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Using Distributed Leadership Readiness Scale's Instrument to Measure the Levels of Distributed Leadership in Secondary Schools

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Abstract
The purpose of this study is to determine the level of distributed leadership among secondary school principals in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) identify the level of distributed leadership among secondary school principals in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, and (2) determine the difference in the level of distributed leadership based on principal gender at secondary school in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The finding was based on teachers' perspectives towards their principal leadership practice. The study employs quantitative research that uses correlation study design using as descriptive correlation study by using survey method for data collection. Data was collected from 342 secondary school teachers selected using a simple random stratified sampling technique from the population of 3094 teachers from 39 schools. Using Distributed Leadership Readiness Scale (DLRS) instrument, results indicated that the level of distributed leadership is at a high level, M=4.03, SD=0.48. There was no significant difference between male and female principals in practicing distributed leadership.
Keywords: Distributed Leadership, Secondary Schools, Teachers

Introduction

Rather than leaders or their roles, responsibilities, procedures, and structures, Distributed Leadership focuses on leadership practice. Rather than being a result of one or more leaders' acts, leadership practice emerges from interactions between leaders and subordinates. According to Gronn (2002), leadership is best viewed as a group characteristic, a set of tasks that the group must complete. Gronn's work on distributed leadership examines it as a widespread phenomenon that manifests itself in a variety of ways across businesses. He expands on the concept as an analytical tool for grasping this emerging feature of leadership in practice. Some of its manifestations can be found in hierarchical contexts, where subordinates' power is restricted by superiors, but it can also be seen in groups and organizations where connections are more equal. Gronn defines leadership as "emerging work-related impact" and distinguishes between numerical or additive and concretive activity as two broad definitions of distributed leadership in the scholarly community.

In education institutions, the core objective is student outcomes. Based on research, teachers, and principals play an important role to make sure the school is on top of academic ranking like high prestige school or boarding schools' administration is associated with leadership. One of the important entities in the administration of a school is an administrator called as principals or headmasters. According to Mahmood (1993), a principal is a person who acquired professional training as a teacher first before they become a principal. In Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (KPM, 2013) shifts 5 outlined that the ministry will ensure that all schools, regardless of location and level of performance have a principal or headmaster of high quality to boost overall school performance. The selection of new principals or headmaster's minimum achievement is mainly based on service grades which are then linked to the length of service. Principals are expected to carry out all three fields at once that task to manage, lead and administer (Mahmood, 1993). Starting from 2014, the new principal's selection process begins with qualified candidates through promotion system (*ePromotion*) in School Leader Replacement Module (SLRM). These candidates will go through the interview process and assessment by the then head of department before recommended. For successful candidates who have been offered of permanent

post, the candidate a who acquired promotion based on a time-based must go for Program of Residency and Immersion (PRIME) organized by the leadership and management institution. Principals are expected to carry out all three fields at once that task to manage, lead and administer (Mahmood, 1993). As the leader of the school, they are responsible to make sure teachers feel comfortable, delighted, and satisfied with their work.

Literature Review

In an educational institution, the principal is the leader of the school and plays the most important role in workers' job satisfaction. Many people believe that contented workers are productive workers. Many factors lead to job satisfaction. One of them is the employer leadership style. According to Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025 in Shifts 5, it was highlighted that teachers and school leaders are the most important entity in developing human capital. Education in Malaysia was focusing on enhancing teacher professionalism and toward distributive leadership (KPM, 2013). Hallinger (2003) said the responsibility to lead has grown principals revealed to the teacher termed as sharing leadership through leadership distributive and teacher leadership. Leadership for school improvement distributive leadership and teachers have a positive impact on organizational change in schools thus enabling teachers to work in groups (Leithwood et al., 2004). Leadership affects organizational performance, how various leadership styles impact organizational culture, employee effectiveness, performance, retention, motivation, satisfaction in organizations (Chang & Lee, 2007; Fernandez, 2008; Griffith, 2004; Mosadegh Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Shaw & Newton, 2014; Siddique et al., 2011; Yang & Islam, 2012; Yang, 2014).

