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Vuca World: The Commitment of Teacher Organization and Student Outcome in Malaysian Primary School

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Abstract

Education is a process for individual development in the physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects that can yield happiness, benefits, and progress in life for oneself, one nation, and religion. The primary-level formal education in Malaysia has two phases namely preschool and primary education is the foreground to the development and expansion of the student's cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains consistent with the National Education Philosophy (NEP). The sustainability of 21st-century education has emphasized a range of universal noble value-oriented practices. The mainstay of 21st-century learning is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) namely Intelligent Quotient (IQ) Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ), and they must be implemented in balance to fulfill the intention and goals of the NEP. That said, the world turmoil has spawned a volatile, vague even complex phenomenon. Whether it is realized or not, the VUCA crisis (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) has already lingered in the lives of the local community for the past two decades. The findings from past studies explained about the education sector experiencing a remarkable impact from the turmoil caused by VUCA. The challenge of holistic education has become greater owing to the unpredictability of the technological gap in forming the student outcome, especially for students in primary schools. This conceptual paper discusses the commitment of teacher organization and primary school student outcomes in the era of VUCA. Even though the direct relationship between the organization, the commitment of teacher organization, and students is not always easy, it is a significant indirect variable for student achievement. To ensure that our country can compete on the international stage, the quality of our education in this VUCA era needs to be given the main focus, especially at the primary level, involving various stages of implementers.

Keywords: VUCA, Teacher Organization's Commitment, Student Outcomes

Introduction

The world is getting more and more complex and dynamic. As early as the year 2000, the world has already illustrated a state of instability, uncertainty, complexity, and vagueness. It is thus, a fact that the world was already in chaos years ago. Around the year 1987, the use of the term VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity) introduced by Warren and Burt at the United States Army War College had begun to be a global concern (Muttaqin, 2021; Noraihan, 2022).

In The New Normal or VUCA, the world is becoming more and more distracted due to volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (Afandi, 2017; Freddy, 2018; Muhammad, 2021). Volatility means an unstable situation. The situations of the world today have undergone a drastic and swift change. This fast-paced change has left us behind, and we are not able to follow the existing development while changes keep happening. The word uncertainty indicates an uncertain and volatile situation, where we are not able to expect situations that may be on the way. Complexity mirrors a difficult situation. The unstable world that we are living in today has doubled the difficulty for us to predict the future. We are not able to make an association with the cause and effect of today's events to foresee our tomorrow. Next, ambiguity illustrates the ambiguity and vagueness of our surroundings. The world of VUCA explains that ambiguity happens due to very swift development and changes.

Due to the unexpected volatility, this VUCA era has caused us to lose our bearings in foreseeing what lies ahead compared to our past. (Hayati, n.d; Ricky, 2022; Viandita, 2022). What is even more worrying is that the impact of VUCA is increasingly felt in various service sectors including the education sector. VUCA has changed the landscape of life from a tranquil one to an unpredictable, complex, and volatile life due to technological disruption in the norms of life (Shasitharan, 2020; Zurina, 2021). Thus, how did the past performance exceed the primary education's preparation to address the VUCA disorder?

VUCA and Primary Education

The exponential growth of digital technology in the era of VUCA demands us to be more serious in facing globalization. The organizational management of primary education must be injected with new breaths of life to produce more prepared and skilled students for the future. The education we have today must be relevant to the current situations that require high skills in information technology and communication. The function of the school as a learning organization must consistently be optimized through the usability of the technology to enhance student outcomes. Education during this VUCA era is not only about transferring knowledge but also encompassing technological intervention to obtain meaningful skills and a high level of marketability (Kheru, 2019; Maszlee as cited in Badriyatun, n.d.). The organization of low education needs to fill the digital gap resulting from unstable and ambiguous global situations. Thus, the 360° change that happens to the development and advancement taking place in education in the VUCA world is only aided by the support and awareness shown by the stakeholders (Rabita, 2022; Muhammad, 2021). Parise and Spillane (2010) stated that this ongoing effort can lend support to excellent leadership and school management in developing excellent human capital.

