

The Application of the Turnaround Leadership Concept amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs Towards Teachers' Viability in Rural Primary Schools in Sabah

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v11-i1/9003> DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v11-i1/9003

Published Date: 30 January 2021

Abstract

The aspect of leadership is an essential matter to ensure the expansion and acquirement within the educational system can be achieved successfully. This research was executed to review the application of Turnaround amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs and the effect it has towards their excellence. This research used a qualitative approach by conducting interviews with six teachers that were randomly selected. The research analysis was done thru the implementation of triangulation qualitative research. The research findings show that there were a few teachers' viability that occurred effecting from the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst the teachers in which it directly relates to changes in organizations, management, enhancement of work accomplishment and work achievement in general. The implication of this research in the future can help increase the effectiveness in education management, shaping brilliant teachers as role models towards delivering more brilliant role models in academic.

Keywords: Turnaround Leadership, Senior Assistants of Student Affairs, Teachers' Viability, Rural Primary Schools, Leadership

Introduction

As stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2015, there are 11 education shifts which must be implemented in improving the current education system. Hence, a more viable effort is needed to conduct researches to further develop one of the missions and vision goals of the present education blueprint (Abdul Rahim et al., 2012). Based on the present-day state of the education world, numerous questions and problems of current education require instant solutions to ensure the development within the education system goes smoothly. According to Sufean (2014), Senior Assistants of Student Affairs require extensive knowledge by using new approach and methods in order to increase academic achievement effectively.

Additionally, various efforts have been conducted so as to overcome the problems within the education system in schools throughout the country. One of the things that should be highlighted is the leadership style of the Student Affairs teacher. The Student Affairs teacher actually holds a vital role in shaping the development and progress of education in the school. Therefore, a Student Affairs teacher should have Turnaround leadership values within themselves. Through this leadership, Senior Assistants of Student Affairs could effortlessly carry out any responsibility and trust that are entrusted to them (Meyers & Hitt, 2018).

Issues regarding drastic position change causes the teacher to not have the opportunity to improve the calibre and quality of their services. This situation leaves a negative stigma to new and other teachers to shoulder the position and responsibilities that are handed to them (Ab. Rahim, 2004). This situation also decreases their productivity in carrying out the duties and trust that were given. They would surely be fearful to accept and do changes after changes due to concerns of not being able to actualize the desired goal (Farrell, 2015). The effort to strengthen the education system in a school is admittedly not easy and it requires quite a long time to figure out solutions and alternatives that are suitable with the problems and questions that happen in schools (Wahab, 2004). Thus, the turnaround leadership is crucial and that much more significant to be practiced by Senior Assistants of Student Affairs to ensure the management system in education is constantly viable.

Turnaround leadership was introduced by Fullan (2005) in his effort to fix the achievement in a school or educational institution that are going through deterioration of the academic field. It is also said to be the recipe for a transformation process.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to identify the level of application of the Turnaround leadership concept amongst the Senior Assistants of Student Affairs towards the teachers' viability in rural primary schools in the state of Sabah. Accordingly, the research objectives stated below were proposed in the effort to achieve the goal of this research.

- i) To review the level of application of the Turnaround leadership concept amongst the Senior Assistants of Student Affairs.
- ii) To analyse responses and feedbacks from teachers regarding the application of the Turnaround leadership in interpreting the effectiveness in carrying out trust, duties and responsibilities as educators.
- iii) To explore the implications of the implementation of the Turnaround leadership amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs towards teachers under their leadership.

Research Questions

- i) How is the level of application of the Turnaround leadership concept amongst the Senior Assistants of Student Affairs?
- ii) What are the respondents' responses and feedbacks regarding the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst the Senior Assistants of Student Affairs?
- iii) What are the overall implications towards the implementation of the Turnaround leadership?

Literature Review

There are several in-country researches related to leadership frontline in schools involving Senior Assistants of Student Affairs yet there are still too many obstacles and research gaps.

This situation requires extensive effort to overcome the problems in the current education system especially in schools that are located in rural areas.

Among the researchers that have studied in relation to Senior Assistants of Student Affairs is Hazilye (2019) in which their research deduced that there is a relationship between the high level of academic competency of Senior Assistants of Student Affairs to their accomplishment and credibility in carrying out their duties. Meanwhile in a research done by Wahab and Kadir (2008); Yusof and Ahmad. (2012) focused more towards the management and administration field of Senior Assistants of Student Affairs in schools. A separate side of the research focused on the academic achievement (Belfi, Haelermans, & De Fraine 2016; Al-Mahdy, Emam & Hallinger, 2018). In their research, they focused on academic success in primary schools in which curriculum and co-curricular management aspects have to achieve the objective and able to increase the academic achievement of students from time to time.

Research affiliated to Turnaround leadership is actually mostly conducted in the leadership aspect of only the principals. According to Meyers & Hitt, (2018), it is not an exaggeration to state that this indicates there are huge obstacles in research related to Turnaround leadership to be done on of Senior Assistants of Student Affairs. It might not be common knowledge that Senior Assistants of Student Affairs are also more exposed to affairs related to leadership in schools in which their responsibility does not involve only students but involvement in matters related to curriculum and co-curricular as well. The responsibilities of Senior Assistants of Student Affairs cover administration, management, teaching and learning duties and their job scope will expand if the school has dormitories. Thus, the aspect of leadership within them is needed to assist in shouldering their responsibilities more systematically.