There is a lack of past studies about distributed leadership and teacher job satisfaction in Malaysia and especially in the Kelantan region. Some of the previous studies only focused on leadership and job satisfaction but did not focus on distributed leadership. In Malaysia, studies have been conducted by a few researchers such as Rahman (2015) and Harun (2016). According to Harun (2016), he stated that distributed leadership has been studied by Loh (2008) in Sabah, East Malaysia; Norasmah and Brondol (2013) in Negeri Sembilan, Noor Azam (2012) and Norashikin et al. (2015) in Johor for the southern zone; Nurulaim Asyikin and Suhaida (2013) in Perlis, Siva (2014) in Perak and Amir Juliana et al. (2014) in Kedah for the northern zone; Rosnarizah and Hussein (2015) in the central zone; and Hailan et al. (2013) and Rosnarizah and Zulkifli (2009) study for the whole of Malaysia. Leadership style can influence subordinate satisfaction. Most of the theory highlighted that the social need, relatedness, and recognition is one of the important things to make sure employee get their satisfaction. A good relationship between teachers and principals will lead them to achieve their social and related needs. This good relationship can be achieved if the principal has a good leadership style.

Distributed leadership, according to Harris (2014), is a type of leadership with shared duties, collective leadership, in which leadership duties are spread among numerous persons in an organization or team rather than managed by one person. The relationships, rather than the acts, of those in formal and informal leadership roles are the focus of a distributed leadership model. It focuses on leadership and how it affects organizational and instructional improvement (Spillane, 2006). It also recognizes the contributions of all persons who contribute to the practice of leadership, regardless of whether they are legally identified or classified as such. According to McRel's (2005) research, leadership is defined as a shared responsibility for accomplishing collective or organizational goals independent of positional or organizational authority, while noting that higher levels of positional authority provide higher organizational influence. Leadership entails working together to achieve goals that people could not achieve on their own. Shared leadership entails shared duty and collaborative accountability for an organization's common purpose or goals. Shared leadership isn't a "model" or a "program". It's a state that can be aided and sustained using organizational power. Elmore (2003) claims that powerful leadership is distributed because instructional improvement work is spread.

There are several theories and dimensions bound on distributed leadership such as Oduro, Groon, Leithwood et. al, MacBeth, and Spillane. Oduro (2004) defined four terms: distributed, collaborative, democratic, and shared. Leadership looks to be dispersed, implying that it is an activity that can take place at several points within an organization and that it precedes delegation, which is a deliberate choice in the exercise of authority. The concept of collaboration is based on 'alliance,' 'partnering,' or 'networking.' It could also refer to a school's collaboration with community agencies, parents, teacher groups, and other external stakeholders in an "inter-agency setting." Democratic refers to things that are the opposite of hierarchy and delegating. It can take the shape of either consultative or participatory decision-making. The easiest way to understand shared leadership is to look at it as a social process, something that emerges from social interactions rather than something that leaders do. It is based on transparency, trust, care, respect, and gratitude. Groon (2002) offers three perspectives on distributed leadership. The first is spontaneous cooperation, which occurs when a group of people with varying talents, knowledge, and/or capacities come together to finish a task or project and then dissolve. The second type is intuitive working relationships, in which two or more people form intimate bonds over time until "leadership manifests in the shared role space contained by their relationship". The third is the institutionalized practice of establishing long-term organizational structures (e.g., committees and teams) to encourage individual collaboration.

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Planful alignment, where resources and responsibilities are purposefully dispersed to those persons and/or groups best suited to lead a given function or task, is one of Leithwood's four factors. When leadership duties and responsibilities are dispersed in an unanticipated manner, 'tacit and intuitive judgments about who should do which leadership duties result in a serendipitous alignment of functions across leadership sources' (Harris et al., 2007). Spontaneous misalignment: if, like above, leadership is allocated in an unanticipated fashion, but the effect is less serendipitous and leadership actions are misaligned. Anarchic misalignment occurs when leaders pursue their own goals independently of one another and there is an "active rejection of influence from others about what they should be doing in their area of influence" on the part of some or many organizational leaders. Six forms of distribution were defined by MacBeth et al. (2004). The first is a formal distribution, in which leadership is delegated or devolved on purpose. The second is a pragmatic distribution, in which multiple elements negotiate and distribute leadership positions and duties. Third, to satisfy a specific leadership requirement, a purposeful distribution of new people with certain skills, knowledge, and/or access to resources was brought in. Fourth, there is an incremental distribution, in which people gradually obtain leadership duties as they gain experience. Fifth, opportunistic distribution occurs when workers willingly accept additional duties beyond those required for their employment on an as-needed basis. Finally, there is a cultural distribution in which members of an organization/group naturally acquire leadership roles and share them organically. Spillane (2006) proposes three aspects of distribution, one of which is collaborative distribution, in which two or more people work together at the same time and in the same place to carry out the same leadership routine. When two or more people work together to carry out a leadership routine, they are known as collective distribution. Two or more people work together to perform a leadership routine in a coordinated manner.

