadership, 19*(September 2009), 504-532.

Prior, L. (2008). Documents and action. In P. Alasuutari, L. Bickman, & J. Brannen (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Social Research Methods* (pp. 479 - 492). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Purinton, T. (2013). Is instructional leadership possible? What leadership in other knowledge professions tells us about contemporary constructs of school leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 16*(3), 279-300.

Quah, C. S. (2011). Instructional leadership among principals of secondary schools in Malaysia. *Educational Research, 2*(12), 1784 - 1800.

Quin, J., Deris, A., Bischoff, G., & Johnson, J. (2015). Comparison of transformational leadership practices: implications for school districts and principal preparation. *Journal of Leadership Education, 14*(3), 71-85.

Quinn, D. M. (2002). The impact of principal leadership behaviors on instructional practice and student engagement. *Journal of Educational Administration, 40*(5), 447-467.

Rahimah, H. A., Ali Jubran, S., & Simin, G. (2017). Leadership dimensions and creativity traits of Islamic schools principals: A quantitative analysis. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management, 5*(1), 29-50.

Riches, C. (1997). Managing for people and performance. In T. Bush & D. Middlewood (Eds.), *Managing people in education* (pp. 15-30). London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Riley, K., & MacBeath, J. (2003). Effective leaders and effective schools. In N. Bennett, M. Crawford, & M. Cartwright (Eds.), *Effective Educational Leadership* (pp. 173-185). London: SAGE.

Ritchie, J., & Spencer, L. (1994). Qualitative data analysis for applied policy research. In A. Bryman & R. G.Burgess (Eds.), *Analyzing Qualitative Data*. London: Routledge.

Robinson, V. M. J. (2006). Putting education back into educational leadership. *Leading & Managing, 12*(1), 62-75.

Robinson, V. M. J. (2010). From instructional leadership to leadership capabilities: Empirical findings and methodological challenges. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 9*(1), 1-26.

Robinson, V. M. J., Lloyd, C. A., & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: an analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 44*(5), 635 - 674.

Robinson, V. M. J., & Timperley, H. S. (2007). The leadership of the improvement of teaching and learning: lessons from initiatives with positive outcomes for students. *Australian Journal of Education, 51*(3), 247-262.

Sammons, P., Davis, S., Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2014). Using mixed methods to investigate school improvement and the role of leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration, 52*(5), 565-589. doi:doi:10.1108/JEA-10-2013-0121

Sammons, P., Gu, Q., Day, C., & Ko, J. (2011). Exploring the impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes: Results from a study of academically improved and effective schools in England. *International Journal of Educational Management, 25*(1), 83 - 101.

Scheerens, J. (2012). Summary and conclusion: Instructional leadership in schools as loosely coupled organizations. In J. Scheerens (Ed.), *School Leadership Effects Revisited* (pp. 131-152). Dordrecht: Springer.

Scott, D., & Morrison, M. (2005). *Key Ideas in Educational Research*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Sharifah, M. N., Zaidatol Akmaliah, L. P., & Suhaimi, A. (2008). Instructional leadership practices of rural school principals. *The International Journal of Learning, 15*(7), 231 - 238.

Sharma, S. (2011). *Attributes of school principals: leadership qualities and capacities.* Paper presented at the 24th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Limassol, Cyprus.

Souba, W. (2011). The being of leadership. *Philosophy, Ethics, and Humanities, 6*(5), 2 – 11.

Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed leadership. *The Educational Forum, 69*(2), 143 - 150.

Spillane, J. P. (2006). *Distributed Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Spillane, J. P., Camburn, E. M., Pustejovsky, J., Stitziel Pareja, A., & Lewis, G. (2008). Taking a distributed perspective: Epistemological and methodological tradeoffs in operationalizing the leader-plus aspect. *Journal of Educational Administration, 46*(2), 189-213.

Spillane, J. P., & Diamond, J. B. (2007). *Distributed Leadership in Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating school leadership practice: a distributed perspective. *Educational Researcher, 30*(3), 23-28.

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Toward a theory of leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 36*(1), 3-34.

Spillane, J. P., & Hunt, B. (2010). Days of their lives: a mixed methods, descriptive analysis of the men and women at work in the principal's office. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 42*(3), 293-331.

Stewart, J. (2006). Transformational leadership: an evolving concept examined through the works of Burns, Bass, Avolio, and Leithwood. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy, 54*, 1-29.

Strega, S. (2005). The view from the poststructural margins: epistemology and methodology reconsidered. In L. Brown & S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches* (pp.199–236). Toronto, Ontario: Canadian Scholar's Press.

Stronge, J. H., Richard, H. B., & Catano, N. (2008). *Qualities of Effective Principals*. Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Sufean Hussin. (2014). On principles of policy making and implementation. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Management, 2*(1), 1-9.

Sun, J., & Leithwood, K. (2015). Direction-setting school leadership practices: a meta-analytical review of evidence about their influence. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 26*(4), 499-529.

Supovitz, J. A., & Tognatta, N. (2013). The Impact of Distributed Leadership on Collaborative Team Decision Making. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 12*(2), 101-121.

Tahir, L., & Abd Rahman, M. A. (2011). *Orientasi Kepimpinan Pengetua Sekolah*. Johor Bahru: UTM Press.

Tahir, L., Al Muzammil, M., & Salleh, M. (2013). Impak strategi politik terhadap amalan kepimpinan pengajaran pengetua cemerlang. *Jurnal Teknologi (Sciences and Engineering), 60*(2013), 1-10.

Tahir, L., Hamdan, S., Sidek, R. Z. S., Yassin, M. A. M., & Yusof, S. M. (2008). Analisa Kepimpinan Pengetua Sekolah Menengah di Johor.

Tahir, L., Mohd Thakib, M. T., Hamzah, M. H., Mohd Said, M. N. H., & Musah, M. B. (2017). Novice head teachers' isolation and loneliness experiences. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 45*(1), 164-189.

Tashakkori, A., & Creswell, J. W. (2007). Exploring the nature of research questions in mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research, 1*(3), pp. 207 - 211.

Tashakkori, A., & Newman, I. (2010). Mixed methods. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education (Third Edition)* (pp. 158-164). Oxford: Elsevier.

Taylor, T., Martin, B., Hutchinson, S., & Jinks, M. (2007). Examination of leadership practices of principals identified as servant leaders. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 10*(4), 401-419.

Teddlie, C. (2005). Methodological issues related to causal studies of leadership: A mixed methods perspective from the USA. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 33*(2), 211-227.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2003). Major issues and controversies in the use of mixed methods in the social and behavioral sciences. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research: integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Pubilcations Inc.

Tian, M., Risku, M., & Collin, K. (2016). A meta-analysis of distributed leadership from 2002 to 2013. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 44*(1), 146-164.

