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Ethical Leadership and The Teachers Job Satisfaction in Schools

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Abstract

Teacher's job satisfaction is needed in teaching profession as it is an effort to develop effective human capital to society and the country. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the influence of ethical leadership on teacher job satisfaction. In addition, this study aims to identify differences in ethical leadership and teacher's job satisfaction based on gender, age and service experience of the teachers. In addition, this study aims to identify the relationship between ethical leadership and teacher job satisfaction. The study used a quantitative approach with Ethical Leadership at Work (ELW), Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) and Three-Component Model Employee Commitment Survey Revised Version (TCM-ECS). A total of 374 samples consisting of Kedah state secondary school teachers were randomly selected. Descriptive statistics, t-tests, one-way ANOVA, Pearson Correlation, Multiple Regression Analysis and Hierarchical Regression Analysis were used in order to analyze the data. Findings show ethical leadership and job satisfaction. Nevertheless, there are significant differences in ethical leadership and job satisfaction of teachers in schools based on age and experience of teacher's services. Studies also show that there is a significant relationship between these two variables.

While the ethical leadership's aspect and teacher's job satisfaction aspect have an influence on organizational commitment in schools. In addition, teacher's job satisfaction plays a role as a mediator to the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational commitment in schools. The results of the study have contributed to the development of ethical leadership theory and teacher's job satisfaction in the educational environment. This study suggests that to ensure teacher's job satisfaction is enhanced, then the aspect of ethical leadership should be given attention by the relevant parties

Introduction

Ethical leadership in this study refers to the nine dimensions proposed by Kalshoven and Colleagues (2011) namely human-oriented, justice, power, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role explanation and integrity. These dimensions form the basis of the formation of a strong identity as well as moral agents that shape and influence the behavior of followers (Brown et al., 2005). The teacher's job satisfaction according to Spector (1985) in the job satisfaction model, means an individual attitudes towards employment when factors such as salary, promotion, support, incentives, rewards, policies and regulations, coworkers, areas of work and communication can provide a sense of peace and calmness for soul.

Literature Review

In the beginning of 1990s, leadership reformation and the insistence for ethical leadership became evident as researchers began to pay serious attention to these needs especially in public and private sector organizations (Yukl et al., 2011). The influence on the ethical leadership is getting stronger as it has dominated the leadership pattern in schools (Kiu & Akmaliah, 2000). The leader's ethical behaviour has been identified as a good role model for their followers to follow and emulate (White & Lean, 2008).

Basically, leader's ethical are playing an important role in shaping an organization because the attitudes, values and beliefs of followers will turn negative if they are in an environment that encourages them towards that attitude (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). It is very important to understand the relationship between leadership and ethics (Ciulla, 2005). The leadership and ethics concept are interrelated and it is an important essence toward success in an organization.

Basically leadership means one's ability to influence something (Yukl, 2006). According to Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) leadership is a set of behaviors of the role, action or influence of a person that officially or unofficially appointed by the organization as a leader to represent the voice of the people. Leadership can also be seen from two perspectives, namely as a set of behaviors to complete tasks and maintain unity in the organization; and a process of influence that is the strategies and tactics to influence the values, beliefs and behaviors of followers towards the achievement of organizational objectives (Kanungo and Mendonca, 1998). Ethics is defined as a set of moral values that form a choice between right and wrong deeds (Abbasi et al., 2010; Haroon et al., 2012). Starratt (2004), ethics is the basic beliefs, assumptions, 54 principles, and values that support an ethical way of life. Kanungo and Mendonca (1998) define ethics as good morals that are considered to be in accordance with established laws or rights. Webster's Dictionary (2013) states that the basis for ethics is related to the determination of something whether good or bad, moral responsibility and moral compliance. Ethics is also known as a set of abstract rules and principles that govern human behavior that is used as evaluation benchmark to determine whether a particular behavior is good or bad (Badran, 1981).