This research use Elmore (2005) dimension that includes mission, vision, and school objective (determination and partnership), school culture (the effect on student achievement, cooperation and collaboration, and professional learning communities), sharing the responsibility (decision making, collaborative decision making, performance evaluation, and professional development) and practice leadership (principalship and middle leader). Elmore viewed distributed leadership as a means of providing instructional leadership within the school (Gordon, 2005). According to Elmore (2004,), distributed leadership does not mean "no one is responsible for the overall performance of the organization" rather than leaders must create a "common culture of expectations" regarding skills and knowledge and holds individuals "accountable for their contributions to the collective result". Elmore believed that in any organized system, people specialize or develop skills that are related to their interests, aptitudes, prior knowledge, and roles.

The mission is defined by DuFour and Eaker (1998) as an organization's purpose, whereas vision is the organization's sense of direction. The professional learning community's mission, vision, and goals are also considered building blocks. A shared vision, according to Neuman and Simmons (2000) has defined goals with an emphasis on student achievement. School vision has also been described as an educational platform in which the organization's principles shape the organization's norms. School culture is established throughout a school's history and includes the organization's beliefs, values, and traditions (Gordon, 2005). Teachers are encouraged to collaborate, participate in school-based decision-making, participate in professional development, and cultivate the leadership of classroom teachers in a culture that supports distributed leadership (Murphy, 2005). If the organization pursues a single purpose, understands the change process, establishes relationships, supports knowledge building, and strives for consistency, school cultures will change as an added advantage (Fullan, 2001). The third dimension is shared responsibility. Distributed leadership as a shared responsibility is "an alternative perspective to the heroic single leader, that is slowly gaining more adherents, is to define leadership as a shared process of enhancing the individual and collective capacity of people to accomplish their work effectively" (Yukl, 2002). The idea behind shared responsibility is that leadership should not be the job of a single person, but rather should be shared among many employees in an organization (Storey, 2004). For the employees to learn and improve, these employees sharing leadership duties must get professional development (Gordon, 2005). In discussing professional growth, DuFour and Eaker (1998) state that employees become more effective in assisting students in learning. Practices leadership is the final dimension. It concerns how school leaders define, present, and carry out their interactions with others within the leadership process (Gordon, 2005). Leadership practices reveal how school leaders behave and how they conduct themselves inside the school's structure (Spillane et al., 2004). The tasks or activities employed in the performance of a routine may be examined, as well as who is responsible for the task, what instruments are required to do the chores, and the leadership role or goals the chores are designed to meet (Spillane, 2006a).

Methodology

This study is designed to determine the level of distribution among secondary school teachers in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the level of distributed leadership among secondary school principals in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, and determine the difference in the level of distributed leadership based on principal gender at secondary school in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The study employs quantitative research that uses correlation study design using the survey to collect data conducted among secondary school teachers in the

district of Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The population of this study is 3094 teachers from 39 secondary schools in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. A total number of 342 respondents are chosen by USA ing a simple random stratified sampling technique. This research used Distributed Leadership Readiness Scale (DLRS) by Elmore (2000). The data obtained in this study had analyzed using statistical software Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0.

Results and Analysis

342 teachers responded to the survey, with 120 (35.1%) males and 222 (64.9%) females. Ten (2.9%) Chinese, one (0.3%) Indian, and one (0.3%) other ethnicity are among the 342 replies. Most of the respondents in this survey, 297 (86.8%) teachers, have the highest academic success up to the degree level. Most of the teachers come from a diverse range of backgrounds. According to the data reviewed, more than half of the respondents (78.7%, or 269 respondents) are over 40 years old, and most of them have been teachers for more than ten years. Furthermore, most of the teachers had worked at this current school for 6-10 years, accounting for 110 (32.3%) of the total responses.

