

The Influence of School Culture and Organizational Health of Secondary School Teachers in Malaysia

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the level of school culture practices by school principals in the national secondary schools in the state of Kedah, Malaysia. The six dimensions of school culture studied were teacher collaboration, unity of purpose, professional development, collegial support, learning partnership and collaborative leadership. The study also looks at the level of teachers' job satisfaction as well as the relationship with the practice of a positive school culture by the national secondary school principals. The respondents consisted of 385 teachers employed in 22 national secondary schools in the state of Kedah. The data obtained was analysed using SPSS version 20.0. Descriptive analysis and Pearson Correlation Coefficient were used to analyse the strength of the relationship. The findings of this study revealed that there was a positive correlation between school culture and job satisfaction according to teachers' perceptions. In addition, the school culture was statistically determined to be an important predictor variable of job satisfaction.

Keywords: school culture, job satisfaction, school principals and teachers.


1. Introduction

School culture is a large part of the symbolic approach to organizations. [1] shows that the symbolic frame centres on the concepts of symbols, myths, rituals and ceremonies. Many of these concepts are included in their framework for understanding culture. They conclude that strong cultures produce results.

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School culture is also experienced through rituals and ceremonies. "Principals can shape culture by participating in and encouraging the rituals that celebrate important values" [2]. [3] described empowerment as a way of shaping school culture. Principals should create a school culture in which decisions are made collaboratively. A principal's primary task should focus on analysing and understanding the existing culture and being aware of teachers' needs, feelings, perceptions, and attitudes [4]. School is a formal organization with certain objectives. According to [5], school is one small society with very own culture. According to [6] and [15] in order to fulfil school's formal culture, teachers play very important roles in understanding long term and short term objectives. For example, teachers discuss about the development of education system of which its important agenda was the implementation of curriculum.

Collaborative Leadership: describes the degree to which school leaders establish and maintain collaborative relationships with school staff. The leaders value teacher's ideas, seek their input, engage them in decision-making, and trust their professional judgments. Leaders support and reward risk-taking, innovation, and sharing of ideas and practices [7].

Teacher Collaboration: describes the degree to which teachers engage in constructive dialogue that furthers the educational vision of the school. Teachers across the school plan together, observe and discuss teaching practices, evaluate programs, and develop an awareness of the practices and programs of other teachers [7].

Professional Development: describes the degree to which teachers value continuous personal development and school-wide improvement. Teachers seek ideas from seminars, colleagues, organizations, and other professional sources to maintain current knowledge, particularly current knowledge about instructional practices [7].

Unity of Purpose: describes the degree to which teachers work toward a common mission for the

school. Teachers understand, support, and perform in accordance with that mission [7].

Collegial Support: describes the degree to which teachers work together effectively. Teachers trust each other, value each other's ideas, and assist each other as they work to accomplish the tasks of the school organization [7].

Learning Partnership: describes the degree to which teachers, parents and students work together for the common good of the student. Parents and teachers share common expectations and communicate frequently about student performance. Parents trust teachers. Students generally accept responsibility for their schooling [7].

2. Problem Statement

A good and responsible teacher is highly important to create a successful nation [8]. As their job scopes become bigger, they cover tasks such as teaching, educating and administrative work, they are more or less will affect teacher's emotion, such as tension, fatigue and less attention were paid to the student during class session. At the same time they also have to comply with the directives and rulings of the ranking of the principals to assure the school's vision and mission set is made. [9] said school's formal culture is one of the factors that can affect learning process. So, it can be noted that school's formality culture based on physical, social and knowledge culture plays very important roles in affecting student's academic performance. According to [10], in its effort to have a meaningful learning process, teachers are compulsory to update their skills and knowledge and mastering their students learning style so they can make a better strategic planning that will lead to increased job satisfaction.

3. Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to investigate the level of school culture and its relationship to job satisfaction. In particular, the objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the level of school culture practiced among school principals in the state of Kedah, Malaysia according to teachers' perceptions.
2. To identify the level of job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in the state of Kedah, Malaysia.
3. To identify if there is a relationship between school culture practiced by school principals and secondary school teachers' job satisfaction.

4. Significance of the Study

Findings of this study are important to:

- Help the school to identify school culture exhibited by their principal.
- Help the school to identify the job satisfaction among their teachers which are the main roles in school.
- Assist the school to carry out school culture practiced and in order to maintain and enhance the job satisfaction of the teachers in their workplace.

5. Research Framework

The research framework in this study is built upon the literature review. It is therefore theorized that each variable in school culture practiced has an influence on job satisfaction of the teachers. Figure 1. below depicts the research framework of this study:

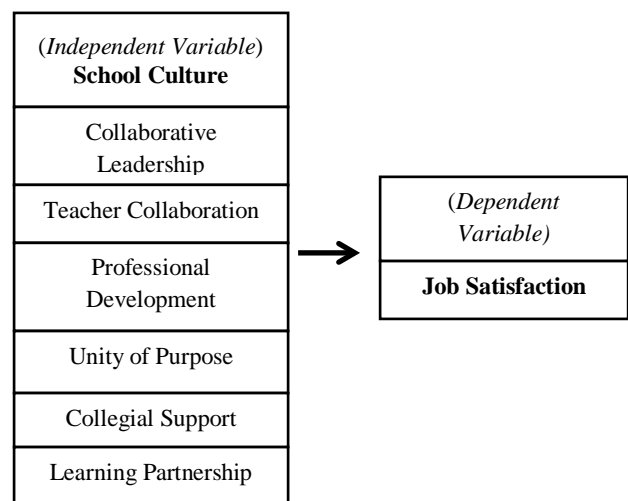


Figure 1: The Research Framework

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design and Population Sampling

This study used a quantitative approach to measure the relationship between school culture and job satisfaction. Quantitative methods provided a framework for the study and statistical persuasion became critical to validity. Quantitative strategies allowed measurement with greater control and as recommended by [11] allowed greater amount of reliability and generalizability. The primary research tool that was adopted was questionnaire survey using five point Likert scale. A 42-item School Culture Survey (SCS) questionnaire was constructed and 35 items were allocated to both school culture and job satisfaction questionnaires.

