

Elements Of Experience In The Leadership Construct Of Special Education Head Teachers In Malaysia

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Abstract: The experience possessed by the head teacher is significantly related to the workload and job satisfaction of teachers of the special education integration program (PPKI). These results are in line with several previous studies that state that the experience of a school leader can have a positive impact on task management in schools. The experience of the head teacher is one of the foundations for determining job satisfaction in the school, guided by the leadership practices carried out. Experience can also motivate a head teacher to determine appropriate leadership practices for PPKI teachers. In addition, the experience of headmasters related to special education is very meaningful in controlling the workload and also determining the workload of PPKI teachers. Therefore, this study was conducted to detail the perceptions related to the elements of experience in leadership in special education. This qualitative study involved 11 respondents consisting of PPKI coordinators in the state of Johor, Malaysia. Through the findings of this study, it is hoped that headmasters can find direct experience with students with special needs (MBK) in school, so that they get a true picture of the situation that occurs in PPKI.

Keywords: experience element, educational leadership, special education, unique leadership

INTRODUCTION

Norazmi et al. (2019) examined the influence of demographics and special education backgrounds of principals on their leadership styles in special education schools in Massachusetts. Their perceptions are based on the following aspects of leadership, namely the ability to make change, teaching and learning, communication methods and leadership direction (Aminah et al., 2021; Azlisham et al., 2021; Saadiah et al., 2021; Firkhan et al., 2021; Ishak et al., 2021; Ashari et al., 2021). The experience of a school leader can have a positive impact on school management (Norazmi et al., 2019; Fauziyana et al., 2020; Norazmi, 2020; Zaid et al., 2020; Zaid et al., 2021). Previous researchers have also emphasized that the experience element is an important element in the leadership of head teachers in PPKI. Head teachers who have no experience in special education matters, special education management and managing MBK will present problems to them (Mohd Norazmi et al., 2021; Rosnee et al., 2021; Roszi et al., 2021; Nik Nurhalida et al., 2021; Een et al., 2021; Yusaini et al., 2021). Through the experience gained will make the headmaster able to understand the situation that occurs in reality at PPKI. In addition, the experience of head teachers becomes one of the foundations for determining the leadership of head teachers in schools. Experience also serves as an important element of headmaster leadership in making a relevant decision in managing the school. So with this it is emphasized once again that the element of experience is an important element in examining the leadership of head teachers.

Fiedler's Contingency Leadership Theory (1967)

The theory introduced by Fiedler emphasizes leadership styles that can meet current needs according to the situation in which they lead. According to Fiedler (1967), leadership requires its practitioners to identify clues in their leadership environment that can be adapted to their own behavior so that it can meet the needs of followers as well as the situation. Norazmi (2020) explains that Fiedler's contingency leadership theory can be successful if the interaction between the leadership and its followers takes place well. Zaid et al. (2020) explain that the effectiveness of this leadership theory can be seen if there is a compatibility between leadership style with the degree of compatibility of leaders and followers. While Fauziyana et al. (2020) stated that effective leadership will exist if a proper adjustment between leadership style and interaction with subordinates.

Zaid et al. (2021) formulated a person to be a leader not because of his personal qualities, but because of situational factors and the existence of interactions between the leader, followers and his situation. Fiedler (1967) as a whole states that there are three situations that can influence a person's style in leadership practice namely leader-member relationship, task structure and position of power. According to Aminah et al. (2021), in terms of leader-member relationship, a need in which establishing a good relationship between the leader and also his subordinates can help in forming loyalty, trust and desire in performing a task. Norazmi et al. (2020) detail that such situations can facilitate leaders to give instructions and followers to follow instructions. Thus, Rosnee et al. (2021) suggested that headmasters should be smart in communicating and interacting with the

teachers under them, and establish good relationships with teachers so that school management can run smoothly.

The second management situation is expressed as a task structure that sees the leader more interested in handling his subordinates based on the task. Roszi et al. (2021) describe this situation as the leader’s ability to convey instructions and division of tasks to his followers whether it is structured or unstructured. This is agreed by Zaid et al. (2020) who stated that the tasks given by the head of department must be structured, easy to understand and according to the role as well as able to generate a quality work productivity.