Table 1: Dimension 1 - Mission, Visions and School Objective

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Determination	4.35	0.53	High
Partnership	3.84	0.53	High
Total	**4.07**	**0.49**	**High**

Note: Low (M=1 – 2.33), Moderate (M=2.34 – 3.66), High (M=3.67 – 5), N = 342

Table 1 highlighted that both constructs are at a high level based on the results. M=4.07, SD=0.53, and the total score is M=4.07, SD=0.53. As a result of the findings, the principals of secondary schools in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, employ the dimensions of mission, vision, and school objective in their high-level leadership.

Table 2: Dimension 2 - School Culture

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
The effect on student achievement	4.15	0.56	High
Cooperation and Collaboration	4.24	0.58	High
Professional Learning Communities	3.61	0.68	Moderate
Total	**4.06**	**0.51**	**High**

Note: Low (M=1 – 2.33), Moderate (M=2.34 – 3.66), High (M=3.67 – 5), N = 342

The respondents' perceptions about their school culture are shown in Table 2. According to the findings, the impact on student accomplishment, cooperation, and collaboration is high, but the impact on professional learning communities is minimal. M=4.06, SD=0.51 is the overall score. The principal of a secondary school in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, can be deemed to have built a high degree of school culture based on the findings.

Table 3: Dimension 3 - Sharing Responsibility

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Decision Making	4.03	0.60	High
Collaborative Decision Making	4.03	0.60	High
Performance Evaluation	4.16	0.63	High
Professional Development	4.13	0.57	High
Total	**4.18**	**0.54**	**High**

Note: Low (M=1 – 2.33), Moderate (M=2.34 – 3.66), High (M=3.67 – 5), N = 342

The respondents' perceptions about responsibility-sharing are shown in Table 3. As a result, all constructs reach a great score. M=4.18, SD= 0.54 is the overall score. The findings indicate that the principal of a secondary school in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, shares responsibility with others to a high degree.

Table 4: Dimension 4 - Leadership Practice

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Principalship	4.10	0.64	High
Moderate Leader	3.74	0.60	High
Total	**3.88**	**0.57**	**High**

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Note: Low (1 – 2.33), Moderate (2.34 – 3.66), High (3.67 – 5), N = 342

The respondents' perceptions of dimension practice leadership are shown in Table 4. Both constructs are at a high level, according to the results. M=3.88, SD= 0.57 is the overall score. As a result of the findings, secondary school principals in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, lead to an enhanced dimension of leadership.

Overall score for the level of distributed leadership
The level of distributed leadership was examined using four dimensions in this study. Table 5 is the overall score for the level of distributed leadership:

Table 5: Level of Distributed Leadership

Descriptive Statistic	Mean	SD	Level
Mission, Vision, and School Objective	4.07	0.49	High
School Culture	4.06	0.51	High
Sharing of Responsibility	4.18	0.54	High
Practice Leadership	3.88	0.57	High
Total	**4.03**	**0.48**	**High**

Note: Low (1 – 2.33), Moderate (2.34 – 3.66), High (3.67 – 5), N = 342

Table 5 depicted secondary school teachers' attitudes regarding distributed leadership in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. All dimensions are at a high level, according to the findings. With M=4.18, SD=0.54, the highest level of responsibility is shared. With M=4.07 and SD=0.49, it was followed by dimension mission, vision, and school objective. M-4.18, SD=0.54 is the next dimension sharing of responsibility. Practice leadership has the lowest M=3.88, but it is still at a high level (SD=0.57). With M=4.03 and SD=0.48, the level of distributed leadership is high overall. This meant that all secondary school principals in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, engaged in high-level distributed leadership.

Distributed leadership based on principal gender
To examine the differences in distributed leadership techniques between male and female principals, this finding was evaluated using an independent t-test statistic. Table 6 is the outcome of tthesefindings:

Table 6: Distributed Leadership based on Principal Gender

Variable	Principal Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig, p
Distributed	Male	8	4.08	0.47	.769	3.082	0.37
Leadership	Female	4	3.91	0.47			
	Total	12					

Note: Significant level, p<.05, df =340, SD= two tailed.

From Table 6, their results show that for male principal N=8, M=4.08 and SD=0.47 whereas for female principal N=4, M=3.91, SD=0.47. The mean score for male principals is higher than female principals. From this result, teachers' perception of distributed leadership of male teachers is higher than female principals. However, there is no significant difference in distributed leadership between male principals and female principals at t=3.082 and p=0.37 when p >.05.

