

The Relationship between Principal Instructional Leadership and the Teaching Effectiveness of Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract

Leadership is an essential quality in a principal to ensure that excellence in schools can be achieved professionally. The role of a principal is a challenging task with various commitments and responsibilities that must be implemented in order to develop and strengthen educational systems and practices. In this context, the purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between Principal Instructional Leadership and the level of Teaching Effectiveness among secondary school teachers in the Papar district, Sabah. This study uses a quantitative research design, employing a modified Google Form questionnaire distributed randomly to schools in order to collect data. The respondents consisted of 110 secondary school teachers from the Papar district, Sabah. The research questionnaire instrument was modified from the Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1997). The study data were analyzed with SPSS version 26 software to answer the research questions. The study findings showed that the instructional leadership of the principals of secondary schools in Papar district was at a very high level (mean=4.65; standard deviation=0.51). Meanwhile, the teaching efficacy of secondary school teachers in Papar district was at a very high level (mean=4.65; standard deviation=0.51). The study data also showed that the correlation coefficient value was $p=0.263$, $p<0.01$. This means that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between the principals' instructional leadership and teachers' teaching efficacy. The findings have implications for the policies, models, and practices of school leaders in underpinning their leadership practices. Therefore, this study can provide valuable information about the advantages of instructional leadership, as emphasized in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. The implications of this study can positively impact the resolution of issues related to principal leadership and school excellence. Furthermore, it can contribute to the creation of a new body of knowledge, which can serve as a pioneering research foundation for further studies on leadership in Malaysia.

Keywords: Instructional Leadership, Prinsipal, Teacher Efficacy

Introductions

Leadership systems and practices are significantly in improving the progress and performance of a school. Various leadership styles are employed by school leaders to enhance academic performance. In this regard, education systems around the world place significant emphasis on the importance of leadership among principals to strengthen the implementation of quality education and achieve holistic outcomes.

Aim of this research is focus on instructional leadership, as it is highly relevant and significant for school leaders. According to Liu, Li, & Huang (2022), instructional leadership styles are part of the ongoing efforts to improve effective schools. This is also supported by Kaone Bakokonyane and Muyunda Gift (2022), believe that instructional leadership can enhance the success of the teaching and learning process and improve student achievement. This finding is further reinforced by Liu, Li, & Huang (2022), found that various empirical studies show that instructional leadership can improve the quality of school performance.

Leadership practices are essential for achieving the goals of a school's mission and vision. This statement is supported by Sri Mohana Karupiah & Aida (2020), asserted that school leaders always focus on the first dimension: formulating school goals to drive the school improvement process. This leadership can improve the ability of school to adapt to changes that may hinder the school's success and guide the school toward becoming an effective institution. Meanwhile, Kalaichelvi & Aida (2020) stated that school leaders in Bandar Banting, Selangor, are able to practice instructional leadership styles across the dimensions of management, division, coordination, and task assessment.

Based on the results of the researchers' reading and research, among the types of leadership giving positive impact on school excellence is instructional leadership that must be present in a principal. The findings of a study by Cammellia Othman and Abdul Halim Busari (2023) clearly explain that the most important element that determines the success of school leaders as competent leaders is through the practice of instructional leadership. This study supported by Siti Nuramal Jariah Kamari & Jamalul Lail Abdul Wahab (2022) found that principals who are able to explain and set the school's mission and goals to teachers in determining the direction of the organization can then increase the job satisfaction of teachers under their administration. However, the research gap found that there are very few studies in Malaysia that highlight the role and application of instructional leadership in schools. However, instructional leadership is one of the types of leadership that must be present in a principal in achieving career goals as a leader.

In Malaysia, the 5th shift of the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MPB) 2013-2025, which is to ensure that high-performance leadership is implemented in every school, has had a positive impact, especially when there are high-performance leaders in every school with assistant school leaders, subject heads and department heads being developed to act as instructional leaders in their own right (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). This statement is agreed by Dayangku Rodzuanah & Mohd. Izham (2021) and Rozila, Jamalul & Chitra (2019) who state that the instructional leadership of principals proven as the factors that increases the potential, quality of teaching and commitment of Malaysian teachers. Based on this question, there is a need to develop more studies on the application of instructional leadership in strengthening the education system in schools.

Although many studies have been conducted from different perspectives, there are still gaps left by previous researchers. Among them are the level of instructional leadership of principals in Papar district, and the level of teaching efficacy of teachers in Papar district. In addition, studies in rural schools are very rarely conducted. This prompted the researcher to look at the relationship between principals' instructional leadership and teachers' teaching efficacy in Papar district, Sabah. This study aims to; i. Identify the level of instructional leadership practices among principals in secondary schools in Papar district, Sabah. ii. Identify the level of teacher teaching efficacy in secondary schools in Papar district, Sabah and, iii. Identify whether there is a relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' teaching efficacy in secondary schools in Papar district, Sabah.

Hallinger's instructional leadership model (2011) to study the instructional leadership style of school leaders. This model is derived from the Leader Learning Management Rating Scale, which combines principals' policies, practices and behaviors. The results of the questionnaire and observation show that there are three dimensions of responsibility: i) defining the school's goals; ii) managing instructional programs; and iii) creating a positive school climate. It turns out that the theory contributes to the findings of the study.

Literature Review

As the effort to expand the research results, researchers have conducted in-depth research on previous studies to see the extent to which studies have been carried out and the extent to which there are research gaps that have not yet been filled, in order to develop new studies. In this regard, the following is information regarding the topic of this study,

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership according to Cammelia & Abdul Halim (2023) refers to the sharing of responsibility to strengthen leadership in schools. Principals who have effective leadership demonstrate important qualities such as the ability to convey a clear vision, flexibility in management, the ability to be a role model for teachers, as well as wisdom in making decisions that benefit all parties without neglecting the interests of the organization. Meanwhile, according to Siti Nuramal Jariah & Jamalul Lail (2022), principals who practice instructional leadership will use student achievement data to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the school's teaching program and its progress towards school goals. In addition, according to Tang Siew Hui & Mohamed Yusoff Mohd Nor (2024), effective instructional leadership can lead to better achievement in the classroom and have a positive impact on student performance.

The practice of effective instructional leadership requires strong cooperation between teachers as well as support from the principal. This collaboration helps strengthen teachers' responsibilities without interfering with their daily tasks. Studies show that positive instructional leadership can increase teacher motivation, which in turn has a great impact on school success and student achievement. Principals who practice instructional leadership can play a role as a driver of change by providing an environment that supports teacher collaboration and improves the effectiveness of teaching in the classroom. In this regard, teachers who are involved in active collaboration often show better performance, having a positive effect on student learning outcomes. According to Yong King King, Mohamed Yusoff & Bity Salwana Binti Alias (2023) found that there is a strong and significant positive

relationship between the principal's instructional leadership practices and the teacher's competence.

In other words, the instructional leadership style of principals giving a positive impact on teacher competence in secondary schools. Effective principals can increase teacher engagement in teaching practice, provide support for their professional development, and increase teachers' confidence in their own ability to improve student learning outcomes.

Teachers Efficacy in Teaching

According to Berliner (1995), in the theory of teacher development it is explained that with increasing teaching experience, teachers become more skilled in carrying out teaching tasks. This emphasizes the importance of experience in developing better teaching skills. This statement is also supported by Nurul Husna Ibrahim and Jamalulail Abdul Wahab (2021) who found that experienced teachers will find it easier to overcome and organize learning methods. Furthermore, Bandura (1977), also stated that teacher self-efficacy exists based on their experience and specific assessment of the task to be performed.

In addition, Yusof & Yaacob (2022), found that the effectiveness of classroom management with the use of technology plays an important role in to identity of teachers and the quality of their teaching. Teachers' competence in managing the classroom is positively related to their ability to carry out effective teaching. Factors such as experience and training also contribute to increasing teaching effectiveness. This study supports the view that trained teachers are better able to manage the classroom than those who are not trained

Mitchell (2019), also stated that teachers with high teaching efficacy are more likely to use effective classroom management strategies, such as prevention strategies, that giving positive impact on their classroom management. This suggests that teaching experience is a maturation process that improves teachers' teaching and classroom management competence, which in turn improves the overall quality of teaching.

Correlations Instructional Leadership and Teaching Efficacy

Recent studies have shown that the instructional leadership of principals plays a very important role in increasing teacher teaching efficacy, which can ultimately improve student performance and achievement. For example, a study by Ambotang, Jadin (2023), found that principals play a very important role in motivating teachers to produce effective teaching and learning processes to improve student excellence. Principals as leaders in schools must always provide support in increasing teacher self-efficacy.

Principals who are able to identify, manage and control their own and their followers' emotions help in producing excellent students and effective schools. This shows that the practice of instructional leadership among school leaders can influence the teaching effectiveness of teachers in schools in Malaysia. However, the lack of research here is that there are not many studies that examine the relationship between instructional leadership and the formation of teacher efficacy in the context of rural schools. Therefore, this study is attempted to fill the gap in the study to create a new knowledge.

Instructional leadership not only improves individual teaching effectiveness, but can also foster a spirit of collaboration and learning community among teachers, as well as improve the overall quality of teaching. According to Norazlinda et al. (2022), the teaching and learning process of teachers in the classroom needs to be given serious attention. Principals as school leaders need to encourage effective teaching among teachers and subsequently emphasize effective learning among students because teacher factors actually play a role in influencing student achievement

In other words, principals implemented effective instructional leadership can guide their teachers to become more committed and confident in their teaching tasks. Principals who provide support, guidance, and resources to improve teaching skills can motivate teachers to achieve excellence in the classroom and contribute to the success of the school as a whole. Based on the findings of the literature, a holistic study is needed to strengthen the current education system. In this regard, this study was conducted to answer this question by forming a more holistic study.

A study conducted by Ma & Marion (2021), found that principals who practice strong instructional leadership can increase the teaching efficacy of teachers in schools. Principals who act as active instructional leaders, encouraging teachers, can improve the quality of teaching and improve the academic achievement of schools. This study supports the idea that effective instructional leadership can have a positive impact on teacher motivation and commitment, thus improving their teaching performance and student achievement. Through the findings of this study, it was found that instructional leadership can indeed have an impact on teacher efficacy in schools. Therefore, this statement does not mention the implementation of such leadership in secondary schools in the interior as an effort to increase the effectiveness and empowerment of schools to achieve goals holistically.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted entirely using a quantitative design using the survey method. The implementation of this study was carried out in secondary schools from Papar District, Sabah only because Papar District has a large number of secondary schools, namely 11 in Sabah (Sabah State Education Department Portal, 2022). Therefore, this study only involves a population of secondary school teachers, Papar District, totaling 732 people (Sabah State Education Department Portal, 2022).

The study sample selection method is based on Raosoft (2022), this study only involves a minimum sample size of 110 people. A simple random sampling method was used so that the study respondents were representative teachers from all secondary schools in the Papar District. Therefore, the research data will be more accurate to the actual situation in Papar District secondary schools. The source of this data is from the School Management Unit, Papar District Education Office which is fully responsible for the statistics and EMIS data of teachers in Papar district in particular.

There are three parts to the study instrument containing 57 questionnaire items. The items were modified from the Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and the three organizational commitment questionnaire of Allen and Meyer (1997). In short, part A contains seven question items to find out the demographics of teachers (Anusha & Azlin, 2021). Part B

is adapted from the study of Dayangku Rodzianah and Mohd. Izham (2021) containing eleven subconstructs, namely 57 items, to find out the instructional leadership practices of principals. Part C is adapted from the study of Ramathevi Kuppan and Ahmad Zabidi (2021) and Noraziyannah and Aida (2019) containing three subconstructs, namely 30 items, to find out the efficacy of teachers. All questionnaire items are positive questions and need to be answered with a five-point Likert scale (Rodzianah & Izham, 2021; Kuppan & Zabidi, 2021; Noraziyannah & Aida, 2019).

Data Analysis and Finding

After conducting a study analysis, the researcher has successfully answered all the study objectives. There are two types of analysis used by researchers, namely descriptive analysis to show demographics and levels or mean values. While inferential analysis is used to analyze the relationship between study variables. The following are the findings and discussion of the study as in the information below.

