Teaching Professionalism Values and Its Relationship with Teacher Leadership Attribute

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Abstract
This research aims to identify the relationship between the values of teaching professionalism and teacher leadership attribute. A total of 168 teachers from three primary schools were selected to participate in this study. A set of questionnaire was used for data collection and the data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The findings show that the level of self-values, professionalism values and social values of primary school teachers are relatively high, while the result for the teacher leadership attribute also show a relatively high level. The overall findings lead us to conclude that there is a significant correlation relationship between the values of teaching professionalism and the teacher leadership attribute. The Implications of this study is; every teacher must have high professionalism values as the key feature in order to become a leader.
Keywords: Teacher Standards, Teacher Leadership Attributes, Social Values, Self-values, Primary School

Introduction

Teachers play important role in contributing towards the country's progress. The teaching tasks carried out by teachers nowadays are becoming more and more complex, which require a high standard of professionalism practice in order to be a truly effective teacher leader (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Harris & Muijs, 2005). The development of a comprehensive education system needs teacher leaders and also effective teacher leadership performance in order to achieve the national aspirations. According to Mahat (2009), the teachers' role is not only to teach; therefore they need to be prepared and practical in preparing themselves to educate the students. The content of Teacher Education Philosophy which says; "…*teachers who are honorable, progressive and scientific-minded, ready to uphold the nation's aspirations and respect the cultural heritage, ensure the individual development and preserved one society which is united, democratic, progressive and disciplined*" clearly shows that the Malaysian government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) wants teacher leaders whom can lead the students. By having such teacher leaders, the quality of human capital can be improved where the final outcome from schools will produce; by characteristics, more balanced and holistic types of students (Taib & Ngah, 2011).

Teaching Professionalism Values

Malaysian Teachers' Standard (*Standard Guru Malaysia*) outlined a number of standards, among them is *The Standard Practice of Teaching Professionalism* that consists of a few values which should be acquired by teachers. The values that need to be hold by the teachers are comprised of self-values, professionalism values and social values. The Ministry of Education (MOE) is striving to produce quality teachers. Teachers are expected to not only focusing on the classroom itself, but also to teach good manners to the students in order to fulfill the National Education Philosophy's aim which demands holistic types of students (Md Sawari & Mustaffa, 2014) as the final product of the education process.

Teachers can create classroom culture that is effective to ensure the students are always interested and feeling fun to learn. This can only be done by teacher leaders who are concerned to the students' needs in the classroom. The conducive classroom environment is influenced by the physical, social and emotional factors. Meanwhile, a good and effective learning climate can be created if the teacher becomes an effective presenter and leader. To achieve this, the teacher must have the characteristics such as loud and clear voice to convey the lesson, have a positive attitude and high expectations towards students' academic achievements and students' personality (Gani Hamzah, Basri & Daud, 2010).

Some of the important roles to be played by the teacher leaders are including being a role model to every student in school. Teachers must be able to provide the best illustrations. A good teacher must be able to transform a student to become good and vice versa (Mohammad Shatar, Azali & Jasni, 2006). A teacher leader should also have a strong faith in God and also have a firm belief in religion (Saeeda, 2006).

This study discusses about the values in the domain which is outlined in the Malaysian Teachers' Standard, or specifically the Standard Practice of Teaching Professionalism. Education in Malaysia put emphasis on the development of first class human capitals. Human capital is a treasure that can be injected in value added, intellect values and also increase the cultural capital (Malaysian Teachers' Standard, 2013).

A teacher should have acquired personal or self-values in order to be a good and effective leader in the mission to fulfill the national education's aim to produce a generation which has value, character, discipline, morality, identity and competence in Science and technology. The values of Teaching Professionalism that are taken into account in this study are; the self-values, professional values and social values whereas the factors under teacher leadership attribute; are determined through the authority that a teacher has both inside and outside the classroom (Danielson, 2006); in particular their involvement in community network, being role model and foster leadership cooperation.

"For teachers who often asked about 'quality' and what standards should they have, the Malaysian Teachers' Standard (SGM) will be the guidance for them. Even though SGM is produced based on foreign countries' teacher-education scenario, but its benchmark is developed in the context, culture and societal values of this country" (Abdullah, 2009 May 14).

In his speech during Teachers' Day celebration in 1999, the Prime Minister had made an assertion, many of the teachers are still not aware of the 'standard' that they need to follow in order to make themselves true teacher leaders. In other words, the teachers are unaware of the quality standards that they should be developed and must be complied by them. The lacking of this attribute has led to the say that the teachers are leaders with poor quality. Thus; in response to this, the Malaysian Teachers' Standard is drafted for a purpose to provide guidance to teachers in preparing themselves with values of teaching professionalism.

