

Transformational Leadership of School Improvement Partner (Sipartner +) and Coaching Process in Education Development Leadership

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ABSTRACT--- Transformational leadership attends the mission to transform the leadership and organisation. Accordingly, the School Improvement Partner (SIPartner +) employs a coaching method in the guiding process to promote school leaders to make adjustments to the organisation. Nevertheless, the SIPartner + transformation leadership practice research is inadequate. This research explores SIPartner + transformational leadership practice as a mentor in performing transformational leadership of principals and headteachers adopting a coaching approach. The study sample was comprised of 117 SIPartner + employees in the District Education Office (PPD) throughout Malaysia. Quantitative research in the form of surveys involved questionnaire management was adopted to collect data. Selection of study samples was made randomly. Data were analysed utilising SPSS version 23.0. The descriptive findings confirmed that the transformational leadership practices and coaching processes among SIPartner + are at a high level. Also, inference analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership practice and the coaching process. Additionally, this study designated that SIPartner + transformational leadership leads to leadership advancement among school leaders. Hence, it is recommended that the Leadership Guidance Program should be administered consistently and systematically so that it stays apposite to the contemporary hurdles and demands of the Malaysia education system.

Keywords--- Transformation Leadership, School Improvement Partner (SIPartner +), Coaching Process, Educational Leadership.

I. INTRODUCTION

Various leadership practices among school administrators may prompt various impacts on school performance and student capacity (Choy & Mohd Izham, 2018). Modern research in the leadership domain presents momentous consideration to the fashions of school leaders that mould students' capacity (Ong & Azlin, 2016). Organisational triumph depends on competent leadership (Learnard, 2018). The job satisfaction, organisational commitment and leadership mode influence employee performance (Sabir et al., 2011) and organisational progress.

The District Transformation Program (DTP) has been recognised as a critical initiative by the Education Sector, Ministry of Education Malaysia in the Public Service Transformation Program. The District Transformation

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Program (DTP) was implemented to accommodate continuous support and accountability to schools through the District Education Office (PPD) which has been strengthened and enabled.

School Improvement Partner (SIPartner +) is a crucial drive in the District Transformation Program (DTP) included in the Sixth Plan of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM 2013 -2025). The SIPartner + position was created to administer direction and assistance to principals/headmasters (PGB) towards improving the quality of leadership and organisational management. SIPartner + is accountable for promoting the professionalism of school-based school leaders. SIPartner + must perform the coaching and mentoring exercises for the development of school leader professionalism and therefore enhance school performance (IAB 2012). SIPartner + acts as a mentor to the PGB in leadership and management ingredients to intensify the competence of school leaders (BPSH, KPM 2015).

Transformational leadership adds value to the desired transformation. It is because the transformational leadership is proficient at producing educational leaders in dynamic organisations (Goldring, 1992). Besides, Leithwood and Janzi (1995) in Rohana and Ahmad Martadha (2019) stated that a transformational leadership approach is vital to school reform as being sensitive to organisational development, vision sharing development, using leadership distribution, and fostering a school culture is a compulsion for restructuring enterprises.

Transformational leaders possess characteristics such as being charismatic, able to inspire others, having individual judgment and intellectual stimulation (Zaidatol Akmaliah & Soaib, 2014). Rohana and Ahmad Martadha (2019) affirmed that transformational leaders are leaders who are continually encouraging, capable of delivering and setting standards of behaviour that subordinates can emulate. Guzman (1997) in Zaidatol Akmaliah and Soaib (2014) demonstrated that transformational leadership has a reflective impression on subordinate behaviour change. Subordinates will be inspired by leaders to work harder to actualise their school vision. In fact, Zawawi (1999), Zaidatol Akmaliah and Soaib (2014) asserted that transformational leadership would discursively support their followers to accept the entrusted responsibilities.

