TEACHER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL TEACHERS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract :

Purpose – This study was conducted to identify the level of teacher leadership development in Malaysia and examine the dominant dimensions of teacher leadership development.

Methodology – This quantitative study was conducted among 150 teachers from several secondary schools located at East Coast of Malaysia. A total of 42 items were used to test and validate this item consisting of seven constructs namely; self-awareness, leadership, change, communication, diversity, teaching skills, continuous improvement and self-management. The questionnaire was extracted from the Teacher Leadership School Assessment (TLSA). Validity and reliability analysis for each dimension was analysed using PLS-SEM.

Findings - All dimensions exhibit high level of teacher leadership development. They are leading change, diversity, communication, continuous improvement, self-awareness, self-management, and teaching skills. The most high score of mean value of is leading change (mean = 4.41, SD = .430). Seven dimensions of teacher leadership development shows high reliability of this instrument.

Significance – These findings are significance to various stakeholders including school and the Ministry of Education in terms of planning and developing teacher skills and leadership talent in order to produce skilful leaders among teacher in future.

Keywords: Leadership development, teacher leadership, secondary school

Introduction

There is a continuous challenge for school leaders and teachers in improving schools. By the year 2025, the education system in Malaysia is expected to achieve quality education and become a major contributor to the human capital development. In determining the direction and excellence of the school, this entails a strong working group driven by effective school leaders. In line with that, school leaders are encouraged to support teachers and one another in their self-learning in the learning process (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Teachers are recognized for their contributions, and as an attitude of 'concern' among school teachers (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). They give full autonomy to take action, and will be rewarded as an incentive (Blase & Kirby, 2000). Further, they work together in determining strategies, material sharing, role model, and monitoring each other's tasks in a cloaking environment (Blase & Blase, 2004). They make a meaningful decisions for the overall improvement of their school via selected work teams (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). There are six elements in explaining the role of

teacher leadership. Firstly, the teacher acts as a professional developer at school. Next, teachers also serve as mentors to other teachers in the school. Then, in the field of special education, these teachers act as the leader who serves the special students. Teachers are also considered as stimulants in curriculum reform. As leaders, teachers are also expected to be in the group for school improvement. In addition, this leader's teacher is also involved in activities and programs for novice teachers (Bond, 2015).

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), though teachers do not regard themselves as leaders, they are individuals who perform various tasks in implementing each program and planned activities. Henman (2017) also stated that leadership is a relationship between leaders and followers who inspire others to produce a mission to achieve. Leadership theory arose when Theory X and Y theory were evolving, beginning with the style, behaviour and situation of the leader to the contingency theory that showed leaders first-oriented tasks and relationships (Henman, 2017). Additionally, the 'new' leadership theory has identified the leadership spread or also known as the spread leadership theory that originated from the leadership of the teacher (Wills, 2015). A spread theory of leadership suggested that organizations can perform tasks in the absence of leaders. Meanwhile, Gronn (2000) believed that spreading leadership has emerged among experts in the organization. In educational institutions, these teachers are described as leaders. Leadership between teachers is the evidence of the values, interests and personalities that exist among them. The distribution of leadership among teachers will produce teachers who act as leaders in their class and can influence students and encourage colleagues to perform well (Muijs and Harris, 2003).

