LEADERSHIP EXISTING PRACTICES, MONITORING, SUPERVISION AND INNOVATION IN SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

The Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) was formulated to provide a comprehensive developmental framework that can transform the education system in a quick and sustainable manner. The Malaysian education system provides Malaysians with necessary knowledge and skills to spur economic growth and prosperity of the country. The aspirations mentioned in the Blueprint are designed to deliver a continuous, fast and comprehensive transformation, in line with the improved capacity and capability of the system. There are eleven shifts to be implemented to produce the desired changes. One of the shifts is strengthening the school leaders by developing their competencies in order to have a high performing principal or headmaster. They need to equip themselves with knowledge and skills to face challenges internally and at the external level specially to foster the human capital.

UNESCO recognized our planning is high quality yet findings University Malaya (2011), shows that that is a discrepancy along the line of implementations since 1957. It should be noted that efforts to transform the organization urgently requires a credible leader who is capable of driving the implementation portion of the transformational process, and who could win the trust and support of the stakeholders. Good leaders are essential to ensure the success of any changes in the organization. In order to transform, we need a capable and creditable leader as a driver to ensure the success

Leadership Practices and Innovation

The objective of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia (MoE) is to ensure that every school at all levels is led by an effective principal. The MoE will also broaden the scope of the leadership to include the middle managers, such as senior assistants, heads of department and subject panel heads. The quality of leadership besides

teachers determines the success of the students. Therefore, MOE has made compulsory to all new principals to go through National Professional Qualification in Education Leaders (NPQEL) course before being nominated in 2014. This will reveal more effective school leaders. International research shows that excellent school leaders who practise instructional leadership technique contribute 20 percent to the success of students.

Professional principals must be an expert in his field. He needs to develop professional qualities such as proficiency, competence, commitment, dedication, and even altruism. Principals must work with enthusiasm, earnest dedication and be willing to make sacrifices in order to attain their objectives with full responsibility. They need to improve their knowledge and upgrade their skills in order to keep up with current changes and demands rather than being static and become obsolete and pursue nothing.

Leadership usually refers to the ability to influence one's followers to perform a task in order to achieve upon agreed objectives. Therefore, a principal should have wisdom and take into account differing values, views, ideas, opinions and abilities when dealing with teachers and students.

Personal leadership refers to the noble values which define the character of a leader All civil servants including principal and teachers must practice the principles of clean, efficient and trustworthy governance. Principals must portray good character as they are role models for teachers and students besides gaining respect from the community nearby. Some of the crucial values are wise in making decisions and problem solving, carrying out the tasks entrusted to them, fair and carry out things they promise. Furthermore, they have the courage to take risk and challenges with patience. Principals are also responsible to deliver a clear and precise message with effective communication skill and good networking with all teachers, students, parents and stakeholders.

    i.   Wisdom: Principals must be wise in making decisions, solving problems, planning and organizing school programs and activities. They should be judicious in choosing the best methods and approaches in developing the school. When presenting ideas and views, wisdom, wit and ingenuity must prevail. Besides this, principals must try to develop the wisdom of teachers and students in their school as well.

   ii.   Trustworthy: Principals must carry out the tasks entrusted to them. It is their duty to take good care of the teachers, supporting staff, students and school property. The career development of the teachers and the students' future are to be their main concern and priority.

  iii.   Truthfulness: Truthfulness must be valued by principals in every circumstance in order to gain the trust of everyone. Thus, they must be fair and carry out their duties with through consideration. As people who represent and defend the truth in every situation and action, they must be exemplary role models. Delivering on their words and promises are the hallmark of real principals. Making false promises, or lying even once in a while, will undermine the trust and confidence of teachers, students and support staff. As a consequence, this will ruin the principal's credibility as a leader.

  iv.   Deliverology: In order to deliver a clear and precise message, principals must have effective communicational skills and build good relationships. Effective communicational and networking will ensure harmony and understanding amongst the school community. Principals must explain their school vision, mission and thinking strategies with clarity, so that it is accepted by all the teachers, students, parents and stakeholders.

   v.   Courage: As every action and decision certainly has its intrinsic risk, principals must have courage in carrying out their duties. Risks, challenges and obstacles which jeopardize the success of the school must be faced with courage, for the benefit of teachers, support staff and students. Courage here does not refer to reckless actions that could completely destroy the values mentioned above, but wisdom grounded in courage, honesty and truth, which should be exercised prudently and judiciously.

  vi.   Patience: Principals must perform their duties with the utmost patience, especially when confronted with the whims and vagaries of people under their leadership. School leadership and management must be carried out with patience, because the school consists of layered structures. This refers to stakeholders, teachers, students, supporting staff and parents, all with differing needs and interests.