Timperley, H. S. (2005). Distributed leadership: developing theory from practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 37*(4), 395 - 420.

Torrance, D. (2013). Distributed leadership: challenging five generally held assumptions. *School Leadership & Management, 33*(4), 354-372.

Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative Research methods: collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.

United States Department of Education. (2010). *A Blueprint for Reform: the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Alexandria, VA: United States Department of Education.

Valentine, J. W., & Prater, M. (2011). Instructional, transformational, and managerial leadership and student achievement: High school principals make a difference. *NASSP Bulletin, 95*(1), 5 - 30.

Wahlstrom, K. L., & Louis, K. S. (2008). How teachers experience principal leadership: the roles of professional community, trust, efficacy, and shared responsibility. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 2008*(44), 4.

Walker, A. D., & Dimmock, C. (2006). Preparing leaders, preparing learners: The Hong Kong experience. *School Leadership & Management, 26*(2), 125-147.

Wang, L. H., Gurr, D., & Drysdale, L. (2013). Successful school leadership: case studies of four Singapore primary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 54*(3), 270-287.

Waters, T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. A. (2003). *Balanced Leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Denver: McREL.

Whitmore, J. (1992). *Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Willig, C. (2014). Interpretation and analysis. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis* (pp. 136 - 149). London: SAGE.

Woods, P. A., Bennett, N., Harvey, J. A., & Wise, C. (2004). Variabilities and dualities in distributed Leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 32*(4), 439-457.

Xu, F., Caldwell, C., Glasper, K., & Guevara, L. (2015). Leadership roles and transformative duties–preliminary research. *Journal of Management Development, 34*(9), 1061-1072.

Yahya, D., & Yaakob, D. (2011). *Kompetensi Kepimpinan dan Budaya Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi*. Sintok: UUM Press.

Yukl, G. (1999). An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories. *The Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 285-305.

Zagorsek, H., Stough, S. J., & Jaklic, M. (2006). Analysis of the reliability of the Leadership Practices Inventory in the item response theory framework. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 14*(180 - 191).

Zaidatol Akmaliah, L. P. (2012). *Educational Leadership: Performance & Improvement*. Serdang: UPM Press.

Zuraidah, J. M. Y., Yahya, D., & Siti Noor, I. (2014). Kompetensi emosi pemangkin keberkesanan amalan kepimpinan guru. *Jurnal Kepimpinan Pendidikan, 1*(3), 1-13.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Permission letter to use LPI

WILEY

May 15, 2015

Shah Norwawi

Dear Mr. Norwawi:

Thank you for your request to use the LPI®: Leadership Practices Inventory® in your dissertation. This letter grants you permission to use either the print or electronic LPI [Self/Observer/Self and Observer] instrument[s] in your research. You may ***reproduce*** the instrument in printed form at no charge beyond the discounted one-time cost of purchasing a single copy; however, you may not distribute any photocopies except for specific research purposes. If you prefer to use the electronic distribution of the LPI you will need to separately contact Eli Becker (ebecker@wiley.com) directly for further details regarding product access and payment. Please be sure to review the product information resources before reaching out with pricing questions.

Permission to use either the written or electronic versions is contingent upon the following:

(1) The LPI may be used only for research purposes and may not be sold or used in conjunction with any compensated activities;
(2) Copyright in the LPI, and all derivative works based on the LPI, is retained by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. The following copyright statement must be included on all reproduced copies of the instrument(s); "Copyright © 2013 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission";
(3) One (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of all papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data must be sent **promptly** to my attention at the address below; and,
(4) We have the right to include the results of your research in publication, promotion, distribution and sale of the LPI and all related products.

Permission is limited to the rights granted in this letter and does not include the right to grant others permission to reproduce the instrument(s) except for versions made by nonprofit organizations for visually or physically handicapped persons. No additions or changes may be made without our prior written consent. You understand that your use of the LPI shall in no way place the LPI in the public domain or in any way compromise our copyright in the LPI. This license is nontransferable. We reserve the right to revoke this permission at any time, effective upon written notice to you, in the event we conclude, in our reasonable judgment, that your use of the LPI is compromising our proprietary rights in the LPI.

Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Ellen Peterson
Permissions Editor
Epeterson4@gmail.com

One Montgomery, Suite 1200, San Francisco, CA 94104-4594 U.S.
T +1 415 433 1740
F +1 415 433 0499
www.wiley.com

Appendix 2: LPI questionnaire

LPI – TEACHER FORM

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

LEADERSHIP PRACTICE INVENTORY - TEACHER FORM
(Please do not write your name on the questionnaire sheet/*Jangan tuliskan nama anda pada borang soal selidik ini*)

Name of school: ____
Nama sekolah

Teacher's scheme or service and grade: __________________________
Skim dan gred perkhidmatan guru

Teacher's position in school: __________________________
Jawatan guru di sekolah

Number of years in the current position at the current school: _________
Tempoh berkhidmat dijawatan tersebut di sekolah sekarang

Total number of years served as teacher: _________________________
Jumlah tempoh berkhidmat sebagai guru

Highest academic qualification:
Kelayakan akedemik tertinggi

Qualification *Kelayakan*	**Year graduated** *Tahun graduat*
Bachelor's degree Ijazah sarjana muda	
Master's degree Ijazah sarjana	
PhD	

Gender: Male/Female
Jantina

Age group (please tick):
Umur (sila tanda)

20 – 24	
25 – 30	
31 – 35	
36 – 40	

41 – 44	
45 – 50	
51 – 55	
56 – 60	

1

LPI – TEACHER FORM

This questionnaire is to describe **the leadership practices** of your **principal**, as you perceive it. Please indicate the rating that you perceive is most relevant in the box provided.

*Soal selidik ini adalah untuk mendapatkan gambaran tuan/puan mengenai **gaya kepimpinan Pengetua tuan/puan**. Sila nyatakan mana-mana skala yang difikarkan tepat bagi menggambarkan gaya kepimpinan tuan/puan pada kotak yang disediakan.*

Thirty descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. **The words "others" and "us" would refer to your Principal's subordinate**. Please use the following rating scale:

*Terdapat tiga puluh item deskriptif pada halaman berikut. Sila nyatakan pandangan tuan/puan terhadap pernyataan yang paling sesuai dengan tuan/puan. **Perkataan "mereka" dan "kami" boleh merujuk kepada staf dibawah selian Pengetua tuan/puan.** Sila gunakan skala pengelasan berikut:*

Almost never/ *Tiada*	1
Rarely/ *Hampir tiada*	2
Seldom/ *Jarang-jarang*	3
Once in a while/ *Sekali sekala*	4
Occasionally/ *Kadang-kadang*	5
Sometimes/ *Kerap*	6
Fairly often/ *Agak Kerap*	7
Usually/ *Selalu*	8
Very frequently/ *Sentiasa, jika tidak selalu*	9
Almost always/ *Hampir setiap masa*	10

Please complete the questionnaire and not spending too much time on any one item. It will take between 10 to 15 minutes to complete. I do seek your honest opinion when completing the questionnaire, therefore, please respond open and truthfully to the questionnaire. The responses collected from the questionnaire will form the basis of my research project.

