Chapter 11
Predictive Model of the Influence of Leadership Styles on Attitudes Towards Organizational Change Among Secondary School Teachers in Selangor

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ABSTRACT

The chapter aimed to examine the relationship of leadership styles and attitude towards organizational change among 360 secondary school teachers in Selangor. Statistical analysis techniques, namely, mean and standard deviation, Pearson product moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis, were used. Findings indicated that although teachers perceived the leadership styles of their principals were only at the moderate level, teachers showed a high level of positive attitude towards organizational change. There were positive relationships between principals' leadership styles and teachers' attitudes towards organizational change. The results also revealed that 11.8% of the variance of attitude towards organizational change is explained by transformational leadership style. Hence, transformational leadership style has an influence on the teachers' attitudes towards organizational change. The practical implications of these findings were discussed to provide insights for the improvement on leadership practices towards organizational change in the secondary schools in Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization, liberalization and information technology are three important change drivers that urge private and public organizations to endure a future constant change (Benn, Dunphy & Griffith, 2014; Osborne & Brown, 2013). Even though the goals of organizational change are varied, however, the common goals of most organizations are bettering the firm, and minimizing cost, crisis and intervention, and overcoming competition. In general, organizational change is a process to optimize performance in order to reach its ideal state. Hence, an organization that is able to deal with change will gain a competitive advantage (Chaston, 2012).

In today's rapid changing environment, it is unavoidable for any organization to undergo constant changes (Mossholder, Settoon, Armenankis & Harris 2000). Therefore, in view of the pressure from external environment such as globalization, internationalization, advancement of ICT and many others challenges, education system in Malaysia has undergone structural changes to face the challenge. In fact, Malaysian education system has entered an intensive phase of change with the introduction of the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025. (MOE, 2013). This policy was introduced in the context of rising international education standards and to uphold the Government's aspiration to better prepare Malaysia's children for the needs of the 21st century, and increase public and parental expectations of education policy. Hence, quality education has become the ultimate goal of transformation of Malaysian education for human capital development. Among the 11 strategies and operational shifts stated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint, there are two shifts (Shift 4 and 5) that are relevant to this study. The fourth shift is transforming teaching into a profession of choice, and the fifth shift is to ensure high-performing school leaders in every school. These two shifts have highlighted the roles of both the teachers and school head in school and in the transformation process of the Malaysian education system.

Since most educational changes happen in the classroom under the responsibility of teachers, hence teachers' attitude has become one of the crucial and critical factors in the process of organizational change (Wiboonuppatum, 2002). In fact, earlier, the Malaysian Ministry of Education has introduced Education Development Master Plan 2006 to 2010, with its six core agendas, that emphasis on commitment of the teaching workforce to increase the quality and efficiency of the educational system (Utusan Online, 2007). Nijhof, Jong and Beukhof (1998) and Wiboonuppatum (2002) have pointed out that teachers are main contributors to school success and quality. They deliver curriculum in bright, shiny new boxes and by the end of the academic year, students are expected to succeed (Loucks and Pratt, 1979). Undeniably, teachers are the ultimate key players in school organization and have the authority to make a difference in students' capital development. The teachers have the responsibilities to enhance the quality standard because all the actual education reform processes happen in the classroom. Hence, in this context, Nordin, Darmawan and Keeves (2009) agreed that teachers' dedication and commitment are vital in quality education. In this sense, teacher commitment has been identified as one of the most critical factors for the success of education and schools (Huberman, 1993).

To date, there are many issues and challenges emerged among school teachers after the Malaysian Education Blueprint has been implemented. These issues and challenges have great impacts on the teachers' attitudes towards the organizational change (Cheah, 2010; Noor & Sahip, 2010; Tan, 2010), and their reactions can range from quite positive and supportive to quite negative and very resistant. (Dunham, Grube, Gardner, Cummings & Pierce, 1989). In the second decade of the 21st century, teachers are likely to play the role as facilitators to provide scaffolding to students in developing their own personal ways of learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Teachers are no more like a sage talking in the front while

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