Presently, it is said that the concept of service in the teaching profession is missing (Tajul Ariffin & Nor'Aini, 2002 as cited in Idris & Hamzah 2012). This concept has yet not prioritized presently as the task of educating has become the duty for splendor, wealth and power. Thus, ample of time is not used for education. This causes people to lose respect on teachers and the dignity of this profession in the public eyes deteriorates. Teachers need to reclaim their honesty, sincerity and commitment in carrying out their duties as teachers. Therefore, there is a need to measure the level of teachers' teaching professionalism through self-value, professional value and social value in order to help them to become quality teacher leaders as envisaged in the national education system.

According to Ishak (1989), teachers need to have excelled nature, a perfect stature and character, and a perfect character education in conveying knowledge. Gamal (2003) who support this assertion and believe that teachers will become a good example to their students as their behaviors will always be observed by the students. However, there are some teachers who still go against the teaching standard and fail to understand the ethics and manners that is required (Baharin & Suzana, 2010). Issues such as teachers' politeness, concern on teaching profession, appearance, doing business in schools, part time job, time and financial management and also ethical issues are the most often raised, conversed and criticized by the people. Hence, due to the negative perception, the status of teachers is no longer looked high and the authority of teachers are no longer recognized and are often disputed.

Negative sentiments on teachers often get media's attention even though its authenticity has not been proved. Thus, it creates a feeling of prejudice and stereotype among society towards teachers (Raudzah, 2008). However, the public or the mass media cannot be blamed entirely.

This is because the values highlighted by a number of teachers themselves causes the people to underestimate the teaching profession. As a teacher, the good values and identity need to be highlighted as they can affect others especially the students. The adoption of the values within themselves is very important as it will influence them in carrying out their responsibilities with full of integrity (Sulaiman, Abdullah & Yusop, 2006).

Teacher Education Philosophy has outlined that a teacher should be well behaved. However, there are still some teachers who do not appreciate this philosophy and even choose to ignore it. As the result they are not aware of the direction and purpose of teaching once they become a teacher. Indirectly, the issues and problems arise have affected the teaching profession itself and also criticized by the public. Gani Hamzah, Basri and Daud (2010) stated that the most effective teachers are the teachers who are approachable by all the students. Such teachers will care and understand each student personally and try to understand the problems faced by the students. Teachers who are lazy, selfish, not punctual to class and not friendly with colleagues, administrators and staffs are not fit to serve as example to their students.

This study assumes that a combination of the values outlined in Malaysian Teachers' Standard (SGM), Teaching Ethical Codes, 12 Pillars (*Tonggak 12*) and Teacher Education Philosophy is embraced and practiced by each teacher in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as teacher leaders. In analyzing the relationship between values of Teaching Professionalism and teacher leadership attribute, the Teaching Professionalism factor is measure by three values namely; self-values, professional values and social values; whereas the teacher leadership attribute is observed from the authority that a teacher has both inside and outside the classroom (Danielson, 2006).

Ministry of Education (2003) has listed six core values that must be complied by teachers namely hardworking, trustworthy, thinking, caring, knowledgeable and virtuous. While the main values of the ministry's working ethic are trustworthy, thoughtful, dedicated, loving, true, grateful and sincere. Guidelines of 12 Pillars also serves as a guidance to all the civil servants in carrying out their duties as public servants. Values, norms and ethics in the 12 Pillars become the basis and guidance to the society and also to each individual in performing an action. In his speech also, he said that the value is established by religious traditions. The Pillars also outlined twelve warnings related to the value namely; appreciate the time, perseverance brings success, fun working, glory the simplicity, exemplary effect, obligation in carrying out the duty, prudential policy and virtue of patience.

The established *Teachers' Working Ethics* should be appreciated and proper guidance is important to assist the teachers in implementation. The five principles that should have in ethical teaching are; have the right intention, good treatment, driving towards goodness, keep up the word, disciplined as well as civilized. Malaysian Teachers' Standard (SGM) also has outlined some guidelines that need to be followed by the existing and future teachers in performing their duties; for the purpose to:
 i. identify the level of teacher's professional competency in the practice of teaching professionalism value, knowledge and understandings as well as in the teaching and learning skills aspects; and

ii.   identify the level of preparation and execution of training needs by agencies, teachers' training institutions in order to ensure the level of teachers' competence are achieved.