Primary education aims to prepare some strong basis in the reading, writing, and counting skills (3M) and reasoning, introduction to basic concepts of science, pre-vocational skills,

generic skills, and the inculcation of good moral values (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). As early as 4+ to 5+ years old, children will follow preschool education aiming to develop their potential holistically, master basic skills, and instill a positive attitude as a preparation to enroll in primary school. Other than that, preschool education also aims to prepare children with a strong basis of socialization, instill self-confidence, and form a positive self-concept (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2012). Next, at the age of between 6+ and 11+ years of age, children enter the second phase, which is primary-level formal education. In sum, preschool and primary school student outcomes go hand in hand and share the same goal which is to be the basis of the development and expansion of the student's cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

VUCA has led the primary education sector, in particular, to struggle with the fast-paced change until it leaves a very profound impact. Following the unexpected development and change in education, the lives of society today seem to have been bound by the technology that eventually leaves a great impact on education (Bolden & Regan, 2016; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as cited in Iskandar, 2021). Thus, the responsibilities of the primary education institutions' leaders as the agent of change for students' early growth are challenging in this VUCA phenomenon. Even though they have never been trained to face volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous circumstances, education leaders need to always be prepared to face any unexpected situations that may happen. However, the research found that world leaders do not have the skills; in fact, only 18% of the leaders can become effective leaders to face the VUCA world (Iskandar, 2021, Rimita as cited in Iskandar, 2021).

Effective schools are schools that function as a learning organization as they have an advantage in terms of supporting ongoing learning among the school members. The leadership of the leaders in the main mover to subordinates to create an effective education organization. Effective education leadership requires some concerted, systematic, orderly, optimal, and structured efforts to unite and use all the components of teaching and learning to attain success. This, primary education leaders have to be prepared for the added elements of new leadership so that the existing leadership patterns can be adapted to the change that comes with the VUCA world. Teachers as the front liners need to equip themselves with the change in the VUCA environment by setting goals based on their respective capacities (Maszlee as cited in Kheru, 2021).

Vuca and The Primary Education Organisation Strategy

There seems to be no end to the fast-paced change that happens globally. It is beyond our expectations and thoughts, especially when there is a problem in understanding or there is a delay in taking action to address the change. Such volatility blinds us, making us lose direction before the relevance is lost in the VUCA world. After the heavy grip of the COVID-19 pandemic, education operations surrounded by the challenges of VUCA starve for education administrators and leaders who can take leaps and bounds over the challenges that emerge. The case of irrelevancy would surface if leaders still use old approaches to deliver education. Reversibly, education leaders in this VUCA era need to act based on the parameter, target, and current site to produce high-quality education products. The work culture based on the current environment enables education to function in a more flexible, dynamic, innovative, and creative way.

According to Ary (2019) and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia [UKM] (2022), education leaders should be facing VUCA peacefully and amicably. VUCA must be faced with principles of stability, certainty, simplicity dan clarity. To provide human resources in the future, primary education organizations need to be more prepared and systematic in welcoming VUCA. Every action of the leaders must be different from the normal patterns of thinking in making high-impact decisions based on the situations. The formation of teamwork in brainstorming ideas for the benefit of the organization requires leaders who can think outside the box. Education leaders have to hold on to the short-term and long-term visions that are arranged flexibly and attainable. The dependency on education through the direction of education in the Malaysian Education Development Plan (MEDP) 2013-2025 that has been built for the past 10 years can already be revised and re-evaluated so that it can be adapted to the change brought by VUCA.

The organization's target setting can be acclimatized through the plan, do, check, and action method (PDCA) with comprehensive involvement of the human resource that can aid the achievement. In the education sector, Shakibul (as cited in KPI- Indonesia, 2019) explained three appropriate strategies that can be given attention namely leadership, organization quality, and optimizing operations by reducing expenses. According to Yuserrie (as cited in Mimi Rabita 2021), education leaders have to be more open (flat), facilitating the service operations (agile), sensitive to the current change and requirements (streamlined), technology-literate (technology-enabled), efficacious in managing costs (efficient) and being transparent in management and administration (resilient). The awareness raised on the main focus of the VUCA world concerns with holistic, balanced, competent, and skilled development of student outcomes, that can prepare the generation today to live prosperously and sustainably in the industry 4.0 era (Ainul, 2020; News Room, 2022).