Research Scope

The research scope is only concentrating on the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs and does not involve other types of leadership. Hence, every aspect and dimension of this research is more focused on the research perspective that relates to the Turnaround leadership. The justification for the application of the Turnaround leadership is because it perfectly coincides with the job scope of Senior Assistants of Student Affairs. Ironically, once it is professionally and thoroughly applied, it will create a more systematic and effective education system.

Research Limitations

This research only involves locations in rural areas in the state of Sabah with the justification of selection being that the location of rural areas is far from city development. This situation demands that administrators and teachers to prepare themselves with as much knowledge as possible so that they would not be left behind by the flow of development and progress of the current education system. Thus, the researcher believes in the relevance of conducting research for the Turnaround leadership amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs in Sabah.

Research Methodology

This research is actually fully reliant on field research since this research was qualitative research. The purpose of this research is to explore the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research is a research that uses field research as the main source in conducting a research by doing interviewing activities, observation towards things that happen in the

surrounding. All the information acquired will be analysed from verbal and written forms to the form of descriptive writing thru the usage of mobile computer.

Besides field research, the researcher also conducted library research in the effort to collect data and research materials related to the research. The point of library research being done was to review current research that correlates to the research topic that the researcher intended to conduct. These research materials were very important in the effort to support the research data collected from field research.

Concept Framework

concept framework explains the course of the entire research which covers the effort to reach the goal of the research. It is an important thing to be done by a researcher to ensure the effectiveness in conducting research can be achieved. Below is the research concept framework in this research.

The information above explains the concept framework in this research. This concept framework actually illustrates the overall picture in regards to the research being conducted by the researcher.

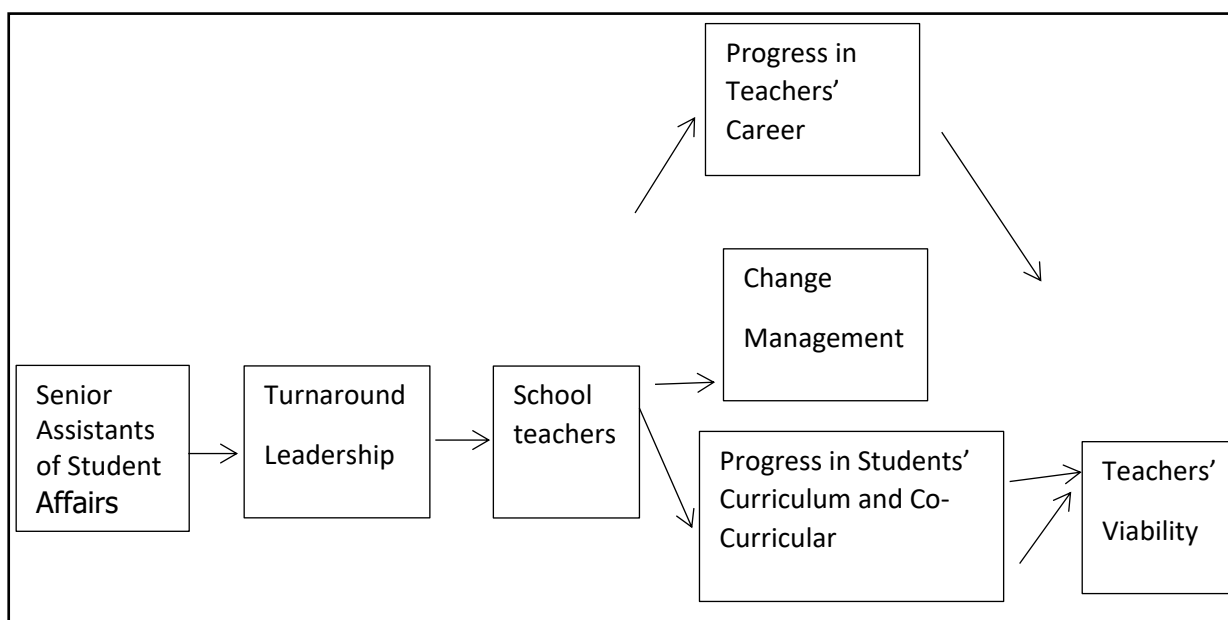


Figure 1.1 Research Concept Framework

Research Findings

The result of the overall research analysis found that there is a relationship between the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst the Senior Assistants of Student Affairs with the teachers' viability in Sabah's rural schools. These findings were the responses and feedbacks collected by the researcher thru responds given by respondents in this research.

The analysis of the interviews was done thru field research conducted by the researcher by interviewing informants to acquire feedbacks regarding the effect of the application of the Turnaround leadership by Senior Assistants of Student Affairs towards teachers. These were the research findings.