Sila lengkapkan soal selidik ini dan tuan/puan dipohon untuk tidak meluangkan masa yang terlalu lama untuk satu-satu item. Soal selidik ini akan mengambil masa 10 hingga 15 minit dilengkapkan. Saya berharap agar tuan/puan jujur dalam memilih jawapan untuk setiap item. Maklumbalas daripada soal selidik ini akan menjadi tunjang kepada kajian saya.

LPI – TEACHER FORM

Almost never/ *Langsung Tiada*	**Rarely/** *Hampir tiada*	**Seldom/** *Jarang-jarang*	**Once in a while/** *Sekali sekala*	**Occasionally/** *Kadang-kadang*
1	2	3	4	5

Sometimes/ *Kerap*	**Fairly often/** *Agak Kerap*	**Usually/** *Selalu*	**Very frequently/** *Sentiasa, jika tidak selalu*	**Almost always/** *Hampir setiap masa*
6	7	8	9	10

1.	My principal sets personal example of what he/she expects of us *Pengetua saya menetapkan contoh dan tauladan tentang apa yang beliau harapkan daripada kami*	
2.	My principal talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done *Pengetua saya berbincang tentang arah tuju masa hadapan yang akan mempengaruhi bagaimana kami melaksanakan tugas-tugas seharian*	
3.	My principal seeks out challenging opportunities that test his/her own skills and ability *Pengetua saya mencari peluang yang mencabar bagi menguji kemahiran dan kemampuan sedia ada beliau*	
4.	My principal develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with *Pengetua saya membina hubungan kerjasama di kalangan mereka yang bekerja bersama beliau*	
5.	My principal praises people for a job well done *Pengetua saya memberikan pujian kepada mereka yang melakukan tugas dengan baik*	

Appendix 3: Permission letter to use PIMRS

Dr. Philip Hallinger
199/43 Sukhumvit Soi 8
Bangkok, 10110, Thailand
hallinger@gmail.com

February 28, 2015

Shah Norwawi

Dear Shah:

As copyright holder and publisher, you have my permission as publisher to use the *Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale* (*PIMRS*) in your research study. In using the scale, you may make unlimited copies of any of the three forms of the PIMRS.

Please note the following conditions of use:

1. This authorization extends only to the use of the PIMRS for research purposes, not for general school district use of the instrument for evaluation or staff development purposes.
2. This is a single-use purchase for the author's graduate research, thereby requiring purchase of additional rights for use in any future research.
3. *The user agrees to send a soft copy (pdf) of the completed study to the publisher upon completion of the research.*
4. *The user agrees to send a soft copy of the data set and coding instructions to the publisher upon completion of the research in order to enable further instrument development.*
5. The user has permission to make minor adaptations to scale as necessary for the research.
6. If the instrument is translated, the user will supply a copy of the translated version.

Please be advised that a separate *permission to publish* letter, usually required by universities, will be sent after the publisher receives a soft copy of the completed study.

Sincerely,

Professor Philip Hallinger

www.philiphallinger.com

Appendix 4: PIMRS questionnaire

PIMRS – TEACHER FORM

PRINCIPAL INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT RATING SCALE (PIMRS) - TEACHER FORM

(Please do not write your name on the questionnaire sheet/*Jangan tuliskan nama anda pada borang soal selidik ini*)

Name of school: ____________________________________
Nama sekolah

Teacher's scheme or service and grade: ________________________
Skim dan gred perkhidmatan guru

Teacher's position in school: ________________________
Jawatan guru di sekolah

Number of years in the current position at the current school: ________
Tempoh berkhidmat dijawatan tersebut di sekolah sekarang

Total number of years served as teacher: ______________________
Jumlah tempoh berkhidmat sebagai guru

Highest academic qualification:
Kelayakan akedemik tertinggi

Qualification *Kelayakan*	**Year graduated** *Tahun graduat*
Bachelor's degree Ijazah sarjana muda	
Master's degree Ijazah sarjana	
PhD	

Gender: Male/Female
Jantina

Age group (please tick):
Umur (sila tanda)

20 – 24		41 – 44	
25 – 30		45 – 50	
31 – 35		51 – 55	
36 – 40		56 – 60	

1

PIMRS – TEACHER FORM

This questionnaire is to describe **your principal's instructional leadership practice**, as you perceive it. Please circle the rating that you perceive is most relevant.

*Soal selidik ini adalah untuk mendapatkan gambaran tuan/puan mengenai **gaya kepimpinan instruksional Pengetua tuan/puan**. Sila bulatkan mana-mana skala yang difikarkan tepat menggambarkan gaya kepimpinan instruksional pengetua tuan/puan.*

Fifty descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. **The word "others" may mean the students or your Principal's subordinate, and/or all of these individuals.** Please use the following rating scale:

*Terdapat lima puluh item deskriptif pada halaman berikut. Sila nyatakan pandangan tuan/puan terhadap pernyataan yang paling sesuai dengan tuan/puan. **Perkataan "mereka" boleh merujuk kepada murid-murid atau staf dibawah selian Pengetua tuan/puan atau/dan kesemua individu yang telah dinyatakan**. Sila gunakan skala pengelasan berikut:*

Almost never/ *Tiada*	1
Seldom/ *Jarang-jarang*	2
Sometimes/ *Kadang-kadang*	3
Frequently/ *Kerap*	4
Almost always/ *Hampir setiap masa*	5

Please complete the questionnaire and not spending too much time on any one item. It will take between 10 to 15 minutes to complete. I do seek your honest opinion when completing the questionnaire, therefore, please respond open and truthfully to the questionnaire. The responses collected from the questionnaire will form the basis of my research project.

Sila lengkapkan soal selidik ini dan tuan/puan dipohon untuk tidak meluangkan masa yang terlalu lama untuk satu-satu item. Soal selidik ini akan mengambil masa 10 hingga 15 minit dilengkapkan. Saya berharap agar tuan/puan jujur dalam memilih jawapan untuk setiap item. Maklumbalas daripada soal selidik ini akan menjadi tunjang kepada kajian saya.

