STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORM

Khalip Musa[1]

[1]Faculty of Management and Economics
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

Abstract

This study was designed to examine the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and their influence on teachers' commitment from the perspective of teachers in selected public primary schools reform. This study sought to examine the degree to which these leadership styles managed to influence levels of teacher commitment. The researcher surveyed 285 teachers from four primary schools to study the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership and commitment using the multifactor leadership questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 2004) and the three-component model of employee commitment survey (Meyer & Allen, 1997). The findings indicated that transformational leadership had a significant influence on teachers' commitment, whereas no significant influence on teachers' commitment was found as a result of transactional leadership.

Keywords: Transformational, transactional, leadership, styles

Introduction

Fechter and Horowitz (1991) aptly stated that change is uneasy but inevitable. The changes in major aspects of human life in the past 30 years have forced changes and reforms in education system in many developed countries (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Al-Qamari, 2008), and, the Malaysian public education system is no exception. The process of tranformation in public education, which began after Malaysian Independence Day in 1957, has resulted in greater access, quality, and equity. However, challenges persist as change is inevitable, constant, and at par with the rapid progress of the nation.

In an effort to respond to challenges facing by national education system, the Education Ministry of Malaysia (2006) introduced the education development master plan (EDMP) for 2006 – 2010, which described the main focus and strategies for the public education system for present and future. The EDMP had two fundamental goals: to enhance the effectiveness of educational programs and to strengthen human capital development in preparing competitive human resources to face escalating competitive global environment (Education Ministry of Malaysia, 2006). As a result, the EDMP brought transformational and changes in public schools involving the curriculum, teaching, learning, cocurricular activities, and school management.

Abu-Tineh et al. (2008) asserted that the most critical element for the success of school reform lies in the school leadership. On a similar note, Fullan (1992) reiterated that, in school reform efforts, the leaders become the key players for providing guidance and solutions to improve students' learning and developing teachers' professionalism. In relation to this, teachers' commitment is seen as an essential element for school reform (Geijsel, Sleegers, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2003).

Leadership is a critical antecedent for organizational commitment. Shamir, Zakay, Breinin, and Popper (1998) proposed that transformational leadership works on the principle of motivating subordinates toward task completion and accepting that leaders' vision and mission represent influencing factors is instilling commitment among the subordinates.

Similarly, Bass and Avolio (1994) asserted that transformational leaders instill organizational commitment among their subordinates.

Statement of the Problem

The leadership of school leaders has impact on followers' behavior. In particular, to what extent the transformational and transactional leadership styles affected teachers' commitment in public schools reform. The EDMP had two fundamental goals: to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of the educational programs and to strengthen the development of human capital. In realizing these goals, the EDMP outlines the focus of the national education system based on the following grounds: (a) access to education, (b) equity in education, (c) quality in education, and (d) efficiency and effectiveness of education management (Education Ministry of Malaysia, 2006).

The EDMP brought about some major transformations into the schools. This outcome is exemplified in the introduction of new subjects and co-curricular activities, improvement of assessment and evaluation, the strengthening of discipline programs, improvement of teaching and learning methods, expansion of information communication and technology in management along with teaching and learning, the upgrading of physical and nonphysical facilities, and the effort made in improving teaching skills and teachers' well-being.

The EDMP identified the roles of school leaders and teachers as prime generator for this transformation at the school level. The success of the EDMP depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of the school's leadership. The EDMP also acknowledge the significant of the quality of teachers and their roles in ensuring the success of this transformation. Therefore, the EDMP suggested that teachers must possess a high level of commitment in performing their task based on the new strategies and approaches that have been laid out. Teachers were encouraged to make a change in their functions and roles. They must be creative, innovative, and committed in order for them to be able to produce effective and interesting learning experiences (Education Ministry of Malaysia, 2006).

Transformational leadership has been recognized as one of the best leadership styles to be adopted for managing challenges in restructuring schools (Barnett, McCormick, & Corners, 2001). Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) stated that transformational leadership has the potential to elevate the level of commitment among teachers. In addition, effective leadership is significant for developing excellent organizations and individuals. To reaffirm this view, Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) expressed similar views because they promoted transformational leadership as having a constructive outcome on the followers. Similarly, Walumba, Lawler, Avolio, Wang, and Shi (2005) asserted that, based on the 20 years of leadership studies, transformational leaders manage to increase the levels of commitment and satisfaction of their subordinates, in addition to bringing about their concerted efforts.

