Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction: A Comparative Case Study between a Rural Secondary School and an Urban Secondary School in Johor, Malaysia

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Abstract

This study examined teacher leadership dimensions and job satisfaction in two public secondary schools in Johor, Malaysia; one located in a rural area and one located in the city. The study determined the differences and relationship in teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction. It investigated how teacher leadership dimensions facilitate or hinder teacher leadership development and job satisfaction in the selected schools. A total of 78 respondents comprising of administrators, middle leaders and subject teachers took part in this study. Using the sequential explanatory mixed-method research design, this study employed Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS), Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS), and semi-structured interview as the instruments. Three respondents were selected from each school for a semi-structured interview. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, correlation, and ANOVA were utilised in the quantitative phase, while qualitative data were treated according to the code, categories, and themes. The findings reflected that both schools ranked relatively high to very high in teacher leadership dimensions and job satisfaction. There was no significant difference found in teacher leaderships dimensions and job satisfaction, yet there was a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and teacher leadership dimensions in both schools. The qualitative findings in the study reflected that both schools acknowledged the importance of the dimensions in job satisfaction. Evidence of teacher leadership practices was found in both schools. There was a similarity in terms of impeding conditions for both schools, in which both schools highlighted a lack of confidence as one of the impeding conditions. Other impeding conditions include teacher's personal problem, unsupportive administrators, motivation, and attitude.

Keywords: Teacher Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Secondary School, Johor, Malaysia, Rural and Urban

Introduction & Background

According to Smylie et al. (2002), in the 1990s, teacher leadership has spurred a genuine interest for educational reform in the western countries. Researchers such as Kelley (2011), Frost (2008), Barth (2001), Hargreaves and Fink (2006), and (Angelle, 2010) advocated the benefits of teacher leadership towards student achievement, professional growth, recognition, autonomy, ownership, retention, school improvement and self-efficacy. Their profound interest in teacher leadership was shared among local researchers in Malaysia who conducted studies on the concept of teacher leadership (Hamzah, Mohd Noor & Yusof, 2016), roles and values of teacher leadership (Yaacob & Don, 2018), guiding principles in preparing teacher leadership for the future (Norwani et al. 2016), teacher leadership competency scale (Chee Yuet, Yusof & Syed Mohamad, 2016), factors affecting teacher leadership in primary schools (Yusof et al. 2017), the relationship between teacher leadership and student academic achievement (Norashikin Abu Bakar et al., 2015), and the relationship between teacher leadership and school culture (Yusof et al. 2016) in the Malaysian context.

As teachers are the driving force in achieving the aspiration of Malaysian Educational Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, areas on teacher leadership dimensions as proposed by Katzenmeyer & Moller (2009) such as developmental focus; recognition; autonomy; collegiality; participation; open communication and positive environment are necessary to teacher leadership development in school. As such, this would not only affect the teaching and learning process, students' achievement, and school performance, but it would influence teachers' job satisfaction.

Context of the study

In the context of Malaysian Educational Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, it is noteworthy that Ministry of Education's vision and mission for transforming formal education system by improving standard of teaching quality, enhancing principal's capacity in school settings, and upgrading educational institution's performance that in the end would improve school's performance and students' achievement holistically (Ministry of Education, 2012). Such vision will only be attained through supportive partnership, collaboration and 'bond of trust' (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) between the principal and the teachers in developing leadership atmosphere in a school context.

This relationship is pivotal in creating a supportive working culture as it has a positive behavioural impact such as psychological, ownership, esprit de corps, and job satisfaction (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006). This premise is supported by Beaudoin & Taylor (2004) as they postulated that principal's positive relationships within teachers would add value to teachers' job satisfaction and would affect students' performance and school's achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Hence, it is pertinent to examine the quality of teacher leadership practices and level of job satisfaction.

Problem Statement

Although there is a real interest in the values of teacher leadership in the Malaysian context, there is limited concrete evidence on how teacher leadership would affect job satisfaction in the context of rural and urban settings. As the context may influence the school culture, attitudes, and values towards leadership (Bush & Middlewood, 2005; Hallinger, 1995; Dimmock & Walker, 2000), it is pertinent to investigate and examine the schools' teacher leadership behaviours and job satisfaction.