The study of Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) in Wong and Nur Ain (2018) discovered that coaching could support in improving leadership culture to produce educational leaders who can contribute collectively to educational institutions continuously. Current researches on coaching approaches in education have established that coach functions to develop organisational development. Samsuddin (2016) revealed that coaching is employed as an approach to develop school and middle school leadership in setting direction, choosing strategies and promoting activities and instructional programs. In addition to studies for improvement, low-performing schools, too, use coaching approaches to enhance the capabilities of principals, middle leaders and teachers in the aspects of goal setting, the professional learning community (PLC) development, leadership sharing and creating a conducive culture for student learning.

As a mentor, SIPartner + is accountable for amplifying the professionalism of school-based school leaders (IAB, 2014). Hence, the Leadership Coaching approach is employed in face-to-face meetings between SIPartner + acting coaches and school leaders acting as coachees (IAB, 2012). Leadership Coaching is an interactive manner through leadership to train and support the development and growth of PGB's professionalism for organisational progress (Tolhurst, 2010; Shamsuddin et al., 2016).

II. STUDY PURPOSES

This research attempts to:

1. Identify the level of transformational leadership practice among SIPartner + in the dimensions of supreme influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and b individual consideration.

2. Identify the stages of implementation of the coaching process among the SIPartner + in terms of goals, relationships, questioning techniques and feedback.

Ho1: There was no significant relationship between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices and the coaching process implemented by SIPartner +.

3. Identify the relationship between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices and the coaching process executed by SIPartner +.

1) Sample

The study population covered all SIPartner + officers working at PPD throughout Malaysia. As being reported in SIPartner + data from BPSH (2017), there are 245 SIPartner + employees are working across PPD nationwide. The researcher employed sample selection based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and the sample size of SIPartner + required in this study was 148 people. Sample selection was randomly administered from the list of SIPartner + names on duty at PPD. The returned questionnaire was 120 samples, which means that almost 79% of the questionnaires were returned. Following Fraenkel and Wallen (2009), surveys of more than 60% were adequate and did not require repeated data collection. After the data cleaning process, only 117 samples were analysed.

2) Tool

In this investigation, the questionnaire instrument used to measure the level of SIPartner + transformational leadership practice was adopted according to the findings from the questionnaire proposed by Avalio and Bass (2004), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and Transformational Leadership Practice questionnaire by Habib Ismail (2012). The questionnaire instrument for measuring the coaching process implemented by SIPartner + was adjusted and modified according to the findings of the Coaching Leadership: Leaders' and Followers' perception Assessment Questionnaires in Nursing (Maria Lucia et al., 2014).

Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0. For data analysis, the researcher employed descriptive analysis and inference to answer the research question. Descriptive analyses (frequency, percentages, and mean scores) were used to describe the level of SIPartner + transformation leadership practice and the level of implementation of the coaching process by SIPartner + to school leaders. Also, the Pearson Correlation analysis was used to identify the relationship between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices and the coaching process implemented with school leaders.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The level of SIPartner + transformational leadership practice across dimensions.

Table 1: Mean score, frequency, percentage and standard deviation of transformational leadership practices among SIPartner +

Variables	Frequency (Percentage)						
	Mean Score 1.00-2.00	Mean Score 2.01-3.00	Mean Score 3.01-4.00	Mean Score 4.01-5.00	Mean	Standard Deviation	Scores Interpretation
Superior Influences	0 (0)	0 (0)	19 (16.2%)	98 (83.8%)	4.66	.372	High
Inspirational Motivation	0 (0)	0 (0)	25 (21.4%)	92 (78.6%)	4.54	.419	High
Intellectual stimulation	0 (0)	0 (0)	26 (21.4%)	91 (77.8%)	4.51	.432	High
Individual Considerations	0 (0)	0 (0)	19 (16.2%)	98 (83.8%)	4.54	.383	High
The entire SIPartner + transformation leadership practice level	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (10.3%)	105 (89.7%)	4.55	.351	High

Table 1 also manifests the analysis according to the dimensions of transformational leadership practice. The table reveals that the four dimensions of superior influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual considerations obtained high interpretations of mean scores. It explicates that the level of transformational leadership practice from all four dimensions is high. The analysis results confirmed that the superior influence obtained the highest mean score (mean = 4.66 and SP = 0.372); followed by inspirational motivation (mean = 4.54 and SP = 0.419); individual considerations (mean = 4.54 and SP = 0.383) and intellectual stimulation (mean = 4.51 and SP = 0.432). The level of implementation of the coaching process within SIPartner + as a whole.

