NOVICE HEADMASTERS' SELF EFFICACY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHERS' ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

A school leader with high efficacy can inspire teachers to be more committed to their school. Many past studies have focused on teachers' self-efficacy, but there is not much research on the self-efficacy of the organisation's leaders, especially novice leaders. On the other hand, past studies on teachers' organisational commitments have shown inconsistent findings. Therefore, this study aims to identify the relationship between novice headmasters' self-efficacy and the teacher's organisational commitment. This quantitative survey was conducted as a pilot study at a primary school in the Melaka Tengah district. A total of 32 teachers were selected as the study's respondents, and the questionnaire was adapted from two questionnaires, namely the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (PSES) by Tschannen-Moran and Garies (2004) and Saat's (2016) *Organisation Commitment Scale* by Allen dan Meyer (1991). The data were analysed using the *Statistical Package for Social Science* (SPSS) software, and the findings showed that both novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment are at a high level. However, the study found no significant relationship between novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment. In conclusion, novice headmasters' self-efficacy does not influence teachers' organisational commitment. This study's findings can contribute to the literature on self-efficacy and organisational commitment and can be used in planning National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders (NPQEL) programme conducted at Aminudin Baki Institute (IAB) to train novice headmasters.

Keywords: self-efficacy, novice headmasters, organisational commitment

INTRODUCTION

A leader should demonstrate high self-efficacy as a reflection of effective leadership and increase organisational commitment among subordinates. As self-efficacy affects one's way of thinking, acting, and motivating, an efficacious leader will show confidence in taking on management responsibilities (Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2004). In the meantime, a novice headmaster newly appointed to lead an educational organisation is often deemed less efficacious, especially in problem-solving situations (Edwards, 2016). This situation can affect work performance and decrease teachers' commitment to the school (Williams, 2010).

Headmaster Self-Efficacy

As the school leader, a headmaster is responsible for sustaining teachers' commitment to the school. However, novice headmasters holding this position for the time usually lack the skills and experience to lead the school and have little understanding of their tasks and responsibilities (Gettys, 2007).

In Malaysia, prospective headmasters are required to attend National Education Leaders Professional Qualification Programme (NPQEL) before being appointed as headmasters. NPQEL is a leadership and management-related training emphasising school management and administration skills. This program instils a belief in a headmaster's abilities in managing and administrating a school.

Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as one's belief in self-sufficiency in carrying out specific tasks. In this light, novice headmasters must master three dimensions: efficacy for

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management, efficacy for instructional leadership, and efficacy for moral leadership (Tschannen-Moran & Garies 2004).

Management efficacy denotes a headteacher's efficacy in scheduling time to carry out a task, write paperwork, follow a predetermined plan, prioritise tasks according to their importance, overcome work pressures and establish working policies and procedures for school management (Mohd Nor, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2004).

Instructional leadership efficacy reflects that a headmaster is competent in formulating school goals, explaining school goals, supervising, and evaluating teachers' teaching, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring students' academic progress, controlling and protecting teachers' teaching time, providing support to teachers' teaching, rewarding teachers' efforts, promoting professional development, and enforcing school academic policies (Saat, 2016; Mohd Noor, 2007).

Lastly, the efficacy of moral leadership means that a novice headmaster should show exemplary behaviour, encourage a positive attitude, promote school commitment among teachers, project a positive school image, demonstrate good values and ethical attitudes, and control students' discipline efficiently (Mohd Noor, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2004).

Based on these dimensions, it is not surprising that headmasters' self-efficacy is considered a reflection of their leadership (Brown & Wynn, 2009), their ability (Buchanan, 2010), as well as administrative support (Russell et al., 2010). In this regard, novice headmasters' efficacy can determine an organisation's success (Butterfield, 2015; Tschannen-Moran & Garies, 2004; Bandura, 1999).

Teachers Organisational Commitment

According to Allen and Meyer (1991), organisational commitment is fostered when there is an active relationship between members within the organisation itself. Positive behaviour, affection, and a sense of responsibility for organisational performance reflect an employee's high commitment to their organisation. (Abdul Rashid & Hashim, 2017; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees who are content with their organisation will show a high level of commitment and vice versa. Allen and Meyer (1991) categorised commitments into three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

Affective commitment is the emotional connection that binds a member to his organisation. Teachers with a high affective commitment show their emotional influence, needs, and sense of responsibility towards the school. The continuance commitment demonstrates the teacher's commitment to his school based on the cost assessments made and the bad and good if they remain in the existing school. Meanwhile, normative commitment is a sense of responsibility and moral values shown to the school due to the stress in their surroundings. Organisational commitments are influenced by an individual, school, or environment (Kiral & Kacar, 2016).

Problem Statement

There is a notion that these novice headmasters have limited competence in management (Liljenberg & Andersson, 2019) which causes them to fail to shine in the first year of appointment (Syed Imam et al., 2010). In addition, they often feel burdened due to the surrounding stress factors (Spillane & Lee, 2014; Yirci & Kobacas, 2010) in the early years of serving as a headmaster. These great challenges cause them to worry if they fail to continue their previous legacy excellence. (Mohd Tahir et al, 2021; Jamal & A. Hamid, 2018; Saidun et al, 2015).