Research problem

Teacher leadership is increasingly viewed as a crucial part of effective school leadership. As described by York-Barr and Duke (2004), teacher leadership is "a wide variety of work at multiple levels in educational systems, including work with students, colleagues, and administrators and work that is focused on instructional, professional, and organizational development". Teacher leaders are those who "lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence other toward improved educational practice" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), teacher leadership can be seen through evaluated skills and behaviours which consist of seven dimensions namely self-awareness, leadership change, communication, diversity, teaching skills, continuous improvement and organizational management. Ironically, many teachers are hesitant to view themselves as leaders (Hobson & Moss, 2010-2011; Wells, 2012). Challenges to teacher leadership also include unclear direction for teacher-leadership programs, norms of isolation and individualism, changed relationships between teacher leaders and other teachers, role ambiguity, inadequate time for collaboration, inadequate communication among stakeholders, and lack of incentives (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Additionally, Margolis and Huggins (2012) found that frequent changes in leadership, as well as multiple "disconnected" initiatives, contributed to a lack of clear role definition for teacher leaders, which, in turn, caused "misuse, under use, and inefficient use" of teacher leaders. Further, Jacobs (2016) added that challenges in teacher leadership included: a heavy workload and lack of time, teacher resistance, role ambiguity, and inadequate professional development. Eventhough, the concept of teacher leadership has existed for more than 50 years and it still remains as a buzzword today. At present, many external efforts have been tried out to change the education system in order to improve school achievement. However, the concept of leadership in Malaysia is not very popular and still under-studied (Azhar, 2016; Norashikin, Ramli & Foo, 2016). Therefore, this study examines the level of leadership practice among

teachers and the most dominant dimension in the development of teacher leadership that Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) have suggested.

Figure 1 below shows the upward trend of retiring school leaders from 2012 to 2014. This connotes an urgent need for new leadership namely, skilful teachers in leadership to be appointed in future. The statistics also provided a basis on the number of school leaders who will undergo compulsory retirement. This explains why the development of teacher leadership is crucially important to continue the legacy for leadership success sustainably.
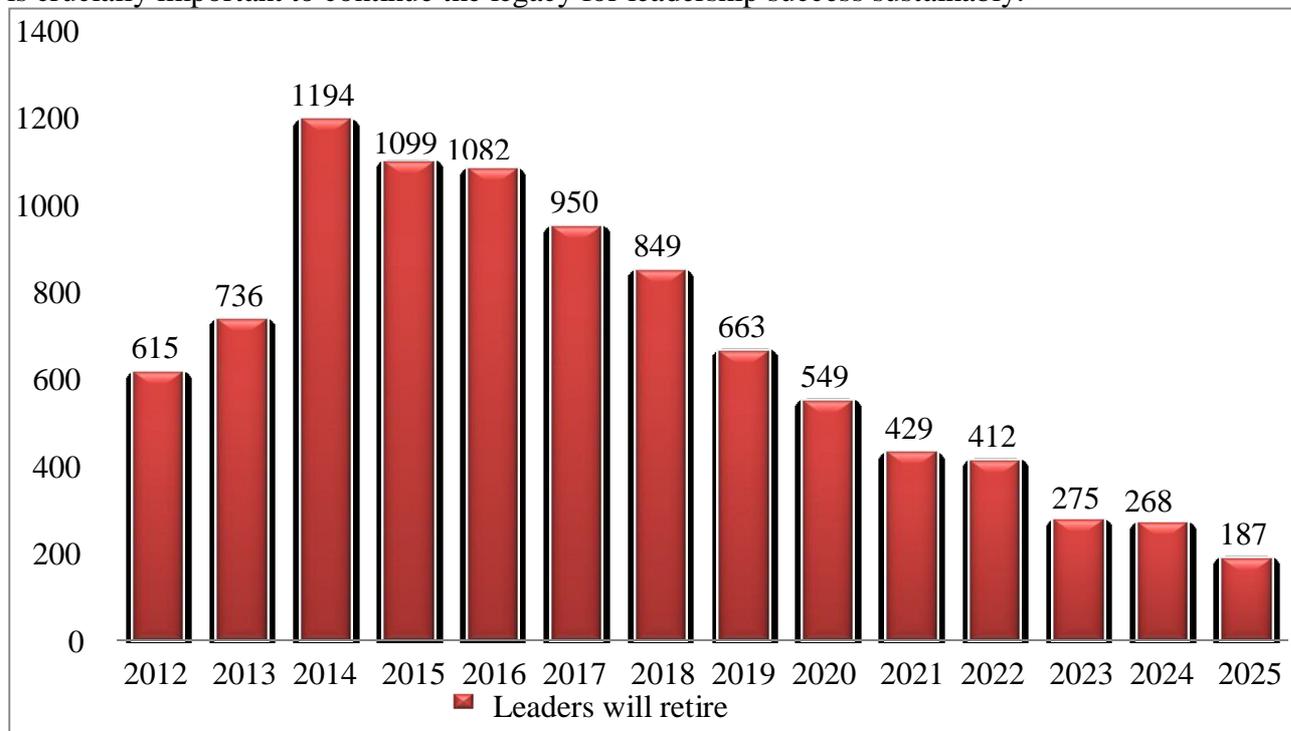