In this study, the targeted population were teachers from national secondary schools from the state of Kedah. A cover letter informed the participants that the aim of this research was to examine attitudes about work and leadership style

and that they were to return the completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes within five to seven days. Participants were encouraged to respond as accurately and honestly as possible, and they were assured that their participation would be kept confidential, anonymous and used strictly for academic research purposes only. A total of 450 structured questionnaires were distributed to teachers from 22 schools around the state of Kedah. The respondents were randomly selected by means of systematic random sampling, whereby 100 percent of the respondents were secondary school teachers.

A total of 400 questionnaires were received and out of this, 15 sets of the questionnaires were considered unusable because over 25 percent of the question in Part 1 Section A of the questionnaire were not answered [12]. It was assumed that the respondents were either unwilling to cooperate or not serious with the survey. Therefore, only 385 usable sets of received questionnaires were used for the data analysis indicating a response rate of 85 percent.

Data were analyzed using SPSS v. 20 for Windows PC and is reported in percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics were used to obtain the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The inferential statistics of t-test and Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrix is used to identify whether there is a relationship between school cultures practiced with secondary school teacher's job satisfaction.

7. Findings

7.1 Level of School Culture Practices among School Principals

Descriptive analysis was used to explain the results of the study on the secondary school teachers' perception towards school culture practices of school principals in the 22 secondary schools in the state of Kedah while inferential analysis was used to determine the relationship between secondary school teachers' job satisfaction.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the School Culture Practiced

Scale	Mean	Std.Dev.	Level
Collaborative Leadership	3.77	0.72	High
Teacher Collaboration	3.86	0.69	High
Professional Development	3.95	0.77	High
Unity of Purpose	3.89	0.63	High
Collegial Support	3.78	0.74	High
Learning Partnership	4.08	0.82	High
Overall Total	3.59	0.72	High

Table 1. shows the school culture practices among the secondary school principals is at a high level with a mean of 3.59 and standard deviation 0.72. The overall mean score for all the items of school culture are in the range of > 3.67 [13]. The findings show that most of the teachers perceive that the practice of positive school culture by secondary school principals in the state of Kedah is relatively high.

7.2 Level of Secondary School Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation for Secondary School Teachers' Job Satisfaction

No.	Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Level
1.	Number of students under your responsibility	3.86	0.74	High
2.	Opportunity to advance in your profession	3.69	0.79	High
3.	Your trust in the administrators	3.78	0.71	High
4.	Your career in the school system	3.81	0.66	High
5.	Your opportunity to advance in your chosen interest	3.71	0.69	High
6.	The physical facilities at your school	3.84	0.65	High
7.	The number of subjects taught	3.79	0.74	High
8.	Appropriate teaching facilities	3.67	0.67	High
Overall Total		3.86	0.79	Low

Table 2. shows that the job satisfaction level of the secondary school teachers in the state of Kedah is at a high level (mean = 3.86, standard deviation = 0.79). The overall mean score for all the items of job satisfaction among secondary school teachers' are > 3.67 [13]. This indicates that most of the teachers agree that the level of their job satisfaction is high.

7.3 Relationship between School Culture Practices of Principal and Secondary School Teacher's Job Satisfaction

H_0 : There is no relationship between the level of school culture practiced by school principals and teacher's job satisfaction.

H_1 : There is a relationship between the level of school culture practiced by school principals and teacher's job satisfaction.

The association between independent variables and dependent variable were explored by using the correlation analysis. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was performed to identify independent variables that individually correlate with the dependent variable. The correlation matrix shows a

significant relationship between the levels of school culture practices to job satisfaction of primary school teachers.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient Matrix

Variable	School Culture	Level	Strength
	R	sig. (p)	
Job satisfaction	0.627	0.000	High

** p < 0.05

Table 3. shows that there is a significant relationship between the level of school culture practiced by primary school principals and teachers' job satisfaction. The value of $r = 0.627$, $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). The r value indicates a positive correlation coefficient at a high level. This resulted in the rejection of the null hypothesis H_0 . Thus, the results show that there is a significant relationship between the level of school culture practiced to job satisfaction of primary school teachers in the state of Kedah.

8. Conclusion

The results showed that school culture practices among school principals and teachers' job satisfaction are at a high level and there is a significant relationship between school culture and job satisfaction among primary school teachers. As a result, increasing the levels of school culture will result in increasing job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the findings obtained from research conducted by [14], [16]. Thus, school principals and educational authorities in schools should pay more attention to the school culture in order to increase job satisfaction of teachers and progress in performance of schools. Special plans are needed to improve the school culture to provide a better working environment for the teachers to perform better. Special considerations and allocations from the Ministry of Education are needed so as to enhance the working conditions and the school culture. Finally, taking into consideration the limitations of this study, with such a low sample size, it is proposed that firstly, the findings should be generalized with caution; secondly, broader research should be carried out considering this issue to increase the possibility of generalizing the results with greater confidence.

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