Malaysian Teachers' Standard (SGM) is divided into three domains namely:

i.   **Personal Domain**
This domain refers to the existing values of the teachers themselves that need to be developed in order to contribute more effectively to the public and country. Values that are put into focused are; believe in God, trustworthy, sincere, knowledgeable, patient, affectionate nature, courteous, fair, considerate, highly resilient, fit, active as well as interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

ii.   **Professional Domain**
The values in this domain should be practiced by the professional teachers such as; love the teaching profession, competent, integrity, being a good example, practice teamwork, proactive, creative, and innovative and problem solving skills.

iii.   **Social Domain**
This domain refers to the teacher's role as an agent of socialization and generating human capital in the society. The main values in domain are; harmony, social skills, community spirit, the spirit of patriotism and love the environment.

Developing a world-class education according to Malaysian context is the main agenda of Ministry of Education (MOE) and Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). Therefore, the teachers need to understand, show their enthusiasm and highly committed in implementing initiatives and new approaches towards improving the quality of education as stated in the following excerpt:

"... as the most significant and costly resource in schools, teachers are central to school improvement efforts. Improving the efficiency and equity of schooling depends, in large measure, on ensuring that competent people want to work as teachers, that their teaching is of high quality, and that all students have access to high quality teaching."
(OECD, excerpt from *Educational Development Master Plan,* MOE 2007: 106)

Teacher Leadership Attribute
Teacher leadership refers to the teachers who practice the teacher leadership values as well as the teachers who are able to influence others, and informally intended to achieve the desired goal (Cuban, 1984). York-Barr and Duke (2004 in *The Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2010*: 10) stated a summary of teacher leadership in line with the changing role of teachers in the context of present educational development; that says *"Teacher leadership is the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of the school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement.*

Teacher leadership is not limited to the roles of the teachers in the classroom context only; but also covers the teachers' interactions with the administrators and colleagues whom are leading the same goal of improvement in the process and students' learning outcome. This

means "the leadership" at school (Surana & Moss, 1999) can be a factor that distinguishes between a successful organization or otherwise" (Singh & Esa, 2008). Strodl (1992) was among the early researcher on teacher leadership. A conceptual framework was developed by him to identify the leadership skills among teachers. In this conceptual framework, Strodl concluded that a school need to have more than one leader. Teacher leadership studies also were carried out by Suranna and Moss in 1999. Their study proclaim that principals and teachers need to share power and authority. According to them, the leadership capacity among teachers could be developed within a certain period of time and set a benchmark to   see the success of the teachers who act as agents of change within and outside.

Harris (2001) has conducted a research on school improvement. As the result of her study, she listed out the following four characteristics of teacher leadership:
i.   Translate the school improvement theory into collaboration with colleagues;
ii. Empowerment between colleagues in order to make changes together;
iii. Acting as a mediator to source expertise from the information obtained; and
iv. Serve as liaison to the colleagues so that learning process can be done more effectively.

Hallinger and Heck (1996) also stated that the leadership among the teachers in school is important in determining its success as well as the students'. This statement was supported by Wallace (2002) who explained that the schools' success is mainly because of the effectiveness of the leaders in schools. The studies and writings of the past clearly showed that the leadership should be one of the values that must be applied in every teacher as a mechanism to help the schools' success.

Southworth (2002) and De Bevoise (1984) agree that teacher leadership is closely related to teaching and learning including teaching profession and the development of the students. Leadership must be one of the values that must be applied in every teacher as a mechanism to help the success of the school and make the school as an institution that is on the right track and in line with the objectives, vision and mission of the school. Hussein Mahmood (1993) stated that a teacher is a mentor in the process of teaching and learning. Teachers should guide their students using their experience and knowledge. Teachers who teach in the classroom is considered a leader and teacher. According to Hassan and Mohd (2000), anything presented by teachers to the students; including the body language, has impact and influence on the students. Teachers should consider all the aspects such as behavior, appearance as well as words uttered so that they look perfect in front of the students.

The interaction between teachers and parents is also vital. This is to ensure that the students could share all the problems that they face in school with their parents. Teachers are encouraged to interact with the parents so that the parents will be more confident with the teachers. Teachers are not only meant to be teachers and educators to the students, but also as leaders, advisors and agents of change in the society.