Figure 1: Statistic of retiring school leaders (2012-2025), (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013)

Research objectives

The study aims to:

1. Identify the level of teacher leadership development based on seven dimensions, namely; self-awareness, communication, leadership change, diversity, continuous improvement, teaching efficiency and self-management.

2. Examine the dominant dimensions of teacher leadership development

Literature Research

The development of teacher leadership in this study has seven dimensions as suggested by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009). The first dimension presented in this study is self-awareness which refers to the teacher having the correct self-image in terms of value, strength, philosophy and behaviour. Meanwhile, communication is the second element of the dimension.

Communication refers to teachers who demonstrate effective conversations and deeds through oral and non-verbal communication, presentation as well as written skills. The third dimension of leadership change is that teachers use effective strategies to facilitate positive change in improving school excellence. Diversity is the fourth dimension that refers to the teacher's ability to respecting and responding well in different values of a school. The fifth dimension, continuous improvement is how the teacher demonstrates the commitment to achieving higher standards of quality and willingness to change. The teaching efficiency is to possess and use professional knowledge and skills in providing effective learning opportunities. Self-management is the teacher setting up action plans and implementing it in order to achieve what the teacher has planned and collectively will improve the overall school performance level.

Mangin (2007) notes that there is a relationship between the principal of 'knowledge of teacher leadership, the interaction between the principal and the leader of the teacher and the principals' support the leadership of the teacher. Research shows that the level of support for teacher leadership can be enhanced through communication about its role. The study also suggested the level of support for teacher leadership through the development of communication systems to enhance knowledge among principals. Villiers (2010) examines the perceptions and readiness of teacher leadership practices at schools in the Western Cape, South Africa. The findings revealed that healthy school culture leads to the emergence and development of teacher leadership practices. Thus, it can be concluded that lack of open communication, participation and relaxation can prevent the emergence and improvement of teacher leadership.

Azhar, Ramli, Zaidatol & Soaib (2016) conducted a study among 400 secondary school teachers and found that there was no significant difference between teachers high-performance schools and non-performing school teachers in determining the level of leadership of teachers. This study uses the TLSS (Teacher Leadership School Survey) instrument by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2010). The findings show that the positive environment of the dimension has the highest mean value. This indicates a positive environment that supports leadership practices among teachers. On the overall leadership practice of the teacher is at a high level (M = 4.13, SD = .51) in high school. There was no significant difference in the school's category of High Performance Schools (SBT) and non-SBT. This study provides added value to drive the Ministry of Education Malaysia / State Education Department / District Education Office/school to strengthen leadership at all levels.

Loh's study (2011), examines the teacher leadership practices at a school in Sabah. The findings show that teacher leadership is at a good level but still has not reached the highest level and requires improvement in teaching and learning. Teacher-teachers have also found that practising leadership qualities and teachers also require more exposure to teacher leadership. This is a good sign and reflects the motivations and potentials among Malaysian school teachers. Through effective leadership of principals, it will produce teachers who are always committed to achieving their goals and in the pursuit of improvement (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2009)

Meanwhile, the study conducted by Hailan et. al (2013) on religious high schools, found that religious school teachers have indeed practised Rabbani leadership. Akert and Martin (2012) in their study found that principals felt the role of teachers as a leader in school being active was due to the influence that principals played. The findings revealed that principals need to create a positive school culture such as mutual understanding, respect and mutual trust. Teachers who have the desire and are willing to become leaders should be actively engaged. This is because, through leadership, teachers will have an impact on school improvement. Bas (2012) examined the significant relationship between the principal's leadership and organizational trust among teachers. Teachers who are working under the leadership of these

principals will be voluntarily and committed to their work. This feature describes the leadership of the teacher expressed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) also states that the leader's teachers are willing to carry out their responsibilities and tasks without waiting for instructions from the principal, but he knows what to do and will act according to the goals to be achieved.

Teacher Leadership Development Model

The leadership development model (Teacher Leadership Development for Teachers) was founded by Marilyn Katzenmeyer and Gayle Moller (2009). This model aims to provide a framework for professional learning in order to develop potential teachers as leaders, collaborating with colleagues and schools. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) stated that mastering skills as a leader teacher should be practised in school working environments.

Teacher leadership practice is a process involving individual or collective teachers in influencing school (Yoke Barr & Duke, 2004). Lambert (2003) stated that the leadership of the teacher was the ability of a teacher to lead the school to the full use of the skills they had through a joint practice involving relationships among individuals in the school (Muijs and Harris, 2007).
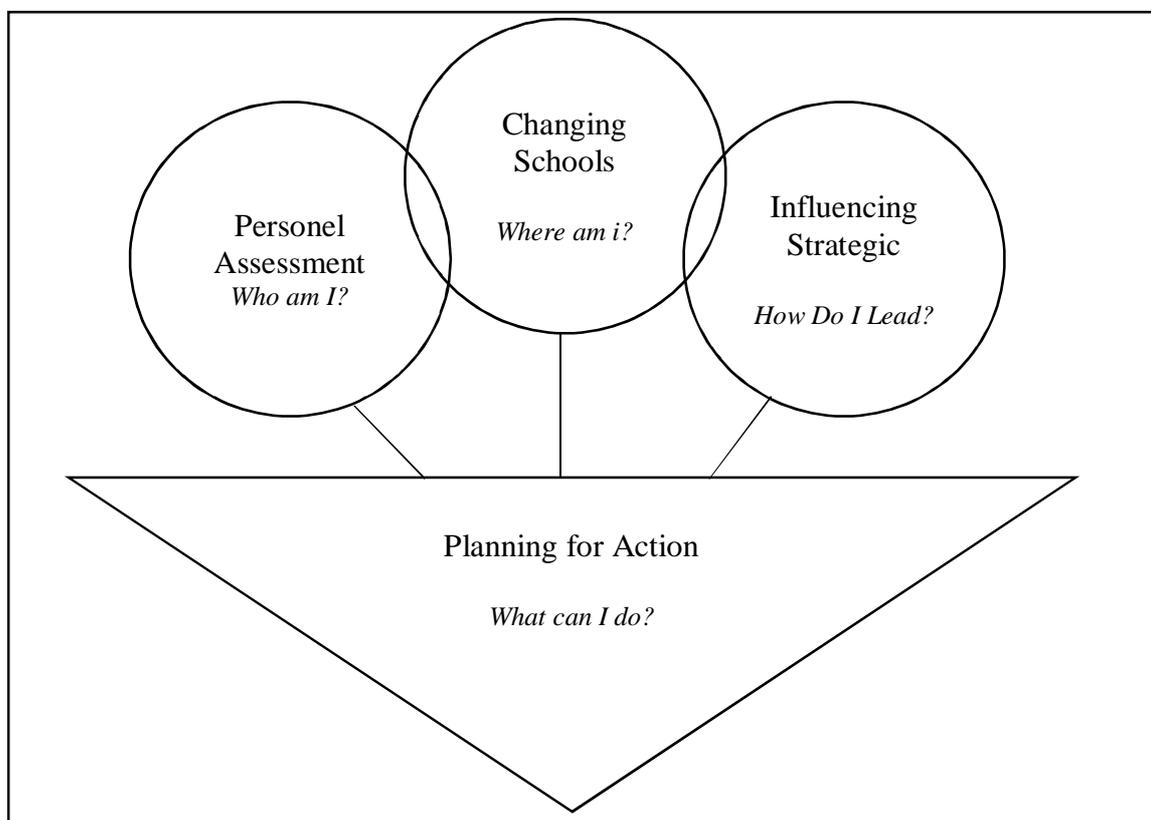