Research conducted in Malaysian schools provided evidence that the low level of commitment among teachers was indeed caused by ineffective school leadership. Zubaidah (1999) found that many teachers who were dissatisfied with the way that the leadership of the superiors was projected tended to miss school of become absent from class. Ishak (2001) claimed that many teachers have negative attitude toward the teaching tasks and, therefore, fail to instill a caring element and the other good in their conduct. In his study of teacher commitment in Malaysia, Ishak found that the low level of commitment among teachers is closely related to the school leaders who similarly show lack of caring attitude toward the teachers' needs. In a recent study, Joriah (2009) highlighted a few behaviors that demonstrate teachers' low level of commitment: their unwillingness to teach in rural schools, their

reluctance to mark pupils' homework, and their resorting to physical abuse toward pupils, which consequently leads to injuries. Joriah viewed poor leadership as the main reason behind this demoralization.

The commitment shown by teachers is vital for a school's success. In the Malaysian school context, Chan (2000) found that the decline of teachers' commitment is associated with their principals' lack of trust, compassion, and empowerment when dealing with them. The National Council of Senior Principals (2005), as an influential educational body in Malaysia, reported that declining academic performance and increasing numbers of student discipline problems stem from the low level of commitment shown among teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The study was developed to gain a better understanding of the relationship between an effective school leadership style and the teachers' commitment. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and their influence on teachers' commitment from the perspectives of teachers in the selected primary schools reform. This study sought the degree to which these leadership styles manage to influence the level of teachers' commitment

Research Questions

The research question for this study is to what extent the leadership styles of the headmaster affected teachers' commitment.

Theories of Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Bass and Avolio (1994) stated that, in recent years, transformational leadership as a new management theory has received ample attention for discussion and investigation from management scholars. Avolio, Bass, and Jung (995) found more than 100 theses and dissertations investigating the concept: of transformational leadership during the 5-year period of 1990 to 1995 alone.

Burns (1978) defined leadership as the act of leaders encouraging followers to act toward attaining specific goals that represent the wants, needs, and aspirations of both parties Leadership is built based on the followers' needs and goals Therefore, Burns believed that fundamental relationship between leaders and followers lies in the interaction of both parties at different levels of motivation in pursuing a common goal.

Similarly, Burns (1978) explained that the interaction of leaders and followers exists in two basic forms, transactional and transformational, in which both are separate from each other. In transactional leadership, "one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things" (Burns, 1978, p. 19). In this model, the relationship that exists between leaders and followers is only temporary and not for pursuing a higher purpose. Burns pointed out that transformational leadership "occurs when one or more engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (p. 20). The relationship between leaders and followers, relationship that exists between leaders and followers is only to therefore, is seen to lie on mutual support for a higher common goal

Bass (1985) further segregated the concept in term of the relationship between leaders and followers into three properties: (a) recognizing what leaders and followers want from their work, (b) exchanging benefit and work between two parties, and (c) exchanging

processes that fulfill the short-term interest of both parties. Bass, in his view of the relationship between leaders and followers in terms of effects, distinguished two forms of leadership: transactional and transformational.

Summarizing his views on transformational leadership, Bass (1985) stated, "The transformational leader motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do" (p. 20). The attainment of superior performance is based on the belief and confidence that the designated performance can be achieved. Bass proposed three interrelated things that could he performed by leaders for such transformation: (a) elevating followers' awareness of the importance of chosen outcomes and ways of attaining them, (b) sacrificing personal interests for the benefit of organization, and (c) expanding followers' needs and wants to a higher level. Bass also concluded that, for leaders to succeed in motivating and elevating followers, they require "a leader with vision, self-confidence, and inner strength to argue successfully for what he sees is right or good, not for what is popular or is acceptable according to the established wisdom of the time (p 17).

In current views, Bass and Avolio (1994) pointed out that transformational leaders encourage followers to perform beyond what they possibly think. The leaders set higher expectations and encourage followers to work harder in order to attain it. In doing this, the leaders employ one or more of the following approaches:

1. Idealized influence. Leaders give attention to followers' needs and try to fulfill them. The leaders become role models who are admired, respected, and trusted. In return, followers recognize leaders and want to be like them.
2. Inspirational motivation. Leaders motivate and inspire followers by providing challenges in their work. The leaders provide vision and clearly communicate the importance of achieving such vision for the benefit of the organization.
3. Intellectual stimulation. Leaders encourage followers to be more innovative and creative in their work. The followers are encouraged to find a new solution when facing problems at work and view a problem as an opportunity.
4. Individualized consideration. Leaders pay attention to followers' individual potential and develop it to a higher level. The leader acts as a mentor or coach.

