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Teachers' Perception of Attitudes toward Change in the National-type Chinese Primary Schools in Perak, Malaysia

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to examine the patterns of teacher attitudes toward change (TATC) in the National-type Chinese Primary Schools (NCPSs) in Perak, Malaysia. A total of 473 respondents completed the survey with useful data. The findings revealed that a) teachers in NCPSs achieved the level of *Quite Good* in TATC and in its three domains i.e. *Cognitive*, *Behavioral* and *Affective*; b) teachers in NCPSs possess cognitively based attitudes; c) in terms of quadrants, teachers in NCPSs were located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* of TATC; and d) there were 70.82%, 21.36%, 6.34%) and 1.48% of the teachers in NCPSs located in the quadrants of *Acceptance*, *Embracing*, *Indifference* and *Resistance* of TATC, respectively. These implied that there is a dire need for improvement of TATC in NCPSs in Perak. The study provides a preliminary insight into the emergence of patterns and typology of TATC in NCPSs, offering local practitioners and relevant parties another dimension of understanding, enhancing and preparing the teachers' capacity for change. The study also serves as a reference as the findings leave the door open for further exploration on TATC in NCPSs as well as other types of primary schools across other states in Malaysia.
Keywords: National-Type Chinese Primary Schools, Teacher Attitudes Toward Change, Cognitive Responses to Change, Affective Responses To Change, Behavioral Responses To Change, Acceptance, Embracing, Indifference, Resistance

Introduction

The increasing demands for educational excellence and accountability, educational reform, therefore, has become a top priority in many countries. As the front-line change implementers in schools, teacher is the single most important school-based factor that determines the change outcomes in the change process (Fullan, 2001; Tai & Omar, 2017a). Thus, understanding how teachers react to change is more likely to provide valuable insights into the mechanisms antecedent to the phenomenon of resistance to school change. Indeed, the literature of organizational change found that the success or failure of any change is individuals' resistance to the change, which is closely related to positive or negative attitudes toward change (Aslan, Beycioglu & Konan, 2008; Bouckenooghe, 2009; Trader-Leigh, 2001; Omar, Rahman, Hamid, 2018).

According to Hayes (2010), Nilakant and Ramanarayan (2006), individual attitude is a good predictor of change readiness in an organisation that has had a successful organizational change. In the field of education, since school change must ultimately be implemented by school teachers as they are at the heart of the improvement process, teacher attitude toward change is a critical factor of change readiness in schools. Hence, if teachers do not put change into practice with positive attitudes, school reform will be adopted superficially or even fail. Teacher attitudes toward change thus are considered as among the most significant determining factors of successful and sustainable school change (Bouckenooghe, 2009; Tai & Omar, 2017a; Rafedzi, Zainal, Yu, & Kamal, 2018).

Malaysia is one of the developing countries that have invested greatly in education development. In order to have a dynamic and coherent education system, the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 has been introduced for the enhancement of the system (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). The envisaged reform is of great complexity in both breadth and depth; teacher attitudes toward change are considered as one major determinant of their intention to embrace or resist these changes. However, to our knowledge, studies on teacher attitudes toward change (TATC) have paid little attention to the primary schools. For example, Tai and Omar (Omar & Tai, 2018; Tai & Omar, 2014a, 2014b; Tai & Omar, 2016; Tai & Omar, 2017a) had examined TATC in Malaysian secondary schools, but how teachers perceive, react and adapt to change in primary schools still remains unexplored. Against this background, the current study aimed to study TATC in the National-type Chinese Primary Schools (NCPSs) in Perak, Malaysia. This may help to broaden the understanding of TATC in Malaysian primary schools as it can inform and guide practices.

Literature Review

Concept of Attitude

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), attitude is seen as a learned predisposition to respond to an object in a consistently favourable or unfavourable way. Basically, it is labelled as a tri-dimensional concept that consists of cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Farley & Stasson, 2003; Dunham, Grube, Gardner, Cummings, & Pierce, 1989; Oreg, 2006; Piderit, 2000). Underwood (2002) pointed out that any particular attitude can also be based on one component more than another (Underwood, 2002). An attitude that is formed primarily through facts instead of emotions, or observations of our behaviour, is cognitively based (Lavine, Thomsen, Zanna & Borginda, 1998; Millar & Millar, 1990); an attitude where the affective component is more salient is affectively based; an attitude which stems from one's observation of one's own behaviour, or where the behavioural component is more dominant, is behaviourally based.