Giving a Second Opportunity and the Next for Teachers to Improve Weaknesses

All the respondents agree that the application of the Turnaround leadership on Senior Assistants of Student Affairs in terms of management and administration can give a second chance and the next for teachers to improve mistakes and weaknesses. This means that the application of this leadership in a school organization climate will encourage them to keep putting in effort to improve their weaknesses and do their responsibilities wholeheartedly as well as aspire to do what it takes with the things that were entrusted to them as best as possible.

Higher Democratic Tendencies

The application of the Turnaround leadership will make the administration and management system to have a higher and fully tolerant democratic tendency. This circumstance will create a peaceful and harmonious situation. This is because if a teacher fails in perfecting their duties well, Senior Assistants of Student Affairs and other teachers will lend a hand until the aforementioned teacher succeeds. From another angle, the democracy being applied here is that the option of handing over duties is reliant on those who are truly worthy for a long period of time and not choosing those who are only capable of carrying out duties in a short time span even though they have specialties and capabilities.

A more Systematic and Effective Management

The management system becomes more systematic and effective thru the Turnaround leadership. This is due to the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs being able to accomplish their responsibilities thoroughly without being burdened by their feelings of needing to replace a teacher in charge of a position by executing instant election procedures and processes. This circumstance will surely be burdensome the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs in which it is uncertain whether the newly chosen teacher is able to carry out the trust and responsibilities given to them. Even the process of reformation of a teacher's personal professionalism requires quite a long time, since they also need experience, knowledge as well as skills that they acquire from time to time. If the process of position exchange constantly occurs, thus it will create a new problem from each position exchange whether it is in terms of implementation as well as exposure of new assignment. In contrast Senior Assistant of Student Affairs need to maintain teachers that have served for a long time by providing opportunities for practice and continuous guidance towards them by attending courses organized by the department or outside personnel.

Increase the level of professionalism amongst Teachers

The application of the TURNAROUND leadership will help increase the level of professionalism amongst teachers. This is due to their constant enthusiasm and possessing a high level of self-confidence to implement the trust and responsibilities that are given. This professionalism is actually formed thru motivation and encouragement that they receive from the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs. The countless effort that they did have actually succeeded in creating success after success and brilliance in carrying out trust.

Shaping the change Management Systematically and Effectively

The Turnaround leadership will grant advantages to the process of shaping the change management in schools in a way that is systematic and effective. This offer opportunities to teachers to enjoy the chance to go thru the course of their professional career as quality

teachers. At the same time, this will ease the duties of the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs in arranging and managing teachers that hold positions in the student affairs organization. More beneficially, teachers can also deal with the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs easier and comfortably.

Stimulate and Encourage the Enhancement of the School's Achievement and Progress

The application of the Turnaround leadership also helps and encourage the enhancement of the school's achievement and progress in general. This is because the application of the Turnaround leadership practiced by the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs will help in enhancing the integrity, credibility, honor of a teacher in carrying out their duties and responsibilities brilliantly. In the context of psychology, a teacher will be more enthusiastic and motivated if they are given trust and opportunity to learn and enhance their level of achievement in carrying out a certain duty and responsibility given to them.

In conclusion, the research findings show a very positive effect from the application of the Turnaround leadership by the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs towards the teachers' viability in school. There are actually various research dimensions that can be reviewed from the Turnaround leadership within school context. This was proven thru this research in which the Turnaround leadership is extremely relevant to be used for the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs and not only the principals.

Discussion

Based on the research findings, it can be deduced that the Turnaround leadership is able to shape a brilliant climate of school organization and it is formed thru the thinking abilities of the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs in applying the Turnaround leadership within themselves. According to a review done by the researcher, it is undeniably not easy for a Senior Assistant of Student Affairs to implement new leadership since they are actually still bound with old pattern of leadership. However, due to the persistence and strong enthusiasm of the Senior Assistant of Student Affairs enables them to be successful in carrying out their duties well by proving that they succeed in creating a good role model of a teacher with the best teachers' viability.

Ironically, the application of the Turnaround leadership amongst Senior Assistants of Student Affairs will actually form an intrinsic and extrinsic success. Intrinsic success is the success that can be considered as a long-term success as it involves inner aspects in the teacher's own self in which there is an enhancement in professionalism, knowledge as well as experiences instilled within the teacher. Meanwhile extrinsic success is something that we can observe from outer aspects such as the standard and quality of a teacher, a teacher's progress and accomplishment in carrying out trust and the responsibilities given to them.

Thru the scenario in this research, the researcher indicates that there should be an effort in applying more types of leadership that are deemed suitable and relevant to be implemented in school. This is to create more space and the opportunity of resolving issues and problems in a school towards achieving the desired goal.

Conclusion

In general, the research findings suggest that the Turnaround leadership definitely gives a new dimension in academic research, even more so that the Turnaround leadership is a research that has not been conducted by any researcher towards Senior Assistants of Student Affairs. This research actually contributes to the school's progress and achievement in the

future in not only academic aspect but in the school management and administration in general as well. The implication of this research in the future will create a new knowledge corpus in education but it can also be applied in schools to be used to create a professional leadership that can be seen from various angle.

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