On the other hand, Bass and Avolio (1994) highlighted the fact that transactional leadership "occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the followers depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance" (p. 4). At this juncture, leaders depend on three approaches:

1. Contingent reward. Leaders provide rewards to followers as an exchange for completing a task, and the end result is deemed satisfactory.
2. Management by exception-active. Leaders monitor followers' work closely and take remedial action as soon as mistakes are discovered.
3. Management by exception-passive. Leaders do not monitor followers' work closely and take remedial action only when mistakes have occurred.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has become a highly researched subject over the past 40 years (Joolideh & Yeshodhara, 2008). Organizational commitment has several theoretical explanations, but no consensus exists on how best to define it. In the early conceptualization, Becker (as cited in Joolidch & Yeshodhara, 2008) viewed organizational commitment as a one-dimensional construct because commitment is referred to as an activity that is associated

with cost when someone quits from an organization. Elizur and Koslowsky (2001), on the other hand viewed commitment as something that relates to a personal value to mark the individual's existence in the organization. In the same direction, Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) viewed commitment from the perspective of emotiobal attachment between employees and an organization.

Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that, even though organizational commitment has been defined in many ways in an abundance of literature, the term echoes into three common themes affective attachment to the organization, costs associated with leaving the organization, and obligation to stay with the organization. Based on the argument and extensive search in literature reviews, Meyer and Allen then argued that commitment is a "psychological state that (a) characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization and (b) has implications for the decision to continue or discontinuc membership in the organızation" (p. 67). Realizing that the psychological state is vast, Meyer and Allen further defined commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative as follows:

1. Affective commitment refers to the relationship built between an individual and the organization based on emotional attachment and how the employee absorbs and assimilates with an organization. The employee stays in an organization because he or she wants to do so.
2. Continuance commitment refers to the relationship built between an individual and the organization based on cost consideration because the employee views the potential losses when he or she leaves the organization. Therefore, the employee stays in an organization because he or she needs to do so.
3. Normative commitment refers to the relationship built between an individual organizations based on responsibility. The employees stay in an organization because they that they ought to stay.

Meyer and Allen (1997) asserted that affective commitment among employees contributes toward better job satisfaction, improvement in job performance, instilling of better behaviors, reduction in turnover rates, and development of leadership skills. Normative commitment that rises from the sense of obligation of employees toward the organization which they work has a positive relationship to performance but not as strong as affective commitment (Karrasch, 2003). The continuation of commitment that rises from cost association, in turn, manages only to keep employees performing their jobs as required; therefore, no relationship exists between this type commitment and job performance (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Research on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

It is undeniable that leadership is important for an organization's success. Greenberg (2000) asserted that the quality of leadership plays a vital role in any organization's successfulness. Therefore, for the last 20 years, leadership theories, particularly those highlighting transformational, charismatic, or visionary leadership, have become the most researched subjects (Bass, 1983). One to be noticed is the common criterion stared by these methods, whereby they are able to produce extraordinary effects on followers due to these exceptional leadership styles. McCann, Langford, and Rawling (2006) added that these styles of leadership have produced committed employees in materializing he leader's and the organization's missions.

Nguni, Sleegers and Denessen (2005) asserted that almost all theoretical studies of transformational leadership confirm the positive relationship to employees' motivation and commitment, which leads them to exert an extra effort for the organization's improvement. Nguni et al. highlighted the fact that substantial evidence exists from research in different countries and organizations that have supported the direct effects of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors in business, military, and health service organizations.

Organizational commitment has been researched widely for the past 40 years (Segzin, 2009). Furthermore, it has been analyzed from several perspectives (Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001) and has served as both dependent and independent variables. Being a dependent variable, it served as the antecedent to factors such as age, tenure, and education (Elizur & Koslowsky 2001), whereas for an independent variable, it served as a predictor of various outcomes, such as turnover, intention to leave, absenteeism, and performance (Elizur & Koslowsky, 2001). In addition, Segzin (2009) raised the fact that organizational commitment has been investigated in numerous studies as a variable related to the behaviors and performance of employees.