PIMRS – TEACHER FORM

Almost never/ *Tiada*	Seldom/ *Jarang-jarang*	Sometimes/ *Kadang-kadang*	Frequently/ *Kerap*	Almost always/ *Hampir setiap masa*
1	2	3	4	5

To what extent, your principal…

Sejauh mana, pengetua tuan/puan…

I	**FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS** *Merangka matlamat sekolah*					
1.	Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals *Menetapkan satu set matlamat tahunan sekolah yang jelas dengan berfokuskan kepada apa yang hendak dicapai*	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them *Menentukan matlamat sekolah berpandukan kepada kemampuan staf untuk mencapai matlamat tersebut*	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Use needs assessment or other formal and informal methods to secure staff input on goal development *Menggunakan penilaian keperluan atau menggunakan cara-cara formal serta tidak formalbagi mendapatkan input daripada staf alam membangunkan matlamat sekolah*	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Use data on student performance when developing the school's academic goals *Menggunakan data prestasi akademik pelajar apabila merangka matlamat akademik pelajar.*	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Develop goals that are easily understood and used by teachers in the school *Menetapkan matlamat yang mudah difahami dan dipratikkan oleh guru-guru di sekolah*	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 5: Interview protocol principal

Interview protocol for Principals Final

a. Introduction
b. Explanation on the study – provide participant with the Interview information sheet
c. Explanation on the consent – request participant to read and understand the Interview Participation consent form

First part of the interview – background

1. How long have you been a principal?
   Berapa lamakah tuan/puan menjawat jawatan sebagai Pengetua di sekolah ini?

2. Were you awarded with the excellent principal award while you were heading this school, or were you awarded while heading another school?
   Adakah tuan/puan dianugerahkan dengan jawatan Pengetua cemerlang semasa bertugas di sekolah ini, ataupun ketika bertugas di sekolah lain?

3. Could you tell me in brief your past working experience as a senior leadership team member before you were appointed as principal?
   Bolehkah tuan/puan nyatakan secara ringkas pengalaman tuan/puan sebagai guru penolong kanan sebelum tuan/puan dilantik sebagai pengetua?

Second part of the interview – leadership practices

4. What do you think are the most effective leadership and management strategies carried out by you at this school?
   Mengikut pendangan tuan/puan, apakah strategi kepimpinan dan pengurusan tuan/puan yang paling efektif?

5. Are there any leadership practices which could be considered as least effective?
   Adakah tuan/puan melihat atau merasakan terdapat amalan kepimpinan yang dianggap kurang efektif?

6. In what way do you think that the leadership and management practices could be improved in this school?
   Adakah tuan/puan merasakan amalan kepimpinan dan pengurusan di sekolah ini dapat diperbaiki atau dipertingkaktkan?

7. How are expectations for high performance shared with the staff?
   Bagaimanakah jangkaan untuk berprestasi tinggi dikongsi bersama-sama dengan warga sekolah ini?

8. In your opinion, how important is the contribution of a principal to the current performance of the school?
   Pada pandangan tuan/puan, sejauh mana pentingnya sumbangan seorang pengetua tuan/puan terhadap prestasi semasa sekolah ini?

9. Could you describe one or more challenging issues you encountered as the principal in this school and how, if at all, did you overcome those issues?
   Bolehkah tuan/puan menceritakan satu atau lebih isu yang mencabar yang pernah dihadapi oleh tuan/puan dan bagaimanakah isu tersebut ditangani?

<u>Third part of the interview – instructional, transformational and distributed leadership practices</u>

10. How familiar are you with the concept of instructional leadership? Do you enact this type leadership?
    Adakah tuan/puan biasa dengan konsep kepimpinan instruksional? Adakah tuan/puan merasakan corak kepimpinan ini dipraktikkan oleh tuan/puan?

11. What types of instructional support are available within the school?
    Apakah bentuk sokongan instruksional yang diberikan di sekolah ini?

12. To what extent do you feel that instructional leadership is an effective leadership approach in promoting teaching and learning in this school?

Sejauh manakah tuan/puan merasakan kepimpinan instruksional sebagai salah satu pendekatan kepimpinan yang efektif dalam menggalakkan pembelajaran dan pengajaran di sekolah ini?

13. What does it mean when policymakers believe that principals should act as instructional leaders?
    Apakah yang difahami apabila pembuat dasar menyatakan pengetua harus bertindak sebagai pemimpin instruksional?

14. What is the vision of this school?
    Apakah visi sekolah ini?

15. To what extent do you emphasise and share this vision with your teachers and students?
    Sejauh manakah visi ini ditekankan dan dikongsi oleh bersama-sama dengan guru-guru dan pelajar di sekolah tuan/puan?

16. How closely does the vision of the school align with the aspiration of being a high performing school?
    Sejauh manakah visi sekolah ini selaras dengan aspirasi sekolah ini sebagai sekolah berprestasi tinggi?

17. How often do you engage with the senior leadership team or other teachers?
    Sejauh manakah tuan/puan mengekalkan kolaborasi dan kerjasama dengan barisan pentadbir sekolah ataupun guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

    PROMPT: Can you elaborate on the nature of engagement?
    Bolehkah tuan/puan terangkan bentuk atau cara penglibatan tersebut?

18. To what extent do you maintain collaboration and cooperation with the senior leadership team and the teachers?
    Sejauh manakah tuan/puan berkolaborasi dan bekerjasama dengan barisan pentadbir serta guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

19. Do you delegate leadership responsibilities with others in this school?
Adakah tuan/puan mengagihkan tanggungjawab pentadbiran atau pengurusan kepada guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

PROMPT:
Can you describe the responsibilities that you share with others?
Bolehkah tuan/puan terangkan tanggungjawab yang dikongsi oleh tuan/puan dengan guru-guru lain?

20. Distributed leadership and transformational leadership were the two other leadership practices mentioned in the Malaysian Education Blueprint alongside instructional leadership. How do you assess the relative importance of these three leadership practices as the principal in this school?
Amalan kepimpinan distributif dan transformasi merupakan dua amalan kepimpinan lain yang dinyatakan di dalam PPPM selain kepimpinan instruksional. Bagaimanakah tuan/puan menilai kepentingan ketiga-tiga amalan kepimpinan di sekolah ini?

21. Is there anything that you wanted to add?
Adakah tuan/puan ingin memberi komen atau menambah apa-apa lagi?

Appendix 6: Interview protocol SLTM/teacher

Interview protocol for Teachers Final

a. Introduction
b. Explanation on the study – provide participant with the Interview information sheet
c. Explanation on the consent – request participant to read and understand the Interview Participation consent form

First part of the interview – background

1. How long have you been teaching in this school?
   Berapa lamakah tuan/puan mengajar di sekolah ini?

2. How long have you been working with your principal in this school?
   Berapa lamakah tuan/puan telah berkhidmat dengan pengetua sekarang di sekolah ini?

3. Do you hold any leadership or management position in this school?
   Adakah tuan/puan menjawat apa-apa jawatan pentadbiran di sekolah ini?

Second part of the interview – leadership practices

4. Could you tell me about the leadership practices of your principal as well as the senior leadership team in this school?
   Bolehkah tuan/puan menerangkan amalan kepimpinan pengetua serta pasukan pentadbiran di sekolah ini?