Objectives of the Study

This study was conducted to study the relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction among participants in the selected schools. The study aimed to: 1) find out the extent teachers perceived teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction in the selected schools; 2) to determine whether there are significant differences in teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction between the selected schools; and 3) to investigate how the school culture facilitates or impedes teacher leadership development and job satisfaction in the selected schools.

Research questions

This study addressed three research questions: 1) to what extent teachers perceived teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction in the selected schools? To what extent teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction in a rural secondary school differ from an urban secondary school? And 3) How does the school culture facilitate or impede teacher leadership development and job satisfaction in the selected schools?

Literature Review

In educational settings, Bryk & Schneider (2004) asserted that a positive relationship between principal and teachers would be beneficial towards school improvement, teacher motivation and job satisfaction (Leithwood et al., 2003). Trust and respect should be put as the priority (Moye et al., 2005) between the principal and teachers by being sensitive and considerate towards teachers' needs, recognising one's potential, and supportive towards effective school's performance and student's achievement (Harris et al., 2013; Smith, 2014). Findings from Muijs and Harris (2006) and Cheng and Szeto (2016) profoundly accentuated that principal plays an utmost pivotal role in moulding a conducive working environment through delegation of power, trust and participation in decision making. This notion was echoed by Nolan and Palazzolo (2011) as they asserted that for supportive school culture to nurture, the principal needs to be motivated to facilitate, and to encourage teachers' to be proactive in the working environment towards the common goals.

In addition to that, Yahya et al. (2007) accentuated that conducive working atmosphere would not only affect the school's performance and student's achievement, but it would influence teacher's job satisfaction. This notion was in line with Schulz and Teddlie (1989), as they advocated that such aspect would influence teacher's motivation, satisfaction, eagerness and willingness to maximise their potential in teaching and learning. On the other hand, a teacher's low job satisfaction would have an adverse effect on productivity and work performance and could lead to psychological problem and stress (Troman, 2000). Fishbein (1980) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) postulated that job satisfaction has a direct influence on turnover. Hence, sustaining teachers' job satisfaction in a school would be salient to avoid turnover so that it would promote retention.

Teacher job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, including student behaviour, pay, administrative support, and school setting (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ng & Peter, 2010). Although teachers are often intrinsically motivated to improve student outcomes, financial incentives such as pay and benefits also

heavily influence the job satisfaction of teachers (Hughes, 2012). Early research completed by Ingersoll and May (2011) corroborates the above research, showing that administrative support, student behaviour, decision-making power, and pay have been shown to influence teacher retention in teachers.

Research by Zinn (1997) reported that personal consideration and commitments such as family or other responsibilities at home, personal health issues, and cultural or religious values that discourage leadership were some of the examples of factors that impede teacher leadership development. In addition to that, Wenner and Campbell (2016), Angelle and De Hart (2011), Aliabakri and Sadeghi (2014), Nwokorie-Anajemba (2010), and Ghavifekr et al. (2014) suggested that time constraint, poor rapport among colleagues, parents and administrators, workload, intrinsic factors such as attitudes and demographic elements such as teacher's age and education were some of the hindering factors to teacher leadership development and job satisfaction. Hence, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) concluded that the reality of teachers' lives might compel them to move in and out of leadership roles. The hierarchical or structural factor is yet another condition for teacher leadership development. In this context, it involves resistance to change (Durias, 2010), absence of collective vision (Brooks et al., 2004) and refusal to leadership (Friedman, 2011) are some of the impeding conditions to teacher leadership development.

Methodology

This study employed Creswell's (2014) explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, whereby it combined both quantitative and qualitative methods. As suggested by Yin (2014), the researcher opted the case study approach in order to study the real-world phenomenon of events that occurred in the selected schools. There were two stages of this research: the first stage was a quantitative phase that employed two questionnaires namely Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) and Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS) in examining teacher leadership behaviours and job satisfaction in the selected schools. The second phase of this research was the qualitative phase, whereby the researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews in the quest to explain the current phenomenon based on the findings from the quantitative phase (Creswell, 2014).

The sample of this research was framed based on two tiers: the schools sampling and participants sampling.