Park, Henkin, and Eglay (2005) summarized previous studies showing that organizational commitment has a positive relationship with job performance and organizational effectiveness but a negative relationship with absenteeism and turnover. Park et al. concluded that numerous studies in the past have also found a positive relationship between or commitment, good citizenship, and extra-role behaviors. Leadership is a critical antecedent for organizational commitment. Shamir et al. (1998) suggested tha transformational leadership could influence organizational commitment by motivating employees into accomplishing the tasks at hand and increasing personal commitment by accepting the vision, missions, an organizational goals initiated by leaders. Studies conducted in various organizations and industries support such findings (McCroskey, 2008).

Ross and Gray (2006b) revealed that earlier research conducted by Koh et al. and Nguni et al. confirmed that the approach of transformational leadership accounts for 17% to 18% of the variance in organizational commitment. Transformational leadership has also been found to play a part in the employees' motivation because they exert an extra effort beyond the formal job requirements to enhance organizational effectiveness. Research on school leadership, particularly in transformational leadership styles, has found a positive relationship with teacher outcomes (Ross & Gray, 2006a). The heart of transformational leadership lies in the nurturing of the employees' potential and improving their commitment by elevating their goals. Ross and Gray (2006a, 2006b) pointed out that the transformational leadership style, as superior compared to other leadership styles, has been found in many studies in various organizations, including schools.

Leithwood et al. (1999) identified 20 studies linking leadership to teacher outcomes. Even though the results of studies were mixed, transformational leadership was consistently associated with exerting extra effort, improving classroom practice, and creating behavioral changes among teachers. In the school context, Hulpia, Devos, and Keer (2010) asserted that teacher commitment representing organizational commitment has been acknowledged as an effective approach in ensuring the success of the school. Furthermore, Hulpia et al. asserted that many studies in the past years have recognized teachers' level of commitment as a critical component for teacher efficiency and the excellence of education. In relation to this, many studies have concluded that school leadership plays a significant role in influencing teachers' commitment.

Evidence suggests that the transformational leader affects group processes positively (Atwater & Bass, 1994). Specifically, Walumba et al. (2005) stated that 20 years of leadership generate a higher level of commitment, satisfaction, and effort on the part of their followers.

Kurland, Peretz, and Hertz-Lazurowitz (2010) completed a study to measure the principals' leadership style in schools as contributing to organizational learning by using the school vision as mediator. The study included 1,474 teachers at 104 elementary schools in northern Israel. The study found that (a) there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and the schools' vision, b) the principals' transformational leadership style positively affected their schools' organizational learning, (c) the principals' transactional and laissez-faire leadership style had no effect on school vision and its organizational learning, and (d) the school vision functioned only as a partial mediator between the transformational principals' leadership style and the school's organizational learning.

As for the Malaysian schools, studies with a similar direction seem to be relatively lacking. Ishak (2001) conducted a study that examined the relationship between the transformational leadership approach employed by principals and teachers' degree of commitment. The study suggested that the transformational leadership adopted by those principals had a significant relationship to teachers' commitment. Teachers were more committed to performing their tasks and became willing to exert their contributions beyond routines when they realized that their principals applied the transformational leadership style in leading the schools.

Similarly, Lokman (2007) conducted a study that examined the relationship between the principals' leadership style and teachers' commitment. The leadership style was based on the four-frame leadership model that classifies leadership styles in o four areas: human resource, structural, political, and symbolic. The study found that school principals had practiced all the styles. The human resource style was more commonly practiced, and the political style was the least practiced. Furthermore, the study findings indicated that all the styles demonstrated a significant relationship to teachers' commitment, but none was dominant.

Participants

The population of this study included teachers from four primary schools in a Malaysian suburb. The total accessible population was 400 teachers. Based on a formula suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (as cited in Gay & Airasian, 2003), for the population size of 400, the appropriate sample size would be 196. However, for the purpose of validity and involvement of as many respondents as possible, the sample size for this study involved 400 teachers. For the purpose of selecting respondents, a convenience-sampling technique was utilized. There were 285 participants involved in this study from 400 populations.

Instrument

For the purpose of collecting data, two sets of instruments involved. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire: Form 5X-Short (MLQ-5X-S) and the three-component model of employee commitment survey (TCMECS) were used to answer the research question.

Research Design

The study was quantitative in nature and in terms of its design. Gall, Gall and Borg (2009) pointed out that the purpose of a correlational research design is to determine relationship between variables through the use of correlational statistics.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using a linear regression analysis to measure to what extent of the independent variable (i.e., leadership styles) affected the dependent variable (i.e., teacher commitment).

Research Hypothesis

Based on the research questions as stated above, the study examined six research hypotheses, which were presented in both the directional and null formats:

1. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' affective commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' affective commitment.

2. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' continuance commitments. The null hypotheses stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' continuance commitment.

3. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' normative commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' normative commitment.

4. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' affective commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' affective commitment.

5. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' continuance commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' continuance commitment.

6. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' normative commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' teacher normative commitment.

Use of Linier-Regression Analysis to Test Research Hypotheses

A linier-regression analysis was used to test the six research hypotheses. The results are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Hypothesis 1. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' affective commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' affective commitment. The independent variable was transformational leadership, and the dependent variable was affective commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .187 and the p value was .000, which is lower than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the directional hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. Transformational leadership did influence teachers' affective commitment

Hypothesis 2. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' continuance commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' continuance commitment. The independent variable was transformational leadership, and the dependent variable was continuance commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .047 and the p value was .000, which is lower than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the directional hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. Transformational leadership did influence teachers' continuance commitment.

Hypothesis 3. The directional hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would influence teachers' normative commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transformational leadership would not influence teachers' normative commitment. The independent variable was transformational leadership, and the dependent variable was normative commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .171 and the p value was .000, which is lower than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the directional hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. Transformational leadership did influence teachers' normative commitment

Hypothesis 4. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' affective commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' affective commitment. The independent variable was transactional leadership, and the dependent variable was affective commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .000, and the p value was .925, which is higher than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, and the directional hypothesis was rejected. Transactional leadership did not influence teachers' affective commitment.

Hypothesis 5. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' continuance cot The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' continuance commitment. The independent variable was transactional leadership, and the dependent variable was continuance commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .021 and the p value was .014, which is lower than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the directional hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. Transactional leadership did influence teachers' continuance commitment.

Hypothesis 6. The directional hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would influence teachers' normative commitment. The null hypothesis stated that transactional leadership would not influence teachers' normative commitment. The independent variable was transactional leadership, and the dependent variable was normative commitment. Using linear regression, the results showed that the R square value was .003 and the p value was .377, which is higher than the significance level of .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, and the directional hypothesis was rejected. Transactional leadership did not influence normative commitment.

Elaboration and Interpretation of Results

Based on the statistical analyses above, transformational leadership was related to affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment because all p values were lower than .01; therefore, Directional Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were accepted. Transactional leadership was not related to affective commitment and normative commitment because both p values were higher than .01. In contrast, transactional leadership was related

to continuance commitment because the p value was lower than 01. Thus, Null Hypotheses 4 and 6 were accepted, and Directional Hypothesis 5 was accepted.

From the findings above, there were two conclusions could be made: (a) all five transformational leadership factors (e.g., intellectual stimulation, idealized influences behavior, idealized influences-attribute, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration) had significant relationships with teachers' commitment; and (b) transactional leadership was related to continuance commitment but not to affective commitment and normative commitment. A significant relationship was also found between the transactional leadership factor of contingency reward and teachers' commitment.

Based on the conclusions above, two conclusions arose for further discussion: a) the transformational leadership practiced by the headmasters had influenced teachers' commitment significantly; (b) the transactional leadership practiced by the headmasters did not influence teachers' commitment, but the contingency reward as one of the approaches in transactional leadership had significant influence on teachers' commitment. Therefore, it could be concluded that, to a certain extent, the transactional leadership style has also influenced teachers commitment.

Relationship of the Findings to the Literature

The first conclusion of the study stated that transformational leadership influenced teachers' commitment significantly. All five transformational leadership factors (e.g., intellectual stimulation, idealized influences-behavior, idealized influences-attribute, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration) had significant relationships with teachers' commitment. In relation, the second conclusion stated that, to a certain extent, the transactional leadership factor of contingent reward also contributed to the teachers' commitment. Thus, both were discussed simultaneously

Shamir et al. (1998) proposed that transformational leadership works on the principle of motivating subordinates for task completion and accepting that leaders' vision and mission represent influencing factors in instilling commitment among the subordinates. Similarly, Bass and Avolio (1994) asserted that transformational leaders instill organizational commitment among their subordinates. Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) stated that transformational leadership has the potential to elevate the level of commitment among teachers. Walumba et al. (2005) also asserted that based on 20 years of leadership studies, transformational leaders manage to increase the levels of commitment.

Bass and Avolio (1994) asserted that transformational leaders who encourage followers to think creatively, let followers make decisions, inspire trustworthiness, and respect the diversity of the followers' potential are likely to influence the followers to supply organizational commitment. This notion was supported by Walumba and Lawler (2003), who pointed out that transformational leader who motivate followers to always think out of the box in order to solve problems, will increase followers' involvement in their work and, as a result, elevate followers' organizational commitment to a higher level. In relation to this finding, Lee (2C04) identified earlier research that found a higher degree of organizational commitment among followers whose leaders promoted involvement in the decision-making process, placed emphasis on consideration, and were helpful and concerned with their followers' growth.

According to Avolio (1999), empowerment, which is one of the main characteristics of transformational leadership, is an important instrument for building followers' commitment

in meeting an organization's goals. Similarly, Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) pointed out that transformational leadership, which is based primarily on motivating and stimulating the needs and wants of followers for a higher purposes, will unleash followers' full potential. Followers' engagement and association with them to have a greater feeling toward the organization's objectives through the enhancement of empowerment (Laschinger, Finegan & Shamian, 2001).

Leaders who engage and involve followers in building organizations' futures are likely to get more committed followers working on the designated future. The acts of transformational leaders who encourage and stimulate followers through their passion, honesty, ethical, confidence, and challenges will ultimately enhance followers' self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-determination. A study by Avolio (1999) confirmed that leaders who display honesty, confidence, and high expectations in their relationships with followers would encourage and empower followers to go beyond their self-interest in order to accomplish a given task.

Bass and Avolio (1994) asserted that intellectual stimulation behavior relies on encouraging and challenging followers to be creative and innovative in performing tasks and solving problems. With his in mind, this behavior prepares followers to be more responsible and to emulate their leaders (Bass, 1985). Individualized consideration behavior that depends on feedback and encouragement provided by leaders will also enhance the followers' beliefs in their own capabilities (Hughes, Ginnett & Curphy, 1999). Waye, Liden and Sparrowe (2000) concluded that leaders who provide followers with more active participation in decision making challenges, trust, responsibilities and self-determination will generate a greater commitment among followers toward improving and developing an organization.

Rowden (2000) stated that many studies on transformational leadership show positive relationships to organizational commitment. Bycio, Hacket and Allen (1995) learned that transformational leadership has a strong positive relationship to affective commitment because of the emotional attachment involved. On the other hand, Bycio et al. found that normative commitment that relies on one's sense of obligation to remain in the organization has a lower positive relationship to the transformational leadership approach.

Several studies have established the positive effects of transformational leadership on organizational commitment (Fortman, Feinzimer, Thompson, Glover, Moraes and Frame, 2003). Judge and Bono (2000) found that leaders with transformational characteristics are often associated with their subordinates' commitment to the organization. Dubinsky, Yammarino, Jolson and Spangler (1995) also found similar results in their study. Koh, Steers and Terborg (1995), in their study on the augmenting effect of transformational leadership on organization commitment, discovered that the transformational leadership adopted by school principals substantially enhanced organizational commit. On the other hand, transactional had a limited effect on organizational commitment.

Ross and Gray (2006b) revealed that earlier research conducted by Koh et al. and Nguni et al. confirmed that the approach of transformational leadership accounts for 17% to 18% of the variance in organizational commitment. Research in school leadership, particularly in transformational leadership styles, has found a positive relationship with teacher outcomes (Ross & Gray, 2006a). The heart of transformational leadership lies in the nurturing of the employees' potential and improving their commitment by elevating their goals.

Ishak (2001) conducted a study on the relationship between the transformational leadership approach employed by principals and teachers' degree of commitment. The study suggested that the transformational leadership adopted by those principals had a significant relationship with teachers' commitment. Teachers were more committed to performing their tasks and were willing to exert their contributions beyond routines when they realized that their principals applied the transformational leadership style in leading the schools.

Conclusion

This research study demonstrated that transformational and transactional leadership have an influence on teachers' commitment. Transformational leadership had a significant influence on teachers' commitment, whereas transactional leadership had minimal effect. Transformational leadership is formed on transactional leadership because leaders elevate followers' basic needs to a higher and more meaningful purpose. With such actions, the commitment among teachers rises.

References

Abu-Tineh, A. M., Khasawneh, S. A., &Al-Qamari, A. A. (2008). Kouzes and Posner's transformational leadership model in practice: The case of Jordanian schools. *Leadership & Organizational. Development Journal, 29,* 643-660. doi: 10.1108 /01437730810916613.

Atwater, A., & Bass, B M. (I994). Transformational leadership in teams. In B. M. Bass & B. J. Avolio (Eds), *Improving organizational leadership*, (pp. 56-78). London, England: Sage.

Avolio, B. J. (1999). *Full leadership development: Building the vital forces in organizations.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Avclio, B. J., Bass, B. M., & Jung, D I. (1995). *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire technical report.* Redwood City, CA: Mind Garden.

Barnett, K, McCormick, J., & Conners, R. (2001). Transformational leadership in schools: Panacea, placebo or problem? *Journal of Educational Administration, 39,* 24-46.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transormatioral leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Burns, J. M. (1978), *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Bycio, P., Hackett, R. D., & Allen, J. S. (1995). Further assessments of Bass's (1085) conceptualization of transactional and transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *80*, 468-478. doi:10.10370021-9010.80.4468.

Chan, Y. F. (2000, May). *The important aspects of principal training in the 21ˢᵗ century.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Seminar of Management and Educational Leadership, Genting Highland, Malaysia.

Dubinsky, A. J, Yammarino, F. J., Jolson, M. A., & Spangler, W. D. (1995). Transformational leadership: An initial investigation in sales people. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *15*, 1-19.

Education Ministry of Malaysia. (2006). *Efficiency and innovation in education: The case of the Education Development Master Plan 2006-2010*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Author.

Elizur, D., & Koslowsky, M. (2001). Values and organizational commitment. *International Journal of Manpower*, *22*, 593-599. doi:10.1108 /01437720110408967.

Fechte, F. W., & Horowitz, R. R. (I991). Visionary leadership needed by all managers. *Industrial Management*, *33*(4), 2-5

Fortman, K., Feinzimer, B.A., Thompson, C., Glover, B., Maraes, A., & Frame, M. (2003, June). *The effects of transformational and transactional leadership on affective organizational*. Paper presented at the annual meeting at the IOOB Conference, Akron, OH.

Fullan, M. G. (1992). Getting reform right: What works and what doesn't. *Phi Delta Kappa*, 73, 744- 752. Rerieved from ERIC database. (EJ445727)

Gall, D. M., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2009). *Educational research: An introduction* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson

Gay, L. R., & Airasian, P. (2003). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Geijsel, F., Sleegers, P., Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2003). Transformational leadership effect on teachers' commitment. *Journal of Educatiomal Administration*, *41*, 228-256. doi:10.1108/09578230310474403.

Greenberg, J. (2000). *Managing behavior in organizations* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Hughes, R. L., Ginnett, R. C., & Curphy, G. J. (1999). *Leadership: Enhancing the lesson of experience* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Hulpia, H., Devus, G., & Ke, H. V. (2010). The influence of distributed leadership on teachers' commitment: A multilevel approach. *Journal of Educational Research*, *103*, 40-52. doi: 10.1080/00220670903231201.

Ishak, S. (2001). *The effect of instructional leadership. transformational leadership, and substitutes for leadership on organizational commitment, efficacy and teachers' job satisfaction* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia.

Joolideh, F., & Yeshodhara, K. (2008). Organizational commitment among high school teachers of India and Iran. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *47*, 127-136. doi:10.1108/09578230910928115.

Joriah, M. S. (2009). *Instructional and transformational leadership behaviors performing among senior principals and principals of secondary schools and their influence on teachers' commitment* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Malaysia.

Judge, T. A., & Bono, J. E. (2000. Five-factor model of personality and transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *85*, 751-765.

Karrasch, A (2003) Antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment. *Military Psychology*, *15*(2), 225-236. doi:10.1207/S15327876MP1503_05.

Kirkpatrick, S. A., & Locke, E. A. (1996). Direct and indirect effects of three core charismatic leadership components on performance and attitudes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *81*, 36-51 doi:10.1037/0021-9010.81.1.36.

Koh, W. L., Steers, R. M., & Terborg, J. R. (1995). The effects of transformational leadership on teacher attitudes and student performance in Singapore. *Journal of Organizational behavior, 16*, 319- 333. doi:10.1002/job.4030160404.