Teacher Attitudes toward Change

Teacher attitude toward change (TATC) is the overall positive or negative evaluative judgment of a teacher towards change initiatives implemented by his or her school (Tai & Omar, 2017b). It is the internal state that affects a teacher's choices of personal action in school change. Likewise, TATC consists of three important components namely, teacher's cognitions about change, affective responses to change, and behavioral tendencies toward change. Cognitive responses to change refer to the teachers' beliefs about the significance of the change, the need for change and the favorability of outcomes i.e. the extent to which the change will be personally and organizationally beneficial. Affective responses to change refer to teachers'

feelings about the change – the feeling of being linked to satisfaction or anxious about change; it is the tendency of teachers to enjoy changes in schools. Behavioral reaction to change is the extent that teachers would take action to support or initiate change; it is the teachers' actions for or against change.

On the other hand, basically TATC can be explained based on two main continuums i.e. positive-negative and active-passive (Tai & Omar, 2017b), This is due to the fact that attitudes may vary by the degree of positive-negative and active-passive of the individuals toward an attitude object. If a stimulus evokes primarily favorable responses, a positive and active attitude is fostered; if a stimulus evokes primarily unfavorable responses, a negative and passive attitude is nurtured (Underwood, 2002). Based on the aforementioned three main components of attitudes (*Cognitive*, *Affective* and *Behavioral*) and two main continuums of attitudes (positive-negative and active-passive), TATC can be divided into four main categories namely *Embracing, Acceptance, Indifference*, and *Resistance* (Tai & Omar, 2017b). The characteristics of each category are displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Indicators for Four Categories of TATC

Positive

ACCEPTANCE	EMBRACING
● Believes that a change is necessary (C) ● Believes that the change implemented is appropriate for the organization (C) ● Feels ease with the change (A) ● Concerned and valued the change (A) ● Does only what is required in the change (B) ● Not mattering whether others are interested in the change (B)	● Believes that only change will increase organizational effectiveness (C) ● Believes that only the way the change is implemented will bring benefits to the organization (C) ● Enthusiastic and excited about the change (A) ● Passionate and proud about the change (A) ● Engaged and take responsibility in the change (B) ● Inspired others to engage in the change (B)
RESISTANCE	INDIFFERENCE
● Believes that a change is unnecessary at all (C) ● Believes that the change implemented is	

Negative	not appropriate for the organization (C) ● Feels irritated and in a state of denial about the change (A) ● Shows anger and hostility toward the attributes of the change (A) ● Refuse to participate in any form of change activity (B) ● Recruiting others for common support to oppose or sabotage the plan for change (B)	● Believes that whether change or not change the situation in the organization will be the same (C) ● Believes that no matter how the change is implemented, it does not affect the situation in the organization (C) ● No marked feeling about the change (A) ● Keep aloof from the change (A) ● Keen in showing that oneself is neutral in the change (B) ● Encourages others to be neutral in the change (B)
	Passive	Active

Note. C=Cognitive; A=Affective; B=Behavioural

Contextual Background of the Study – the National-type Chinese Primary Schools

The NCPS is an integral part of the national educational system of Malaysia since 1957. These schools located on private donated lands and are accorded the status of "government-aided schools". The government is responsible for the setting of the school curriculum, teachers' training and salary as well as funding the school operations (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). However, the NCPSs receive less funding from the Ministry of Education in comparison with those National Schools that are situated on public land and are fully under the Education Ministry's responsibility in terms of funding and maintenance. For NCPSs, funding in other areas such as the building of the school and utility expenses is the responsibility of the local ethnic communities. Normally the NCPSs are managed by boards of directors made up of strong supporters from the local Chinese community, who place a high priority in safeguarding and ensuring a conducive environment for study. Fund-raising is their main strategy to gather funds for the school, with the Chinese community being a strong donor for this purpose (Raman & Tan, 2015).

The NCPSs adopt the same national syllabus used by the government schools and offer the same school-leaving examination, the Primary School Achievement Test (*Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah*). The teaching of the Chinese language is compulsory in NCPSs and is the medium of instruction for all non-language subjects. The Malay language remains a compulsory subject in NCPSs whereas English is conducted as a third language (English is taught as a second language in government schools). As the NCPSs are specifically designed for the Chinese children to learn their mother tongue as well as their culture, 90% of the students are Chinese. However, there have been an increasing number of non-Chinese children in NCPSs in the past ten years. This is perhaps due to NCPSs having stricter

disciplinary and educational methods (Raman & Tan, 2015). Notwithstanding the rise of China as an economic powerhouse may have also raised the awareness of the need for Mandarin learning globally.