Norazmi et al. (2020) the third management situation is referred to as position power or position of power where at this level the leader uses the available power to exercise leadership. Firkhan et al. (2021) stated that this position of power can be accepted because it is officially entrusted by the authorities, however, its implementation must be carried out according to the situation. The theory proposed by Fred Fiedler as a whole provides an alternative to good leadership practice because it has no direct dependence on the behavior or character of a leader, but emphasizes the aspect of leadership adaptation to the situation they lead. This shows that, effective or not the leadership needs to be evaluated to what extent it can be mobilized in a given situation. Therefore, this practice is considered good because it is in line with current needs and wants. However, this leadership situation may create contradictions in practice if members take advantage in avoiding tasks or are unproductive if the relationship between leader and member becomes too close. Similarly, the loopholes that exist in management situations involving positions of power or authority, leadership will be seen as too drastic or excessive if it involves the use of authority that is too frequent to ignore discretion.

METHODOLOGY

The elements of the construct were explored by conducting interviews. This qualitative approach was carried out by interviewing 11 coordinators for the PPKI program throughout the state of Johor. A total of 11 respondents involved are a coordinator for each district in the state of Johor. The element of the construct was explored. The results of the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis methods. Each element obtained through the thematic analysis was included as a dimension.

FINDINGS

Through the coding process, the experience element results from six statements, namely teaching not in PPKI and headmasters not in PPKI (open coding), which forms the management of PPKI (axial coding), teaching MBK and managing people with disabilities (OKU) (open coding) form the management of MBK (axial coding), as well as never attended any courses related to special education and the background of non -special education services (open coding) that form the management of special education (axial coding). The three statements on the axial coding, are summarized as elements of experience in the selective coding process as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Thematic Analysis Process For Experience Elements

<i>Open Coding</i>	<i>Axial Coding</i>	<i>Selective Coding</i>
Teaching is not at PPKI	PPKI	Experience
The professor is not at PPKI		
Teaching MBK	MBK	
Managing the disabled		
Never attended any special education courses	Special Education	
Background of non -special education services		

A summary of the interview excerpts related to this element of experience is as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Elements of Experience Agreed by Respondents

Element	Respondent	Interview Excerpts
Experience	RT1	Yes. He used to go to a normal school. Ordinary school principal used to be. In terms of that experience, out of coat. Where there is. He will see all sorts of calm je kt ppki ni.

	RT2	He is not from a special education stream. Before this, he was a BPK in a school that did not have a PPKI. He never handled PPKI.
	RT4	But you are there. These teachers have no experience. Just like a great teacher.
	RT5	Administration, especially head teachers who have no special education background, less knowledge, less experience. So, the headmaster will share the assignment. I don't care about anything else.
	RT6	Like I mentioned. If the headmaster also felt or ever felt great, tired of teaching and even nursing at PPKI, I think he would understand enough.
	RT8	The headmaster of this school is pure from the prime. Decades in the mainstream. Do not fully know how PPKI operates. No experience and knowledge.
	RT10	So, if the headmaster knows, has knowledge about PPKI, has experience, he will probably channel the task to whoever he should be.
	RT11	Moreover, they have no experience in handling MBK formally and may even have no experience in dealing with the disabled outside of working hours.

DISCUSSION

Details of the results of the analysis also show that eight out of 11 respondents think that the experience of head teachers is an important element in the leadership construct of head teachers that influence the workload and job satisfaction of PPKI teachers. As stated by respondents RT1, RT2, RT4, RT5 and RT8, the experience of headmasters related to special education is very important in understanding the situation of MBK, PPKI and the duties of PPKI teachers. Headmasters who do not have experience related to special education or PPKI, see all teachers are the same and all students also have the same needs and management methods. In fact, there are also inexperienced head teachers who will describe MBK as dangerous and PPKI teachers as not teaching. Lack of experience or no experience at all related to special education will make headmasters inaccurate in assigning assignments to teachers. This situation causes a workload for PPKI teachers.

For the respondents of RT6, RT10 and RT11, the experience of being with MBK or handling MBK formally or does not allow the headmaster to at least understand the reality that occurs in PPKI as well as the heavy tasks borne by PPKI teachers. By seeing for themselves the movement of MBK, MBK category, MBK behavior, MBK class situation and PPKI management, headmasters will have an awareness of how important it is for these teachers to give full attention to MBK.

CONCLUSION

The analysis found that young, inexperienced and inexperienced head teachers with no special education knowledge led with low -achieving leadership, while older, more experienced and knowledgeable head teachers of special education practiced high -performing leadership. At the end of the study, the researchers suggested that head teachers gain sufficient experience and knowledge in leading schools that have special education programs. This study explains that sufficient knowledge related to special education is very necessary for headmasters in choosing leadership practices in PPKI.

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