5. What do you think are the most effective leadership and management strategies shown by your principal in this school?
   Mengikut pendangan tuan/puan, apakah strategi kepimpinan dan pengurusan yang paling efektif ditunjukkan oleh pengetua tuan/puan?

PROMPT:

Are there any leadership practices enacted by your principal which could be considered as least effective?
Adakah tuan/puan melihat atau merasakan terdapat amalan kepimpinan yang dianggap kurang efektif yang dipamerkan oleh pengetua tuan/puan?

6. In what ways do you think that the leadership and management practices could be improved in this school?
Adakah tuan/puan merasakan amalan kepimpinan dan pengurusan di sekolah ini dapat diperbaiki atau dipertingkaktkan?

7. How are expectations for high performance shared with the staff?
Bagaimanakah jangkaan untuk berprestasi tinggi dikongsi bersama-sama dengan warga sekolah ini?

8. How important is your principal's contribution to the current performance of the school?
Sejauh mana pentingnya sumbangan pengetua tuan/puan terhadap prestasi semasa sekolah ini?

9. Could you describe one or more challenging issues your principal has encountered and how, if at all, your principal overcame those issues?
Bolehkah tuan/puan menceritakan satu atau lebih isu yang mencabar yang pernah dihadapi oleh pengetua tuan/puan dan bagaimanakah beliau menangani isu tersebut?

Third part of the interview – instructional, transformational and distributed leadership practices

10. How familiar are you with the term or concept of instructional leadership? ***[INTERVIEWER explains about IL if participant was unsure of the concept]** Do you experience this type of leadership with your principal?
Adakah tuan/puan biasa dengan konsep kepimpinan instruksional? Adakah tuan/puan dapat merasakan corak kepimpinan ini dipraktikkan oleh pengetua tuan/puan?

    PROMPT:
    What types of instructional support are available within the school?
    Apakah bentuk sokongan instruksional yang diberikan di sekolah ini?

11. To what extent do you feel that instructional leadership is an effective leadership approach in promoting teaching and learning in this school?
Sejauh manakah tuan/puan merasakan kepimpinan instruksional sebagai salah satu pendekatan kepimpinan yang efektif dalam menggalakkan pembelajaran dan pengajaran di sekolah ini?

12. What does it mean when policymakers believe that principals should act as instructional leaders?
Apakah yang difahami apabila pembuat dasar menyatakan pengetua harus bertindak sebagai pemimpin instruksional?

13. What is the vision of this school?
Apakah visi sekolah ini?

14. To what extent is this vision emphasised by the principal?
Sejauh manakah visi ini ditekankan oleh pengetua tuan/puan?

15. To what extent does your principal share this vision with teachers and students?
Sejauh manakah Pengetua tuan/puan berkongsi visi ini dengan guru-guru serta pelajar di sekolah ini?

16. How closely does the vision of the school align with the aspiration of being a high performing school?
Sejauh manakah visi sekolah ini selaras dengan aspirasi sekolah ini sebagai sekolah berprestasi tinggi?

17. How often does your principal engage with the senior leadership team or other teachers?
Sejauh manakah pengetua tuan/puan berusaha mengekalkan kolaborasi dan kerjasama dengan barisan pentadbir sekolah ataupun guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

PROMPT:
Can you elaborate on the nature of engagement?
Bolehkah tuan/puan terangkan bentuk atau cara penglibatan tersebut?

18. To what extent does your principal maintain collaboration and cooperation with the senior leadership team and the teachers?
Sejauh manakah pengetua tuan/puan berkolaborasi dan bekerjasama dengan barisan pentadbir serta guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

19. Does your principal delegate leadership responsibilities with others in schools?
Adakah pengetua tuan/puan mengagihkan tanggungjawab pentadbiran atau pengurusan kepada guru-guru lain di sekolah ini?

PROMPT:
Can you describe the responsibilities that your principal shares?
Bolehkah tuan/puan terangkan tanggungjawab yang dikongsi oleh pengetua tuan/puan dengan guru-guru lain?

20. Distributed leadership and transformational leadership were the two other leadership practices mentioned in the Malaysian Education Blueprint

alongside instructional leadership. How do you assess the relative importance of these three leadership practices for a principal in this school?
Amalan kepimpinan distributif dan transformasi merupakan dua amalan kepimpinan lain yang dinyatakan di dalam PPPM selain kepimpinan instruksional. Bagaimanakah tuan/puan menilai kepentingan ketiga-tiga amalan kepimpinan di sekolah ini?

21. Is there anything that you wanted to add?
Adakah tuan/puan ingin memberi komen atau menambah apa-apa lagi?

Appendix 7: EPU permission

UNIT PERANCANG EKONOMI
Economic Planning Unit
Jabatan Perdana Menteri
Prime Minister's Department
Block B5 & B6
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62502 PUTRAJAYA
MALAYSIA

Telefon : 603-8000 8000

Ruj. Tuan:
Your Ref.:

Ruj. Kami:
Our Ref.: UPE 40/200/19/3 94 [illegible]

Tarikh:
Date: 3 March 20[illegible]

Shahrizal Norwawi
128 Forster Street
Nottingham
NG7 3DD
United Kingdom
Email : ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA

With reference to your application, I am pleased to inform you that your application to conduct research in Malaysia has been approved by the **Research Promotion and Co-Ordination Committee, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department**. The details of the approval are as follows:

Researcher's name	:	SHAHRIZAL NORWAWI
Passport No./ I.C No	:	780404-06-5039
Nationality	:	MALAYSIA
Title of Research	:	"LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA"
Period of Research Approved	:	4 YEARS

2. Please collect your Research Pass in person from the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Parcel B, Level 4 Block B5, Federal Government Administrative Centre, 62502 Putrajaya, Malaysia. Bring along **two (2) colour passport size photographs.** Kindly, **get an appointment date from us before you come to collect your research pass.**

"Merancang Ke Arah Kecemerlangan"

3. I would like to draw your attention to the undertaking signed by you that you will submit without cost to the Economic Planning Unit the following documents:

a) A brief summary of your research findings on completion of your research and before you leave Malaysia; and

b) Three (3) copies of your final dissertation/publication.

4. However, you are required to avoid using samples from exam classes.

5. Lastly, please submit a copy of your preliminary and final report directly to the State Government where you carried out your research. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Munirahman

(MUNIRAH BT. ABD MANAN)
For Director General
Economic Planning Unit
E-mail: munirah@epu.gov.my
Tel : 03 88882809
Fax: 03 88883798

ATTENTION

This letter is only to inform you the status of your application and **cannot be used as a research pass.**

Appendix 8: Approval letter from BPSBPSK

BAHAGIAN PENGURUSAN SEKOLAH BERASRAMA PENUH DAN SEKOLAH KECEMERLANGAN
(Residential And Excellent School Management Division)
KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA
(Ministry Of Education Malaysia)
ARAS 3, BLOK 2251, JALAN USAHAWAN 1,
63000 CYBERJAYA, SELANGOR.