Methodology

Sample

Quantitative approach using survey method was employed to collect the data for the study. To perform the test adequately, multiple-staged stratified random sampling was applied in the study due to its highly recommended efficiency; each important segment is adequately represented and thus increased the likelihood of representation as well as the possibility of greater accuracy (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). As shown in Table 1, there were altogether 10 districts in Perak with 185 NCPSs. The researcher decided to have a total of 20 percent of each stratum of the district or a total of 37 NCPSs were selected randomly for the survey. Except the district of Perak Tengah, the number of NCPSs of each district engaged in the study ranged from two to seven. For each school, 15 teachers were chosen randomly for the survey. As a result, a total of 555 teachers (37 x 15) were identified as respondents for the study.

Table 1. Total Number of Schools and Respondents of Each District of Perak Engaged in the Survey

Districts of Perak	No. of schools in each district	No. of school involved in the survey	No. of respondents in each district
Batang Padang	23	5	75
Manjung	24	5	75
Kinta Utara	35	7	105
Kinta Selatan	22	4	60
Krian	10	2	30
Kuala Kangsar	16	3	45
Hilir Perak	20	4	60
Larut	23	5	75
Hulu Perak	11	2	30
Perak Tengah	1	0	0
	185	37	555

Survey Instrument

Teacher Attitudes toward Change Scale (TATCS) constructed by adapting the Attitudes toward Change Scale (ATCS) of Dunham et al. (1989) by Tai and Omar (2017b) was applied to examine TATC in NCPSs in Perak. It encompasses three main dimensions namely; (a) *Cognitive*; (b) *Affective*; and (c) *Behavioral* responses to change. Each aforementioned dimension consists of three items with factor loadings ranging from .64 to .83. The composite reliability index for each dimension of TATCS is .67, .65, and .62, respectively. TATCS hold discriminant validity since Average Variance Extracted of the factors is greater than .5 (Kline, 2011). The instrument was a six-point Likert-type scale and respondents were requested to rank their responses from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The data interpretation for the level of TATC is based on the measurement of two indicators i.e. frequency of the performance and

performance rating as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Raw Scores of TATC and Its Level and Indicators

Raw Scores	Level of TATC	Indicators	
		Frequency of the Performance	Performance Rating
5.51 - 6.00	Very good	Almost all of the time	Very satisfactory
5.01 – 5.50	Good	Often	Satisfactory
4.01 - 5.00	Quite good	Quite Often	Quite satisfactory
3.01 - 4.00	Fair	Sometimes	Average
2.01 - 3.00	Quite poor	Quite Rarely	Quite Dissatisfactory
1.51 – 2.00	Poor	Rarely	Dissatisfactory
1.00 – 1.50	Very poor	Almost Never	Very Dissatisfactory

On the other hand, based on the two main continuums of TATC i.e. positive-negative (vertical) and active-passive (horizontal) as mentioned earlier, with two main indicators for each of the components of TATC, *Cognitive*, *Affective* and *Behavioural* as illustrated in Figure 1, TATC is presented in four quadrants: *Embracing, Acceptance, Indifference*, and *Resistance* (Tai & Omar, 2017b). As TATCS is a six-point Likert-type scale and with the scores range from 1 to 6, as shown in Table 3, those respondents who score between 1.00 and 2.24 will fall in the quadrant of *Resistance*, 2.25 and 3.49 in the quadrant of *Indifference*, 3.50 and 4.74 in the quadrant of *Acceptance*, and 4.75 and 6.00 in the quadrant of *Embracing*. This measurement is employed to capture the respondent's position on the above two defined TATC continuum so as to explain TATC explicitly and thus able to reflect the position of the respondent accurately (Tai & Omar, 2017b).

Table 3.The Raw Scores and the Quadrants of TATC

Raw Scores	Quadrants of TATC
1.00-2.24	Resistance
2.25-3.49	Indifference
3.50-4.74	Acceptance
4.75-6.00	Embracing

Data Collection and Analysis

The process of data collection was taken over a period of two months and adhered to all ethical considerations. Of 555 sets of questionnaires sent to 37 NCPSs, 480 sets were returned or with a response rate of 86.49%. As there were seven sets of questionnaires with illegible responses, only 473 sets of questionnaires were included for the final analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to analyses the data of the study whereby means, standard deviations and percentages were obtained by using SPSS software. Besides, based on a significance level of 0.5, t-test was employed to test the significance of the differences between variables.

Demographic Characteristics

As shown in Table 4, majority of the respondents were female (82.88%; N=392) and only 17.12% (N=81) were male. In terms of age, most of the respondents were aged between 31 to 40 years (N=205; 43.34%), followed by the age group of 21 to 30 years (N=104, 21.98%), 41 to 50 years as well as 51 to 60 years (N=82, 17.34%). Regarding academic qualification, a total of 73.15% (N=346) were with Bachelor's degree, 21.78% (N=103) with certificate or diploma and 5.07% (N=24) with Master's degree. In terms of school seniority, 24.95% (N=118) were attached to the current school between 11 to 15 years, 24.74% (N=117) more than 20 years, 22.19% (N=105) 1 to 5 years, 16.91% (N=80) 6 to 10 years, and 11.21% (N=53) 16 to 20 years.

Table 4. *Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

Demographic	Category	Frequency	Per cent (%)
Gender	Male	81	17.12
	Female	392	82.88
Age	21-30	104	21.98
	31-40	205	43.34
	41-50	82	17.34
	51-60	82	17.34
Academic	Certificate/Diploma	103	21.78
Qualification	First Degree	346	73.15
	Master	24	5.07
School Seniority	1-5	105	22.19
	6-10	80	16.91
	11-15	118	24.95
	16-20	53	11.21
	>20	117	24.74
Location of school	Urban	130	27.48
	Rural	343	72.52

Findings

The Level of TATC in NCPSs

As shown in Table 5, the mean score for TATC, *Cognitive*, *Affective* and *Behavioural* of TATC were 4.21, 4.39, 4.10 and 4.13, respectively. Based on the raw scores and the levels of TATC displayed in Table 2, this indicated that the NCPSs achieved the level of *Quite Good* in TATC as well as in its three main domains as the mean scores fell within 4.01 to 5.00. While examining closely based on domains, teachers in NCPSs achieved the highest mean in *Cognitive* (M=4.39; SD=.76), followed by *Behavioural* (M=4.13; SD= .71) and *Affective* (M=4.10; SD=1.26). Importantly, the differences were significant as the *p*-values of the *t*-tests were less than .05 (Table 6). Based on the above results, it can be concluded that teachers in NCPSs possess cognitively based attitudes.

Table 5. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of TATC and Its Dimensions in NCPSs

Domains	M	SD
Cognitive	4.39	.76
Affective	4.10	1.26
Behavioural	4.13	.71
TATC	4.21	.63

Table 6. One-sample t-Test for Differences among Domains of TATC in NCPSs

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
COG	124.830	472	.000	4.39	4.3192	4.4574
AFF	70.286	472	.000	4.10	3.9868	4.2161
BEH	126.322	472	.000	4.13	4.0640	4.1925

TATC Based on Quadrants

On the other hand, while examining TATC based on quadrants, with the mean score of 4.21 (Table 4), teachers of NCPSs were located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* as the mean scores fell within 3.50 to 4.74 (Table 3). Likewise, all the dimensions of TATC i.e. *Cognitive* (M=4.39), *Affective* (M=4.10) and *Behavioral* (M=4.13) also located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* as all mean scores also fell within 3.50 to 4.74. While examining closely, there were 70.82% (N=335), 21.36% (N=101), 6.34% (N=30) and 1.48% (N=7) teachers in NCPSs located in the quadrants of *Acceptance*, *Embracing*, *Indifference* and *Resistance*, respectively (Table 7).

Table 7. Frequency Distribution of TATC Based on Quadrants in NCPSs

Raw Scores	Quadrants of TATC	N	%
1.00-2.24	Resistance	7	1.48
2.25-3.49	Indifference	30	6.34
3.50-4.74	Acceptance	335	70.82
4.75-6.00	Embracing	101	21.36

Discussion

The study has revealed several important observations about TATC in NCPSs. Firstly, teachers in NCPSs achieved the level of *Quite Good* in TATC and in its three domains i.e. *Cognitive*, *Behavioral* and *Affective*. Based on the interpretation of the levels of TATC suggested in Table 2, this implied that the teachers of NCPSs had practised positive TATC 'quite often' with 'quite satisfied' performance. If TATC is viewed as one of the important factors that will impact school change especially in improving student learning, it would imply that there is a need for teachers of NCPSs to 'often' practice positive TATC with 'satisfied' performance so as to realize change goals effectively. Therefore, it can be argued that there is room for improvement for the teachers of the NCPSs in Perak to enhance their TATC if they are to provide the best possible education for the students.

Secondly, while examining closely based on domains, teachers in NCPSs achieved the highest mean in the domain of *Cognitive*, followed by *Behavioral* and *Affective.* As the differences among the three components were significant and the component of *Cognitive* was more salient in comparison with the components of *Behavioral* and *Affective*, teachers in NCPSs thus possessed cognitively based attitudes toward school change. These implied that cognitive factors play a substantial and significant role in attitude formation of teachers in NCPSs. Early in a change

process, teachers in NCPSs will be exposed to the information on school change, and they then form beliefs about the change. Issues such as whether the school itself is capable of implementing the change, whether the change is needed in such a way that important objectives are met, and how school leader supports this particular change will be the main concern of the teachers (Tai, Omar, Sahari & Khuan, 2015). If the acceptance about the rationales for school change is high, the likelihood that teacher demonstrate positive TATC will be relatively high and vice versa.

Thirdly, while examining TATC based on quadrants, it was found that the teachers of NCPSs were located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* as the mean scores of TATC and its three domains i.e. *Cognitive*, *Affective* and *Behavioral* also fell within 3.50 to 4.74. Indeed, the study also found that there were 70.82% of teachers in NCPSs were located in this quadrant. Basically, teachers in the quadrant of *Cognitive* are those who believe that a change is necessary and the implemented change is appropriate for their schools. In terms of affect, they feel at ease with the change and concerned and valued the change. However, behaviorally, they only do what is required in the change with no particular regard for whether others are interested in the change (Tai & Omar, 2017b). Indeed, Hayes (2010), Kotter (1999), Nilakant and Ramanarayan (2006) also argued that organizational change can only be implemented effectively if the organization members have strong positive intentions to support change and work together to realize the change goal. Since the teachers of NCPSs were located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* and the envisaged reform in the Malaysian education system is complex, it is most likely that to implement school reform successfully as set out in the Blueprint is a great challenge to Ministry of Education.

Fourthly, there were only 21.36% of the teachers in NCPSs located in the quadrants of *Embracing*. Cognitively, the teachers of NCPSs located in this quadrant strongly believe that change will increase school effectiveness and bring benefits to the schools. They are enthusiastic, passionate and proud about the proposed change. Additionally, they are not only engaged and take responsibility in the change, but also inspired and pull others in to engage in the change (Tai & Omar, 2017b). In short, they display palpable energy, excitement and hope for school reforms. Ideally, if the number of teachers located in the quadrant of *Embracing* is high, the probability to turn change goals into reality would be relatively high. However, this is not the case now. With less than one quarter of the total number of teachers of NCPSs located in this quadrant, real and sustained school reforms certainly are not easy to be achieved. Since teachers are the largest resource for promoting school effectiveness (Buckner & McDowelle, 2000), mobilizing the energy and capacities of teachers are of paramount importance in the face of change. Hence, the findings seem to suggest that concerted efforts should be taken in the near future to improve TATC especially to increase the number of teachers engage in the quadrant of *Embracing* in NCPSs.

Fifthly, the finding showed that there were 6.34% of the teachers in NCPSs located in the quadrant of *Indifference*. Teachers who are in the quadrant of *Indifference* of TATC are those who believe that no matter how the change is implemented, it does not impact the effectiveness of the school. Basically, this type of teachers has no marked feeling about the change and would keep aloof from the change. They tend to show that they are neutral in the change and encourage others to be neutral (Tai & Omar, 2017b). Obviously, they are obstacles in the change process as they cannot promote a nurturing learning and teaching environment that impact learning

outcomes in NCPSs. Hence, special attempts should be taken to identify the root cause of the situation as teacher is the single most important school-based factor that determines the change outcomes in the school change (Fullan, 2001).

Lastly, the sixth finding showed that there were 1.48% of the teachers of NCPSs located in the quadrant of *Resistance*. Teachers who are in the quadrant of *Resistance* are those who believe change is unnecessary and not appropriate at all for the school. Often they feel irritated and in a state of denial about the school change. Behaviorally, they show anger and hostility toward the attributes of the change and refuse to participate in any form of change activity. On top of this, they might even recruit others for common support to oppose or sabotage the plan for change (Tai & Omar, 2017b). Athough the percentile of the teachers of NCPSs located at this quadrant was relatively low, however, as school reform requires the participation and engagement of teachers at all levels (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990), it is important for school leaders in NCPSs to identify the situational antecedents of this phenomenon.

There were few possible reasons why there were teachers of NCPSs located in the quadrant of *Resistance*. According to Oreg (2003), an individual's familiar responses are not compatible with the proposed change, the likelihood to participate in the change is relatively low. Tai and Omar (2016) pointed out that this may be due to teachers not equipped with the right set of competencies to implement the change. If teachers believe that they have the necessary skills and ability to cope and make the change succeed, they are more likely to buy into the change and attempt to make it work. Cunningham (2006), Halverson and Smith (2010) and Selwyn (2010) argued that teacher's abilities and skills are important predictors of classroom practice in the face of change. Hence, the result can be viewed as an indicator that teachers in NCPSs need to be exposed to more relevant professional development programs that are specifically targeted to their needs and their mastery levels so as to perform the new task efficiently.

Besides, Oreg (2003) also observed that individuals who are low in psychological resilience tend to demonstrate negative attitudes toward change. It is important to note that less resilient teachers usually do not share the confidence that they have the ability to face challenges and implement a complex organizational change collectively (Tai, Omar, Mohamad Sahari & Khuan, 2017). This lack of confidence may due to the lack of supportive relationships within the organization. Research reveals that change resistance will be relatively low when a supportive culture is present (Bardoel & Sohal, 1999; Sarros, Cooper & Santora, 2011). Supportive relationships among the school leaders and the teachers probably will help to create trust and develop confidence in the individuals' ability to handle change (Seijts & Roberts, 2011). Besides, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) emphasized that when change is used as a tool for the superiors to monitor or to evaluate the teacher, the likelihood that teacher demonstrate negative attitudes toward the change is relatively high; teachers may feel that control over their instructional life in the school is taken away from them especially when top-down changes are implemented.

Limitations of the Study

The study has several limitations. As the study employed survey method by using self-report questionnaires to collect the data, the findings probably would be affected by egocentric biases. This is due to the fact that instead of actual performance level, self-report measures are likely to

reflect perceived performance level (Harris & Schaubrocek, 1988). To address this predicament, it would be meaningful to involve the change agents themselves i.e. the head teachers and also another third party, the senior assistants in future studies. Apart from this, to capture and understand TATC through a survey study alone provides insufficient clues on how teachers perceive, react and adapt to change. To better identify and analyze TATC, longitudinal research is needed to improve the situation. This initiative may help us to gain a comprehensive perspective of the phenomenon and to enhance the ability to interpret the findings. Lastly, the study is limited by its small sample size. Future research should be designed to address this limitation by taking a larger sample size; it is more likely to be representative of the original population and tends to be associated with a smaller margin of error as well as to increase the power of the study to draw conclusions.

Conclusion

One critical factor that influences the success or failure of any school change is the acceptance or the heart of the teachers to work through the change process that is closely linked to their positive or negative attitudes toward change. Overall, the study found that a) teachers in NCPSs achieved the level of *Quite Good* in TATC that they had practised TATC 'quite often' with 'quite satisfied' performance; and b) most of the teachers in NCPSs were located in the quadrant of *Acceptance* of TATC; cognitively the teachers believe that although change is necessary to the schools and they feel at ease with the change and valued it, however, they only do what is required in the change. As school reform requires the participation and engagement of teachers at all levels, the findings seem to imply that real and sustained school reforms are not easy to be achieved in NCPSs and therefore there is a dire need for improvement of TATC in NCPSs in Perak.

In the face of such results, it is a wake-up call for the school leaders of NCPSs to look into this predicament. Special attention should be given and attempts should be made to identify the root cause of the situation. Particularly, school leaders in NCPSs need to create ways and nurture conditions to promote and enhance positive TATC in schools if they wish to transform the schools with less difficulty and turn change goal into reality. Indeed, improvement of quality of teacher attitudes is an obligatory condition for high quality school education. On the whole, the study provides a preliminary insight into the emergence of patterns and typology of TATC in NCPSs, offering local practitioners and relevant parties another dimension of understanding, enhancing and preparing the teachers' capacity for change. The study may also serve as a reference as the findings leave the door open for further exploration on TATC in NCPSs as well as other types of primary schools across other states in Malaysia.

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