Methodology
The respondents consisted of 168 primary school teachers from three schools with a total population of 253 teachers. Simple random sampling is used to select the respondents. The respondents were 85.1% (143) female teachers and the remaining 14.9% (25) were male teachers. The study used a survey design by using a set of questionnaires to collect the data. This questionnaires, which is measured by using a five-point Likert scale, are taken from

Malaysian Teachers' Standard (Personal Domain, Professional Domain and Social Domain), 12 Pillars, The Theory of Values (1973) and Schwartz's Basic Theory of Humanity (1992). A pilot study involving 30 teachers as respondents was conducted. Based on the data obtained from the pilot study, the Alpha Cronbach reliability for the entire factors of value is 0.966, whereas the Alpha Cronbach reliability for teacher leadership is 0.946. This study used descriptive statistics and correlation analyses to investigate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

The Findings
The (Teachers' Professionalism) Value factors and the Teacher Leadership Attribute
Overall, the teachers' value factors are on high level (M=4.65; SD=.303). The level of self-value factor of the teachers is mean=4.73 (SD=.296), profession value is mean=4.61 (SD=.351) and social value is mean=4.54 (SD=.443). Teacher leadership is also high (M=4.58; SD=.355).

Table 1: The Value Factors and Teacher Leadership

Value Factors	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation
Self-value	4.73	.296
Profession value	4.61	.351
Social value	4.54	.443
Value factors	4.65	.303
Teacher Leadership	4.58	.355

1.0-2.33=low; 2.34-3.66=moderate; 3.67-5.00 =high

The relationship between Value factors and Teacher Leadership Attribute

Table 2 shows the relationship between value factors and teacher leadership attribute and found that the relationship is moderate, positive and significant.

Table 2: The relationship between Value Factors and Teacher Leadership Attribute

Value Factors	Teacher Attribute	Leadership
Self-value	.604*	
Profession Value	.722*	
Social Value	.734*	
Value Factors	**.722***	

* at the significance level $p < 0.01$

Discussion and Conclusion

Overall findings showed that there is a significant relationship between each factor value; namely the self-value, profession value and social value, with teacher leadership attribute. It shows that these value factors play important role in forming teachers who have excellent leadership traits towards the school, parents as well as students. This study supports the study conducted by Danielson (2007) who found a number of values and characteristics that make certain individuals fit as teacher leaders; among them are those who exhibit confidence, assertiveness, flexible, willing to use a variety of approaches and willing to take risks.

In addition, Abdul Rahim (2005) said that a teacher must have the following characteristics; personal, interpersonal, professional, intellectual, kind, skilled in management as well as creative and innovative. These characteristics will be able to make a teacher as someone who is credible, effective and skilled in profession. Whereas, Krisko (2001) explained that teacher leaders should be creative, flexible, demand for lifelong learning, dare to take risks as well as having interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Wahid and Ahya (2009) insisted that the teachers should present themselves as someone who has attractive character and personality, well dressed, dynamic, cheerful, energetic, friendly and firm. Gani Hamzah, Basri and Daud (2010), on the other hand, sees the characteristic of a teacher leader in his/her "arguing skill" which to them, the possession of this skill "… means the ability to convey thoughts and its purposes with rational, logic, clear, precise and compact along with good body language." Teachers need to communicate their ideas orderly and logically during teaching and learning process. Brilliant and organized presentation of teaching content together with appropriate examples will help direct students' thinking geared towards the concept that to be conveyed.

The findings of Jackson, Burrus, Basset, and Roberts (2010) also support the findings of this study which emphasize the cooperation value. Cooperative culture can be learned through study groups. In addition, these findings also is consistent with the findings of Harris and Jones (2010), and Sharratt and Fullan (2009) which stated that relationship and cooperation can bring pedagogical changes through sharing the goals, support the relationship and beliefs as well as continuous learning. This will lead to a positive impact on students' achievement and the effectiveness of teacher's teaching. Teachers are also can be an example to the students, colleagues, parents and the community.

Basically, the teacher leaders have the same characteristics with the organizational leaders who seek to influence the behavior of others to work in order to achieve the goals already set. Besides that, the basic concept of leadership is the ability to persuade. The strength of a leader depends on persuasion rather than coercion. This process usually involves two way linkage effect and the main purpose is to achieve the common goal together (Hussein, 1993). In school, leadership process starts from teacher to administrators and vice versa, teachers with parents and other parties (Abd Rashid, 2005), also need to add the role of teachers with colleagues. According to Gallagher, Bagin, and Moore (2005), the cooperation between school and community can be established via parents as they are one of the main components of the school community. In Barth's opinion (in Angelle, Nixon, Norton & Niles, 2011), if more teachers participate in the decision making process thus the morale in the organization will increase as well as the participation and commitment to implement the school's goal also will

be better. The findings of this study are expected to help the teachers to identify their ability to be leaders.

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