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

Telefon : 03-8321 7400 (Talian Umum)
Fax : 03-8321 7403
Laman Web : http://www.moe.gov.my/

"1MALAYSIA, RAKYAT DIDAHULUKAN, PENCAPAIAN DIUTAMAKAN"

Ruj. Kami : KPM(BPSBPSK)201/018/Jld4(4)
Tarikh : 12 Mei 2015

Shahrizal Norwawi
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM

Tuan,

KEBENARAN UNTUK MENJALANKAN PENYELIDIKAN DI SEKOLAH-SEKOLAH BERASRAMA PENUH

Dengan hormatnya perkara yang tersebut di atas dirujuk. Surat tuan bertarikh 23 April 2015 dan surat kelulusan Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia bernombor rujukan KP(BPPDP)603/011/JLD.16(29) bertarikh 9 Mac 2015 adalah berkaitan.

2. Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Berasrama Penuh dan Sekolah Kecemerlangan, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (KPM) mengambil maklum dan **tiada halangan** kepada pihak tuan untuk menjalankan kajian penyelidikan yang bertajuk **"*Leadership Features of High Performing Principals in Selected Schools in Malaysia*"** di sekolah-sekolah yang telah dipilih.

3. Walau bagaimanapun, kelulusan bagi menjalankan kajian ini hanya dikhususkan kepada Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi (SBT) dalam kategori Sekolah Berasrama Penuh sahaja. Bagi kelulusan pelaksanaan kajian di sekolah harian biasa berstatus SBT, pihak tuan boleh menghubungi Jabatan Pendidikan di negeri-negeri yang berkaitan. Di samping itu, untuk makluman tuan, pihak KPM sedang berusaha Melindungi Masa Instruksional (MMI), yakni masa pengajaran dan pembelajaran (PdP) murid. Oleh yang demikian, pihak KPM mencadangkan supaya penglibatan guru dan murid diadakan di luar waktu PdP agar tidak menjejaskan waktu pengajaran dan pembelajaran murid.

Kerjasama pihak tuan terlebih dahulu diucapkan terima kasih.

Sekian.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menurut perintah,

(DR. HJH ROSNAH BINTI SELAMAT)
Timbalan Pengarah SBP
Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Berasrama Penuh dan
Sekolah Kecemerlangan

Appendix 9: Letter to principals seeking permission to carry out research

Shahrizal Norwawi
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM

Tarikh: 15 MEI 2015

Pengetua Cemerlang
Sekolah Berasrama Penuh/Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi
Seperti di lampiran

Tuan/Puan,

MEMOHON KEBENARAN UNTUK MENJALANKAN PENYELIDIKAN UNTUK MELENGKAPKAN TESIS KEDOKTORAN YANG BERTAJUK "LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA"

Dengan segala hormatnya saya merujuk kepada perkara di atas.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa saya, Shahrizal bin Norwawi merupakan calon PhD dari University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. Saya kini sedang menjalankan satu kajian projek yang akan dijadikan tesis bagi ijazah PhD saya. Fokus kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji dan menilai gaya kepimpinan Pengetua berprestasi tinggi di kalangan mereka yang telah menerima anugerah Pengetua Cemerlang dan juga anugerah Tawaran Baharu atau Bai'ah.

3. Sehubungan dengan itu, saya memohon kebenaran untuk menjalankan penyelidikan di Sekolah tuan/puan.

4. Untuk makluman, kelulusan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan ini telah diperolehi daripada **Unit Perancangan Ekonomi, Jabatan Perdana Menteri** berdasarkan ulasan dan sokongan daripada **Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia**. Di samping itu, **Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Berasrama Penuh dan Sekolah Kecemerlangan** juga tidak memberi sebarang halangan untuk kajian ini dijalankan.

5. Dua set soal selidik akan diedarkan kepada tuan/puan dan kepada guru di sekolah tuan/puan untuk dijawab. Saya amat berharap agar **tiga puluh orang guru** di sekolah tuan/puan dapat memberi kerjasama untuk menjawab soal selidik yang dilampirkan.

6. Bersama-sama ini dilampirkan dokumen berkaitan dengan penyelidikan:

i. Surat kelulusan daripada EPU, Jabatan Perdana Menteri
ii. Surat sokongan dan Ulasan daripada Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, KPM
iii. Surat sokongan daripada Bahagian Pengurusan Sekolah Berasrama Penuh dan Sekolah Kecemerlangan
iv. Surat pengesahan universiti
v. Surat pengesahan penyelia
vi. Maklumat kajian kepada peserta kajian
vii. Biodata penyelidik
viii. **15 set soal selidik PIMRS Teacher form <u>untuk diisi oleh guru</u>**
ix. **15 set soal selidik LPI Teacher form <u>untuk diisi oleh guru</u>**
x. **1 set soal selidik PIMRS Leader form <u>untuk diisi oleh Pengetua</u>**
xi. **1 set soal selidik LPI Leader form <u>untuk diisi oleh Pengetua</u>**

Saya dahului dengan ucapan terima kasih di atas kebenaran dan kerjasama pihak tuan/puan dalam proses menjalankan penyelidikan ini.

Sekian.

Yang ikhlas,

Shahrizal Norwawi
Calon PhD
University of Nottingham
Emel: ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 10: Ethics approval

2015/39/MO

School of Education – Research Ethics Approval Form

The University of Nottingham

Name	Shahrizal Norwawi
Main Supervisor	Prof Tony Bush
Course of Study	PhD
Title of Research Project:	Leadership features of high performing principals in selected Malaysian schools
Is this a resubmission? Yes	**Date statement of research ethics received by PGR Office:** 25/02/15

Research Ethics Coordinator Comments:

Thank you for addressing the comments we have raised earlier.

I am happy to approve this on the condition that you check the data storage in line with the University's requirements. I think you will find that there is a 7 year limit and requirement for data to be securely stored and retained.

Good luck with your research.

I consider this research to be above minimum risk ☐

Final responsibility for ethical conduct of your research rests with you and your supervisor. The Codes of Practice setting out these responsibilities have been published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the University Research Ethics Committee. http://www/educationstudentintranet/researchethics/index.aspx http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/Ethical%20Guidelines *If you have any concerns during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice and refer again to the School of Education's Research Ethics Committee.*

Independently of the Ethics Committee procedures, supervisors also have responsibilities for the risk assessment of projects as detailed in the safety pages of the University web site. Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace, or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Outcome:

Approved [X]   Revise and Resubmit [ ]

Signed: *Mary Oliver*   Name: Dr Mary Oliver (Research Ethics Coordinator)   Date: 25/02/2015

Appendix 11: Questionnaire participant information sheet

The University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN MALAYSIA

QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

RESEARCHER: Shahrizal Norwawi
School of Education
University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a PhD candidate at the School of Education, University Of Nottingham, United Kingdom. I am pursuing a research project leading to a thesis. The research project is entitled: **LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA**. The focus of this research project is to understand the leadership features of principals who are deemed high performing by the virtue of the excellent award as well as the New Deals award. This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Nottingham's Ethics Committee; approval number **2015/39/MO** dated 25 February 2015.