Descriptive Analysis

This descriptive analysis presents demographic information of the study respondents and an analysis of mean values regarding the level of instructional leadership and the level of teacher efficacy

Respondents Demographic

A total of 110 respondents, 55 males and 55 females, were involved in this study. The demographic profile showed that respondents aged 30 years and below were 5 (4.5%), followed by respondents aged 31 to 40 years, 25 (22.7%), followed by respondents aged 41 - 50 years, 45 (40.9%), which was the group that answered the questionnaire the most. The last category was respondents aged 51 years and above, 35 (31.8%). Based on teaching experience, respondents who had worked for 3 years and below were 5 (4.5%), 6 (5.5%) who had worked for 4 - 9 years, and 26 (23.6%) who had worked for 10 - 15 years. Respondents who had worked for 16 - 20 years numbered 15 people (13.6%) and respondents with 20 years of experience and above numbered 58 people (52.7%), which is the group that answered this questionnaire the most.

Principal's Instructional Leadership Level

Based on Table 1, the mean value for the principal's instructional leadership variable is $M = 4.65$ with a standard deviation = 0.514. This value falls within the range of 4.1 to 5.0, which indicates that the level of instructional leadership among respondents is at a very high level. The standard deviation of 0.514 indicates that there is little variation in the data, but most respondents gave scores close to the mean value.

Table 1:1

Level of Instructional Leadership Practices of Principals

Construct	Mean	Standard deviations	Interpretation
Level of Instructional Leadership Practices of Principals	4.65	0.514	Very high

Teacher Efficacy level

The study findings show that the overall level of teacher efficacy in Papar is at a very high level, namely (mean = 4.65; s.p. = 0.514).

Table 2

The Level of Teaching Efficacy

Construct	Mean	Standard deviations	Interpretation
The level of teaching efficacy	4.65	0.514	Very high

Inferential Analysis

The study findings show that the overall level of teacher efficacy in Papar is at a very high level, namely (mean = 4.65; s.p. = 0.514).

i) The Relationship between Principals' Instructional Leadership Practices and Teachers' Teaching Effectiveness

Table 3 shows that there is a moderate positive significant correlation ($r = 0.513$) between the implementation of instructional administration by administrators and teacher efficacy. The significant value ($p=0.000$) is smaller than the significant value ($p<0.01$). This value is smaller than 0.05, indicating that the relationship between leadership and efficacy is significant. This relationship is direct, meaning that an increase in leadership is most likely associated with an increase in efficacy.

Table 3

Pearson Correlations Data Analysis

	Instructional Leadership	Teacher Efficacy
Pearson correlations	1	0.513**
Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000
N	110	110

Discussions*i) The Level of Instructional Leadership*

Table 3 shows that there is a moderate positive significant correlation ($r = 0.513$) between the implementation of instructional administration by administrators and teacher efficacy. The significant value ($p=0.000$) is smaller than the significant value ($p<0.01$). This value is smaller than 0.05, indicating that the relationship between leadership and efficacy is significant. This relationship is direct and its able to increase in leadership is most likely associated with an increase in efficacy.

Based on the findings of the study, the level of instructional leadership of principals in Papar district is at a very high level. This finding is consistent with the study by Sri Mohana Karupiah and Aida (2020). However, this shows that efforts to improve the instructional leadership practices of principals need to be continuously named. The issue of principals' busyness is believed to have affected their ability to develop collective responsibility in the school, as stated by Sri Mohana Karupiah and Aida (2020) and Donnie et al. (2018).

Principals need to be more active in monitoring and ensuring the quality of all school staff to achieve the set targets, as suggested by Uddin (2019). Principals also need to hold discussions

with the administrative group to resolve issues faced by teachers in the school. This indicates that the principal's instructional leadership practices should focus more on a collaborative and democratic approach in all school affairs, as suggested by Shava, Jan Heystek and Thompson Chasara (2020). These steps to improve leadership practices are believed to bring positive changes to a more conducive school environment, as stated by Uddin (2020) and Gordden (2019).

ii) Level of Teacher Teaching Effectiveness

Based on the study findings, the level of teacher teaching efficacy is also at a very high level. This finding is in line with a study by Dayangku Rodzianah and Mohd. Izham (2021), which found that teacher teaching efficacy in secondary schools is at a very high level. This shows that efforts to improve teacher teaching efficacy need to continue to ensure that the level of teacher professionalism and efforts to improve the education system are not affected. It cannot be denied that more and more teachers do not agree that they will feel guilty about leaving school and are very indebted to the school.