Primary education institutions must be prepared in wading through any possibilities following the unexpected and unpredictable VUCA crises or changes. When schools are closed down due to the national crisis, the education sector must possess an emergency plan that can cater to the requirements and be appropriate to the local conditions. (Leask & Younie as cited in UKM, 2022). The aspects of operations, physicality, education leaders, teachers, and the community must be given attention. Education leaders have to be competent in managing the organization to face the crisis that happens. Next, physical requirements and digital facilities including technology teaching aids must be equipped as support facilities for both teachers and students to continue learning. In the aspect of digital learning training, teachers have to be skilled with the online method to conduct their lessons. To enhance the learning session online, systematic planning and hybrid learning method must be practiced starting now. In brief, the preparation for education operations through an alternative exigency plan, leader competency, teacher skills, system preparedness, also school physicality can overcome past experiences when the world is panicking due to the pandemic, to the point that schools have to be closed down in a long period.

The Commitment of Teacher Organisation in Primary Schools in The Vuca World

Commitment is defined as the level of change in individuals towards a set of high-performing behaviors to motivate them to act toward delivering services and coming up with products (Katzenbach, 2000). Organizational commitment is a unique aspect of organizational effectiveness based on employee participation in each of the organization's operations (Hester et al., 2011). Commitment promotes motivation, being happier, always striving and

wanting organizational membership, protecting company assets, and sharing goals and values (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Organizations will gain benefits, productivity, and profits if they have committed employees. Employees will continue to serve because they want to do so and feel proud to be part of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Commitment becomes stronger among employees who are allowed to participate in decision-making (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Flexibility and empowerment to make decisions will increase subordinates' opportunities in bringing additional initiative, ideas, and energy to the job.

In the field of education, the commitment of teachers' organizations as facilitators is a critical factor that affects the quality of learning and school effectiveness to improve student achievement (Mahazi, 2016; Nurharani et al., 2013). Although the direct relationship between the organization, teacher, and student organizational commitment is not always straightforward, it is an important indirect variable for student achievement. According to Maulana et al (2015); Nolan and Molla (2017); Titik et al (2018), the challenges of 21st-century education require the commitment of teacher organizations to improve the quality of learning so that students can become holistically born. Organizational commitment of teachers can be developed if the organization always supports teachers. Cooperation among colleagues will be highlighted by teachers to highlight the organization because they have a strong passion and motivation to provide the best service. Therefore, school leadership needs to pay attention to increasing the commitment of teachers' organizations to careers, autonomy, and a professional work environment (Shah & Abualrob, 2012).

In the modern world characterized by VUCA, education faces uncertainty due to globalization and digitalization. Primary-level education also faces pressures from the technology, emotional, mental, socialization, and digitalization sides further giving impact to the function and commitment of teacher organization in developing student outcomes (Dave, 2019; Hendarso, 2020). Today, the responsibilities of the teachers in primary education organizations involving the growth and development of students' early potential have become increasingly complex and critical (Khairuddin et al., 2017; Muhibah & Zetty, 2018). The roles of the teacher are more and more diverse and multi-faceted, as a facilitator and also a planner, a controller, a guide, and an assessor in producing their students as active. This is because academic achievement, physical excellence, emotional strength, and social and spiritual well-being are of equal importance and should serve as the benchmark of success for a school (Day et al., 2016).

The challenges of education in the 21st century that have become unstable and intricate require a commitment on the part of teacher organization to enhance the quality of learning and facilitation (Titik et al., 2018). In the era of VUCA, teachers not only have to equip their self-competency, but they also have to face even greater challenges related to teaching and learning pedagogy, be it face-to-face, online, or using the hybrid method (Ainul, 2020; Muttaqin, 2021). Teachers need to have the efficacy and the skills to ensure the effectiveness of the teaching (Jale & Hengameh, 2016; Karacop, 2016). However, issues related to teachers involving commitment, teaching quality, interpersonal skills, student and classroom management and still raise some persisting questions (Ismail & Norliza, 2018). Teachers also face issues of communication, attitude, interest, and pedagogy until the climate of the classroom becomes passive (Abdul Rasid, 2015; Tay, 2023). Other than that, the swift transformation of education in the VUCA world also gives an impact on the commitment of

teacher organizations toward various changes be it in, or outside, the teaching profession (Syiem, 2012).

The task of educating in the VUCA era is not a walk in the park, as the VUCA world has made technology the main medium for knowledge delivery and problem-solving (Naily et al., 2022). The VUCA phenomenon that is unstable and ambiguous must be faced by the teachers to enable them to help achieve the ultimate goals of education. Other than being held accountable in the management and administration of the organization, education leaders should lend support to teachers' efforts as a strategy for increasing their commitment. Bachkirov (2018); Aboramadan et al (2020); Wan Shahrazad et al (2013) contended that the commitment of the organization has come in the form of employees' feedback on the rewards they receive from their employers. To strike a balance between VUCA challenges and the teacher organization commitment, education leadership has to comprehend the status of teacher wellbeing so that education continues to be of quality, although our lives are still plagued by COVID-19. This status of understanding is important as an early action for the increased commitment of teacher organization through their efficacy for the benefit of the school (Gupta, 2014). Strong collaboration can be seen in the effort to put forth their organization as teachers have a strong spirit and motivation in giving the best services.

Committed teachers display high responsibility while carrying out their duties to improve the quality of education in developing students optimally (Lily & Suhaimi, 2020; Ambotang & Bayong, 2018). Jaggil and Suhaimi (2018) stated that in facing the challenges of VUCA education, the level of commitment of teachers is decisive to be more sensitive to the changes. To develop feelings toward the achievement of teachers' career performance, the emotional cohesion and strengthening of teachers' commitment to the organization need to be increased (Nagar, 2012). Therefore, educational leaders should give encouragement and motivation to teachers so that they continue to provide the best service for the development of students and the success of the organization. With motivation and enthusiasm guided by school leaders, teachers will continue to provide voluntary service to support the goals of the organization by getting involved and participating in every program and activity of the organization. Committed teachers exhibit a high level of professionalism such as being motivated and always prioritizing the quality of work. In summary, teachers' organizational commitment is an indication of a strong school organizational management culture, which is considered an important mediating variable for student learning and achievement.

Primary Students' Outcome in Vuca World

The Malaysian education system carries the intention of ensuring that every student reaches their full potential. Student outcome is not only measured in academics, but it encompasses the morals, values, and skills of the students (Zainal, 2016). Student outcome is the outcome of the form of the person, as the consequence of the education one receives from their teachers, whether the outcome is materialized perfectly, less than perfect or flawed, or far from perfect. For Toronto University (2014), student outcome takes place when students can use the knowledge after schooling, to improve their lives in society. Student outcome is at the primary or secondary level, according to the Malaysian Education Quality Standard indicates student development in academic, co-curriculum, and moral development that serves as the benchmark for the school's success in producing high-quality education. Students are taught to resolve conflicts peacefully, to make reasonable decisions in critical situations, and to have

brevity in doing the right thing. In line with changes through VUCA, the existing education system requires some improvement to enable all students to compete outside the ordinary academic context. Thus, to develop primary-level students' potential holistically, all parties have a role to play in ensuring that the young generation achieves their education aspirations and can offer meaningful contributions to their family, society, and country.

Malaysia realizes that the education development that is highly dynamic in the surge of globalization demands a change in the curriculum. Harmonious with this, MOE always takes the initiative to revise and improve the existing curriculum. Starting from the year 1983, the primary education system in Malaysia adopted the Primary School New Curriculum, Primary School Integrated Curriculum in 1993, and Primary School New Curriculum (KBSR) revised edition in 2003. In 2011, Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR) replaced the KBSR curriculum (Revision). The revised KSSR was reintroduced to fulfill the new policy under MEDP so that the quality of the curriculum implemented in primary schools was at par with the international standard. Starting in 2017, the school curriculum has used the KSSR curriculum (Revised). The curriculum based on the standard that has become international practice has transpired into the KSSR through the formulation of the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document for all subjects containing the content, learning, and performance standards.