Table 2: Mean score, frequency, percentage and standard deviation of process implementation coaching by SIPartner +

Variables	Frequency (Percentage)						
	Mean Score 1.00-2.00	Mean Score 2.01-3.00	Mean Score 3.01-4.00	Mean Score 4.01-5.00	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation of Scores
Goal	0 (0)	0 (0)	29 (24.8)	88 (75.2)	4.40	.383	High

Building relationship	0 (0)	0 (0)	11 (9.4)	106 (90.6)	4.61	.314	High
Questioning techniques	0 (0)	0 (0)	20 (17.1)	97 (82.9)	4.56	.397	High
Feedback	0 (0)	0 (0)	37 (31.6)	80 (68.4)	4.52	.448	High
Overall level of coaching implementation by SIPartner +	0 (0)	0 (0)	10 (8.5%)	107 (91.5%)	4.54	.304	High

Table 2 displays the analysis according to the dimensions of the coaching implementation process. The table shows the four dimensions of goal, building relationship, questioning techniques and feedback are in the interpretation of high mean scores. It indicates that the level of implementation of the coaching process from all four dimensions is high. In detail, the analysis shows that the level of implementation of the coaching process in terms of building relationship has the highest mean score (mean = 4.61 and SP = 0.314); followed by questioning technique dimensions (mean = 4.56 and SP = 0.397); feedback dimensions (mean = 4.52 and SP = 0.448) and goals (mean = 4.40 and SP = 0.383). This finding proves that in the coaching process, SIPartner + can build relationships and rapport with school leaders. Findings for the level of implementation of the coaching process by SIPartner + also show that the standard deviation value is less than 1 for all dimensions (goal = 0.383, building relationship = 0.314, questioning techniques = 0.397 and feedback = 0.448). It symbolises that the smaller the standard deviation, the smaller the distribution of scores in the distribution, which implies that the data are close to one another (homogeneous). This homogeneous distribution of data demonstrates the high reliability of the instrument (Creswell, 2014). The Relationship Between SIPartner + Transformation Leadership Practices with the Coaching Process implemented by SIPartner +.

Table 3: Correlations between dimensions of SIPartner + transformational leadership practice with the coaching process implemented by SIPartner +

<i>Dimensions of Transformational Leadership Practice</i>		<i>r</i>	<i>Varians r²</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Relationship Level</i>
Superior Influences	Coaching process	0.547**	0.299	0.000	Strong
Inspirational Motivation	Coaching process	0.716**	0.512	0.000	Strong
Intellectual stimulation	Coaching process	0.721**	0.519	0.000	Strong

Individual Considerations	Coaching process	0.742**	0.550	0.000	Strong
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Table 3 exhibits the results of the analysis revealing a significant relationship between transformational leadership practices through the superior influence dimension and coaching process with values of $r = 0.547$ and $sig. = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$); inspirational motivation dimension by coaching process with values of $r = 0.716$ and $sig. = 0.00$ ($p < 0.005$); intellectual stimulation dimensions with the coaching process with values of $r = 0.721$ and $sig. = 000$ ($p < 0.05$); individual consideration dimension by coaching process with values of $r = 0.742$ and $sig. = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). The strength of the relationship between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices through the dimensions of superior influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration with the coaching process is strong. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_01) that suggested that there is no relationship between transformational leadership practice and coaching process is rejected.

