



The Relationship between Organizational Readiness to Change and Professional Learning Community (PLC) Practices in Kelantan Residential School

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Abstract: *The study investigated the relationship between organizational readiness to change and the level of professional learning community in Kelantan Residential Schools. A total of 371 teachers representing 15 schools had participated in the study. Random sampling is used to select respondents. The organizational readiness instrument is used to measure the organizational readiness level (Shea, 2014, while the Professional Learning Communities- Revised instrument (Oliver & Hipp, 2010) was used to measure the practices of the PLC. The finding showed a moderately high, positive correlation and significant relationship between organizational readiness and PLC. The result of the study suggested that a readiness to change in an organization positively and significantly affected the PLC implementation. Consequently, organizational readiness to change was found to affect the commitment to change significantly. This research is essential for organizational change management to plan and implement PLC more effectively. The implication of the study was further discussed.*

Keywords: *Organizational change readiness, professional learning community, readiness to change*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian Education Development Plan (2013-2025) was launched in 2013 providing eleven (11) shifts in the education system. (Moe, 2014)[25]. In the 4th shift, transform teaching into the profession of choice was stated seven (7) focus and the major focus is upgrading the teachers quality of continuous professional development (CPD). The teacher learning is to improve the quality of teacher's. The quality of teachers is based on the level of skills, mastery of knowledge, the ability to enhance self proficiency that involves continuous learning. Besides, the ability to work collaboratively in a team that will impact student learning.

(Ahmad & Ibrahim, 2016; Ibrahim, Razak, & Kenayathulla, 2015) [1][17]. To ensure the paradigm shift is parallel due to the globalization change, Teachers Education

Division has taken the initiative to develop a guideline for the implementation of the PLC and has been disseminated to the State Department of Education since 2014. One of the main goals of the PLC is to promote continuous learning among teachers as a way to enhance their professionalism. The CPD implementation manual as a method for implementing PLCs has been widely disseminated and Teacher Education Division is responsible for training and guiding teachers in implementing PLC (Moe, 2014)[25].

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Educational reform movements in Malaysia are setting ambitious goals for student learning. The quality of teachers in the classroom has an impact on student learning that will contribute to improved performance. (KPM, 2011; Fink, 2003; Fullan, 2007; Hallinger, 2004; Harris, 2006) [19][10][11][14][15]. Many factors contributed to achieving these goals. However, the changes in teachers' attitudes towards their commitment and classroom practices demanded by the reform visions ultimately (PPB KPM, 2014; Fullan, 2007; Zuraidah, 2016)[18][11][35]. Teachers are the main triggers and implements of educational reform. Therefore, the ability of teachers to create a creative learning situation in the classroom will attract students to learn. Thus, they make a tangible difference in student achievement. The quality of teachers in the classroom has an impact on student learning that will contribute to improved performance (Dufour, 2016, Dufour & Eaker, 2008)[9][8].

According to the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PBB, 2014) [18], PLC has been widely disseminated and implemented throughout high schools in Malaysia since 2014 as a strategy to raise the level of professionalism. However, teachers' level of readiness for implementing PLCs as a way to enhance their professionalism remains a question (MOE, 2014)[25]. Therefore, efforts have been made at all levels in particular to provide an understanding of what role teachers need to play in school to succeed in PLCs.

Depending on the PLC criteria, the key elements in focus are teachers working in teams by practicing collaborative values, working together, having a high commitment, making data a guide and sustaining student performance.

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Thus, understanding the culture, climate and environment will lead to changes in the attitude of teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. Darling-Hammond et al, 2017; Zuraidah, 2016; Stoll et al., 2006)[35][30].

There are various definitions provided by scholars in defining PLCs. Based on the learning organization approach, PLC is an ongoing practice to find new ideas, approaches and teaching methods to meet current (Dufour, 2016; Morel, 2014) [9][26]. In other words, a collaborative culture among peers will create a positive learning environment, foster a cooperative culture by inculcating the values of sharing, responsibility, guiding and working together to drive school development.

However, the acceptance of teachers and the willingness of teachers to implement changes to make the PLC successful is still questionable. In fact, how much they understand and master the features of the PLC remains a question. (Keong et al., 2016, Zuraidah et al., 2016),[20][35]. Therefore, this study attempts to explore whether there is a relationship between organizational readiness for change and PLC implementation practices.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions raised in this study area,

1. What level of organizational readiness for change in Kelantan residential secondary school?
2. What level of professional learning community (PLC) practices in Kelantan residential secondary school?
3. Is there a relationship between organizational readiness to change and the practice of the professional learning community (PLC)?