According to Brown et al (2005), the ethical leader characteristics is when a person who has integrity, adheres to ethical standards, gives fair treatment to employees and selfless. In addition, Brown and Trevino (2006) have explained that ethical leadership consists of two main aspects namely moral individuals and moral managers. The moral individual aspect refers to the leader's personality such as their perceived characteristics, behavior and decision-making process. Meanwhile the moral manager aspect refers to the deliberate efforts of a leader to influence others (role model), to guide the followers ethical behaviour by communicating about ethical standards and disciplining employees who exhibit unethical behavior. Thus, the combination of moral individual aspects and moral managers make ethical leadership style seen differently from other leadership styles. This is because ethical leaders is by being a role models who exhibit appropriate personality and behavior, also use aspects of rewards and punishments to stimulate ethical behavior among followers (Brown et al., 2005; Trevino et al., 2003). In the education field, measuring the teacher's job satisfaction has been a major focus and concern for researchers in efforts to improve and consolidate human resource services towards a more dynamic and efficient (Ali et al., 2011). In any education system, the secondary level is a very important level because it is the most important phase that link between primary education and higher education. Teachers in secondary schools

need to work hard in order to prepare students for future education. If teachers are not treated in the right way, it is likely that their job satisfaction level will decrease and will interfere with their work commitment (Ali et al., 2011)

According to Smith et al (1969), the definition of job satisfaction is the extent to which employees have an affective positive orientation towards certain aspects of their work. Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as a positive or emotional state of pleasure that results either through others' appreciation of one's work or one's own experience in performing a work.

Spector (1997) states the definition of job satisfaction as a person's assessment of the overall quality of his work and these assessment measures are either related to the job, the position or the attitude towards work. While McShane and Von Glinow (2003) define job satisfaction as a person's assessment of his work. Robbins (2005) further defines job satisfaction as a collection of feelings felt by an individual towards his work. Newstrom (2007) defines job satisfaction as a set of employee feelings and emotions towards work either in a positive or negative form. Haroon et al (2012) also explored the meaning of job satisfaction and stated it as a way for an individual to be motivated towards his work. Thus, an employee who has a stable level of emotion, feels positive, is always driven by strong motivation and enthusiasm and is always appreciated by others will be happier and satisfied with his work.

Theory

There are two main theories used in order to understand the influence of ethical leaders on their followers namely Social Learning Theory (SLT) and Social Exchange Theory (SET)

1. *Social Learning Theory (SLT)*

The main perspective is to understand the influence of ethical leadership is through social learning theory as expressed by (Brown et al., 2005). Based on social learning theory, followers will behave similarly or accordingly to their leaders through the act of imitation and learning resulting through observation (Bandura, 1986). The demonstration behaviour will lead to the end result of positive personal formation (Bandura, 1977). For followers, leaders are the most important sources and key models to emulate based on their power, role, status and success in organizations where employees will learn about expected behaviours and learn through the reward and punishment systems (Brown et al., 2005). In other words, ethical leadership contains both role model elements and the rewards and punishments that influence employee behaviour (Mayer et al., 2009).

2. *Social Exchange Theory (SET)*

Apart from the SLT approach, ethical leadership is also seen through the social exchange theory approach (Mayer et al., 2009; Turner et al., 2002). The social exchange theory approach is more of a social exchange where the focus is more on the norm of consideration for reciprocity (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The social exchange theory is used as a basis in many studies of relationships within organizations and workplace behaviours (Cropanano & Mitchell, 2005). According to Mayer et al (2009), followers will be prepared to respond well when they are treated fairly and caringly by their leaders. Social exchange also involves a set of interactions which then leads to several elements of compliance (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960). This process of compliance depends on reciprocal norms (Gouldner, 1960) in which followers reciprocate the benefits they received in the past with other benefits in return in any way that can create a continuous cycle between leaders and followers (Dulac et al., 2008). According to Mayer et al (2009) a high support from the

employer will encourage employees to increase diligence in carrying out their work responsibilities as well as strive to increase their participation in any activity. The positive response has a very good impact on the organization but if the employer does not give support and attention to employees, then it will reduce their involvement and affect the employees reputation, thus bringing a negative impact to the organization (Mayer et al., 2009). The social exchange also focuses on the role of leaders in ensuring employees to feel responsible for doing a job (Wayne et al., 2002). For example, a leader who appreciates the employees contribution and their well-being will create a positive relationship in an organization thus will improve the organizational performance and behaviour (Eisenberger et al., 1990). This positive relationship exists because employees know that they can rely on such leaders who treat employees fairly and preferably (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Mayer et al., 2009). As a result, they are more likely to reciprocate the treatment by behaving in a way that benefits the entire work group and restrains themselves from behaviours that would be detrimental to supervisors, workgroups and organizations (Mayer et al., 2009).

Therefore, it is important to understand to what extent the Social learning theory and the social exchange theory are relevant to ethical leadership. Although ethical leadership is translated through different approaches of two major theories namely SLT and SET, but researchers think it is better to combine the approach of the two theories to further strengthen the understanding related to ethical leadership. This is because through SLT human beings will instinctively learn something through the modeling process in which there is a process of reward and punishment (Bandura, 1986). While in SET, the learning process occurs when followers are satisfied with the behaviour of the leader and respond to it through a reciprocal process (Blau, 1964) In this case, the reciprocal process will occur normally if the follower satisfied and grateful for something. However, as a guarantee toward the agreement the reciprocal process will take place then it must be accompanied by a process of reward and punishment. The rewards and punishments process is important to strengthen the behavioural aspects of followers in an organization. This is because it can bind followers to the discipline and rules of the organization so that their actions are always in line with the vision and mission of the organization. Thus, the relationship between SLT and SET is complementary and the combination of these two theories will be able to strengthen the theory of ethical leadership.

Maslow's Theory of Motivation

According to Maslow's Hierarchy Theory (1954), an individual will not be satisfied until he be able to do something he wants, driven by his need to reach a certain potential to be better than the existing situation. Maslow (1954) states that human will is arranged hierarchically. This means that once the will at the lower level is satisfied, the individual will be motivated to fulfil the will located at the higher level and this action occurs due to human nature which is always never satisfied. Motivation here is associated with motivation while fulfilling desires refers to performance, status and reputation (Maslow, 1954)

Herzberg (1959) in The Two Factor Theory states that there is a set of specific factors in the workplace that cause no job satisfaction, while a separate set of factors that cause job satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg named these two factors as hygiene factor and motivation factor. The hygiene factor refers to elements that do not involve the external (extrinsic) work itself that is such as caring, relationships between friends, work environment, salary, administrative policies, benefits and safety (Herzberg, 1966). Motivational factors refer to elements in the job that impact the actual and internal (intrinsic) tasks such as

achievement, appreciation, the work itself, tasks, development and progress (Herzberg, 1966). The hygiene factor and the motivator factor differ in terms of function and consequences. If the leader’s goal is to reduce the job dissatisfaction problem, then the hygiene factor needs to be increased. If leaders want to increase job satisfaction, then the motivating factor needs to be increased (Azhan, 2010). This theory emphasizes that the factors of job satisfaction and the factors of job dissatisfaction are independent and not tied to each other. According to Herzberg et al (1959), both hygiene factors and motivators become the driving force or motivator for employees to determine their level of job satisfaction.

Research Objective

- This Study is to delve deeper into the relationship between ethical leadership and the teacher’s job satisfaction with organizational commitment in the schools
- The research needs is to focus on ethical leadership because it has a great responsibility to determine the teacher’s direction so that they are always on the right track
- Acknowledging that the job satisfaction factor is also a form of motivation and encouragement that can influence employees to be more dedicated and accountable to improve outcomes and school excellence outcomes.
- Determine the relationship between ethical leadership and teacher job satisfaction in sufficient complexity.

Summary and Researcher

A leader who appreciates the employees contribution and their well-being will create a positive relationship in an organization thus will improve the organizational performance and behaviour (Eisenberger et al., 1990). This positive relationship exists because employees know that they can rely on such leaders who treat employees fairly and preferably (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Mayer et al., 2009). As a result, they are more likely to reciprocate the treatment by behaving in a way that benefits the entire work group and restrains themselves from behaviours that would be detrimental to supervisors, workgroups and organizations

Tittle	Researcher
Ethical Leadership	Abbasi et al (2010); Avolio & Gardner (2005); Bandura (1977); Bass & Steidlmeier (1999); Bottery (1992); Brown & Trevino (2006); Brown et al (2005); Ciulla (1998); Craig et al (1998); Fullan (2003); Greenfield (2004); Handford & Leithwood (2013); Kalshoven et al (2011); Kanungo et al (1998); Maslow (1954); Northouse (2004); Piccolo et al (2010); Pijanowski (2007); Shapiro & Stefkovich (2005); Spector (1985); Starratt (2004); White & Lean (2008); Yukl et al (2011); Zubay & Soltis (2005)

Job Satisfaction	Ali & Al-Owaihyan (2008); Bogler & Nir (2012); Brown & Trevino (2006); Erwin (2011); Eyal & Roth (2011); Gilstrap & Collins (2012); Joolideh & Yeshodhara (2009); Kalshoven et al (2011); Kelly et al (2008); Klein (2012); Koustelios et al (2004); Lambert & Paoline (2008); Locke (1976); Miller et al (2009); Mulki et al (2008); Parkes, & Thomas (2007); Snipes et al (2005); Wayne et al (2002)
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Method

Based on the formula given by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), if the population is 13,743 people, then the sample will involve around 374 people. This means that a total of 374 teachers will be involved in answering the questionnaire which is 6 people per school (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). According to Sekaran (2000), a sample size that over 30 is suitable for most surveys in the form of surveys. In addition, Gay and Diehl (1990) also stated that 30 is a sufficient amount for correlation and comparative study

Conclusion

Based on the literature review conducted, the previous reserchers studies has shown the existence of a relationship between ethical leadership and job satisfaction (Kalshoven et al., 2011; Piccolo et al., 2010). However, studies on the relationship between ethical leadership and job satisfaction are still declining (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Erwin, 2011) especially among the school level in Malaysia (Shah & Azida, 2010). There are some studies conducted showing that the increases in leaders integrity level will be able to influence job satisfaction and teacher’s emotion to continue to work and contribute to the organization while being able to increase their commitment (Klein, 2012; Koh & Boo, 2004). In addition, Bogler and Nir (2012) found that leaders who have good social relationships with teachers, always care for their well-being and safety, prioritize teacher professional development and manage their promotion opportunities fairly will increase the job satisfaction among teachers in school. Bogler and Nir (2012) also found that 30 percent of the variance of teacher job satisfaction is explained by the aspect of power sharing of the leaders and teachers. Hwa (2008) found that school leaders who practice power sharing can increase teacher job satisfaction. Similarly, the findings of a study by Kim et al (2009) on hotel workers in Thailand found that hotel managers who practice power sharing with their employees are seen to be able to increase the level of employee satisfaction and encourage them to provide better services to customers and willing to help their colleagues. However, a study by Kelly et al (2008) on primary school teachers in Singapore found that only 45.9 per cent of teachers were satisfied with their current 117 assessment system. This is because school leaders pay less attention to aspects of fairness in the management of the assessment system and are less sensitive to the clarity of assessment criteria (Kelly et al., 2008). While the credibility of the evaluator, especially from the aspect of justice is an important criterion that contributes to the increase in the level of job satisfaction of teachers (Veloo & Hasmin, 2011). Thus, leaders need to be fair and professional when operating the assessment system to ensure that job satisfaction can be met and it can prevent them from the stress, depression and declining commitment to work (Kelly et al., 2008).

Researchers believe that Maslow's social learning theory and hierarchical theory are very effective in improving the quality of education in a school. The main perspective for analyzing

the impacts of ethical leadership is through Social Learning Theory (SLT), as articulated by (Brown et al., 2005). According to the SLT, followers will try to emulate and learn to behave similarly to their leaders through the act of imitation and learning that results from observation (Bandura, 1986). The demonstration of such attitude will result in positive personal formation (Bandura, 1977). According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954), an individual will not be satisfied unless he is able to do something desired, which is motivated by his own need to reach a certain potential in order to be better than the current situation. According to Othman and Wanlabeh (2012), if this theory is used as a foundation, there are numerous options and suggestions for a principal to increase the motivation of his teachers by meeting their needs to a higher level.

Researchers believe that the findings of this study will also help schools understand how ethical leadership can be implemented effectively in schools. Indeed, a school's success will be jeopardised if a leader does not know and manage himself, or fails to be a role model and example to students. This study is expected to serve as a foundation for future research on teacher job satisfaction in schools from the perspective of ethical leadership, particularly among school principals and Ministry of Education officials. As a result, this study is expected to assist principals in increasing teachers' job satisfaction in schools.

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