Two fully government-aided public secondary schools in Kulai, Johor were purposively selected as the sample schools for this study. Random purposive sampling technique was used for the quantitative phase. Of the total population, 35 teachers of school A and 43 teachers of school B completed the questionnaire. Stratified purposive sampling was used to select three teachers from each of the two schools.

With a 5 point Likert-type scale, Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2009) Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) and Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman's (1977) Job Satisfaction Scale were used. For the qualitative data, an eleven question semi-structured instrument was used.

The top management level officers in both schools helped distribute the questionnaires to their teachers randomly. Completed questionnaires were collected after three days, and it took two days for the researcher to analyse the quantitative data before proceeding with the qualitative phase of the study. Face to face semi-structured interview sessions was done individually in a conducive room provided by the administrator.

The researcher conducted a pilot test to ensure the internal reliability of the bilingual questionnaire (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Ten secondary school teachers were involved in the pilot test. Cronbach's Alpha scores for TLSS of .967 and .907 for MCMJSS suggested an internally reliable instrument.

Results

The average ratings of Teacher Leadership School Survey (TLSS) and Job Satisfaction between School A and School B were calculated. In terms of developmental focus, both schools perceive this dimension as very high though school B (4.36, 0.411) scored higher than school A (4.26, 0.714). In the dimension of recognition, school B (4.28, 0.498) scored higher and ranked very high in comparison to school A (4.20, 0.640). Autonomy was ranked high for both schools with school A (4.08, 0.485) while school B (4.02, 0.456). Ranked as very high by school B (4.21, 0.504), respondents from school A perceived collegiality as high with the mean and SD of 4.17, 0.665. Perceived as the lowest mean among other dimensions, both schools rank participation as high with school A scored (3.89, 0.796) while school B scored (3.86, 0.570). Both schools equally perceived the dimension of open communication as high, with school A (4.11, 0.740), whereas school B (4.12, 0.523). Similarly, both schools ranked positive environment as very high with the mean and SD for school A (4.31, 0.634), while school B (4.27, 0.513). In terms of job satisfaction, both schools rank this dimension as high with a total mean and SD for school A (4.18, 0.667), while school B (4.09, 0.524). Overall, as indicated in Table 1, both schools ranked reasonably high to very high in all the dimensions of teacher leadership and job satisfaction.

Dimensions	School	Aggregated Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Developmental Focus	A	4.262	0.71427	Very High
	B	4.3698	0.41174	Very High
Recognition	A	4.2031	0.64011	High
	B	4.2891	0.49847	Very High
Autonomy	A	4.0854	0.48584	High
	B	4.0274	0.45686	High
Collegiality	A	4.178	0.66507	High
	B	4.2186	0.50493	Very High
Participation	A	3.8909	0.79629	High
	B	3.8663	0.57034	High
Open Communication	A	4.1117	0.74082	High
	B	4.1207	0.52303	High
Positive Environment	A	4.3129	0.63476	Very High
	B	4.2712	0.5137	Very High
Job Satisfaction	A	4.1806	0.66724	High
	B	4.0967	0.52467	High

Table 1

Based on the findings, this study reflects that teacher leadership practices have been enacted highly among teachers in the selected schools. The high level of job satisfaction among teachers in the selected schools shows that conducive school culture would have an impact on teacher's job satisfaction (Yahya et al. 2007). This premise was in line with Pallegrini and Scandura (2006), Beaudoin and Taylor (2004), and Tschannen-Moren and Gareis (2015) that elements of school culture that include positive relationships and positive environment would have a positive behavioural impact towards psychological, ownership, esprit de corps and job satisfaction. The findings also suggest that there was evidence of teacher leadership and elements of developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, a high degree of open communication, and positive environment in the selected school. It is interesting to note that the dimension of participation was rank the lowest among all the dimensions for both schools. In this context, findings from the qualitative phase may provide the answer to such a phenomenon. The high level of job satisfaction in the selected schools implies that the human needs as outlined by Maslow (1954) that consist of physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualisation were evidence in the schools. Kalleberg's (1977) various dimensions to job satisfaction could be applicable in this context. It also indicates that there was a positive emotional feeling, whether intrinsically or extrinsically, as suggested by Locke (1976).