Based on the theory of the three leadership model of organizational commitment by Allen and Meyer (1997), this perception is closely related to the level of normative commitment of teachers. Low levels of normative commitment may have contributed to the issue of increasing the number of teachers choosing to retire early. Therefore, among the steps to increase teachers' normative commitment is to improve school culture, teaching careers, work teams, self-development opportunities, and teachers' internal motivation (Rapika et al., 2018). Increasing teacher commitment should be done without ignoring the pressures faced by teachers (Ezeanokwasi et al., 2020).

iii) The Relationship between Principal Instructional Leadership and Teacher Teaching Effectiveness

Finally, this study shows that there is a moderate positive relationship between the leadership of secondary school principals in Papar district and teacher teaching efficacy. This finding is consistent with studies by Dayangku Rodzianah and Mohd. Izham (2021), Rozila and Jamalul Lail (2019), and Chitra (2019), who found a strong significant relationship between the two variables. The findings of this study are also in line with the study by Anusha and Azlin (2021), who stated that the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teacher teaching efficacy in the Mantin Zone, Negeri Sembilan, is positive significant and moderately strong. This shows that instructional leadership practices have an impact on teacher teaching efficacy, but not completely. There is a gap in research on the relationship between principals' instructional leadership practices and teacher teaching efficacy among different secondary schools. Therefore, principals need to strive to improve their instructional leadership practices in order to have a greater impact on teacher teaching efficacy.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study prove that the leadership practices practiced by principals influence the teaching efficacy of teachers in schools. Therefore, this study provides several implications for policy and training, principal leadership practices and management practices in schools. Implications in terms of policy and training, evaluation and reflection on the effectiveness of PGB instructional leadership on teacher teaching efficacy should be carried out by JPN, PPD and IAB. The policy for improving the National Education Professional

Qualification Program NPQEL or principalship training is very much needed from time to time according to educational changes. The results of this study can also be used as a guide in providing courses or training related to instructional leadership and teacher job satisfaction to PGB or prospective PGB.

This study is expected to give an impact and contribution to school leaders and teachers in general. In addition, the findings of this study will contribute to awareness of the level of teacher teaching efficacy and its relationship with student achievement. It can also provide input and explain to the community the extent of the relationship between the Principal's instructional leadership and teacher teaching efficacy due to the lack of such studies, especially in the Papar

Limitations of Research

The findings of this study on the relationship between principals' instructional leadership only explain the findings in this district and do not reflect the entire district in Sabah. The study on teacher teaching effectiveness conducted also only involved secondary school teachers.

Further Research

To strengthen the findings of this study, further research is suggested to explore other models and different research methods. Qualitative research methods can also be used, such as library survey designs, field studies, observations, and interviews, to investigate instructional leadership practices and their relationship to teacher teaching efficacy, including their effects. According to Marshall and Rossman (2016), qualitative methods use an inquiry-based rather than statistical approach to obtain data. This approach focuses more on understanding the thoughts and actions of respondents.

In addition, the location of this study can be expanded to other districts in Sabah and throughout Malaysia to develop more comprehensive and beneficial findings for policy, administrators, and schools. The number of study populations and samples can also be expanded to primary schools, and the dimensions of instructional leadership and teacher teaching efficacy can be added for further study. In addition, further studies can be conducted to identify factors that influence the level of leadership practice, such as experience or leadership style applied.

Conclusions

The study successfully identified the level of instructional leadership of principals in the Papar district and teacher teaching efficacy and its relationship in the Papar District, Sabah. The study findings show that principals in the Papar district have practiced instructional leadership in their daily affairs and have a high impact on teacher teaching efficacy. Based on this study paper, it was found that there is a moderate positive significant relationship between principals' instructional leadership and teacher teaching efficacy. This is in line with Hallinger's theory of instructional leadership which states that instructional leadership has an impact on teacher teaching efficacy. This study also found that principals' instructional leadership is at a very high level and this practice needs to be maintained in order to have a positive impact on the world of education. Therefore, this study contributes knowledge to the field of educational administration regarding the development of principal leadership practices and teacher teaching efficacy specifically in the Papar district. Steps to improve instructional

leadership practices and increase teacher teaching efficacy should be implemented by all involved to build effective schools. Effective schools will be able to realize the Ministry of Education's educational policies.

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