IV. METHOD

A. Research Design

The research design, as an overall plan, was used by the researcher to determine the real framework of the study. Besides, it gives specific information about the process that was undertaken in implementing the research (Robson, 2002)[28]. In general, this cross-sectional study was performed, while the respondents were to represent the population affected by the change (Bourque, 2004; Hall, 2008)[5][13]. This study provided a clear snapshot of the outcomes (Hall, 2008)[13] and explained the level of organizational readiness to change and professional learning community practices, as well as an explanatory nature, to explain the relationship between the variables (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2012)[34]. A quantitative approach was implemented based on empirical data collected in a survey through the questionnaire distribution to teachers Kelantan residential schools. Creswell (2014)[6] explained that a quantitative approach used a post-positivist paradigm to explain the studied phenomena. The instruments consisted of three sections; Section A for the respondents' demographics, Section B for the organizational readiness to change, and Section C for the professional learning community PLC.

B. Sampling Design

The definition of the population of this study was essential to design the sampling plan. According to Sekaran

and Bougie (2010) [29], the population refers to several things that interest researchers such as groups of people or events or similar characteristics (Kumar, Abdul Talib & Ramayah, 2013)[23]. Based on this study, teachers in secondary residential schools in Kota Bharu, Kelantan have been identified as population. Thus the sample size was approximately 371 teachers. Krejcie and Morgan (1970)[22] explained that the sample size of 371 was adequate to support the generalization of the findings to the identified population.

According to Akter, D'Ambra, and Ray (2011)[2], the determination of the sample size was also consistent with the sample size requirement proposed by, which explained the critical role of power analysis to determine adequate sample size. Besides, this sampling was chosen because it is suitable when they almost have similar characteristics.

According to Azizi, Shahrin, Jamaludin, Yusof and Abd Rahim (2007)[4] sampling chosen was based on, every population has an opportunity to choose and the subject chosen was not related to each other. These samples consisted of 85.7% of bachelor's degree holders, while 11.6% were master's degree holders, while 7.2% with Ph.D. holder. The data showed that 67.9% of the teachers involved in PLC's course or attended the briefing about how PLC should be done in schools. The range of the respondents' age was between 20 to 60 years old, which 1.3% of the teachers in the group of 20 to 29, 15.9% of the teachers in the group of 30 to 39, 48.2% of the teachers in the group of 40 to 49, and the rest of 34.5% of the teachers were above 50 years old. The totals of 27.8% of the respondents were men, and 72.2% were females.

C. Instrument

The instrument developed by Shea, which contained two-dimension commitment to change (5 items) and efficacy to change (7 items), was used to measure the organizational readiness to change. To make the answer choices, the researchers used a seven-point Likert scale which is 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree'. George and Mallery (2003)[12] stated that a value of 0.90 and above indicated excellent internal consistency. The IBM SPSS Statistics 25.0 software was used to analyze the descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Meanwhile, the PLC practice was measured by the Professional Learning Community -Revised (PLC-R) instrument by Olivier, Hipp, and Huffman.

The subscales of the PLCA-R consisted of 24 items divided by six dimensions. Each dimension has four items. The dimensions are shared, and supportive leadership, shared values and, vision, collective learning and application, shared personal practice, supportive conditions-relationships, and, supportive conditions- structures.

D. Cronbach's Alpha

Table 1 shows a reliability value greater than 0.8 for all PLC dimensions, with the highest value of 0.94.

Table 1

Dimensions of Characteristic	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	
Professional Learning Community	Shared and supportive leadership	4	0.900
	Shared values and vision	4	0.919
	Collective learning and application	4	0.941
	Shared personal practice	4	0.940
	Supportive conditions-relationships	4	0.908
	Supportive conditions-structure	4	0.919
	Total	24	0.960

The Cronbach Alpha value for PLC reliability test is 0.960. Whereas for organizational readiness to change scale, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.970. All dimensions in organizational readiness to change had good reliability values as well, as followed in Table 2.

Table 2

Dimensions of Characteristic	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	
Organizational Readiness to Change	Commitment to change	5	0.955
	Efficacy to change	7	0.954
	Total	12	0.970

E. Data Collection

Researchers have applied for permission from the Education Planning and Research Division (EPRD) before data is collected. Subsequently, researchers have sought permission from the State Education Department and the District Education Office. Next, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the schools involved in the study. A total of 371 teachers from 13 Kelantan residential schools were involved with a mean of 29 teachers per school. The research questions and the type of data analysis were stated in Table 3 as followed:

Table 3

No	Research Questions	Type of Analysis
1	What level of organizational readiness for change in Kelantan residential secondary school?	Mean
2	What level of professional learning community (PLC) practices in Kelantan residential secondary school?	Mean
3	Is there a relationship between organizational readiness to change and the practice of the professional learning community (PLC)?	Correlation

V. RESULT

Research Question 1: What level of organizational readiness for change in Kelantan residential secondary school?