There are two questionnaires: the **Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale** and the **Leadership Practices Inventory**. You are invited to answer either one **OR** both of the questionnaires.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary, and you are under no obligation to take part in this study. You are free to withdraw at any point prior to returning the questionnaire (you may destroy the questionnaire of you wish). I emphasise strongly here that the information obtained will be used in the strictest confidence. You will not be identified at any stage in this study.

All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. All data that will be analysed electronically will be kept secure at all times on a secure, password protected data storage facility. The hard copy of the questionnaire shall be stored by the researcher in a secured locker located in the University of Nottingham No other person besides me and my supervisors will be able to see and access the questionnaires. The hard copy of the questionnaire as well as the soft copy of the data analysis will be destroyed one year after completing this research.

The only risks or potential discomfort associated with this study are in the area of time required to answer the questionnaire. Participation will require a minimum amount of your time. Your time commitment should be no more than fifteen minutes for each of the two questionnaires.

If you would wish or agree to answer the questionnaires, kindly fill in the attached consent form. You have the right to decline and doing so will not affect the research or your position in your organization. I thank you for taking time in to read the information sheet. Please briefly examine the questionnaire before signing this consent form.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the research project, please contact my first supervisor at:

Professor Tony Bush
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0) 115 951 4494

or you could contact me directly at:

Shahrizal Norwawi
School of Education
Room C12
The Dearing Building
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 7879174507 (mobile)
+60 12 6449413 (Malaysian mobile)

To address any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Nottingham's School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Yours sincerely,
Shahrizal Norwawi

Appendix 12: Interview participant information sheet

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

RESEARCHER: Shahrizal Norwawi
School of Education
University of Nottingham
UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a PhD candidate at the School of Education, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom. I am pursuing a research project leading to a thesis. The research project is entitled: **LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA**. The focus of this research project is to understand the leadership features of principals who are deemed high performing by the virtue of the excellent award as well as the New Deals award. This research has been reviewed and approved by the University of Nottingham's Ethics Committee; approval number **2015/39/MO** dated 25 February 2015.

I would like to seek your cooperation by participating in a one-to-one interview. The interview could be done either in English or in Bahasa Melayu depending on your preference. The responses collected from the interview will form the basis of my research project. I would tape the interview to allow for correct transcribing following the interview and I would send you a transcript of the interview before the process of analysing the transcripts in order for you to check and verify the information of the interview.

I emphasise strongly here that the information obtained will be used in the strictest confidence. All documentation relating to this study would have pseudonyms used in order to protect the identities of the participants. You will not be identified at any stage in this study. All material collected will be kept confidential and secure at all times on a secure, password protected data storage facility. No other person besides me and my supervisors will be able to see and access the audio copy and transcript of the interview. The tape recording as well as the transcription of the interview will be destroyed one year after completing this research.

The only risks or potential discomfort associated with this study are in the area of time required for the interview. The interview would take about 30 to 45 minutes and would be at a time suitable to you.

If you would wish or agree to participate in the interview, kindly fill in the attached consent form. You have the right to decline and doing so will not affect the research or your position in your organization. I thank you for taking time in to read the information sheet.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the research project, please contact my first supervisor at:

Professor Tony Bush
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0) 115 951 4494

or you could contact me directly at:

Shahrizal Norwawi
School of Education
Room C12
The Dearing Building
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 7879174507 (mobile)
+60 12 6449413 (Malaysian mobile)

To address any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Nottingham's School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Yours sincerely,
Shahrizal Norwawi

Appendix 13: Questionnaire participant consent form

QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
PERSETUJUAN UNTUK MENJAWAB SOAL SELIDIK BAGI TUJUAN KAJIAN

RESEARCHER/*Penyelidik*:	**SHAHRIZAL NORWAWI**
PROJECT TITLE/ *Tajuk Kajian*:	**LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA/ *Gaya kepimpinan Pengetua berprestasi tinggi di beberapa sekolah terpilih di Malaysia***
SUPERVISORS/*Penyelia*:	**I. PROF. TONY BUSH** **II. ASSOCIATE PROF. ANDREW TOWNSEND** **III. ASSISTANT PROF. ASHLEY NG**

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part. *Saya telah membaca kandungan dokumen kebenaran untuk ditemuramah bagi tujuan kajian; dan saya telah diberi penerangan akan tujuan serta keperluan kajian ini. Saya bersetuju untuk mengambil bahagian di dalam kajian ini.*

- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it. *Saya faham tujuan kajian ini serta penglibatan saya di dalam kajian ini.*

- I understand that I have the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction *Saya faham bahawa saya akan diberi peluang untuk mengaju sebarang soalan dan mengharapkan jawapan yang memuaskan.*

- I understand that I may withdraw myself (or any information I have provided) from this project without having to give reasons or without penalty of any sort. *Saya faham bahawa saya boleh menarik diri dari kajian ini (atau menarik balik sebarang maklumat yang telah saya berikan) walaupun sebelum soal seldik ini selesai tanpa perlu memberi apa jua sebab atau dikenakan sebarang tindakan.*

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential. *Saya faham bahawa maklumat yang diperolehi menerusi soal selidik ini mungkin akan digunakan di dalam kajian ini, namun identiti saya dan jawapan saya didalam soal selidik tersebut adalah sulit.*

- I also understand that any information I provide in the questionnaire will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor. I am aware that the published results will not use my name and that no opinions will be attributed to me in any way that will identify me as participant of this study. *Saya juga faham bahawa segala maklumat yang diperolehi menerusi soal selidik ini adalah sulit dan hanya penyelidik serta penyelia sahaja yang dapat mengakses maklumat tersebut. Saya sedar bahawa dapatan kajian ini tidak akan menggunakan nama saya dan apa jua pandangan yang saya berikan didalam temuramah ini tidak akan merujuk kepada saya dalam apa jua bentuk sekalipun.*

- I also understand that the data obtained from the questionnaire will be analysed and stored electronically on a secure, password protected data storage facility.
  Saya juga faham bahawa data yang diperolehi daripada soal selidik tersebut akan dianalisa dan disimpan secara elektronik di pusat penyimpanan data yang selamat serta dilindungi dengan kata laluan.