Through MEDP, student development focuses on six aspirations: knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual skills, ethics and spirituality, and national identity. In the National Education Assessment System, the school-based assessment is the mechanism that translates a holistic student outcome. The assessment is carried out continuously to identify the level of mastery in the subject, and to enable teachers to make follow-up actions to enhance students' achievement. A lot of countries in the region have adopted school-based assessment as a system of assessment to form student outcomes from the primary stage. School-based assessment evaluates the cognitive (intellect), affective (emotional and spiritual), psychomotor (physical), and social aspects. Beginning in 2010, National Education Assessment System has emphasized assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment of learning.

In the period of 50 years, studies have shown that Malaysia has attained success, especially in terms of the school students' literacy aspect. Nonetheless, the development of potential among primary school student outcomes still confronts multiple challenges. To continue to be relevant in the VUCA world, the formation of student outcomes has become more and more complex in mastering a multitude of cognitive skills including reasoning and critical thinking, being creative and innovative. Today, Malaysia faces tough challenges in materializing holistic students seeing that students from the VUCA era are susceptible to the borderless schools of thought (Aizan & Murni, 2017).

Entering the VUCA world is the greatest challenge that every primary student has to go through in continuing their learning process. With the uncontrollable technological change, the VUCA and COVID-19 implications continue to shadow the development of student potential. The main thing that a student has to do is to adopt an open attitude in facing the chaos of VUCA. Every student must be ready, skilled, and able to develop their well-being in regaining the lost generation status throughout the pandemic. Students need to understand that COVID itself is VUCA, by characteristics. Amani and Umi (2020) also Tam and El Azhar

(2020) clarified that students are the group most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They tend to face various challenges such as technological change, their adaptation to online learning, self-learning, financial issues, self-wellbeing, mental well-being, emotional well-being, spiritual well-being, and physical well-being (Abdul Rashid et al., 2020; Mohd Nazul, 2020). Thus, to increase students' well-being, the leaders of educational institutions should attempt to revive schools' state of well-being. This can fulfill the psychological requirements of the students in getting their spirits back in terms of learning after they have missed many lessons following the COVID-19 pandemic (Saidatul et al., 2018).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The writing of this article emphasizes that the momentum of technological development can no longer be predicted due to changes occurring too quickly. VUCA has created various impacts on everyone's lifestyle. As the frontline, educators need to realize that students are the group affected by VUCA changes. Therefore, the commitment of the teacher organization as a facilitator for equipping oneself with various skills and competencies is one of the important levers that can improve student achievement (Chang & Park, 2014). Student development is the outcome of the effectiveness of education in producing knowledgeable and skilled human capital to improve future productivity. The uniqueness of each student can be seen through socialization, the cultivation of values as well as their skills and talents. Therefore, students' potential must be developed to face the various technical challenges of the industrial revolution (Subramaniam, 2023).

For school leaders, the focus should be given to organizational development by promoting a positive learning environment for students, assisting teachers and students in meeting curriculum standards, and supporting learning with teachers' professional learning through improvement strategies with organizational context changes (Hallinger, 2013). Based on domestic and foreign studies, the role of school leaders to improve student achievement and motivate teachers is very important because quality schools are the main objective of educational organizations. An effective leader can be seen through his leadership aspect when he succeeds in encouraging and influencing subordinates to work together in helping to achieve the organization's vision and mission.

In sum, the momentum of technological growth can no longer be predicted as the change has been too fast. VUCA has created various impacts on people's lifestyles. As the front liners, educators have to be aware that students are the group most affected by the change brought by VUCA. With the complexity, difficulty, ambiguity, and volatility, VUCA requires educators who are always ready to develop students' potential in various ways. As substantial agents in the education sector, educators need to be clear about addressing the challenges and demands of VUCA by making the education institutions a safe and fun learning center for the students. Various strategies and methods need to be emphasized by teachers and school leaders to face the educational challenges of the VUCA era so that students' development can be developed in a real, balanced, and continuous manner. It is a fact that the uncertainty of the VUCA era has to be accepted as a fundamental element in our lives as global citizens.

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