Kurland, H., Peretz, H., & Hertz-Lazarowitz, R. (2010). Leadership style and organizational learning: The mediate effect of school vision. *Journal of Educational Administration, 48*, 7-30 doi:10.1108/09578231011015395.

Laschinger, H. K. S., Finegan, J., & Shamian, J. (2001). The impact of workplace empowerment and organizational trust on staff nurses' work satisfaction and organizational commitment. *Advances in Healthcare Management, 3*(2), 59-85. doi:10.1016/S1474-8231 (02)03006-9.

Lee, J. (2004). Effects of leadership and leader-member exchange on commitment. *Leadership & Organizational Journal, 26*, 655 672. doi:10.1108/014377305106337 28.

Leithwood, K., & Jartzi, D. (1997) Explaining variation in teachers' perceptions of principals leadership: A replication. *Journal of Educational Administration, 35*, 312-331 doi:10.1108/19578239710171910 .

Leithwood, K., Tomlinson, D., & Genge, M. (1996) Transformational school leadership. In K. Leithwood (Ed.), *International handbook on educational leadership* (pp. 45-65). Norwall, MA: Kluwer.

Lokman, M. T. (2007) School principals' leadership orientation and its relationship with teachers' commitment: *A study at secondary schools in Johor Malaysia* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia.

Lowe, K. B., Kroeck, K. G., & Sivasubramaniam, N. (1996). Effectiveness correlates of transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytical review of the literature. *Leadership Quarterly, 7*(13), 385-425 doi:10.1016/S1048-9843 9690027-2.

McCann, J. A. J., Langford, P. H., & Rawling, R. M. (2006). Testing Behling and McFillen's syncretical model of charismatic transformational leadership. *Group and Organization Management, 31*(2), 237-263. doi:10.1177/1059601104273061.

McCroskey, S. (2008). The leadership challenge-for educational administration. *Academic Leadership, 7*(3), 1-8. Retrieved from http://www.academicleadership.org/empirical_ research/468.shtml.

Meyer J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 1*(1), 61-89. doi:10.1016/1053-4822(91)900l1-Z

Meyer, J. P, & Allen, N. J. (1997). *Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research and applicaton*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mowday, R. T., Steers, P., & Porter, L. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 14*, 224-247.

National Council of Senior Principals. (2005). *A school management guidance policy toward education excellence.* Selangor, Malaysia: Author.

Nguni, S. D., Sleegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effect on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors in primary schools: The Tanzanian case. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17*(2), 145-177

Park, S., Henkin, A. B., & Egley, R. (2005). Teacher team commitment, teamwork, and trust: Exploring association. *Journal of Educational Administration, 43*, 462-479

Ross, J. A., & Gray, P. (2006a). School leadership and student achievement: The mediating effects of teacher beliefs. *Canadian Journal of Education, 29*, 798-822. Retrieved from http://www csse.ca CJE/Articles/FullText/CJE29-3/CJE29-3-Ross&Gray.pdf.

Ross, J. A., & Gray, P (2006b). Transformational leadership and teacher commitment to organizational values: The mediating effects of collective teacher efficacy. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 17*(2), 179-199.

Rowden, R. W. (2000). The relationship between charismatic leadership behaviors and organizational commitment. *Leadership end Organizational Development Journal, 21*, 30-35.

Segzin. F. (2009). Relationship between teacher organizational commitment, psychological hardiness and some demographic variables in Turkish primary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*, 630-631. doi:10.1108/09578230910981099.

Shamir, B., Zakay, E., Breinin, E., & Popper, M. (1998). Correlates of charismatic leader behavior in military units: Subordinates' attitudes, unit characteristics, and superiors' appraisals of leader performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 41*, 387-409.

Walumba, F. O., & Lawler, J. J. (2003). Transformational leadership, collectivist orientation, work-related attitudes, and withdrawal behaviors in three emerging economies. *International Journal of human Resource Management, 14,* 1083-1101.

Walumba, F. O., Lawler, J. J., Avolio, B. J., Wang, P., & Shi, K. (2005). Transformational leadership effects on work-related attitudes: The moderating effects of collective efficacy and self-efficacy across cultures. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 11*, 3-16.

Wayne, S, Liden, R., & Sparrowe, R. (2000). An examination of the mediating role of psychological empowerment on the relations between the job, interpersonal relationship, work outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 407-416.

Zubaidah, A. (1999). *Burnout among teachers: A relationship with background, job stress, conflict of role, ambiguity of role, and social support* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation) Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysa.