



The Level of Competence of the School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia

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Abstract

The idea of setting up a cooperative school in Malaysia was first raised in 1953 during the Malay Cooperation Conference. Until now, the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members is still vague based on the experience of National Co-operative Movement of Malaysia (ANGKASA) and there is no evidence of a comprehensive scientific study on School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia at present. This study involved 300 School Cooperative Boards from 10 school categories throughout Malaysia. The respondents of this study consisted of School Cooperative Board Members, which is a total of 4,500 people who were randomly selected systematically. The results of the main study found that the overall level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members is at a moderate level with an average value as high as 1.94. Therefore, ANGKASA needs to take some actions such as further increasing the existing level of competence from moderate to a better level.

Keywords: ANGKASA, Competencies, School Cooperative, School Cooperative Board.

1. Introduction

The level of competence of the School Cooperative Board Members is important to ensure the success of management benefits its members. In fact, the establishment of school cooperatives is unique because it is the first of its kind in the world. Therefore, its members need to ensure that the school cooperative movement in the future moves more actively to raise its name to a proud level. Since the idea of establishing a cooperative school was first raised in 1953 during the Malay Cooperation Conference, until the present time, issues related to the competence of the School Cooperative Board Members still vague. Thus, this study aims to examine the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia. This is because, previous studies related to the competencies of School Cooperative Board Members are very limited and less the focus of the study. The previous study focused on the governance of school cooperatives (Ahmad Marzuki Ismail, 2004a), the role and function of students in the school cooperative movement (Ahmad Marzuki Ismail, 2004b), identity in the school cooperative movement (Ahmad Marzuki Ismail, 2004c),

competencies of Board Members (selected school cooperatives) (Jamilah Din et al., 2012) and the competency criteria of successful selected School Cooperative Board Members (Abdul Fattah Abdullah, 2017).

This study uses a conceptual framework formed by Abdul Fattah Abdullah (2017) using eclectic methods on competency models as well as some previous studies. In the conceptual framework of the study he explained that the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members is determined by 14 criteria. The following is the operational definition for each criterion.

- i. **Knowledge-** related to cooperative management or member functions if they are cooperative members.
- ii. **Experience-** should refer to the criteria of knowledge and skills. Experience will not exist without being guided by knowledge and skills. Experience will produce skills in the context of cooperative management in schools.
- iii. **Skills-** is the ability of members or staff of the cooperative needed by the organization to help improve the achievement of targets such as in the context of sales, stock review, communication, book-keeping, reporting, following instructions, rules and laws, cooperative policies and so on.
- iv. **Personality-** refers to the attractive personal characteristics among school cooperative staff such as good manners, neat dress, ethics in the workplace, self-managed personality, hardworking and attractive skills.
- v. **Leadership-** in carrying out tasks, has a good way of leading and can be accepted by every layer of work, leadership that is in line with rules and policies, has a certain uniqueness in leadership so as to be able to achieve the target and its leadership to be an example to other employees.
- vi. **Belief-** something that is good for the progress or success of a school cooperative management, usually in the context of their business planning, believe in the capabilities of the staff, believe in the profits to be achieved, believe in destiny and trust among the staff of the cooperative management.
- vii. **Good practice-** is related to work culture such as good relations with all employees and employers, good with customers, responsible, courteous, carry out tasks sincerely, on time, share workload, obey instructions and so on.
- viii. **Dreams-** usually involve their desire to succeed, get praise, attractive financial returns, rewards, the desire to be someone, the desire to get rich or the dream to live luxuriously.
- ix. **Fear-** anxiety or fear related to problems in the workplace, scolded by superiors, often confronted with dissatisfied customers, fear of making mistakes, past experiences often scolded by employers for making repeated mistakes, fear of facing changes in structure or operation businesses that ultimately have a negative impact on job competence.
- x. **Prejudice-** refers to the oblique attitude of an employee or employer towards an event or matter and it can have a negative impact on the business performance of a school cooperative.
- xi. **Bias-** inclination or bias in a particular matter, situation, person or decision taken without thinking of problems will arise in the context of the management of a cooperative.
- xii. **Strategy-** an organizational planning used to develop and maintain continuous competitive advantage in competition. This involves the organizational structure that organizes the work system and the responsibilities of specific work units or individuals to achieve organizational goals.
- xiii. **Achievement-** an activity planned together in the management of school cooperatives. The main goal of a management system that usually targets profit or at least achieves most of the cooperative goals.

xiv. Consistency- needs to exist in achieving a target. In other words, consistency also means in the context of each of the above criteria i.e. from i to xiv

2. Methodology

This study takes 10 percent of the total number of schools in Malaysia that have cooperatives, which is 299 out of 2,998 schools (this study takes the nearest hundred numbers, which is 300 schools), based on opinion Dixon dan Leach (1978). The respondents of this study consisted of School Cooperative Board Members, which is a total of 4,500 people (an average of one school cooperative is 15 people and multiplied by 300 schools) who were systematic randomly selected. This survey uses the rating scales format which is Scale 0 (Never) to Scale 3 (Daily Routine). The analysis used for this study is statistically descriptive based on the mean value of a level. In terms of level scale, the researcher divides the level as follows, namely Scale 0.00 - 1.33 (low); 1.34 - 2.66 (moderate); and 2.67 - 3.00 (high).

3. Results and Discussion

The study found that each criterion that forms the competence of School Cooperative Board Members shows to be at a moderate level which is between mean 1.34 - 2.66 (as mentioned in methodology). In this context, the researcher sees that there are three moderate level clusters namely upper (mean 1.97 - 1.99), middle (mean 1.92 - 1.94) and lower (mean 1.89). The moderate-upper level involves the criteria of skills, good practice, dreams and personality; moderate-middle involves the criteria of knowledge, belief, bias, experience, fear, leadership, consistency and strategy; and moderate-lower involves prejudice and achievement criteria. However, overall the competence of School Cooperative Board Members, the study also shows that it is at a moderate level with a value of 1.94 (Table 1).

No.	Criteria for competence	Mean
1	Skills	1.99
2	Good practice	1.99
3	Dreams	1.98
4	Personality	1.97
5	Knowledge	1.94
6	Belief	1.94
7	Bias	1.94
8	Experience	1.93
9	Fear	1.93
10	Leadership	1.92
11	Consistency	1.92
12	Strategy	1.92
13	Prejudice	1.89
14	Achievement	1.89
Overall competencies mean:		1.94

Table 1.: Level of competency for School Cooperative Board Members

Source: Abdul Fattah Abdullah (2020)

The findings of this study are different from previous studies by Jamilah Din et al. (2012) who found that the level of competence is still low among School Cooperative Board Members towards 100 Grade A schools. This difference may be due to two factors namely: first, the duration of their study in 2012 while this study is in 2020; and second, their study only involved Grade A schools. The most significant difference factor was probably due to the relatively long period of time which may have resulted in an increase in the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion regarding the findings of the above study, the researcher found that the overall level of competence for School Cooperative Board Members in Malaysia is at a moderate level. Therefore, intervention measures need to be created to increase the level of competence of School Cooperative Board Members in the future. For example, through programs in the form of opportunities to gain knowledge and experience with successful cooperatives (or deal with problems for all competency criteria), regular discussions and visits by ANGKASA, leadership courses, technical skills and identity to School Cooperative Board Members.

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