- I understand the hard copy of the questionnaire shall be stored by the researcher in a secured locker located in the University of Nottingham, UK and access to it is limited only to the researcher and the supervisors. The hard copy of the questionnaire as well as the soft copy of the data analysis will be destroyed one year after completing this research. I understand that the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose or released to others.
  Saya faham bahawa salinan keras soal selidik yang telah diisi akan disimpan oleh penyelidik didalam loker simpanan yang selamat di University of Nottingham, UK serta akses kepada soal selidik tersebut hanyalah terhad kepada penyelidik serta penyelia sahaja. Salinan soal selidik dan data berkaitan akan dimusnahkan setahun selepas kajian ini selesai. Saya faham maklumat yang saya berikan tidak akan digunakan untuk tujuan lain atau disebarkan kepada mana-mana pihak yang lain.

- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.
  Saya faham bahawa saya boleh menghubungi penyelidik atau penyelia beliau sekiranya saya memerlukan malumat tambahan berkaitan kajian ini. Saya juga boleh menghubungi Penyelaras Etika dalam Penyelidikan di Fakulti Pendidikan, University of Nottingham sekiranya saya mempunyai aduan berkaitan penglibatan saya didalam kajian ini.

Signed/*Tandatangan*.. (Research participant)

Print name/*Nama* ....

Date/*Tarikh* ....

Please retain this page for the relevant contact details/**Sila simpan helaian ini sekiranya ingin berhubung dengan penyelidik atau penyelia kajian ini*****:**

Researcher/: *Penyelidik*	Shahrizal Norwawi Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management School of Education Room C12 The Dearing Building University of Nottingham Jubilee Campus Wollaton Road Nottingham NG8 1BB UNITED KINGDOM E-mail: ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk Telephone: +44 7879174507 (mobile) +60 12 6449413 (Malaysian mobile)
First Supervisor/: *Penyelia pertama*	**Professor Tony Bush** Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management School of Education University of Nottingham Jubilee Campus Wollaton Road Nottingham NG8 1BB UNITED KINGDOM E-mail: tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk Telephone: +44 (0) 115 951 4494

To address any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Nottingham's School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: *Sekiranya tuan/puan mempunyai pertanyaan berkaitan hak tuan/puan sebagai responden di dalam kajian ini, tuan/puan boleh berhubung dengan Penyelaras Jawatankuasa Etika, Fakulti Pendidikan, University of Nottingham:*

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 14: Interview participant consent form

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM
PERSETUJUAN UNTUK DITEMURAMAH BAGI TUJUAN KAJIAN

RESEARCHER/*Penyelidik*:	**SHAHRIZAL NORWAWI**
PROJECT TITLE/*Tajuk Kajian*:	**LEADERSHIP FEATURES OF HIGH PERFORMING PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA/ *Gaya kepimpinan Pengetua berprestasi tinggi di beberapa sekolah terpilih di Malaysia***
SUPERVISORS/*Penyelia*:	**I. PROF. TONY BUSH** **II. ASSOCIATE PROF. ANDREW TOWNSEND** **III. ASSISTANT PROF. ASHLEY NG**

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
Saya telah membaca kandungan dokumen kebenaran untuk ditemuramah bagi tujuan kajian; dan saya telah diberi penerangan akan tujuan serta keperluan kajian ini. Saya bersetuju untuk mengambil bahagian di dalam kajian ini.

- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
Saya faham tujuan kajian ini serta penglibatan saya di dalam kajian ini.

- I understand that I have the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction
Saya faham bahawa saya akan diberi peluang untuk mengaju sebarang soalan dan mengharapkan jawapan yang memuaskan.

- I understand that I may withdraw myself (or any information I have provided) from this project (before interview and transcription is complete) without having to give reasons or without penalty of any sort.
Saya faham bahawa saya boleh menarik diri dari kajian ini (atau menarik balik sebarang maklumat yang telah saya berikan) walaupun sebelum temuramah atau proses transkripsi temuramah selesai tanpa perlu memberi apa jua sebab atau dikenakan sebarang tindakan.

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
Saya faham bahawa maklumat yang diperolehi menerusi temuramah ini mungkin akan digunakan di dalam kajian ini, namun identiti saya dan hasil temuramah saya adalah sulit.

- I also understand that any information I provide in the interview will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor. I am aware that the published results will not use my name and that no opinions will be attributed to me in any way that will identify me as participant of this study.
Saya juga faham bahawa segala maklumat yang diperolehi menerusi temuramah ini adalah sulit dan hanya penyelidik serta penyelia sahaja yang dapat mengakses maklumat tersebut. Saya sedar bahawa dapatan kajian ini tidak akan menggunakan nama saya dan apa jua pandangan yang saya berikan didalam temuramah ini tidak akan merujuk kepada saya dalam apa jua bentuk sekalipun.

- I also understand that the tape recording of interviews and also the full transcription of the interview will be kept secure at all times on a secure, password protected data storage facility. The tape recording as well as the transcription of the interview will be destroyed one year after completing this research. I understand that the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose or released to others.
  Saya juga faham bahawa rakaman temuramah dan juga transkip temuramah tersebut akan disimpan di pusat penyimpanan data yang selamat serta dilindungi dengan kata laluan. Rakaman dan transkrip temuramah akan dimusnahkan setahun selepas kajian ini selesai. Saya faham maklumat yang saya berikan tidak akan digunakan untuk tujuan lain atau disebarkan kepada mana-mana pihak yang lain.

- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.
  Saya faham bahawa saya boleh menghubungi penyelidik atau penyelia beliau sekiranya saya memerlukan malumat tambahan berkaitan kajian ini. Saya juga boleh menghubungi Penyelaras Etika dalam Penyelidikan di Fakulti Pendidikan, University of Nottingham sekiranya saya mempunyai aduan berkaitan penglibatan saya didalam kajian ini.

Signed/*Tandatangan*.. (Research participant)

Print name/*Nama* ....

Date/*Tarikh* ....

***Please retain this page for the relevant contact details/*Sila simpan helaian ini sekiranya ingin berhubung dengan penyelidik atau penyelia kajian ini*:**

Researcher/: *Penyelidik*

Shahrizal Norwawi
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
Room C12
The Dearing Building
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: ttxsn23@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 7879174507 (mobile)
+60 12 6449413 (Malaysian mobile)

First Supervisor/: *Penyelia pertama*

Professor Tony Bush
Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management
School of Education
University of Nottingham
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
Nottingham NG8 1BB
UNITED KINGDOM
E-mail: tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk
Telephone: +44 (0) 115 951 4494

To address any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Nottingham's School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: *Sekiranya tuan/puan mempunyai pertanyaan berkaitan hak tuan/puan sebagai responden di dalam kajian ini, tuan/puan boleh berhubung dengan Penyelaras Jawatankuasa Etika, Fakulti Pendidikan, University of Nottingham:*

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk