

Quality Monitoring of the Strategic Leadership Styles for Malaysian National Primary School (NPS) Heads Involved in the School Improvement Programme (SIP).

1.0 Introduction

School improvement means making schools better places for learning. This relies on changes at both school level and within classrooms, which in turn depend on schools being committed to fulfilling the expectations of children, parents and other stakeholders. In other words, school improvement refers to a systematic approach that improves the quality of schools.

In the international research field of school improvement, Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994), Stoll and Fink (1996) and Harris (1999), emphasized that the characteristics of school improvement efforts have been widely documented and disputed. Successive studies have clearly shown that purposeful leadership, teacher collaboration and central focus on learning outcomes are the factors that support positive school change (Fullan, 1993). There are however, relatively few detailed studies of successful school improvement programmes (SIP) in action and even fewer studies of the same nature.

2.0 Overview of SIP for NPS in Malaysia

As a centralized governance system and as one of the largest and most vibrant ministry, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOEM) needs to develop and enhance quality monitoring of educational

improvement programmes for the benefit of the schools and pupils. Although there are several instruments and means to monitor such programmes, there are no specific and reliable instruments or means to measure the status of the implementation of the SIP particularly in terms of Strategic Leadership Styles of School Heads.

As at June 2005, there are 5,761 National Primary Schools (NPS) (accommodating approximately 2.4 million pupils) in Malaysia. As a NPS, each individual school is expected to be successful in attracting different races and ethnic groups into their schools, however this target has not been achieved. Hence, the government's goals to employ the NPS as a platform for national unity effort will obviously not be successful if some effective measures are not introduced. As the government still relies on the NPS unity platform strategy, the SIP becomes a major focus in the MOEM's Educational Development Master Plan (2006-2010). The said plan is one of the several plans (involving other ministries) that is aligned with the Ninth Malaysia Development Plan (2006-2010).

Institut Aminuddin Baki (IAB) as one of the MOEM's key policy implementers, particularly in the area of Educational Management and Leadership (EML), contributes significantly in its capacity as a training and consultancy institution for NPS and similar educational setups. As early as 2005, MOEM had selected 350 NPS for the SIP. First, 350 school heads (principals) were given five days of SIP training at IAB in the middle of 2005. Within a period of two months they were required to prepare their school's strategic plan (2006-2010). At the beginning of 2006, all 350 schools were supposed to manage and fully implement their strategic plans as well as practise their strategic leadership skills. This was the best time for MOEM to monitor the Strategic Leadership Style of NPS Heads particularly for those who are involved with SIP.

The main objective of SIP is to enable the Malaysian educational system to nurture and produce strong, excellent and high performing schools particularly among the NPS. MOEM's Educational Development Master Plan (2006-2010) consists of eleven characteristics for these high performing NPS and these are:

- (i). possess highly trained and quality leaders and teachers,
- (ii). able to provide and implement customer oriented curriculum,
- (iii). able to provide and implement effective co-curricular activities,
- (iv). achieve excellent student moral and personality achievement,
- (v). practice internalization of national aspiration,
- (vi). achieve zero illiteracy,
- (vii). exhibit healthy school culture and climate,
- (viii). possess adequate and strong support system,
- (ix). attain excellent academic achievement,
- (x). able to provide Chinese and Tamil subjects as part of the curriculum,
- (xi). possess excellent and high quality infrastructures.

3.0 Research objectives

The quality monitoring for Strategic Leadership Style of Malaysian National Primary School (NPS) Heads, particularly those who are

involved in the SIP, can be effectively and efficiently done through three research objectives as follows:

- (i) To examine the status of the followership styles among the followers (senior management team members) in the NPS involved in the SIP.
- (ii) To examine the status of the strategic leadership styles among the heads of the NPS involved in the SIP.
- (iii) To examine the effect of the followership styles of the followers (senior management team members) on the strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads involved in the SIP.

In general, the objectives of the above study can be determined through the conceptual model of the study, as in Figure 1 below. The assumption made is that the exogenous variable (followership styles) has its effect on the endogenous variable as represented by the strategic leadership styles. The conceptual model is a recursive one as there is no feedback loops (Arbuckle & Wothke, 2006).

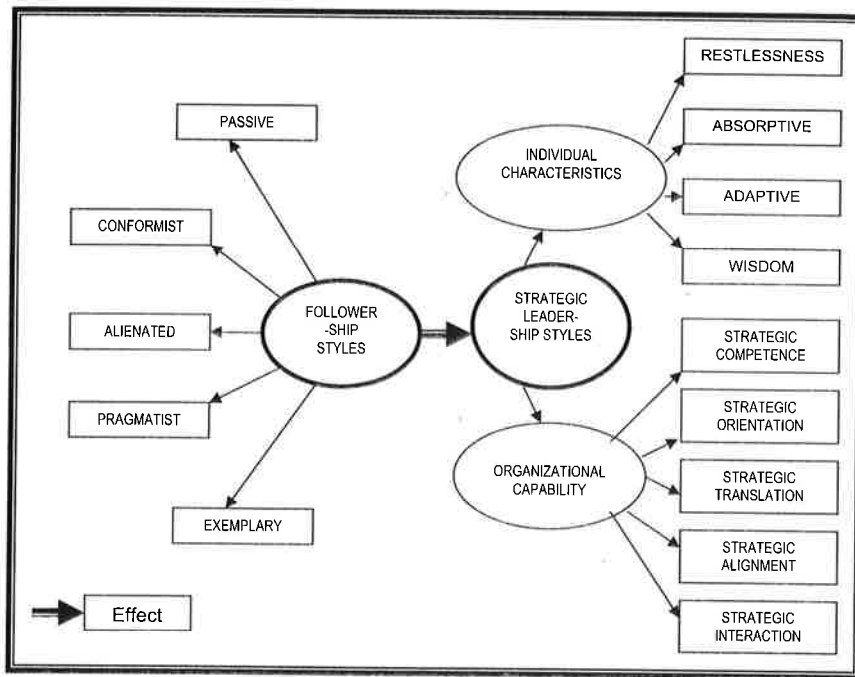


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the study

4.0 Understanding followers and followership

Followers and leaders complement each other (Townsend & Gebhardt, 1997) and both have been in existence for 2,500 years (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). Only in 1988, Robert E. Kelly came up with groundbreaking findings on the existence and importance of followers (Frisina, 2005). In 1995, Ira Chaleff came out with '*The Courageous Follower*'. Kelly (1992 & 1997) claimed that many people would be in followership roles more times than they are in leadership roles as well as no one begins as a leader (Townsend & Gebhardt, 1997). Thus, it is important to recognize the power the followers have and the powers they grant to the leaders. Followers

may choose whom (leaders) they wish to follow by means of analyzing, making a judgement and taking some risks on whether or not to follow the leader or leave.

Kelly (1992 & 1997) defined followers as a group of people who know what to do without being told, who act with intelligence, independence, courage and strong sense of ethics and who take appropriate actions with great skills and achievement. In addition, Chaleff (1995) described a follower as one who shares a common purpose with the leader, believes in what the organization is trying to accomplish, and wants both the leader and the organization to succeed. Dixon (2003) remarked that followers engage body, mind, soul and spirit in the commonly held purpose and vision of the organization. Both Chaleff (1995) and Dixon (2003) agreed that a follower is not synonymous with subordinate and being a follower is a condition, not a position.

The literature identifies the presence of three paradigms that attempt to categorically separate followers amongst themselves. Townsend (1999) described two different types of followers such as active and passive followership. Active followership category is where the relationships between a leader and a follower ensure understanding and success. In other words, the active follower takes an active role in his or her relationship with the leader. Passive followership as recognized by Townsend (1999) reinforces the negative stereotype of the followers who portray "sheep-like" characteristics.

Chaleff (1995) valued courage in comparison to mute category of followership. A mute follower is one without the courage or skill to stand up against their leader in terms of constructive criticism, or outright defiance when the leader is in the wrong (Brown, 1995).

Thus, the exemplary follower in this case is the courageous follower.

Kelly (1992 & 1997) categorized the followers into five different groups or styles such as alienated (alien), conformist (yes people), pragmatist (survivor), passive (sheep) and the exemplary. The two important factors that determine the followers' categories are based on two-dimensional taxonomy that comprises "independent and critical thinking versus dependent and uncritical thinking" and "active versus passive engagement". Kelly emphasized that an alienated follower is one who is independent and is a critical thinker but lacking in engagement due to a sense of "disgruntled acquiesce" (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). This is due to the feeling of frustration with the leader or the organization. As a comparison, Brown and Thornborrow (1996) described alienated followers as critical and independent in their thinking but passive in the conduct of their role. They also mentioned that these "switched off" followers are often cynical and seldom openly opposing leader's effort.

A conformist follower is the opposite of the alienated follower who is very active in their organization but lacking in independent and critical thinking skills (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). These individuals ('yes' people) are said to be livelier than the passive followers (sheep) but equally unenterprising, and completely dependent on a leader for inspiration. Brown and Thornborrow (1996) described, the 'yes' people can be aggressively deferential, and possibly servile.

A pragmatist follower is one who straddles "the middle of the road", neither question their leader too much nor too little (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). The followers who are survivors live by the slogan "better safe than sorry" and are skilful at surviving change (Brown &

Thornborrow, 1996). They are also known as organizational “fence-sitters” and adapt to new situations in a chameleon-like manner.

A passive follower is one who neither thinks for him or herself nor is an active part of the organization (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). Brown and Thornborrow (1996) described “‘sheep’ as passive, uncritical, lack initiative and sense of responsibility. At their best, they are able to perform the tasks assigned to them.

Finally, an exemplary follower, the opposite of a passive follower is a constant critical thinker and is actively engaged in his or her organization (Kelly, 1992 & 1997). Brown and Thornborrow (1996) on the other hand described that exemplary or effective followers have the ability to think for themselves and conduct their duties with energy and assertiveness. They are often risk-takers and self-starters who can independently solve problems and are frequently awarded consistently high ratings by their leaders.

With respect to Malaysia’s NPS, the followers comprise all school head deputies (senior management team), teachers and support staff. One of the objectives of the study is to examine the status of the followership styles in the NPS involved in the SIP. The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

H 1 There are five categories of followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia.

H 1.1 Part of the followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia is from the alienated category.

H 1.2 Part of the followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia is from the conformist category.

H 1.3 Part of the followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia is from the pragmatist category.

H 1.4 Part of the followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia is from the passive category.

H 1.5 Part of the followers in NPS for the SIP in Malaysia is from the exemplary category.

5.0 Understanding strategic leadership.

Leadership is the process of guiding and directing the behavior of people in the work environment. In contrast, followership is the process of being guided and directed by a leader in the work environment. Kelly's research shows that followers are said to be an important force behind organizational productivity. The importance of followers as cited by Kelly (1997) is that on the average leaders contribute no more than 20% to the success of most organizations compared to followers who contribute the remaining 80%. Kelly repeatedly stressed that organizations cannot have a leader without a follower, and good followers eventually make good leaders.

Chaleff as cited by Brown (1995) stated that the leader and the follower in a healthy organization individually and collectively recognize and serve a common purpose. Lundin (1990) also stressed that a leader cannot be successful unless they are able to establish a base of loyal, capable and knowledgeable followers. Kelly (1992) argued that because of the intensity of the leadership focus, the importance of the followers had been entirely overlooked.

Most literature agrees that the mark of a great follower is the growth of leaders and it is the job of the leaders to grow the followers. In return, it is the job of the followers to grow the organization. Clement and Wash (1990) supported that the failure to acknowledge the role of the followers and to examine the relationship of leader-follower dynamics can alter efforts to understand the influence processes. Therefore, this study will provide a balance of both sides and will determine the relationship between the followership and strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads in implementing the SIP.

Researchers in the fields of school effectiveness and school improvement have consistently reinforced the importance of leadership as a major level for change, development and improvement, and in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching (Harris, 2004). Harris again emphasized the need to raise the standards and to improve the outcomes of schooling. This has increased the pressure on school heads to secure, sustain and demonstrate school improvement. This inevitably extended the changing roles of the school heads (Cranston, 2000) and those serving in other key leadership positions (Kouzes & Posner, 2003) within the school.

The quality of strategic leadership in the school is the central activity that facilitates and drives the strategic cycle of a strategically focused school (Davies, 2004; Davies & Davies, 2004). If we are to support and enhance the development of strategic leadership in schools, Davies made a suggestion to build a framework of understanding of what strategic leadership might comprise. Hence, Davies had identified nine factors associated with strategic leadership styles of school heads. In his term, Davies classified these nine factors into two parts: firstly, the ability of a

school head to undertake organizational activity, and secondly, his or her individual abilities. The two groups are as follows:

- (i) Strategic leaders have the organizational capability to:
 - be strategically oriented
 - translate strategy into action
 - align people and organizations
 - determine effective strategic intervention points
 - develop strategic competencies
- (ii) Strategic leaders display individual characteristics:
 - a dissatisfaction or restlessness with the present
 - absorptive capacity
 - adaptive capacity
 - wisdom

As stated earlier, the objective of this study is to examine the status of strategic leadership styles among the school heads in the SIP. Thus, the hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H2 (a) NPS heads in the SIP in Malaysia possess five organizational abilities such as:

H2.1 (a) is strategically oriented.

H2.2 (a) translate strategy into action

H2.3 (a) align people and organizations

H2.4 (a) determine effective strategic intervention points

H2.5 (a) develop strategic competencies

H2 (b) NPS heads in the SIP in Malaysia display four individual characteristics such as:

H2.1 (b) a dissatisfaction or restlessness with the present

H2.2 (b) absorptive capacity

H2.3 (b) adaptive capacity

H2.4 (b) wisdom

As the third objective of the study is to examine the effect of followership styles on the strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads of SIP, the final hypothesis of the study is therefore:

H3 Followership styles of the followers (INDEPEND & ACTIVE) in NPS for SIP affect the strategic leadership styles (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB) of the NPS heads for SIP where:

H3.1 Independent and critical thinking dimension (INDEPEND) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP directly affects the individual characteristics dimension (INDVCHAR) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.

H3.2 Independent and critical thinking dimension (INDEPEND) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP directly affects the organizational capability dimension (ORGACAPAB) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.

- H3.3 Active engagement dimension (ACTIVE) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP directly affects the individual characteristics dimension (INDVCHAR) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.
- H3.4 Active engagement dimension (ACTIVE) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP directly affects the organizational capability dimension (ORGACAPAB) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.
- H3.5 Independent and critical thinking dimension (INDEPEND) of the followership styles of the followers of NPS for SIP indirectly affects (through active engagement, ACTIVE dimension of followership styles) the individual characteristics dimension (INDVCHAR) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.
- H3.6 Independent and critical thinking dimension (INDEPEND) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP indirectly affects (through active engagement, ACTIVE dimension of followership styles) the organizational capability dimension (ORGACAPAB) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.

- H3.7 Active engagement dimension (ACTIVE) of the followership styles of the followers in NPS for SIP indirectly affects (through individual characteristics, INDVCHAR dimension of strategic leadership styles) the organizational capability dimension (ORGACAPAB) of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP.

6.0 Research methodology

6.1 Sampling

The study used probability sampling because it provided a statistical basis that a sample should represent the target population and should also have the ability to generalize the findings of the entire population (Fink, 1995). The sampling units of the study were the schools chosen for the study while the sampling elements were all senior management teams which, comprised senior assistants/deputy heads of administration, student affairs, extra co-curricular and afternoon session supervisor. The study used a sampling frame comprising a list of 350 schools involved in SIP. Out of 350 schools, the study randomly selected 150 schools as samples (sampling units). All senior management team members of the sampling units (schools) were asked to complete the survey questionnaires. It was expected that at least 600 senior management team members (sampling elements) from these sampling units would respond to the survey questionnaires. Thus, the expected margin of error (accuracy) was at $\pm 4\%$ and confidence interval of 95% (Ferguson, 1981; Vockell & Asher, 1995). All survey instruments were mailed to and administered by the Senior Assistants/Deputy Head for Administration of the

respective schools. The completed survey instruments were returned to IAB using the enclosed envelopes.

6.2 Instrumentation

Dillman (1983) emphasized the quality of questionnaire design as an important factor for self-administered instruments. For data collection process, the study used ten (10) pages Bahasa Malaysia (National Language) survey instrument comprising 55 items. Back-translation process of the survey questionnaires confirmed the original translation (Brislin, Loner & Thorndike, 1973). The survey questionnaires comprised filtered questions (states, region, school's category, enrolment etc.), Section A (20 items on followership styles based on Kelly's), Section B (35 items on strategic leadership styles based on Davies & Davies) and additional space for respondents to provide comments and other information. The study used multiple-item measures for all constructs in the hypothesized model (Bearden & Teel, 1983; Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980). Compared to 5-point Likert scale, Churchill (2004) suggested the study to use 7-point Likert scale (where 1 = Rarely, 4 = Occasionally and 7 = Almost Always) because the samples were considered large (600 respondents).

As suggested by Bourque and Clark (1992) and Zikmund (1997), the survey instruments underwent two stages of pretests. In the first stage, two educational management experts from IAB screened the items searching for difficulties such as ambiguous items, wordings, leading questions and biases. As a result, some sections especially the directions and a few ambiguous items were corrected. For the second stage pretest, thirty (30) senior management teams from the sampling frame were selected. As expected, generally there were no problems with the responses to

the survey instruments (compared to the first stage pretest). In terms of internal consistency for the indicators, the Cronbach's Alphas were INDEPEND = 0.7939, ACTIVE = 0.8813, ORIENTAT = 0.8895, ACTION = 0.8911, CAPABILI = 0.9074, RESTLESS = 0.8658, ABSORB = 0.9040, ADAPT = 0.8238 and WISDOM = 0.9346. All Cronbach's coefficient alphas were considered acceptable and good (Sekaran, 2003 & Nunnally, 1978) because the values were between 0.7930 (which was the lowest) and 0.9346 (which was the highest).

6.3 Statistical analyses

The study employed SEM technique for statistical analyses. SEM is a multivariate technique combining aspects of multiple regression and factor analysis to estimate a series of interrelated dependence relationships simultaneously (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1995). In conjunction with SEM, the study used SPSS Analysis of Moment Structures or SPSS AMOS 7.0 (Arbuckle & Wothke, 2006). For clarity, the study exhibits a hypothesized model of the study or SEM model (Figure 2) as causal modeling, confirmatory analysis and latent variable modeling (Loehlin, 1992).

In Figure 2, the followership style (comprise INDEPEND and ACTIVE) variables are exogenous latent variables, while strategic leadership styles that comprise organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) and individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) are endogenous latent variables. The ovals represent latent variables or unobserved variables while the squares are the observed variables or indicators. SEM identifies the causal relationships between the latent variables as structural model (surrounded by dotted line boundary) while the relationships between each latent variable and its indicators/manifest variables are indicated as measurement models.

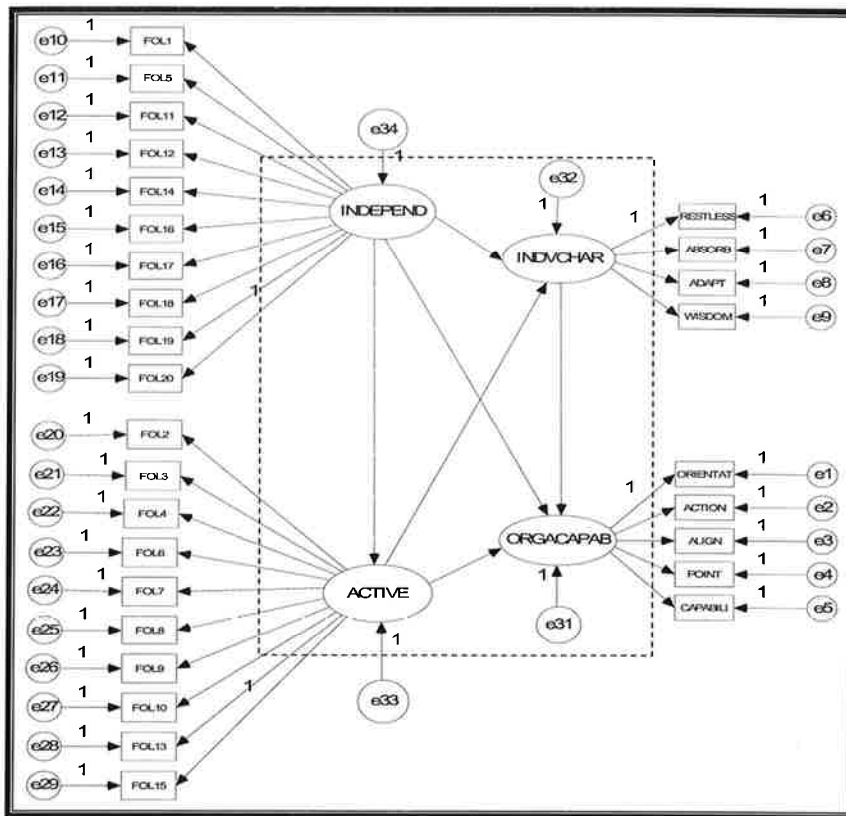


Figure 2: Hypothesized model of the study

The exogenous latent variable INDEPEND is measured by ten (10) manifest variables/indicators such as Fol 1, Fol 5, Fol 11, Fol 12, Fol 14, Fol 16, Fol 17, Fol 18, Fol 19 and Fol 20. Another exogenous latent variable ACTIVE is also measured by ten (10) manifest/indicators and they are Fol 2, Fol 3, Fol 4, Fol 6, Fol 7, Fol 8, Fol 9, Fol 10, Fol 13 and Fol 15. The score of INDEPEND (represents independent and critical thinking) and ACTIVE (represents active engagement) will enable to identify five categories of followers such as passive, conformist, alienated, pragmatist and exemplary.

Organizational capability (ORGACAPAB), as an endogenous latent variable, is measured by five manifest variables such as strategic orientation (ORIENTAT), translate strategy (ACTION), strategic alignment (ALIGN), strategic interaction (POINT) and strategic competencies (CAPABILI). Individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) as an endogenous latent variable is measured by four manifest variables such as restlessness (RESTLESS), absorptive (ABSORB), adaptive (ADAPT) and wisdom (WISDOM).

7.0 Results and analyses

7.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

As exhibited in Table 1, this study covered almost all states in Malaysia. However, only Labuan was not included because the study considered it as part of the state of Sabah when the study commenced. Out of 150 schools, 135 (90%) responded to the survey. From these 135 schools, 420 (70%) senior management team members successfully completed the survey questionnaires and mailed them to IAB. With 420 responses, the confidence interval was at 95% and the margin of error (accuracy) was $\pm 5\%$ (Ferguson, 1981; Vockell & Asher, 1995).

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents.

Nos.	Characteristics	
1	States	School Responses Senior Management Responses (%)
	Johor	7 23 (3.833)
	Kedah	9 28 (4.666)
	Kelantan	5 17 (2.833)
	Melaka	7 23 (3.833)
	N. Sembilan	3 10 (1.666)
	P.Pinang	8 24 (4.000)
	Pahang	22 62 (10.33)
	Perak	19 60 (10.00)
	Perlis	3 10 (1.666)
	Sabah	8 25 (4.166)
	Sarawak	22 67 (11.16)
	Selangor	5 19 (3.166)
	Terengganu	12 35 (5.833)
	WPKL (FT)	5 17 (2.833)
	TOTAL	135/150 (90%) 420/600 (70%)
2	Types of school	National school 125 Mission school 10
	TOTAL	135
3	Grade of school	Grade A 115 Grade B 16 Under enrolled 4
	TOTAL	135
4	Gender of school head	Male 88 Female 54 (Missing cases) 13
	TOTAL	135
5	Location of school	Urban 70 Rural 57 Remote 8
	TOTAL	135

Out of 135 sampling units, 125 schools represented the national primary schools while the rest (10 schools) were mission schools. In terms of school size, 115 schools were categorized as A-grade, 16 were categorized as B-grade and the remainder as under-enrolled schools. Looking at the gender of school heads, 88 were males compared to 54 females (missing cases of 13). From the list, 70 were urban schools, 57 were rural and 8 were from the remote areas. In general, the respondents seemed evenly distributed and almost covered the whole of Malaysia.

As discussed earlier, the study employed SEM for its statistical technique. Because of that, the study needed to overcome some practical issues such as sample size and missing data, multivariate normality and absence of outliers, linearity, absence of multi collinearity and singularity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). As the researcher was very much aware of these requirements, he managed to conduct data screening prior to the segment of model testing. With the final sample size of 406, the study considered the sample size adequate (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998).

7.2 Goodness-of-fit criteria evaluation

As mentioned in the research methodology, the study used SPSS AMOS 7.0 data-fitting program (Arbuckle & Wothke, 2006) to analyze and estimate the hypothesized model of the study. This software adopted maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) in generating estimates of the full-fledged SEM. Since the software also analyzed covariance matrices, the estimation procedure satisfied the underlying statistical distribution theory, and thereby yielding estimates of desirable properties (Arbuckle & Wothke, 2006).

Table 2: Fit indices of the hypothesized model

Measures	Fit Indices	Threshold Values
CMIN/df	3.632	Less than 5
GFI	0.80	0.90 and above
AGFI	0.80	0.90 and above
RMSEA	0.081	0.08 and less
TLI	0.90	0.90 and above
NFI	0.90	0.90 and above
CFI	0.90	0.90 and above
RMR	0.190	The nearer to zero the better
PRATIO	0.91	0.90 and above
R ²	0.94	The bigger the better
Insignificant coefficients	3	

Note:

- Number of variables in the model = 66
- Number of observed variables = 29
- Number of unobserved variables = 37
- Number of exogenous variables = 33
- Number of endogenous variables = 33
- Number of distinct sample moments = 435
- Number of distinct parameters to be estimated = 64
- Sample size = 406; Degrees of Freedom (435 – 64) = 371
- Chi-square (χ^2) = 1347.525; p = 0.000

Once the estimates of the model were established, the study applied a set of measures to evaluate its good-fit. The consistency of the model with the data was determined by ten measures as in Table 2, which reflected the overall model fit. Next, the study examined the magnitude and direction of individual parameter estimate to determine its reasonableness. The examination included the offending estimates such as negative error variances and theoretically inconsistent coefficients that could undermine the validity of the model. The final step was to estimate the multiple R² of the responses where the high values indicated better explanation of the endogenous variable by the model.

As emphasized by Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998), likelihood-ratio chi-square statistic (χ^2) is the most fundamental measure of overall fit. As exhibited by Table 2, the hypothesized model exhibits likelihood-ratio chi-square (χ^2) of **(371, N=406) = 1347.525; p = 0.000**. The hypothesized model seemed to yield an acceptable level of discrepancy between the observed data and the hypothesized model divided by the degrees of freedom (CMIN/df = 3.632). However, other fit indices especially GFI, AGFI and RMSEA did not fulfill the threshold values indicated. Although the values of other fit indices such as TLI, NFI, CFI and PRATIO did equate the threshold values but other studies proved that such indices could still be improved in some other ways.

Finally, the recursive model below (Figure 3) exhibits three (3) insignificant coefficients (INDEPEND \rightarrow INDVCHAR = - 0.17, ACTIVE \rightarrow ORGACAPAB = 0.02 and ACTIVE \rightarrow INDVCHAR = 0.01). Thus, the generated fit indices as in Table 2 and the presence of three insignificant coefficients indicated that the hypothesized model of study, needed to be revised.

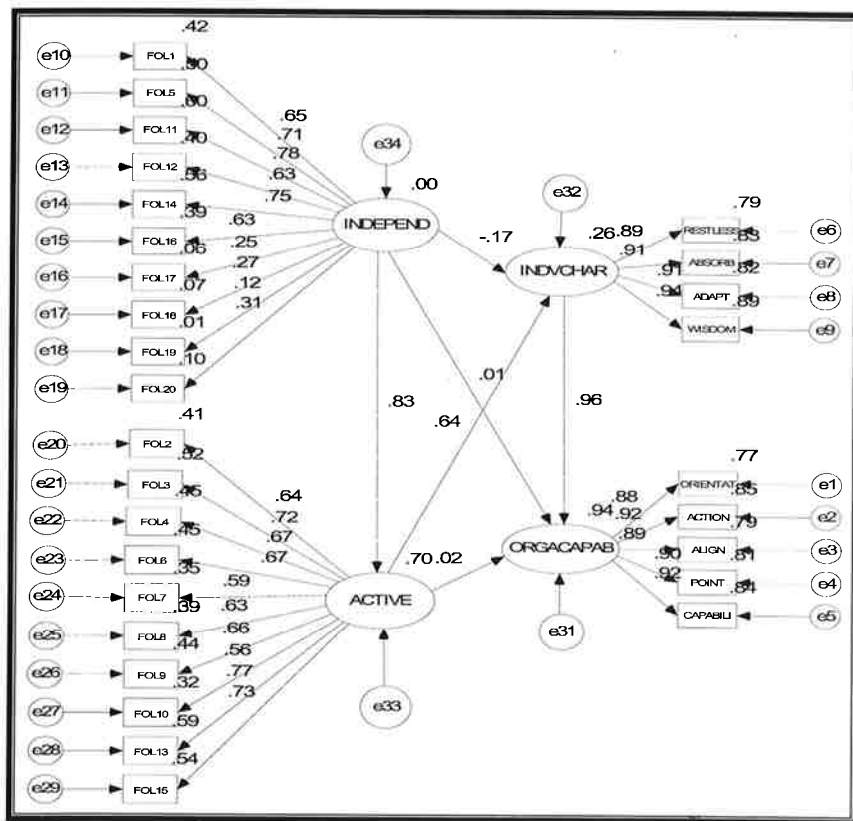


Figure 3: Generated output of the hypothesized model

7.3 Standardized causal effects of strategic leadership styles of the hypothesized model (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB)

Table 3 below explains the summary of standardized causal effects (direct, indirect and total effects) between four latent variables (INDEPEND, ACTIVE, INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB) of the study. However, there is one offending estimate (- 0.168) and two insignificant coefficients (0.010 & 0.016) as exhibited by the table. Thus, the study could not successfully identify the significant causal

effects of the hypothesized model. It was therefore proven that the study needed to formulate an alternative (revised) model.

Table 3: Summary of standardized causal effects of the strategic leadership styles (Hypothesized Model)

Outcome	Determinant	Causal Effects		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
INDVCHAR	INDEPEND	- 0.168	0.533	0.365
ORGACAPAB	INDEPEND	0.010	0.363	0.373
INDVCHAR	ACTIVE	0.639	-	0.639
ORGACAPAB	ACTIVE	0.016	0.613	0.629
ACTIVE	INDEPEND	0.834	-	0.834
ORGACAPAB	INDVCHAR	0.958	-	0.958

7.4 Revised model evaluation

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggested that there are at least two reasons for modifying a SEM model. Firstly, is to improve fit and parsimony, and secondly is to test the hypotheses. The re-specification of the model involved omitting certain parts of the causal relationships in the model with the aim of improving the significance of the model and hence improving its goof-fit. Thus, the revised model supposedly displayed better causal relationships than the original or hypothesized model. The study used the revised model (Figure 3) below to discuss the overall model fit.

Byrne (1994) suggested that SEM is a statistical methodology that takes on hypotheses testing (i.e. confirmatory) approach of the multivariate analysis. Further, Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) in Hairuddin (2006) also viewed SEM as a confirmatory technique for model testing. Thus, all research hypotheses would be accepted or rejected based upon the employment of SEM to the dataset.

By employing the AMOS 7.0, the study conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and as a result nine measured variables/ indicators for INDEPEND (Fol 17, Fol 18 & Fol 19), ACTIVE (Fol 2, Fol 3, Fol 4 & Fol 13) and ORGACAPAB (ALIGN & POINT) were omitted because they possessed small loadings (Figure 3). Based on substantive reasoning, the revised model fixed the causal relationships of INDEPEND and INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB; and ACTIVE & ORGACAPAB to zero. Thus, there were no direct relationships between INDEPEND and INDVCHAR; INDEPEND and ORGACAPAB; ACTIVE and ORGACAPAB.

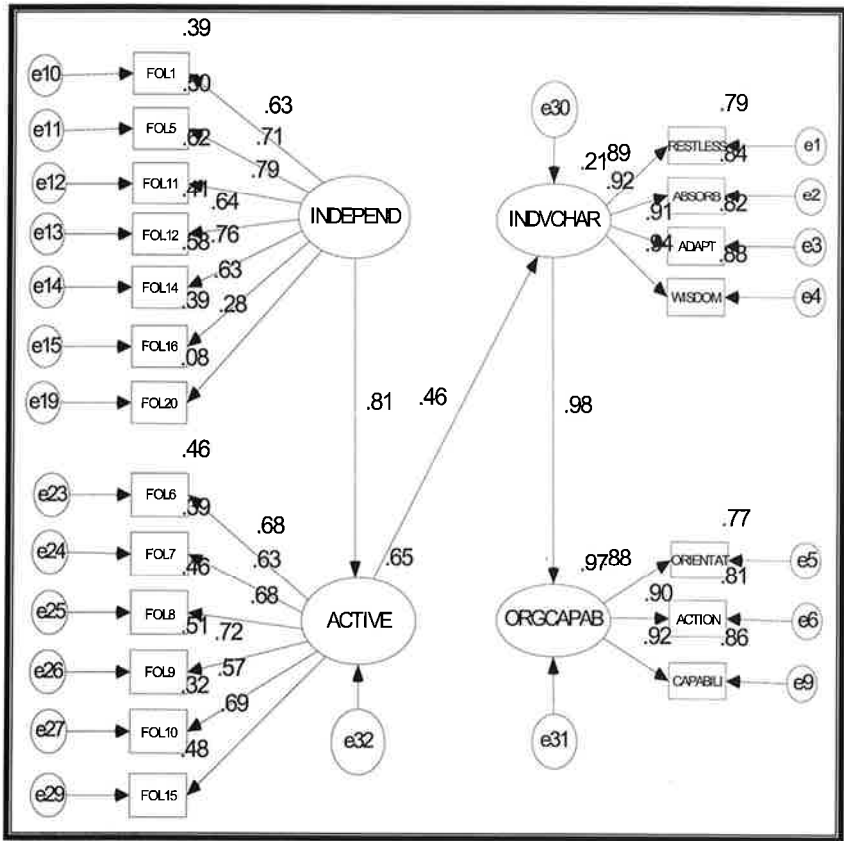


Figure 3: Revised model of the study

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) considered a Chi-square difference test as one of the basic methods for model modification. The Chi-square for the hypothesized model with 371 degrees of freedom was $\chi^2 = 1347.525$; $p = 0.000$, and the Chi-square for the revised model with 167 degrees of freedom was $\chi^2 = 517.086$; $p = 0.000$. Therefore the Chi-square difference test (or likelihood ratio for maximum likelihood) yielded $\chi^2 = (1347.525 - 517.086) = 850.439$, $df = (371 - 167) = 104$, $p = 0.000$. This proved that the model's fit was significantly improved after the re-specification of the model.

Table 4: Fit indices of the revised model

Measures	Fit Indices	Threshold Values
CMIN/df	3.096 (3.632)	Less than 5
GFI	0.90 (0.80)	0.90 and above
AGFI	0.90 (0.80)	0.90 and above
RMSEA	0.072 (0.081)	0.08 and less
TLI	0.93 (0.90)	0.90 and above
NFI	0.91 (0.90)	0.90 and above
CFI	0.94 (0.90)	0.90 and above
RMR	0.17 (0.190)	The nearer to zero the better
PRATIO	0.90 (0.91)	0.90 and above
R ²	0.97	The bigger the better
Insignificant coefficients	NIL	

Note: Values in the parentheses are from Table: 2.

- Number of variables in the model = 47
- Number of observed variables = 20
- Number of unobserved variables = 27
- Number of exogenous variables = 24
- Number of endogenous variables = 23
- Number of distinct sample moments = 210
- Number of distinct parameters to be estimated = 43
- Sample size = 406; Degrees of Freedom (210 – 43) = 167
- Chi-square (χ^2) = 517.086; $p = 0.000$

In general, all goof-fit indices as in Table 4 show very remarkable results. The level of discrepancy between the observed data and the revised model divided by the degrees of freedom yielded better fit at CMIN/df = 3.096 compared to 3.632 for the hypothesized model. As for absolute fit, GFI = 0.90 and RMR = 0.17 for the revised model. The RMSEA value was at 0.072 well below that of the threshold value of 0.08. This meant it is a better fit.

In terms of incremental fit measures, AGFI, TLI and NFI values were at 0.9, 0.93 and 0.91 respectively. All these values satisfied the threshold values. Finally, as explained by R^2 , the revised model possessed $R^2 = 0.97$ and free from offending estimates. There were also no indications of insignificant values, thus proving that the revised model fitted the dataset almost perfectly. As a conclusion, all three types of good-fit indices, which were discussed previously, proved that the study had successfully developed and identified better fit and parsimonious model.

7.5 Standardized causal effects of strategic leadership styles of the revised model (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB)

Having assessed the overall model and the aspects of measurement model, the next step was to examine the estimated coefficients for both practical and theoretical implications (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998). As exhibited in Table 5 below, all equation coefficients were highly significant and were of practical importance as each coefficient was larger than 0.1. The data indicated that the determinant of strategic leadership styles (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB) with the largest causal effect was the ACTIVE (0.462 & 0.454) which were entirely due to direct and indirect effect. The next determinant of strategic leadership styles (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB) was INDEPEND (0.372 & 0.366) due entirely from indirect effect. Other causal effects were entirely

between the two latent variables of the same group, for example, the followership styles (INDEPEND & ACTIVE = 0.806) and strategic leadership styles (INDVCHAR & ORGACAPAB = 0.983). As a conclusion, the study confirmed and identified the presence of significant causal relationships for the revised model. Thus, the study proceeded with the testing of the hypotheses.

Table 5: Summary of standardized causal effects of the strategic leadership styles (Revised Model)

Outcome	Determinant	Causal Effects		
		Direct	Indirect	Total
INDVCHAR	INDEPEND	-	0.372	0.372
ORGACAPAB	INDEPEND	-	0.366	0.366
INDVCHAR	ACTIVE	0.462	-	0.462
ORGACAPAB	ACTIVE	-	0.454	0.454
ACTIVE	INDEPEND	0.806	-	0.806
ORGACAPAB	INDVCHAR	0.983	-	0.983

7.6 Testing of the hypotheses

The study used the SEM results and significance level of 0.05 to test all the hypotheses. The study also used the results in Table 5 and the generated output as in Figure 3 to examine whether the revised model supported the research hypotheses (or vice-versa) of the study.

7.6.1 Categories of followership styles in NPS

As indicated by Kelly (1992), the categories of the followership styles could be identified through the indicators (items) that measured the two latent variables (INDEPEND & ACTIVE) of the

followership styles. INDEPEND represented “independent and critical thinking” (or/and dependent & uncritical thinking) while ACTIVE represented “active (or/and passive) engagement”. SEM that employed AMOS 7.0 in the study managed to identify seven items/indicators for latent variable INDEPEND and six items/indicators for latent variable ACTIVE. The study also used SPSS 11.5 to sum up the scores of the items/indicators for each latent variable (INDEPEND & ACTIVE) for all (406) respondents.

Table 6: Categories of followership styles in NPS

Categories of Followers	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Exemplary	40	9.9	9.90
Passive	9	2.2	12.10
Alienated	1	0.2	12.30
Survivors/pragmatist	356	87.7	100.00
Conformist	0	0	100.00
TOTAL	406	100.00	

All the individual scores were plotted onto a modified Kelly’s two-dimensional taxonomy of followership styles (Kelly, 1992; page 97). The result is exhibited as in Table 6. It is obvious that there were only four groups or categories of followers in NPS particularly the exemplary (9.9%), passive (2.2%), alienated (0.2%) and survivors or pragmatist (87.7%). Thus, the study supported hypotheses’ *H* 1.1, *H* 1.3, *H* 1.4 and *H* 1.5 except *H* 1.2.

7.6.2 Strategic leadership styles of NPS school heads

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) in Hairuddin (2006) and Byrne (1994) viewed SEM as a confirmatory technique for model testing and hence all research hypotheses were accepted or rejected based upon the employment of SEM (and AMOS 7.0) to the dataset.

The study conducted the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by employing the AMOS 7.0. As a result, SEM and AMOS 7.0 confirmed that the latent variable INDVCHAR (as one of the strategic leadership components) was represented by four indicators (RESTLESS, ABSORB, ADAPT & WISDOM) while ORGACAPAB (as one of the strategic leadership components) was represented only by three indicators (ORIENTAT, ACTION & CAPABILI). The study omitted two items/indicators for ORGACAPAB (ALIGN & POINT) as they possessed small loadings (Figure 3).

Although the study attempted to examine and prove that NPS heads for SIP in Malaysia possessed **five organizational capabilities**, the finding from the study however confirmed only **three** (out of **five**) organizational capability dimensions were present. The confirmed organizational capability dimensions were “strategically oriented” (ORIENTAT) [H2.1 (a)], “translate strategy into action” (ACTION) [H2.2 (a)], “develop strategic competencies” (CAPABILI) [H2.5 (a)]. The study could not confirm the presence of the remaining two organizational capability dimensions among the NPS heads. The dimensions were “align people with organizations” (ALIGN) [H2.3 (a)] and “determine effective strategic intervention points” (POINT) [H2.4 (a)]. As a conclusion, the study only supported three out of five hypotheses.

Pertaining to the strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads for SIP, the study intended to examine and to prove that all NPS heads concerned displayed **four individual characteristics dimensions**. The confirmed individual characteristics displayed by the NPS heads were “a dissatisfaction or restlessness with the present” (RESTLESS) [H2.1 (b)], “absorptive capacity” (ABSORB) [H2.2 (b)], “adaptive capacity” (ADAPT) [H2.3 (b)] and “wisdom”

(WISDOM) [H2.4 (b)]. The study supported all four hypotheses pertaining to the four individual characteristics displayed by the NPS heads.

The subsequent hypotheses testing of the study was based simultaneously on the results of the standardized causal effects of the revised model (Table 5) and the revised model of the study (Figure 3). As in Figure 3, latent variable INDEPEND indirectly affects the two components of the strategic leadership INDVCHAR (0.372) and ORGACAPAB (0.366). Thus, the study supported hypotheses H3.5 and H3.6.

Pertaining to the latent variable ACTIVE, the revised model exhibited its direct and indirect effect on the strategic leadership style components such as INDVCHAR (direct effect, 0.462) and ORGACAPAB (indirect effect, 0.454). Hence, the study supported hypotheses H3.3 and H3.7.

By referring to Figure 3, there is no indication (supposedly shown by an arrow from INDEPEND to INDVCHAR) that the latent variable INDEPEND directly affects the latent variable INDVCHAR (H3.1). Pertaining to the revised model of the study (Figure 3), there is also no indication (supposedly shown by an arrow from INDEPEND to ORGACAPAB) that the latent variable INDEPEND directly affects the latent variable ORGACAPAB (H3.2). Similarly, there is no one-headed arrow that runs from the latent variable ACTIVE to the latent variable ORGACAPAB (H3.4). This indicated that there was an absence of direct relationship between the two latent variables and hence the study confirmed that hypotheses H3.1, H3.2 and H3.4 were unsupported. The findings from the study tendered a more in depth discussion, especially with regard to the theoretical aspects and behavior of managerial and policy makers in Malaysia (MOEM).

8.0 Discussion and managerial implications

8.1 Followership styles of the NPS followers

The study identified that all senior management staff/teachers such as senior assistant for administration, senior assistant for student affairs, senior assistant for extra co-curricular activities and the afternoon session supervisor (who were the respondents for the study) were the most powerful group in the schools studied. As all of them had some form of authority, this study assumed that they somewhat influenced and exert pressure on the leadership of the schools concerned. In this situation, the school's leadership considered them as the change agents who could help to initiate the future success of the schools. Had the policy makers identified these senior management teams? Had the policy makers made the right choice of the senior management teams? Could the future success of the schools concerned depend on the existing management team members whose major task was to fulfill the objectives of SIP?

The study had examined and identified the four categories of followers in the schools concerned and they were: "alienated" (0.2%), "passive" (2.2%), "exemplary" (9.9%) and "survivors or pragmatist" (87.7%). The study also confirmed that there was no "conformist" group of followers in the sampled schools. The findings tendered further in-depth discussions because it might be important to various sectors of the public as well as the decision and policy makers (MOEM).

With only 9.9% exemplary followers in the sampled schools, what can the policy makers expect from them? Would they be able to synergize and turnaround the schools' performance? With less than

10% of the exemplary followers in the schools, could they produce 90% of the school's success? In addition, could they turn the survivors or the pragmatist followers (87.7%) to become exemplary followers? What do the policy makers (MOEM) expect from them because the schools concerned are the groups of schools involved with the SIP? Thus, a major task for the leaders was not only to maintain the outnumbered exemplary followers but also to turn those from the other categories of followers (alienated, passive and survivors or pragmatist) to become exemplary followers. The schools' leadership obviously needed to identify every available resource and effective strategy for that particular purpose and simultaneously fulfill the Standards of Competency for Malaysian School Principals (2006). The development of human resources to become courageous followers (Chaleff, 1995) is one of the leadership competencies, Johnson, Chvala and Voehl (1995) saw that it is in line with an old Chinese proverb:

*"If you want one year of prosperity, grow grain,
If you want 10 years of prosperity, grow trees,
If you want 100 years of prosperity, grow people".*

For comparison, from their study on three organizations, Brown and Thornborrow (1996) also confirmed that pragmatist/survivors group of followers were one of the most dominant (22.7%) compared to exemplary (15.7%), passive (20.8%), alienated (14.2%) and conformist (26.6%).

8.2 Strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads

The study successfully examined and confirmed the presence of two strategic leadership styles of the NPS and they were organizational capability and the individual characteristics.

Following the employment of CFA and AMOS 7.0, the study confirmed the existence of three (out of five) organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) dimensions particularly “be strategically oriented” (ORIENTAT), “ability to translate strategy into action” (ACTION) and “ability to develop strategic capabilities” (CAPABILI). By employing CFA and AMOS 7.0 too, the study confirmed the presence of all four individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) dimensions such as “a dissatisfaction or restless with the present” (RESTLESS), “absorptive capacity” (ABSORB), “adaptive capacity” (ADAPT), and “wisdom” (WISDOM).

8.2.1 Organizational capability of the NPS heads

In the case of NPS heads for SIP in Malaysia, the study confirmed that they possessed three dimensions of organizational capability of strategic leadership styles as discussed above (8.2). Davies (2004), Davies and Davies (2004) described the first dimension as “be strategically oriented” (ORIENTAT). It was obviously clear that the leaders of the NPS for SIP were strategically oriented as required by the stakeholders (MOEM) and hence conformed to the Standards of Competency for Malaysian School Principals (2006). The possession of this particular capability fulfills the Quality Standards for Malaysian Education (2004) and is one of the prerequisites and predictors to be an excellent and effective school in Malaysia. Unlike in the United Kingdom (Preedy, Glatter & Wise, 2003), strategic planning concept was quite recently introduced in the Malaysian education system in conjunction with the inception of the Educational Development Master Plan (PIPP) 2006-2010. Hence, the year 2010 will witness the achievements of the strategic implementation of the plan.

Davies (2004), Davies and Davies (2004) described “ability to translate strategy into action” (ACTION) as one of the organizational capability dimensions of strategic leadership styles. Kaplan and Norton (2004) viewed “ability to translate strategy into action” as an essential factor for the success of the strategy management implementation. In the case of Malaysia, the study confirmed that the NPS heads possessed the “ability to translate strategy into action”. The possession of this particular capability would enable the stakeholders to differentiate the true strategic implementers from the mere rhetoric and mediocre leadership. The strategic implementers were those who were able to turnaround the schools’ performance as in contrast to the rhetoric leaders who were just holding on to the status-quo and survived. As the ability to translate strategy into action is one of the components in strategy management implementation (Kaplan & Norton, 2004) and strategic planning for public organization (Bryson, 2003), the study identified it to be one of the leadership skills needed by the NPS leadership. Hence, this will fulfill both the Standards of Competencies for Malaysian School Principals (2006) and Quality Standards for Malaysian Education (2004).

Davies (2004), Davies and Davies (2004) described “ability to develop strategic capabilities” (CAPABILI) as one of the organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) dimension of strategic leadership. The study confirmed that the NPS heads for SIP possessed the CAPABILI. Among others, CAPABILI comprised “ability to identify strategies to improve student learning”, “no culture of “scape-goat”, “ability to interpret data for student achievement”, and “team problem solving”. As an instructional leader, it was accepted that the NPS heads must be skillful in identifying the learning improvement strategies as the student learning factor was considered to be the most important component

in the Standards of Competencies for Malaysian School Principals (2006) and Quality Standards for Malaysian Education (2004). In addition, team problem solving and the absence of the "scapegoat culture" will fulfill the statement that "the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (Hargreaves, 2003).

8.2.2 Individual characteristics of the NPS heads

The study proved and confirmed that NPS heads for SIP possessed all four dimensions of individual characteristics of strategic leadership styles as discussed in section 8.2. The dimensions as confirmed by CFA were "a dissatisfaction or restless with the present" (RESTLESS), "absorptive capacity" (ABSORB), "adaptive capacity" (ADAPT), and "leadership wisdom" (WISDOM).

Pertaining to "a dissatisfaction or restless with the present" (RESTLESS), the study proved that the NPS heads possessed this particular individual characteristic. Davies (2004), Davies and Davies (2004) described this characteristic dimension as one of the most important aspect of the strategic leadership styles because "vision without action is merely a dream and while vision with action can change the world" (Barker, 1992). From this point, the stakeholders could expect the best from the NPS heads of SIP and thus will fulfill the "third core of the Malaysian Educational Development Master Planning (PIPP) 2006-2010.

The study also proved and confirmed the presence of the second dimension of the individual characteristics of strategic leadership. As described by Davies (2004), Davies and Davies (2004), one of the most important aspects of the individual characteristic was the NPS heads' capacity and ability to absorb the available information

(ABSORB) which was important for the students' achievement. Bryson (2003) emphasized that by having this ability and capacity, the school heads were able to conduct the strategic analyses (including environmental aspect) prior to the preparation of the school strategic development planning. Preedy, Glattter and Wise (2003) supported and emphasized the importance of the internal and external environment scanning and the role of interpretation. Thus, all NPS heads for SIP should see that ongoing learning, through interaction with environmental information, was important in developing the individual's and organization's capacities to interpret external events and identify key trends that needed to be responded to (Senge, 1990).

The study also proved and confirmed the presence of "leadership wisdom" (WISDOM) among the NPS heads for SIP. The leadership's wisdom comprised intellectual aspect, wise judgment, believe in the team's ability and excellent application of knowledge for the sake of organizational success. By having the leadership wisdom, the stakeholders of NPS heads could expect the best out of NPS heads. In conclusion, the study believes that these individual characteristics dimensions of strategic leadership style of NPS heads will propel the schools ahead and hence successfully fulfill the third core of the Malaysian Educational Development Master Plan (PIPP) 2006-2010.

8.2.3 The effects of the followership styles on the individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) component of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads

The discussion above is based on the causal effects between the followership styles of the followers and the strategic leadership of NPS heads for SIP. Thus, the discussion certainly fulfilled the third

objective of the present study. As in Table 5, the causal effects (0.372) between the independent and critical thinking (INDEPEND) of the followership styles and individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) of strategic leadership styles of NPS heads were entirely from the indirect effect [through the active engagement (ACTIVE)]. In general, the study confirmed that all the followership style components (INDEPEND & ACTIVE) were the predictors for individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) of the strategic leadership style components of the NPS heads.

As in the managerial and leadership scenario, there was an indication that the followership styles of the followers in NPS were strongly influenced by the individual characteristics (INDVCHAR) of strategic leadership components of NPS heads. The important individual characteristics are “a dissatisfaction or restless with the present” (RESTLESS), “absorptive capacity” (ABSORB), “adaptive capacity” (ADAPT), and “wisdom characteristic” (WISDOM). When NPS heads possess these four individual characteristics of strategic leadership the stakeholders would be assured of the performance of the NPS heads for SIP. However, the study foresees a potential strategic leadership problem in future when the existing NPS heads for SIP were to leave his/her school for some reason or other. Another potential strategic leadership problem might arise when the “entirely new” leaders begin to fill their place. Thus, the stakeholders need to address these potential problems as a precautionary measure.

8.2.4 The effects of the followership styles on the organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) component of strategic leadership styles of the NPS heads

As exhibited in Table 5, the causal effects (0.366 & 0.454) between the followership styles components [independent and critical

thinking (INDEPEND) and active engagement (ACTIVE)] and the organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) of the strategic leadership styles of NPS heads were entirely from the indirect effects [through the individual characteristic (INDVCHAR)]. In general, the study confirmed that all the followership style components (INDEPEND & ACTIVE) were the predictors for organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) of the strategic leadership style components of the NPS heads. It also confirmed that the organizational capability (ORGACAPAB) comprised these characteristics i.e “be strategically oriented” (ORIENTAT), “ability to translate strategy into action” (ACTION), and the “ability to develop strategic capabilities” (CAPABILI). In this particular case, it seemed that the whole cause/effect relationship between the followership styles and the organizational capability of the NPS heads was mediated by his/her individual characteristics.

This implies that followers and leaders need to understand each other's strength and weakness, each other's personalities, and be open for communication. In addition, it is important that leaders be sensitive to feedbacks from followers' (Clements and Washbush (1999) as followers' action/attitudes can influence their leader for better or worse (reciprocity). Another pertinent implication is, in order for the followership styles to have its full effect on the ORGACAPAB dimensions of the NPS heads, the leaders themselves should possess all four individual characteristics dimensions (INDVCHAR). The dimensions are: restless or hardworking, ability to use the available information for improvement, flexible and able to change the strategies wherever possible, and the possession of leadership wisdom. In short, without dedicated followers, there can be no effective leaders and as the saying goes: “without his armies, Napoleon was just a man with grandiose ambitions” (Townsend & Gebhardt, 1997).

Pertinent to the relationship between the followership style components and organizational capability component of strategic leadership of the NPS heads, the study also managed to foresee a potential strategic leadership problem in the future in the situation where the existing NPS heads for SIP were leaving his/her school for whatever reasons. Another potential strategic leadership might also rise when the “entirely new” leaders filled the vacuum. The stakeholders needed to adhere to these potential problems as preventive measures.

Moreover, the mark of a great follower is the development and growth of the followers, the mark of a great follower is the growth of the leaders (Kovar, 2005).

9. Conclusion

Pertaining to the study, several limitations and hindrances cropped up when the study commenced. The most prominent limitation was the lack of response from the respondents especially towards the end of the data collection period (about two months). There were instances where at least thirty (30) envelopes (contained at least 90 completed questionnaires) came in two months later (after the data collection period). There were also situations where three different senior management teachers provided three different demographic data although they were from the same school.

The study successfully examined and confirmed that the followership style components of the followers indirectly affect the strategic leadership of the NPS heads for SIP. Although there was a strong belief that the strategic leadership of NPS would affect the followership style components of the followers, however, it was not the objective of the study to examine it. Thus, the suggestion for future research is to examine the effect of strategic leadership styles of the leaders on the followership styles of the followers.

Generally, the study provides us (the followers) some insight on effective strategies to influence the leaders particularly the NPS heads. Here, courageous or exemplary followers must ensure that they are available as resource for the leader. They must be honest and dependable and be able to determine the leader's needs. Another strategy that the follower can adopt is to help the leader to be a good leader. The tactic is to ask for advice, to tell the leader what one thinks and to try to anticipate problems that might arise. In addition, Mann (2001) suggested that the followers should build relationships with their leaders by recognizing the mutual dependency and welcome feedback and constructive criticism.

Another exemplary follower's strategy to influence the leaders, particularly the NPS heads in this case, is to view the leader realistically by giving up the idealized leader images, recognize weaknesses and disagree when necessary. As the above strategies are from the existing literature, their applicability in the Malaysian educational system setup is questionable. However, the findings from this study will obviously enhance the nation's indigenous knowledge in the field of followership and strategic educational leadership styles.

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