The interpretation of the mean score was explained in the following Table 4.

Table 4

Mean Score	Level
0.00-1.40	Very low
1.41-2.80	Low
2.81-4.20	Moderate
4.21-5.60	High

5.61-7.00

Very high

The descriptive analysis result indicated the level of perception of PLC in each dimension as shown in Table 5. All dimensions, as well as overall PLC, were perceived high. Based on the mean value, it showed that commitment to change contributed to the highest mean (M=5.41, SD=0.86) followed by efficacy to change (M=5.24, SD=0.81). The overall mean of the perception of organizational readiness to change was perceived high as well (M=5.30, SD=0.58).

Table 5

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
ORC1 Commitment to change	5.41	0.86	High
ORC2 Efficacy to change	5.24	0.81	High
Overall ORC	5.30	0.58	High

Research Question 2: What level of professional learning community (PLC) practices in Kelantan residential secondary school?

Table 6 showed the descriptive analysis result that indicated the level of perception of PLC. All dimensions, as well as overall PLC, were perceived high, except for Collective Learning and its Application, which was seen very high. Based on the mean values, it showed that Collective Learning and its Application were perceived as the highest mean (M=5.64, SD=0.79). The overall mean of the PLC was observed high (M=5.30, SD=0.58), while the lowest was shared personal practices (M=5.37, SD=0.83).

Table 6

Construct/Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
PLC3 Collective learning and its application	5.64	0.79	Very high
PLC5 Condition (human relations)	5.50	0.78	High
PLC2 Shared values and mutual vision	5.46	0.85	High
PLC6 Supporting condition (school structure)	5.45	0.83	High
PLC1 Shared and supportive leadership	5.38	0.92	High
PLC4 Shared personal practices	5.37	0.83	High
Overall PLC	5.47	0.73	High

Research Question 3: Is there a relationship between organizational readiness to change and the practice of the professional learning community (PLC)?

Table 7 showed the result of the Pearson correlation analysis at 95% confidence level. It showed that organization readiness to change had a significant, positive, and strong correlation with PLC (r = 0.74, p<0.1). The result showed that a positive perception of organizational readiness to change helped to develop acceptance of PLC and a greater willingness to implement this practice.

It connected PLC as a concept that was practiced widely in the teachers' routine daily job to a specific practical activity like lesson study. In other words, the contextual practice in the form of a lesson study was strengthened when the teachers had embraced the concept of PLC itself.



Table 7

		Organizational Readiness to Change	PLC Implementation
Organizational Readiness to Change	Pearson Correlation	1	0.74**
	Significant		0.00
	N	371	371

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

VI. DISCUSSION

The effectiveness of PLC implementation depends entirely on the willingness of teachers to implement the change. [32][21]. Implementing the changes meant here is the willingness to make improvements in how individuals work with teamwork, prioritize collaboration, share teaching practices, develop best practice partnerships, work collaboratively and be prepared to provide the best commitment to improving student performance. At the same time, teachers are ready to transform from conventional to the systematic methods, using data as a guide to implementing change. The willingness to implement the change is high then the implementation of the PLC is also more effective [33].

VII. CONCLUSION

Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a great way to be practiced as an approach to enhance the development of professionalism. High levels of professionalism will translate into practice and quality teaching and education in the classroom. Quality teaching in the classroom can stimulate students' interest in learning and mastering the subjects that will impact their academic achievement [9].

Therefore, the PLC needs the readiness of teachers to implement it systematically and continuously. The readiness in question is the willingness of teachers to shift from doing regular work to more organized methods. Design is intended as a teacher's willingness to change from self-employed to group work with a focus on teamwork and teamwork. This will lead to the collaborative work being achieved or the value of its fulfillment.

The value of authenticity is translated through the sharing of best practices among teachers. Commitment among teachers can be strengthened through the support of administrators. In other words, the implementation of the PLC has a strong link between teacher willingness to implement change as well as the support of administrators and all school children in setting goals, sharing their vision and mission and having the goals they want to achieve as a group (Hidayah, 2014, Darling, H. 2012)[16][7][31].

PLC is a model that needs to be highlighted to improve the teacher professional development program in schools. Administrators and all school teachers, including parents, should jointly implement it for the betterment of student performance and organizational excellence [15] [35].

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