T-test
A t-test was conducted to determine any significant difference in Teacher Leadership School Survey and Job satisfaction between school A and school B. Based on Table 2, no significant findings found in all the dimensions between school A and school B as sig(2-tailed) value is more than .05. Hence, this finding implies that there was no significant difference in teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction between a rural school and an urban school. This result may due to the size of the sample that was minimal. It also suggests that the location of the schools, whether it was located in a rural area or an urban area does not affect teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction.

Dimensions	School	Agg.Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Developmental Focus	A	4.262	0.71427	-0.834	76	0.407
	B	4.3698	0.41174			
Recognition	A	4.2031	0.64011	-0.695	76	0.489
	B	4.2891	0.49847			
Autonomy	A	4.0854	0.48584	0.795	76	0.429
	B	4.0274	0.45686			
Collegiality	A	4.178	0.66507	-0.333	76	0.74
	B	4.2186	0.50493			
Participation	A	3.8909	0.79629	0.114	76	0.91
	B	3.8663	0.57034			
Open Communication	A	4.1117	0.74082	0.007	76	0.994
	B	4.1207	0.52303			
Positive Environment	A	4.3129	0.63476	0.321	76	0.749
	B	4.2712	0.5137			
Job Satisfaction	A	4.1806	0.66724	0.621	76	0.536
	B	4.0967	0.52467			

Table 2

One-way ANOVA

To further validate any difference in the teacher leadership dimensions and job satisfaction between the selected schools, the one-way ANOVA was employed by the researcher. Due to the fact the selected schools consist of two different areas namely rural and urban, the one-way ANOVA was used to compute whether there were any significant differences of teacher leaderships dimensions and job satisfaction between the selected schools. The results of the ANOVA test in Table 3 have validated that there was no significant difference in the teacher leadership dimensions and job satisfaction between the schools.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Developmental Focus	Between Groups	0.224	1	0.224	0.696	0.407
	Within Groups	24.466	76	0.322		
	Total	24.691	77			
Recognition	Between Groups	0.154	1	0.154	0.483	0.489
	Within Groups	24.257	76	0.319		
	Total	24.412	77			
Autonomy	Between Groups	0.161	1	0.161	0.633	0.429
	Within Groups	19.296	76	0.254		
	Total	19.457	77			
Collegiality	Between Groups	0.038	1	0.038	0.111	0.74
	Within Groups	25.658	76	0.338		
	Total	25.696	77			
Participation	Between Groups	0.006	1	0.006	0.013	0.91
	Within Groups	35.254	76	0.464		
	Total	35.26	77			
Open Communication	Between Groups	0	1	0	0	0.994
	Within Groups	31.423	76	0.413		
	Total	31.423	77			
Positive Environment	Between Groups	0.034	1	0.034	0.103	0.749
	Within Groups	24.782	76	0.326		
	Total	24.816	77			
Job Satisfaction	Between Groups	0.136	1	0.136	0.386	0.536
	Within Groups	26.699	76	0.351		
	Total	26.835	77			

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation between Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction in school A and School B

Table 4 indicates that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and teacher leadership dimensions in both schools. Recognition (r = .770, n = 35, p = .000) was a strong correlation among all the dimensions of teacher leadership in school A, whereby a strong correlation was found in the positive environment (r = .732, n = 43, p = .000) in school B. The findings also indicated that there was a moderate correlation in other dimensions such as developmental focus, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment in school A as the value of r ranging between 0.5 to 0.7. While there was a moderate correlation for developmental focus, recognition, collegiality, participation and open communication, the finding reflected that there was weak correlation in the dimension of autonomy (r = .456, n = 43, p = .002) in School B. Table 4 shows the overall correlation between job satisfaction and teacher leadership dimensions in school A and school B

			D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	JS
School A	JS: Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.645[**]	.770[**]	.558[**]	.631[**]	.666[**]	.601[**]	.581[**]	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		N	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
School B	JS: Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.503[**]	.654[**]	.456[**]	.574[**]	.664[**]	.594[**]	.732[**]	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0	0.002	0	0	0	0	
		N	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
Overall	JS: Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.577[**]	.708[**]	.553[**]	.603[**]	.661[**]	.602[**]	.648[**]	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
		N	78	78	78	78	78	78	78	78