Figure 2: Teacher Leadership Development Model adopted from Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009)

The Teacher Leadership Development Model (TLD) consists of four main components as shown in the figure 2 above: personal assessment, change of school, strategy to influence and action plan. Personal assessment refers to the actions of the teacher who observes their selves in the context of their work. This is influenced by various modifications in thinking involving one's attitude, awareness and readiness as supported by Abdullah Sani, Abdul Rashid and Abdul Ghani (2007). Teacher's personal assessment will help teachers to identify their values,

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behaviour and philosophy as well as the professional performance. In addition, they can re-evaluate their existing skills to become a leader. Additionally, a study by Syed Ismail and Ahmad Subki (2010) suggested that in order to become a leader, teachers need to have a vision, boldness to take risks, influence and integrity. Thus, they are also able to know their level of professional skills as well as they can also seek support and cooperation from other teachers too.

School's change as the second component of teacher leadership development is seen as most arguable among teachers. In practical, their leadership roles are only applicable in the classroom or just in their subject matter. Hence, the question of "Where am I?" is related to an issue that leaders should ponder. This will be benefited once teachers revisit and make an analysis of their school culture as well as explore and interpret teacher leadership vividly. Some improvements and changes in school can be made via teacher leadership, as teachers can lead in various ways, as well as their colleagues (Harrisons and Killion, 2007). Thus, it creates collaborative relationships with other teachers too and open to the opportunity to make the change (Syed Ismail and Ahmad Subki, 2010).

Next, the third component of teacher development is to influence others. In order to perform this task, teachers also need to develop their existing skills. Hence, the question of "How I lead others?" is vitally important to be asked since these leaders need to acquire a set of robust strategies and skills practiced via their daily chores as a leader. As pointed out by Syed Ismail and Ahmad Subki (2010), every teacher who wants to become a leader should have the leadership qualities within themselves. One must learn to lead the group as well as well-equipped with coaching and mentoring skills. They are also encouraged to organise PLC (Professional Learning Community) among themselves to uplift their professionalism skills and avoid isolation among them (Harrison and Killon, 2007). Thus, an effective communication is a very important skill in improving the relationship between teachers. They are welcome to hearing opinions, accepting and respecting the views of others. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), teacher leadership relies on the ability to build relationships and expand partnership capacity to achieve goals.

Lastly, as a teacher leader, action plan is last components to be scrutinised and the question of "Should I" is the way forward for them in bringing school excellence. They entail new corpus of new knowledge, skills and attitudes as leader. Furthermore, support from school management as well as colleagues can determine the success of the leader teachers.

Methodology

This study employed the quantitative design. There are about 42 indicators in assessing teacher's perception towards teacher leadership development. The population of the study was secondary school teachers. A total of 150 teachers were involved in this study as a sample of the study by using survey. It is also believed that surveys are also useful for measuring opinions, attitudes and behaviours (Kothari, 2012). The teachers involved were teachers who have served for more than a year as well as teachers who are in the management level for over a year. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire and later, the questionnaires were distributed among teachers. Additionally, the questionnaire was adapted by the researchers from TLSA (Teacher Leadership Survey Assessment) constructed by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009). In Malaysia, this questionnaire has also been used by some other researcher such as Norashikin (2016).

The data gathered was analysed by IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 23 and Smart-PLS SEM software. This study used descriptive statistics to analyse standard deviation and mean.

Findings

Table 1 depicts the profile of the respondents including gender, age, academic background, years of experience.

Table 1: Demographics of Respondents by Gender, Age, Academic Qualification and Experience

	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Men	50	33.3
	Women	100	66.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Age	20-29 years	6	4
	30-39 years	20	13.3
	40-49 years	72	48.0
	50 years and above	52	34.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Qualification	First Degree	128	85.3
	Master Degree	22	14.7
	Total	**150**	**100**
Working Experience	1-5 years	4	2.7
	6-10 years	9	6.0
	11-15 years	63	42.0
	16-20 years	38	25.3
	21 years and above	36	24.0
	Total	**150**	**100**

From the above table, the majority are the female respondents who represented 66.7 per cent or 100 out of 150 respondents. Meanwhile, male respondents represent another 33.3 per cent. This is normal because most schools have many female teachers. This is because the position of the teacher is said to fit the soul of the woman. About 50 per cent of respondents is aged around 40 years and above. Majority of the respondents are aged between 40 and 49, representing 48 per cent of the total respondents. Meanwhile, around 52 teachers aged 50 are representing 34.7 per cent of the total sample. Teachers aged between 20 and 29 are only 6. Only 6 people represent young teachers among 150 respondents.

It can be seen that 128 out of 150 respondents have completed their first degree. This scenario portrays that teachers are less interested in continuing their studies to a higher level. This is because only 22 people representing 14.7 per cent have a master's degree and no one is pursuing the education to the doctorate level. Over 15 years of experienced teachers representing 49.3

per cent, indicating that nearly half of these teachers have good skills in their respective fields at school.

Research Objective 1: To identify the level of teacher leadership development based on self-awareness, communication, leadership change, diversity, continuous improvement, teaching and self-management skills.

The level of teacher leadership development for each dimension is demonstrated in Table 2. All dimensions exhibit high level of teacher leadership development. They are leading change, diversity, communication, continuous improvement, self-awareness, self-management, and teaching skills.

Table 2: The mean score of each dimension of teacher leadership development

Dimension	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Level
Self-awareness	4.24	.373	High
Communication	4.36	.422	High
Leading Change	4.41	.430	High
Diversity	4.40	.457	High
Continuous Improvement	4.31	.371	High
Teaching Skills	4.14	.338	High
Self-management	4.17	.335	High

The mean score scores obtained from these descriptive statistics can be divided into 3 levels as in table 3 based on Pallant (2013) mean score interpretation.

Table 3: Interpretation of mean score Development of teacher leadership

Mean Score	Level
1.00 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.67	Moderate
3.68 to 5.00	High

Source: Pallant (2013)

Research Objective 2: Analyze the dimensions of teacher leadership development and the most dominant among teachers

Based on Table 2 above, the most high score of mean value of is leading change (mean = 4.41, SD = .430). This suggests that leading a change has a greater impact on the development of teacher leadership. In becoming a leader, one of main role one need to perform is to lead their

teams to facing change. This is because when the teacher is given the opportunity by their principals to lead, they will be able to improve their leadership skills (Akert and Martin, 2012). Principals play a key role in creating the conditions and necessary support to enhance the development of teacher leaders (Muijs & Harris, 2006; Silva et al., 2000; Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore, & Geist, 2011; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Validity and reliability of Questionnaire

The validity of content (content validity) was conducted by the relevant expertise. The researcher has requested five experts in the related field to ensure the validity of the questionnaire by verifying the listed items to be in accordance with the variables. All appointed specialists are based on their expertise in talent management, leadership management and teacher education. The five experts have confirmed that the items constructed are related to the field of study. Researchers have provided the Rubrics for Expert Panel Survey Validation (VREP). According to Lynn (1986), a questionnaire requires a minimum of three experts and should not exceed ten. Other than that, face validity was also conducted among the selected teachers. The researcher has provided a questionnaire to 10 teachers to review the items in order to facilitate the answer of future respondents. The table below shows in detail the dimensions of teacher leadership development and the number of items for each dimension.

Table 4: The dimensions of teacher leadership development

Dimensions	Number of items
Self-awareness	6
Leading Change	6
Diversity	6
Continues improvement	6
Teaching Skills	6
Self-Management	6
Number of questionnaire items	**42**

In the Table 4 above, the dimensions of teacher leadership development are divided into seven dimensions that contain 42 items consisting of self-awareness, communication, managing changes, diversification, continuous improvement, teaching and self-management skills. Each of these dimensions has six items.

Convergent Validity

Table 5 depicts reliability of this research by examining the measurement model. Seven dimensions of teacher leadership development shows high reliability of this instrument. All exceeds the threshold value (0.708) as stated by Hair.

Table 5: Measurement Model (*Cronbach Alpha, composite reliability, CR* & Average Variance Extracted, AVE)

Dimension	Alpha Cronbach Value	(Composite Reliability)	AVE
Self awareness (KK)	0.8667	0.8999	0.6000
Communication (KM)	0.8576	0.8943	0.5871
Leading Change (MP)	0.8644	0.8993	0.6001
Diversity(KE)	0.8792	0.9092	0.6268
Continuous Improvement (CI)	0.8555	0.8931	0.5836
Teaching Skills (KP)	0.8890	0.9152	0.6427
Self management (PK)	0.8495	0.8889	0.5726

To determine the validity of the measurement model (CFA) in Smart PLS, several items such as loading, AVE, and Composite Reliability items need to be accessed using PLS algorithm (as in Table 5). In this study, the researchers have conducted a convergent validation test on the instrument. The method used to test the validity of convergence is to measure the value of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). In addition to AVE values, convergence validity was also judged by the value of composite reliability. If the value of the composite reliability exceeds 0.7 (Nunally and Bernstein, 1994), then the instrument of study reaches the validity standard of convergence. Furthermore, the loading factor exceeds 0.7 which also proves that the instrument of this study achieves convergent validity standards (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In the present study, the researcher had examined the loading and composite reliability factor as well as the average variant extracted.
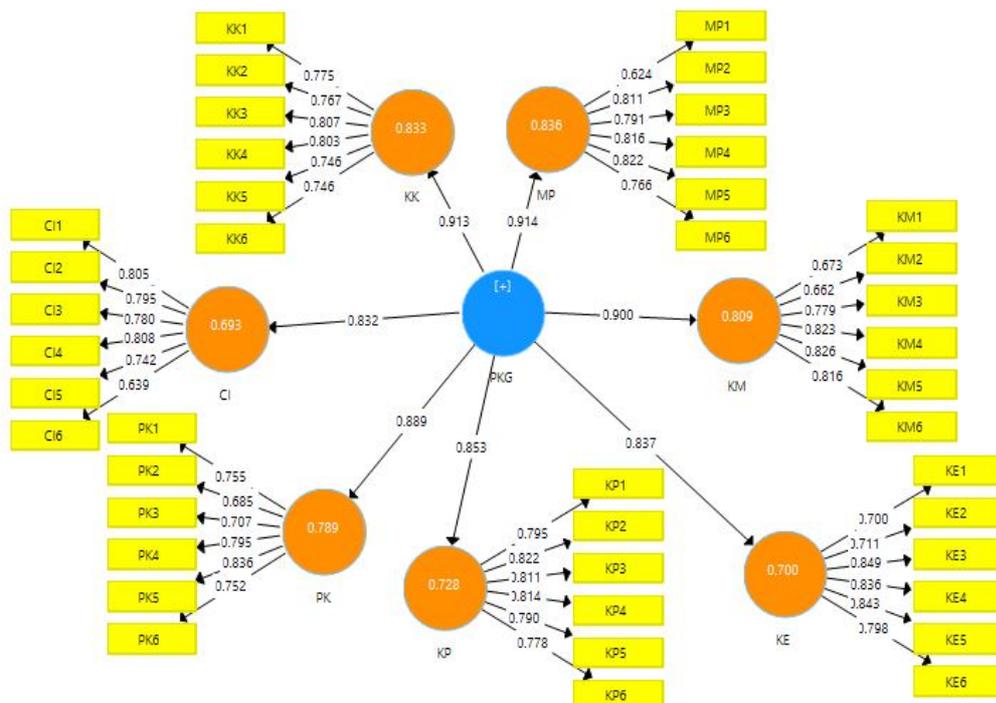

FIGURE 3: Teacher Leadership Model

Discussion and conclusion

The result of this study has enabled the researchers to identify the level of teacher leadership development among teachers and the most dominant dimension. This finding indicates that both dimensions: leading change, and diversity are the most dominant dimensions that stand out. Leading change and diversity are not the issue in this study. On the other hand, studies by Jacobs (2016) and York-Barr and Duke's (2004) portrayed a different result.

In Jacobs study (2016), teachers' resistance to change as a major barrier to successful teacher leadership. The teacher leaders offered different reasons for why some teachers resisted change. One perception expressed by several participants was that some teachers simply are comfortable with the way things are and have a low capacity for change. Teacher leaders spoke about teachers' fear of change as being associated with fear of failure as well as fear of technology. Teacher leaders felt that teachers are not getting the depth of professional development they need to prepare them for the change. On the contrary, this study proved that teacher leaders are not resist to change. They lead changes at school. This is due to the proper training (professional development) that they may receive or the success role played by their principals as the agent of change.

The results concerning participants' lack of focus on culturally and linguistically diverse students were disheartening in Jacobs (2016). For example, in York-Barr and Duke's (2004) comprehensive literature review on teacher leadership, there was not one reference to issues of equity or supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students. The reasons teacher leaders gave for the lack of focus on cultural responsiveness—low numbers of minority students, color blindness, lack of knowledge about other cultures, discomfort with the topic—clearly point to the need for intensive professional development for teacher leaders in this area. This study proved that leading change is vital to become a teacher leader. The principal provides teacher leaders with the time necessary to carry out their leadership responsibilities. To be an authentic teacher leader one must remain in the classroom (and most teacher leaders prefer to do so), but teacher leaders need released time if they are going to carry out the many responsibilities of teacher leadership described by participants in this study as pointed out by Jacobs (2016). Of course, teacher leaders who are provided released time still can be overloaded if principals assign them too much work, so principals and teacher leaders must negotiate a balance of workload and released time. A principal who takes teacher leadership seriously will need to devote a fair amount of time and effort into supporting teacher leaders, but in the long run, teacher leaders will share more and more of the burdens of instructional leadership. And if teaching and learning improve as a result of teacher leadership, then the principal has become a more successful leader and become the role model to their teachers.

In spite of above factors, teachers have demonstrated a high commitment to improving their leadership development due to their awareness on the leadership interests. Leadership is not only happened in the classroom but teachers are also leading other teachers on many occasions. Therefore, the principal should guide and ensure the teachers to participate in any training related to the development of teachers' professionalism especially in the field of leadership. Principals also need to give some space and time for teachers to share their ideas and experiences after attending courses.

The proposed dimensions can be used as a strategy to improve teacher's leadership development. Good principals' practices and values in schools will also influence teacher's behaviour in improving motivation, self-efficacy, work satisfaction and mutual trust in the organization. In addition, it also maintains a teacher's career, enhances student performance and also collaborates exclusively on collaborative organizations (Frost & Durrant, 2002; KatzenMeyer & Moller, 2001; Elangkumaran, 2010; Angelle, Nixon, Norton & Niles, 2011; Bas & Yildrim; 2010; Yavuz & Bas, 2010). The improvement in teacher leadership development will improve the quality of teachers' professionalism. This will also indirectly increase student and school excellence. Therefore, it is in line with the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025 and the Teacher Professional Development Plan. Teachers' professionalism can be enhanced and teachers can choose the best career path for them.

Other contributions in this study indicated that items in all dimensions of teacher leadership development (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009) can be used because of the high reliability and reliability of residential school among teachers in Malaysia. This is because the instrument is a widely used instrument abroad that may have different backgrounds and cultures. Researchers will also be able to use this research instrument for their study of Malaysian primary school teachers for further study.

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