The challenges novice headmasters face influenced by their self-efficacy in performing administrative tasks. Those less competent usually lack the determination to give their best in their services where there is a lack of communication and not open to listening to the suggestions and views of teachers in their organisation (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008).

The increase in the task load is a major factor influencing the commitment of the teacher's organisation (Ibrahim et al., 2017; Bagi, 2015). Furthermore, teachers feel depressed when they are not allowed to voice their opinions but have to comply with all the headmaster's instructions, which ultimately affects their commitment to the school (Abdul Rashid & Hashim, 2018).

Therefore, this study was carried out to identify the level of novice headmasters' self-efficacy, the level of commitment of the teacher's organisation as well as whether there is a significant relationship between these two variables based on the three questions of this study, namely:

1. What is the level of novice headmasters' self-efficacy?
2. What is the level of a teacher's organisational commitment?
3. Is there a relationship between the novice headmasters' self-efficacy and the teacher's organisational commitment?

Related Works

Studies related to the self-efficacy of headmasters are widely conducted to look at teaching leadership (Mohd Noor, 2007; Saat, 2016), centralised learning leadership practices (Gümüş & Bellibaş, 2020), the collective efficacy of the teacher and the commitment of the teacher's organisation (Hallinger et al., 2018) Organisational citizenship behaviour (Butterfield, 2015) School effectiveness (Işik & Gümüş, 2017), The effectiveness of induction training (Asma et al., 2018) as well as leadership style (Mohd Hairuddin et al., 2021; Cobanoglu & Yurek, 2018). These studies focused on experienced headmasters only, and very few studies related to novice headmasters' self-efficacy were conducted, especially in the Asian context (Mohd Tahir et al., 2021).

Local studies related to the commitment of teacher organisations showed varying findings. Several studies show a high level of teacher organisation commitment (Noor Isham & Mohd Nor, 2021; Abdullah et al., 2017; Jamail & Don, 2016; Effendi, 2014) and a moderate level (Md Yasin & Mohd Hamzah, 2018; Baharuddin et al., 2016; Mohd Azhar, 2016; Zakaria, & Abdul Kadir, 2013).

Due to the lack of studies related to novice headmasters in Asia, as well as inconsistencies in the findings of teacher organisation commitments, researchers need to fill the gap in the Malaysian context.

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study was carried out using the survey research design. The sampling method is intended to choose respondents with the same characteristics as teachers in schools under the administration of a Novice Headmaster. The study was conducted as a pilot study at a primary school in Melaka. The respondents comprised 32 teachers in the school, including the senior assistant teachers and ordinary academic teachers. The set of questionnaires was adapted from three existing questionnaires; namely, the *Principals Sense of Efficacy Scale* (PSES) adapted from Saat (2016) and Tschannen-Moran dan Garies (2004), and the *Organisational Commitment Scale* by Allen dan Meyer (1991). The survey contained 46 questions assessed using the five-point Likert scale. The *Statistical Package for Social Sciences* (SPSS) software were used to analyse the data due to its large-scale findings.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the validity of the questionnaire, the researchers have enlisted the services of three experts in this field, and all experts agreed that the questionnaire provided can be used in this pilot study. The Cronbach Alpha value for the entire questionnaire is 0.903, indicating that this set of questionnaires is reliable for data collection.

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha Value For The Instrument

Cronbach Alpha	Total Number of Items
.903	46

DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics to answer all three research questions. Mean score analysis and Standard Deviation was used to answer the question of studies 1 and 2. Table 2 shows Creswell's Interpretation of the Mean score values (2014).

Table 2. Mean Score Interpretation

Mean Score Value	Level
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low
1.81 – 2.60	Low
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
3.41 – 4.20	High
4.21 – 5.00	Very High

Inferential analysis was used to answer the third research question and test the study hypothesis,

H_o: There is no significant relationship between novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment.

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment. Table 3 presents the interpretation of the correlation coefficient values used in this study.

Table 3. Interpretation of Correlation Coefficient Values

Coefficient Value	Relationship Level Interpretation
0.01 – 0.09	Negligible
0.10 – 0.29	Low
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate
0.50 – 0.69	Strong
0.70 – 1.00	Very Strong

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings showed that out of the 32 teachers, 14 were males (43.8%), and 18 were females (56.3%). The respondents were divided into five age categories. Only one teacher was aged between 25 to 29 (3.1%), five teachers were aged between 30-34 (15.6%), ten teachers were between the age of 35-39 (31.3%), eight teachers were aged between 40-45 (25.0%) and 8 teachers were more than 45 years old (25%). As for their teaching experience in the current school, 11 teachers have taught for less than five years in the current school (34.4%), A total of seven teachers have taught between 6 to 10 years (21.9%), eight teachers have taught for 11 to 15 years (25.0%), and six teachers have taught more than 15 years in the current school (18.8%). Table 4 summarises the findings of the respondents'(teachers) demographic background.

Table 4: Summary of respondents'

Demography	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	14	43.8
	Female	18	56.3
Age	25 – 29	1	3.1
	30 – 34	5	15.6
	35 – 39	10	31.3
	40 – 45	8	25.0
	Above 45	8	25.0
Years of Teaching in The Current School	0 – 5 years	11	34.4
	6 – 10 years	7	21.9
	11 – 15 years	8	25.0
	More than 15 Years	6	18.8

Demographic background

The pilot study's findings were analysed to answer all three research questions. The survey of 32 respondents found that the headmaster's self-efficacy is at a high level (Mean = 4.50, SD = 0.45839). Table 5 shows the findings for research question 1.

Table 5: Self-Efficacy of Novice Headmaster

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Self-Efficacy	4.50	.45839	Very High

The finding showed a high-level organisational commitment among the teachers (mean = 3.57, SP= 0.31659). Table 6 summarises the findings on teachers' commitment level

Table 6: The Level of Teachers' Organisational Commitment

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Organisational Commitment	3.57	.31659	High

In the meantime, this study found no significant relationship between the novice headmaster's self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment ($r = 0.23$, $p = 0.209$, $p > 0.05$).

As shown in Table 7, the r value (0.23) is greater than the significance value of p ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that the hypothesis (H_o) of this study is accepted. Table 7 shows the findings for the third study question.

Table 7: The Relationship Between the Novice Headmaster's Self-Efficacy and Teachers' Organisational Commitment

		Organisational Commitment
Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	0.23
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.209

Based on the pilot study, the novice headmaster's high self-efficacy shows his confidence in performing his duties as a school leader (Cobanoglu & Yurek, 2018; Saat, 2016; Syed Imam & Ibrahim, 2010; Mohd Noor, 2007). The high sense of responsibility and efficacy among novice headmasters are likely to be acquired during their previous administrative positions, such as a senior assistant teacher or head of the panel, which helps them build the confidence to handle their responsibility well.

In addition, the compulsory NPQEL course, which is the main condition for this position, has been shown to provide positive results. It has produced quality new headmasters who are competent in school management (Bleach, 2013; Syed Imam & Ibrahim, 2010). Novice headmasters also develop high efficacy due to the encouragement and support from superiors (Butterfield, 2015), i.e School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+), district

education office (PPD) and state education department (JPN), especially in the first year of appointment.

Thus, it can be concluded that the careful planning in training new headmasters managed to produce new headteachers who were positive, optimistic, and brave enough to take on the challenge immediately after they were appointed to the new position.

In the meantime, teachers' high organisational commitment has shown that these teachers are committed to their careers (Abdul Rashid & Hashim, 2018). They also have a close relationship with the school. In this regard, Allen and Meyer (1991) stated that they emotionally connected to the school.

The findings also illustrate that teachers are willing to do their best to improve the school. Undoubtedly, teachers' organisational commitment is also determined by teachers' job satisfaction, motivation, and conducive work environment.

Although the study found positive findings for novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment, there was no significant relationship between these two variables. This shows that the teacher's commitment to the school is not linked to novice headmasters' self-efficacy. This may be because these teachers are civil servants whose commitment does not depend solely on the head of the department (Sukiman & Bambang, 2020).

In addition, placements and transfers of new headmasters are common in the school system. Hence, the change in school leadership does not significantly interfere with teachers' work. Thus, it is clear that school leaders' self-efficacy does not affect teacher commitment to the school (Sukiman & Bambang, 2020; Dahlkamp et al., 2018).

IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have several implications for the leadership practices of novice headmasters, the commitment of teacher organisations, and education policy in Malaysia.

NPQEL and the support from their superiors help novice headmasters to navigate the school well through effective, tolerant, and considerate leadership. Consequently, MOE can create exemplary leaders in Malaysia and the eyes of the world.

This study also showed that Malaysian teachers are highly dedicated and committed civil servants. They are the teammates for educating the nation as it is not something that can be done alone.

In addition, the MOE's serious efforts to place high-performing leaders in each school is an achievable goal, with the cooperation and involvement of all parties, namely MOE, IAB, (JPN), (PPD), and the educators themselves.

The high-level novice headmasters' self-efficacy and teachers' organisational commitment demonstrate that the centralised school system practiced in Malaysia provides equal opportunities to all prospective headmasters, especially in the selection, appointment, and mandatory management training.

Novice headmasters are confident and have the efficacy to carry out their duties due to their experience as senior assistant teachers

or even the head of the panel with several administrative responsibilities. The high commitment of the teacher's organisation is because all these teachers adhere to the same goal of producing quality students.

In conclusion, the absence of a relationship between the novice headmasters' self-efficacy and the commitment of the teacher's organisation indicates that various other factors affect the commitment of the teacher's organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made for future researchers:

1. Novice headmasters' self-efficacy can be examined and compared based on several demographic factors such as gender, type, and locality of the school.
2. Future studies can examine the self-efficacy of headmasters of schools other than schools under the Education Ministry.
3. Compare the self-efficacy of school leaders based on their age.

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