Table 4

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
D1 = Developmental Focus
D2 = Recognition
D3 = Autonomy
D4 = Collegiality
D5 = Participation
D6 = Open communication
D7 = Positive environment
JS = Job satisfaction

Overall, there was a strong significant correlation in the dimension of recognition (r = .708, n = 78, p = .000), whereas a moderate correlation was found in other dimensions such as developmental focus (r = .577, n = 78, p = .000); autonomy (r = .553, n = 78, p = .000); collegiality (r = .603, n = 78, p = .000); participation (r = .661, n = 78, p = .000); open communication (r = 602, n = 78, p = .000); and positive environment (r = .648, n = 78, p = .000). In summary, the quantitative findings strongly suggest that there was a significant positive relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction.

School A Qualitative Results

Developmental Focus
All respondents acknowledged the importance of developmental focus, such as training, coaching, and mentoring in teacher leadership development and job satisfaction. A12 asserted that:

> *"Competency development through training."*
> *"We do have a mentor-mentee program especially for newly appointed*
> *teachers in which they will be given a mentor to assist them. We*
> *have a module for the mentor-mentee program. PLC was conducted twice a month."*

Recognition
According to A12, recognition was given to teachers who are excelled and achieved the key performance indicator. She emphasised that recognition take into account of teacher's contribution towards school's achievement academically and their contribution to the society. Considered recognition as necessary to *"spark motivation"*, A11 expressed her dissatisfaction towards the management as her panel did not receive any recognition when the result for the English language improved recently as she stated:

> *"For about 15 years of the school establishment, the GP for English*
> *was at level 8, however recently we managed to get to level 6. It*
> *indicates that we already improve the quality, but we did not get anything*
> *not even a simple congratulations, but for other subjects like the Malay*
> *language etc., yeah they received the congratulatory remarks.*
> *Yeah, we didn't get a simple recognition like congratulations English*
> *language panel. Not even that. We didn't receive anything."*

Autonomy
All respondents believe that autonomy is vital in developing teacher leadership and job satisfaction. A12 asserted that autonomy could be given to the teachers, but it should not be a total autonomy. She told the researcher that she empowered some teachers to take the lead in order to "*develop and enhance their leadership skills and confidence level to be a leader in terms of communication skills, management skills and interpersonal skills*". As for A31, she orated that empowerment would help her leadership skills by delivering the task, responsibility or roles given excellently. A11, however, reflected that:

> *"I don't think that we are given autonomy in the school in a*
> *sense that the top management has already instructed and directed*
> *us to do what we were supposed to do and we just do it. So, I don't*
> *think the word autonomy is there. Sometimes, we can't say anything.*
> *So, we just follow as instructed."*

Collegiality
All respondents acknowledged the need to have a positive relationship among the colleague. Though A12 described the collegiality in the school as "good", A31 reflected that:

> *"Some teachers, especially competitive teachers, are reluctant to share*
> *their experience and teaching materials. Maybe they see new teacher*
> *like me as a competitor or a threat to them. So you can see that there will*
> *be teachers with the attitude that "I do my work, you do your work" attitude.*
> *By right we should be helping each other"*

Participation

A12 described that teachers actively participated in school activities or programme. However, the notion of participation of teachers in the decision-making position was not mentioned by A12. A31 believed that *"teacher involvement in the school is important not only in decision making but in any program conducted in the school. This will provide a platform for us to learn, practice and develop our leadership skills"*. She reiterated that she did not contribute to the decision-making process in the school. She also emphasised that the administrator set the school mission and vision. Similarly, A11 reflected that:

> *"The administrator has already determined the KPI for the school*
> *rather than discussing with the teachers. The vision and mission*
> *of the school are not clear. What actually the school want to achieve?*
> *My previous school we set our mission to be the top 5 schools in*
> *the district, but here in this school there is no clear mission of the school.*
> *The school vision and mission are very general. That's the reason why*
> *the teachers are very relaxed."*

Open Communication

A12 claimed that the top management level always reminded teachers that they were free to communicate, to criticise and to voice up any issues during meeting and discussion as a form of open communication. However, A11 reflected that *"...usually 85% of our opinions or views are rejected. So, the final say is still up to the administrator rather than collective agreement"*. Being a backbencher though she had some reservation on specific issues in the school, A31 accentuated that:

> *Most of the teachers would just follow the instruction of the*
> *administrator, but some of them would have their own say if they*
> *were disagreed with the administrator.*

Positive Environment

Contradict to A12 who described the school environment as positive and supportive, A11, who was awarded as Excellent Teacher expressed her disappointment towards unsupportive administrators by saying that:

> *"Not quite supportive environment. As a GC, I have a task to*
> *assist English language teachers in the district and state level*
> *whereby I conducted training and knowledge sharing session*
> *regularly. However, some of the administrators are not happy with*
> *that even though I was instructed by the State Education Department.*
> *In order to make the administrator happy, I have to surrender some*
> *of my portfolios as a GC. The administrators are not really supportive."*

School B Qualitative Results

The themes for the dimensions for School B are indicated below-

Developmental Focus

All respondents acknowledged the importance of developmental focus as one of the conditions for teacher leadership development and job satisfaction. Coaching, mentor-mentee program, peer observation, PLC, training, workshops, talks and courses were some of the examples given by the respondents in terms of developmental focus. B43 opined that peer observation sessions would benefit her to improve her teaching skills and strategies. B30 reflected that there were plenty of elements of developmental focus activities in the school, such as:

> *"We have SISC+ guidance coaching and mentoring throughout the year.*
> *Coaching is not only for junior teachers, but it includes the middle leaders*
> *We have Learning English Together (LET) every Thursday, so the expert from*
> *the district would also come to share their experience and best practices.*

> *We need to refresh our knowledge. Sometimes we are too comfortable with*
> *ourselves. We need to enrich our knowledge by sharing our experience*
> *and best practices."*

Recognition

B1 explained that it was a "culture" in the school that any achievement gained by the school, whether students or teachers contributed it, the principal would post the news in the social media channel, Telegram so that that good news can be shared and appreciated. He stated that:

> *"I will congratulate them. Even though it was students' achievement,*
> *but I will also congratulate the teachers because I believe that without*
> *the teachers' assistance to prep the students, they will not be succeeded.*
> *For example, we have been number 1 in athletic events for five years in the*
> *district. This is a reflection of the commitment of not only the students but also*
> *the teachers who trained them".*

Autonomy

As a principal, B1 highlighted that teachers were given total autonomy when they were in the classroom. He emphasised that *"teachers are free to decide on what and how to teach the subject according to the students' needs. They have total autonomy in this sense as long as the learning objectives were achieved".* B30 supported this premise as she accentuated that:

> *"We are given autonomy, especially with regards to our*
> *subject matters. The administrators would definitely let us*
> *decide on what and how we want to carry out our plan pertaining*
> *our students need in the subject. So, in a way that is autonomy*
> *given to us. We are able to do whatever is right for our students".*

Collegiality

All respondents perceived collegiality in the school as very supportive, collaborative, cooperative and helpful. The respondents considered the relationship among colleagues as closed as a family. B1 explained that apart of conducting family day, annual dinner, and festive celebrations, the school had a proactive teachers' club in promoting positive school culture to strengthen the bond among them. He orated:

> *"The relationship among teachers in this school s like family.*
> *I can say that they are cooperative and collaborative. They are*
> *really close to each other. I am not worried about collegiality among*
> *teachers in this school. I always try to bring them together because*
> *I don't want to see 'groupings' at school. I would be difficult if groupings*
> *existed in the school. We should be one in direction."*

Participation

B1 emphasised that his approach in participation was *"more towards a bottom-up approach rather than top-down approach".* He allowed teachers to participate in discussing the school's mission and vision. He explained that:

> *"In terms of the KPI of the academic performance, normally*
> *some principals would determine the target. But in this school,*
> *we the top management level would let the subject teachers to*
> *decide the target. After the subject teachers decided on the KPI,*
> *it will go higher to head of panel to be reviewed. Only after that, it*
> *will bring us to be discussed with the top management level*
> *and middle leaders."*

Open Communication

B30 and B43 felt the presence of open communication practices in the school. According to B30, teachers *"can discuss things that we are not satisfied with others professionally"* and *"there is space for us to reason up".* Considering the principal as not rigid as compared to her previous school, B30 emphasised that open communication is one of the facilitating conditions for teacher leadership development and job satisfaction. In addition to that, B43 highlighted that openness among them sometimes leads to arguments. However, the end of the

argument was a mutual consensus of the solution. As a principal, B1 highlighted the use of social media channel, Telegram as a medium for interaction among teachers in the school. He reiterated that:

> *"As a principal, I can always make a decision on my own based on my experience,*
> *but it will be one-sided. Hence, if we were*
> *to seek other perspectives or views, it will be better, because two*
> *heads are better than one…their views, opinions or perspectives*
> *will be beneficial in helping the top management to decide.*
> *We listen to their opinions, suggestion and recommendations."*

Positive Environment

All respondents perceived that there was a positive environment in the school. Being the first school for her, B43 expressed that she loved to be working in the school due to excellent communication among colleagues and administrators. Similarly, B30 highlighted that they were not stressful working for the school as the environment was very supportive. B1 concluded that:

> *Having said how the culture in the school operates, I would say*
> *that we have a positive school culture and environment. That's*
> *the reason I think why most of teachers choose to serve in the school*
> *for a long period. We are supportive among each other.*

Discussion

The findings in the study reflected that both schools acknowledged the importance of the positive school culture, as suggested by Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2009) dimensions of teacher leadership. However, while the researcher was trying to seek for an explanation in terms of the dimensions on how the school practices teacher leadership, the researcher discovered that though both schools ranked the dimensions relatively high quantitatively, qualitative findings suggest that there was a contradiction of statement between respondents. Statements given by respondents in school B were more consistent and aligned in comparison to statement gathered in school A. Dissatisfaction highlighted by respondents in school A in terms of developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment implies that the actual practices of teacher leadership may not be evidence as opposed to the claims made by the top management level in the qualitative phase.

In terms of developmental focus, there were shreds of evidence given by the respondents in school B as compared to school A. The lack of developmental focus activities highlighted by respondents A11 and A31 may suggest the administration's weakness in monitoring the developmental focus activities. One of the possible reasons highlighted by A11 was due to the attitudes of the teachers who find coaching and mentoring troublesome. In contrast to school A, respondents in school B valued developmental focus as a platform to enrich their skills and knowledge (Villiers & Pretorius, 2012) not only in pedagogical aspect but in personal and professional growth (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). This scenario, in turn, would lead to better teaching practices (Hobson et al. 2009).

As recognition would spark motivation for teachers to develop professionally (Barth, 2001), the failure to give recognition to the deserving teachers would affect poor motivation and low job satisfaction. Perhaps this was the reason why respondents in school A expressed her dissatisfaction in term of recognition practices in the school. Kelly (2011) and Villiers and Pretorius (2012) postulated that recognition behaviours, such as giving respect and acknowledgement, would influence teacher leadership development. This notion was evidence in school B rather than school A as stated by respondents in school B that it was a "culture" to appreciate, to thank, to congratulate and to respect those who were excelled,

The precise description given by the principal in school B of autonomy in school provides a vivid picture of how autonomy can be given to teachers without being manipulated. The lack of clear understanding of autonomy would lead to numerous misunderstandings (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). The autonomy given to teachers would lead teachers to feel the sense of ownership (Davignon, 2016), empowered (Barth, 2001), more committed, engaged that could lead to job retention (Ingersoll & May, 2011). The lack of autonomy given in school A may limit teachers' initiative in making improvement and innovation (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Perhaps the traditional belief of leadership, hierarchical and structural influenced the decision of the administrator in school A for being rigid and not flexible compared to school B. This notion was in line with Hinde (2004) as of hierarchical or structural power may positively or negatively influence leadership practices and job satisfaction.

Both schools acknowledged the importance of collegiality in developing teacher leadership and job satisfaction. While respondents in school B were consistent in outlining the collegial behaviour in the school that includes sharing of knowledge and experience, sharing of resources, collaboration, and discussion (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009), the researcher noticed divided perception towards collegiality in school A. The presence element of clique or groupings among the senior teachers that may be due to the grade of the teachers and the issue of competitive

colleagues who were reluctant to share teaching resources were evidence that showed the lack of collegial behaviour in the school. This scenario would not be beneficial to teacher development primarily, and it would affect the school environment (Cuban, 2003; Shulman, 1996).

Though dimension of participation was ranked the lowest among other dimensions for both schools, it was noteworthy to know that the principal of school B practised bottom-up approach when it comes to participation, in which involvement of all teachers was necessary to gather information before decision-making process. As advocated by Barth (2001), Muijs and Harris (2007), Nolan and Palazzolo (2011), and Angelle & Teague (2014), the participation of teachers in making collective would influence positive school culture for teacher leadership development. On the contrary, school A approach was more on top-down as claimed by the respondent. Hence, this would limit teachers' participation in the decision-making process due to structural and hierarchical influence.

Though both schools acknowledged the importance of open communication in developing teacher leadership and job satisfaction, the lack of openness in school A was highlighted by most of the respondents. However, respondents in school B were consistent in projecting instances of open communication. The lack of open communication would deter understanding and support among teacher as positive communication would determine the success of teacher leadership (Hart, 1994). The presence element of open communication would heighten the spirit of cooperation, respect and mutual understanding between the principal and the teachers. This scenario, in turn, would lead to loyalty and satisfaction among the teachers (Matthias, 2014). Musah et al. (2018) advocated that principals who practised open communication and supportive by providing a platform for teachers to share their opinions would influence teachers' motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment.

In terms of positive environment, there was a positive and vivid picture of positive environment in school B compared to school A. A supportive and positive environment would primarily affect teachers' motivation and job satisfaction; apart would impact on students' learning (Danielson, 2006; Phelps, 2008; Yahya et al. 2007). Concerns raised by the two respondents in school A indicates there was lack of positive vibe in the school, resulting the respondents wanted to transfer to another school as they felt the environment was not supportive for personal growth and professional development. This scenario contradicted with the quantitative findings of the dimension as a positive environment in school A was ranked very high with the highest mean score. Findings from Muijs and Harris (2006) and Cheng and Szeto (2016) profoundly accentuated that principal plays an utmost pivotal role in moulding a conducive working environment through delegation of power, trust and participation in decision making. This notion was echoed by Nolan and Palazzolo (2011) as they asserted that for effective change to happen, the principal needs to be motivated to facilitate and to encourage teachers' to be proactive in the working environment towards the common goals.

Conclusions

The conclusions of the study are indicated below.

Research question 1: To what extent teachers perceived teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction in the selected schools? Teachers in both schools perceived their teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction to a great extent ranging from high to very high based on the aggregated mean score.

Research question 2: To what extent teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction in a rural secondary school differ from an urban secondary school?
There was no significant difference in teacher leadership practices and job satisfaction between the selected schools. However, there was a statistically significant positive relationship between job satisfaction and all the dimensions of teacher leadership.

Research question 3: How does the school culture facilitate or hinder teacher leadership development and job satisfaction in the selected schools? Teacher leadership dimensions such as developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication, and positive environment have a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Though qualitative findings reflected that both schools acknowledged the importance of teacher leadership dimensions in developing teacher leadership and job satisfaction, however, there were some loopholes and room for improvement in the practices of teacher leadership. There was a similarity in terms of impeding conditions for both schools, in which both schools highlighted a lack of confidence as one of the impeding conditions. Other impeding conditions include teacher's personal problem, unsupportive administrators, motivation, and attitude.

Recommendations

As for the administrators, it will be beneficial if the school governance were to support and encourage teachers in developing themselves as a leader. Supporting behaviour such as encouragement, recognition, empowerment, giving autonomy, professional development training, mentoring, and effective communication within the school context would not only improve teachers' motivation, but it would lead to high-quality job satisfaction. This, in turn, would promote professional growth and retention.

The district and state education departments were encouraged to conduct developmental programmes, not only focussing on the pedagogical aspect of teaching but also leadership development programme. Policy maker in the Ministry of Education should consider teachers in leadership training. The inclusion of teachers is necessary as they are the future leaders that would shape the future of the school.

For future research, it will be more meaningful if a similar study is expanded to a more significant number of samples in rural and urban secondary schools so that the findings can be generalised to other areas of Malaysia.

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