By practising wisdom, principals will, over time, be able to be more influential not only in the school but also in the larger community. Good character is the essence of good leadership as it highlights the principal's personality and supports his personal leadership capacity. Consequently, this will help him focus on values and educational outcomes, develop interpersonal skills and implement changes for the betterment and progress of the school. Principals are important role models in school for teachers, support staff, students and the community and should be "leading by example".

Effective leadership and moral influence can be developed as follows:
    i.   The Principal must always be ethical.
   ii.   He should model positive personal traits in terms of initiatives, ideas and leadership.

   iii. He must praise, show compassion, understanding, and trust towards teachers, support staff and students and thus encourage them.

   iv. He must initiate genial working relationships and mutual cooperation. Principals should be concerned and compassionate with regard to their subordinates.

Professional Leadership

As professional leaders, principals must develop their knowledge and skills related to the profession referring to the theories and models of educational leadership. A competent principal must master the theories of leadership as these theories are of utmost importance to the leaders, as the function of theories is to provide a rational explanation of an issue, provide the expected outcomes of regular practices, provide a research framework, generate new knowledge, and provide a guide for actions. There are an assortment of leadership theories that principals can refer to for knowledge and guidance. Among the selected theories of leadership that must be mastered and applied by school principals are:

1. Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership refers to the ability of leaders to develop followership by empowering them to achieve the organizational goals. The priority of the leaders is to change and transform the attitudes and behaviour of their followers through their own performances. This results in the follower demonstrating confidence, loyalty, admiration and respect for their leaders.

The three ways in which a leader can transform his followers are by increasing awareness of the importance of their role and the necessity to understand good values, appealing to them to place organizational goals above personal interests, motivating them with passion, and a desire to achieve results. The principal who uses this theory and approach can achieve these three basic goals:

   i. Assist teachers and support staff to collaboratively and professionally improve and maintain an excellent school culture.

   ii. Encourage teachers in their careers and in the pursuit of knowledge.

   iii. Help teachers solve problems effectively.

Consequently, philosophies, values and leadership styles can be linked with the needs of religion, society and the nation. To achieve this, the principal must integrate the following ideals in their leadership tasks; (i) be energetic and implement the required transformation; (ii) inspire, improve performance and reputations; (iii) be courageous in facing challenges; (iv) identify suitable and competent teachers to tackle demanding tasks; (v) focus on tasks that will produce the maximum impact and (vi) be resilient.

2. Situational Leadership Theory

According to this theory, effective leadership is something that is neither obvious, nor always manifested in the same form. On the other hand, this theory is dependent on several factors like as the interdependence, interrelatedness and interactions between human beings and their environment.

In schools, Principals must first evaluate their teachers, support staff and students, all of whom are from diverse backgrounds and have different values. Leading experienced teachers who have taught for decades would definitely differ from leading novices, or teachers with just a few years of teaching experience. Their maturity levels can vary. Hence, the principal would need wisdom, be astute in assessing the level of ability, maturity and motivation of the teachers to enable him to effectively employ the appropriate leadership style. Similarly, leading the support staff and students of different age groups requires wisdom.

The following leadership styles may be used as a guide by the principals:

   i. Directing: Provide specific instructions and supervise novice teachers closely.

   ii. Coaching: Principals may either advise or ask for suggestions from the teachers. At the same time, principals may explain to the teachers how to perform these tasks. This method can be used for experienced teachers. Although these teachers might demonstrate good skills and seem confident, they might still need further guidance.

   iii. Supporting: Decisions are made together, and the principal must offer his full support to the teacher during the implementation stage. This style is effective with creative teachers. Creative ideas from these teachers are given due consideration, with the principals providing support later.

   iv. Delegating: The principal empowers the teachers to perform certain tasks. This style is effective for experienced teachers; those who have the requisite ability, capacity, and creativity to work independently.

Organisational Leadership

Initially, the letter of appointment as the principal is due to the authorization as an administrator or representative of the government. Subsequently, the principal has to develop himself from a mere administrator to a true leader. Therefore, he needs to influence his subordinates subtly so that they could engage voluntarily. Only then, a shared vision and mission be realized. In order to exert the right influence on his subordinates, the practice of all the attributes mentioned above is a necessity. In the context of organizational leadership in schools, it is vital that the principal blends and maximises all available resources to achieve specific objectives. To ensure the success and effectiveness of the school, the principal must focus on consolidation or unity in school, so that all understand the vision and strategy

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that has been developed, developing teamwork in the organization, involving all members of the school community so that they can contribute to the success of their school. Their commitment and active involvement as team players is crucial towards the school's achievement, Internalisation of policies, programmes and activities is imperative for all teachers, supporting staff and students so that they are more focused in the deliberation of the assigned tasks, fostering good values and excellent work culture in his school. Highlighting best practices will enable to prosper new culture in schools. Then, school ethos and culture can be developed.

Diagram 1: Dimensions of Leadership: Personal, Professional and Organisational Leadership
Resource: Sustaining Towering Leadership: the Fellow Kanan, Institut Aminuddin Baki, 2015

Diagram 1 shows the integrated dimensions of a principal's Personal Leadership, Professional Leadership and Organizational Leadership. Personal Leadership emphasizes character building and the key qualities of an individual. Professional Leadership emphasises on professional knowledge, skills and confidence. People, technical and structural elements as well as systems are incorporated in Organizational Leadership. The integration of these three dimensions enable the principal to exercise his influence in order to lead the teachers and optimise all the available resources to achieve the mission and vision of the school, and thereby attain the aspirations of the country.

Monitoring and supervision

1. Capacity Building

Capacity building provides opportunities for the members of an organization to work together in new ways. Collegiality is the core of capacity building. One of the

reasons why schools fail is the absence of a professional community, intellectual discourse and shared beliefs. In successful schools, there is a climate of collaboration and shared commitment in doing work. This climate is created via discussions and dialogues amongst organizational members. Moreover, teachers actively play a significant role in the pursuit of knowledge and learning, collectively creating a learning community. Teachers' learning is as important as the pupils' learning.

Indeed, capacity building involves building relationships, trust and the community. Capacity building ensures a self-development force, generated through progress and changes in the school and classrooms. Therefore, schools need to build their internal capacity to manage change and stay ahead. This situation is consistent with the findings from Hopkins et al., 1996 (in Harris, 2002) on internal school improvement. According to their research, school improvement is dependent on these assumptions; (i) the capacity to make improvements; (ii) involves cultural change; (iii) conducive classroom; (iv) greater capacity building in order to facilitate change.

Harris and Lambert (2003) pointed out that if school improvement is dependent on only one person, a few people or on external directives, then change will not occur. Over-dependence on a strong leader or seeking alternative authorities as a source of directives and guidelines will lead to failure. Therefore, Harris and Lambert recommended that principals must develop and foster the leadership capacity of their teachers. As a result, teachers will be able to contribute to the improvement and progress of their schools.

Among the assumptions that underlie leadership capacity building of teachers and students are that:

i. Everyone has the right, responsibility and ability to lead.
ii. The adult learning environment in school is an important factor in refining the teachers' leadership.
iii. In the adult learning environment, opportunities for involvement and skills should be a priority.
iv. The way one defines leadership will determine the level of one's involvement in the school.
v. Teachers should be committed and professional, and hence make leadership an important aspect of their professional lives.
vi. Teachers should be determined, and through their leadership, realize the objectives of the school.

Therefore, capacity building must reflect the level of the development, skill and ability to manage and facilitate productive change at the school level. Hence, for leaders, capacity building is suitable to drive progress, changes and school improvement.

To increase the capacity of schools to meet current challenges and changes, especially with regards to the capacity building of the teachers, students and even parents, the principal needs to consider these factors; (i) building relationships, (ii) building trust, (iii) building a community, and (iv) building a learning organisation. When all of these four factors intermingle, the school may then attain high capacity. An active involvement of principals, teachers, parents, and students can contribute to continuous school improvement.

In conclusion, leadership capacity building encompasses wider involvement and skilful management by all members of the school community. Both the leadership capacity enhancement and progress of schools must occur continuously and sustainably. As such, Principals need to shape teachers' leadership skills and raise their capacity in order to sustain progress. Harris and Lambert (2003), noted that schools with high levels of capacity exhibit the following characteristics:

a. Sharing the vision of producing sustainable school programs.
b. Making decisions and taking actions based on informed judgment and research.
c. Raising the bar of the student achievement consistently and continuously.
d. Student achievement is high and increases both consistently and continuously.
e. Involving broad-based and experienced leadership.

2. Nurture High Culture

Developing the culture includes not only the teachers, but also the support staffs and students. Key elements in implementing high culture are:

a. Excellent work culture amongst teachers. Teachers need to appreciate and practice Total Quality Management (TQM), universal values and high standards at all times.
Then, these practices are aligned with the principal's effort and exemplify a good role model.

b. Excellent work culture of the support staff. All support staff must understand the importance of excellent work culture in order to contribute to the school's progress.
c. Excellent learning culture of students in the hostels and at school. Students must be trained in self-management and equip themselves with learning skills through an execution of a quality and well-planned set of activities, that is scheduled for them.
d. Quality learning culture in the classroom. In order to optimize benefits, students must be trained in listening skills, focusing, taking notes and systematically preparing as well as revising school work.

e. Nurturing a moral culture and good character. Promoting a healthy lifestyle, developing character as well as cultivating generic and soft skills, prepares students for their future careers and a challenging life ahead.

3. Expected Result

Emphasising on high culture among teachers, support staff and students, we expects to produce students who will: (i) become leaders, while acknowledging that future progress and success of the country is their responsibility; (ii) have the wisdom, intelligence, talent and knowledge to address future challenges; (iii) be aware of the importance of one's health and safety, and therefore, maintain their physical fitness by participating in sports and games. The countries and organisations are in dire need of citizens and leaders who are spiritual, intelligent and healthy so that they can make a difference by making significant contributions to the nation and the organisations they lead; (iv) be courteous, polite and humble as this is an important communicational skill in managing and leading the country and organisations ; (v) be God-fearing and faithful as spiritual knowledge helps students overcome the challenges and threats that may affect national and organizational progress ; (vi) be holistic, that is, possess suitable generic soft skills of a good citizenry as a pre- requisite on becoming effective organisational leaders.

Principals are the key players who shape the climate, set the tone and the impetus for a successful school. Ethical principles of fine character will be perceived as persons of integrity and honesty; respected and admired by all. They must lead schools in a professional manner, utilizing all available resources to effectively contribute towards a successful organization. Nevertheless, principals are unable to lead schools single-handedly. Hence, the support and the motivation of the teachers, support staff, students, parents and other stakeholders is necessary for progress and school improvement. Therefore, principals are required to develop the leadership capacity of all members of the school community in order to achieve a high level of performance. To achieve this objective, all individuals concerned must work together as a strong, high performing team, with excellent work culture. As an outcome of this, the school will then produce high quality, honourable, responsible, knowledgeable and skilled students, consistent with the aspirations of the government in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013 -2025).

Goal and Operational Plans

Personel leadership, profesional leadership and organizational leadership should be blend together to build the capacity and nurture high culture in school. Empowering school leaders with excellent school leadership competencies will able them to analyse, diagnose, plan, implement and evaluate to produce intervention as shown in the diagram below.
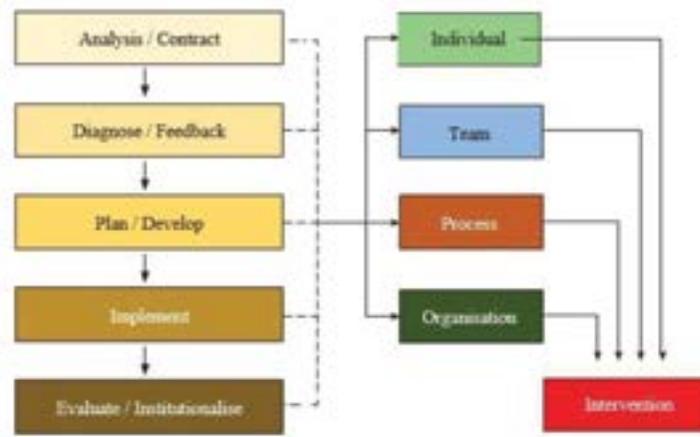
Diagram 2: Organisational Development Model (IAB, 2012)

PRACTICES AND INNOVATION

Case Study 1: Vandalism

The Challenge

1. The last day of the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination has a unique and distinctive meaning to the candidates. The feeling of 'freedom' from the stress and routine of schooling has prompted them to behave aggressively and eventually vandalizing the school property. The intensity of this misconduct increases significantly on the last day of SPM.

2. The consequences of this behaviour vary. Violators are exposed to safety risks especially when performing destructive behaviours that are harmful such as using firecrackers and punching the glass panel. The fear of getting caught also increases the violator's safety risk. The school becomes the 'victim' who we have to spend a huge amount of money to repair the damages. In the year 2012, the school spend RM18,000.00 to repair the vandalized school property.

Creative Process Intervention

3. Objective of this intervention is to shift the focus from external control to empowerment effective internal control of the students. These activities are carried out based on experiential learning approach which is a dynamic blend of active reflection and reflective action.

Choosing a theme : The theme of school's strategic planning 2014-2016 (Tekad, 2016) is chosen. This selection aims to increase awareness, acceptance,

commitment to the school. With the hope that they will contribute to the development of the school even after completing their secondary education. In addition, the combinations of school colours are assigned: blue, red and yellow.

Forming groups : SPM 2013 candidates who are involved in this activity were divided into eight groups based on existing classes to strengthen their existing relationships and generate better competition among the groups.

Briefing : The briefing was given by the Principal. The session began with a prayer and the sharing of hope. The students were given information regarding the purpose of the activity, procedures, and safety precautions. Students were encouraged to ask questions if they need clarification.

Leading the activity : Each group is facilitated by a teacher. The facilitator is responsible to determine the smooth running of the activity. The students undergo a formative assessment and propose an improvement plan immediately. The process involved reinforcement of learning through the application of reward and punishment.

Reflecting : Facilitators reflect on the emotional content of the discussion to uncover the thoughts and/or emotions of the students involved. Both verbal and emotional responses were considered essential. These responses were explored and shared with other students. This exploration and sharing are enhanced through another point of view (reframing).

Conclusion : At the end of this activity, all participants seems to be better prepared, gain better understanding and acceptance of Tekad 2016. 'Iqra' is the keyword which was mutually agreed in this activity.

Reinforcing : Information and updates regarding the event are distributed to all stakeholders through group emails, sms, WhatsApp, Telegram, etc. It is essential to get feedback for continuous improvement.

Impact

4. Overall, these activities have accomplished the objectives and provide a long term impact on the students involved.

Greater involvement : This activity has attracted active participation from various groups of students, teachers and staffs. As a result from their active participation, their awareness, understanding, and commitment towards the Tekad 2016 have also increased.

Returns cost per unit : These activities involved more participants with less cost in a shorter time span. These activities also provided high flexibility for all participants. Any participants who are unable to participate from the beginning can still comprehend and enjoy these objectives since the beginning of the activity carried out.

Reduce the cost of maintenance : There is a significant reduction in the cost of maintenance caused by the destructive behaviour of the SPM 2013 candidates compared to the cost of repair which had to be spent as a result of the same behaviour emulated by the SPM 2012 candidates.

Students' support : Almost all SPM 2013 candidates have actively participated in this activity. However at an early stage (during briefings), some of them were not convinced by the seriousness of the principal in conducting the intended activity. Some also expressed satisfaction and relieve through these activities.

Teachers' support : Teachers had a positive perspective towards the activity. They trusted the management team who conducted this activity. They also argued that it is not wrong to try out the activity even though it is something new.

Community support : Many of the school community members came to see the graffiti produced and associated themselves with this graffiti through photography. Some even expressed understanding of the philosophies behind the implementation of these activities.

Room for improvement : However there was little resistance from some individuals. They expressed discomfort with the decision of the management team to carry out this activity.

The Conclusions and Recommendations

5. The implementation of this activity was very successful. This conclusion was based on the active involvement among the participants from various age groups and backgrounds. At the same time, this activity was carried out in a short time with minimum cost but still provided an excellent impact. The spontaneity, humor and creativity shared among the participants were the success criteria of this activity

    However generalizations and applications of this activity should be done cautiously. The differences of school background and dynamics must be first understood and taken into account before conducting this activity.

Photo 1: Briefing the participants

Photo 2: Leading and reflecting the activities

Photo 3: Leading and reflecting the activities

Photo 4: Conclusion

Photo 5: Reinforcing

Case Study 2 : Computer Lab

The Challenge

1. After 10 years, all equipment under Computerization Project Phase 2 (2005) is out-dated. De™sktops are no longer updated and should be disposed. LCD projector became dim. Screen is covered by fungi. Tables made of fibre board have been decaying and collapsed. The air conditioning is no longer functioning. More and more electrical and network cables became malfunction.
2. SchoolNet has been replaced with 1BestariNet Project. The school has received 41 units of chrome books under this project. The teachers are challenged to manage the process of teaching and learning without tables, chairs, and projector. Students have to sit on the floor. They feel uncomfortable.
3. In recent years, the school has yet to receive any allocation for repair work and replacement for disposed equipment. Existing allocation is just enough to pay for utilities and household. The management team required to revolutionize the existing equipment to be appeared as good as fresh equipment.

Creative Process Intervention

4. Emphasis is given to the empowerment of thinking and the power of collective action and cumulatively revolutionizes the use of existing resources to new methods and forms which can fulfil the customer needs.

Choosing a theme: The theme of 'Bushido' as 'unified factor' on the grounds of racial diversity that characterizes the environment in the school. The seven core values have been identified
*   Quality (Hinshitsu)
*   Achievement (Seika)
*   Innovation (Kakushin)
*   Teamwork (Gun)
*   Speed (Jisoku)
*   Caring (Dekiai)
*   Honest (Shojiki)

Leading : The existing equipment was readjusted in a new and different way to get a better climate.

*   *LCD Projector* : readjusted and mounted on the ceiling. This projector is installed at the middle of the room to increase students' engagement.

*   *The screen* : The existing screen was uninstalled and disposed. The projector mounted on the ceiling emitting presentation slide into the wall in a larger size.

*   *Soft board* : The existing wood frame soft board mounted in landscape is changed to the portrait. The print out information printed is put on display independently on the soft board.

*   *Curtains* : The existing 6 ft x 8 ft curtains were modified to 2 ft x 10 ft and hung on the ceiling. This gives the impression of privacy.

*   *Iron grille*: The grille was used as an exhibition venue which affects more casual users 'SOHO'.

*   *Tables* : Replaced with side table 24 in x 12-in from the board layer 4 mm and fixed to the wall using angle iron 8 in each unit 'SOHO'.

*   *Chairs* : Chairs are available and reuse with a low side table set 2 mounted on the floor.

Leading : The work of renovation undertaken by the management team with the help of support staff during the mid-semester 1 break, 2015.

Reflecting : Reflection is carried out as often as possible. It's important to nourish a healthy work climate so that feedback can be given with sincere genuine and freely accepted immediately for continuous improvement.

Reinforcing : Information about any events is distributed to all stakeholders via emails, SMS, WhatsApps, Telegram, etc. It's important to get feedback for continuous improvement.

Impact

5. These activities have accomplished the objectives and also provide extensive impact in the long term.

Greater involvement : The involvement of the school community in this project is over and the time limits set. In addition to administrators, teachers and students, and workers cleaning AKP have also felt compelled to get involved.

Extensive Support : This project was well accepted by the school community and the stakeholders. They expressed their support and their 'admiration' to the work processes and results of the project. In the long term, this project also contributes to the acceptance and support for other projects such as the Frog Classroom and Smart Cafe.

Room for improvement : Koperasi SMK Tanjung Sepat Bhd. has produced a strong brand based 'Way of the Warrior'. The main products are Leadership Training Modules, Organizations Development Training Modules and shirts.

The conclusions and recommendations

6. The implementation of these activities is very successful. The project has been able to revolutionize the use of existing computer lab equipment that has been worn out. A more stimulating working climate can be built and nurtured during the working process. Teaching and learning climate has also become more favourable after the completion of a Chrome Lab.

Photo 6: Softboard

Photo 7: Small Office Home Office (Soho)

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Photo 8: Side tables

Photo 9: Iron grille

Photo 10: T&L session

CONCLUSION

To be an effective principal who exerts great impact on the school, he must possess strategic and creative thinking, focus on getting the best out of his teachers, and encourage staff under his leadership. The principal and his staff need to understand the bigger picture and learn how to pool their efforts and resources together. These are the clues to being a great, efficient and excellent principal. Overall, principal focussed strategic leadership includes people, planning, process and performance. Base on the two cases on vandalism and computer lab in school, the school leader was able to use the available resources with creative thinking to overcome problems arises in his school.

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