From the description of the correlation analysis above, it can be concluded that there is a stable and significant positive relationship between SIPartner + transformational leadership practices through the dimensions of superior influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration with the coaching process among SIPartner + officers. The verdicts of this correlation analysis too, designate that the dimensions of individual judgment in transformational leadership practice have a strong relationship with the coaching process implemented by SIPartner + officials with school leaders. The correlation was at the highest value of $r = 0.742$ compared to intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and supreme influence. The analysis below shows the relationship between the two variables to see the strength of the relationship.

Table 4: Relationships between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices and processes coaching conducted by SIPartner +

		<i>Transformational Leadership Practice SIPartner +</i>	<i>Proses Coaching</i>
Transformational Leadership Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	.802**
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Coaching process	Pearson Correlation	.802**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 4, there was a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership practice and coaching process with values of $r = 0.802$ and $sig. = 0.000$. The force of the relationship between transformational leadership practice and the coaching process is significantly positive (Jackson, 2006). Hence, the null hypothesis (H_01) that suggest there is no significant relationship between transformational leadership practice and coaching process by SIPartner + is rejected. It implies that there is a vital relationship between transformational leadership practices and the coaching process executed by SIPartner + officers to school leaders.

IV. DISCUSSION

The conclusion of the research attest that SIPartner + is proficient of being a transformational leader through the dimensions of supreme influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. The descriptive analysis of SIPartner + transformation leadership practice is at a high level. Transformational leadership performs a vital position in the formulation of SIPartner + with positive school leaders. Positive synergies depend on the satisfaction of followers (school leaders) in their position under the leadership (SIPartner +). It is because the transformation process moves leaders' attitudes, effort, performance, commitment, and behaviour. Hence, it points to satisfaction (Pharion, 2014). The positive relationship between leadership and transformational performance symbolises that followers' perceptions of their work characteristics serve as mediators of the relationship between transformational leadership and performance (Nielsen et al., 2008). The selection of this leadership pattern has the potential to help SIPartner + develop the professionalism of school-based school leaders and improve school performance.

In regards of the implementation of the coaching process by SIPartner +, the findings reveal that the execution of the coaching process in terms of goals, buliding relationships, questioning techniques and feedback is at a high level. It suggests that throughout the coaching process, SIPartner + can develop relationships and execute the coaching process effectively. Boyee et al. (2010) stated that building a good coaching relationship can design and form mutual understanding, a willingness and agreement between coaches and employees to tend to reduce gaps, to appreciate and respect one another. The verdicts of this research are also in line with Heng's (2016) affirmation that PGB has high perception for SIPartner + coaching skills as a leadership coach. This account by Heng (2016) also explained that the coaching skills maintained by SIPartner + are at a high level. The results of this study further support the opinion of Abdul Razak (2012) who explained that a skilled coach could utilise a blend of various techniques including listening, questioning, giving feedback and possibly observing to facilitate coachee.

Analysing the strength of the relationship between SIPartner + transformation leadership practices and the coaching process implemented is a positive and significant relationship. It signifies that there is a crucial relationship between transformational leadership practices and the coaching process performed for school leaders. This discovery is harmonious with Kunalan and Vincent (2015) who reported the relationship and influence of SIPartner + on school leadership and achievement, improving the quality of secondary school education in Malaysia (Sharifah Sofia & Mohd Izham, 2017) and rendering support and guidance to PGB in three fundamental domains that is coaching operation, coach-coachee relationship and guidance impact (Shamsuddin et al., 2015).

V. CONCLUSION

The outcomes of this learning imply that SIPartner + can be a transformational leader for principals and headteachers in delivering transformation and organisational direction towards development. SIPartner+'s transformational leadership practices in four dimensions, that are supreme influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual considerations are at a high level. It is applicable, too, for the coaching process being operated to school leaders. It proves that the transformation process performed by SIPartner + through the leadership coaching approach has started to offer its denouement. Ergo, this situation demonstrates that transformational leadership connects leaders and followers in a collaborative process of change that moves

the total execution of the organisation and consequently presents a productive and innovative atmosphere (Zaidatol & Soaib, 2014).

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