Discussion
Overall, the level of distributed leadership is at a high level. Each dimension of distributed leadership is the mission, vision, and school objective, school culture, sharing of responsibility, and practice leadership also is at a high level. This signifies that principal in Kota Bharu practice distributed leadership at a high level. These findings are supported by prior studies' findings.
Harun (2016) found that distributed leadership practice is at a high level, with M=4.13 and SP=.51. Furthermore, according to Rosnarizah (2009), teachers are highly prepared to take on distributed leadership. Her research revealed that parents and students do not fully comprehend the dimensions of purpose, vision, and school objectives. However, Nurulaim and Suhaida (2013) found that distributed leadership is practiced to a modest degree in Kangar secondary schools. Siva (2014) also discovered that distributed leadership in Perak's technical and vocational educational institutions is modest, with cooperation and collaboration with partners playing a major role. Based on prior research and this study, it can be concluded that instructors in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, are more qualified than those in Kangar and Perak.

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There is some item at the moderate level. From the pattern of data finding, it is noted that items 10 and 11 in the construct of determination for dimension mission, vision, and school objective score at a moderate level. Almost 10% of respondents rated disagree for item 10 "pupils can clearly explain school mission" and more than 20% of teachers do not think that parents/guardians can clearly explain the school's mission. The finding was the same as research by Rosnarizah (2009). Her research shows the dimension of mission, vision, and school objectives are not fully understand by parents and students. However, the other research was conducted by Newmann and Simmons (2000) found a different situation. They concluded that the construct of partnership in mission, vision, and school objective is clear by the student. The school culture dimension also shows that cooperation and collaboration are practiced in their school and have become a culture at school. Furthermore, 91.8% of respondents agreed that parents are easy can interact with school communities. The mean analysis found that more than 73.59% of respondents agreed that distributed leadership was practiced in their schools. This finding represents the culture of Malaysians in parental involvement in school.

The second objective is to determine the different levels of distributed leadership based on principal gender at secondary school in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. From the result, there is no significant difference between male and female principals for the distributed leadership. However, the mean for male principals is higher than for female principals. Harun (2016) also found there is no significant difference between male and female principals for distributed leadership. Distributed leadership, according to Elmore (2004), does not imply that "no one is responsible for the organization's overall performance"; rather, leaders must establish a "common culture of expectations" regarding skills and knowledge, and hold individuals "accountable for their contributions to the collective result." Peoplespecializee or develop talents that are related to their interests, aptitudes, past knowledge, and functions in any structured system, according to Elmore.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study discovered that distributed leadership is at a high level, with M=4.03 and SD=0.48. The findings of this research provide several implications for theory, practice, and policy that can benefit the Ministry of Education, the State Department of Education, and the District Education Office in general. Aside from that, the consequences of this discovery benefit secondary school principals in Malaysia, particularly those in Kota Bharu, Kelantan.

One of the leading ideas that have a favorable impact on the organization is distributed leadership. This idea is still new to some administrators in Malaysia, but it is a good strategy in educational leadership because it is based on best practices in developed countries. Distributed leadership is vital in educational institutions because instructors will have the opportunity to learn how to become future leaders. Distributed leadership, according to the theory, shared their leadership with others, including parents. Parents play a significant role in increasing student achievement, according to Malaysian Blueprint Plan 11. Parents will have a better understanding of how their children are developing and how they can help them improve, will communicate with their children's teachers regularly rather than only when there is a problem, and will have full visibility and access to their children's performance on national examinations and school-based assessments (KPM, 2013).

The policy was also influenced by this research. According to Malaysia's wave 2 Malaysian Blueprint shift 5, education in the country would be geared at improving teacher quality and promoting distributive leadership. The Ministry will move toward a distributed leadership model, where effective, high-quality school leadership pervades the whole organization of all schools, in line with international best, practices (KPM, 2013).

This research will help attempts to foster distributed leadership in schools, which is in line with this policy. The researcher would like to recommend that the practice of distributed leadership be emphasized in principle training at the leadership and management institute, based on the findings. Teachers must also be enlightened about distributed leadership by providing them with manuals and handbooks. Aside from that, the researcher advised that a degree-level course in educational management be provided. Teachers in training should be exposed to leadership skills from the start so that they do not experience a cultural shock when they begin teaching. In terms of school principals, they must improve their collaboration with parents and communities, as the outcome for certain items in the partnership construct is only moderate. The principal might host an event with parents through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) to ensure that they have a clear grasp of the school's goal and vision.

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