

# Leadership Skills among Technical and Vocational Educators

Nurazyan Zahidah Zakaria  
Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education  
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia

Nor Atikah Md.Jizat  
Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education  
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia

Normah Zakaria  
Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education  
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia 86400 Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia

## Abstract

The purpose of leadership skills among technical and vocational educator are to prepare them towards effective organization. Effective leadership is widely accepted as being a key constituent in achieving organization improvement and to examine. This study aimed to gauge the leadership skills among technical and vocational educators effectiveness by using Katzenmeyer and Moller dimensions which are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment. This study also indicated the difference between leadership skills and technical and vocational educator experience. A quantitative study using survey exploration was carried out on 30 vocational and technical educators. The respondent was selected by using random sampling technique among technical and vocational educators and the analysis using SPSS 16.0 through descriptive statistic and t-test. The result indicated that the level of leadership skills were at highest in the collegiality dimension and this analysis show that the data variation is not equal and the analysis show there are no significant relationship between effective leadership of educator and gender. This study is hoped to be used by organization as to increase leadership skill among educators and could increase critical thinking skills, insight, intuition and interpersonal communication including listening and positive impact for an improvement in an organization.

**Keywords:** Leadership Skills, Staff, Educators, Professional development

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a key factor in university on its ability to improve. The leadership often been associated with vice chancellor in a university and the skill of leadership is a critical factor since it will promote the university improvement, change and development. Leadership viewed as a collaborative effort, a 'banding together' with other lecturers to promote professional development and growth and the improvement of educational services. The model of leadership means creating the conditions in which people work together and learn together where they construct leading to a shared purpose or set of goals. Staff who are lead within and beyond contribute to a community of learners and leaders (Harris and Muijs, 2005).

Leadership is a very important factor in determining the effectiveness of an organization. Effective leadership is often associated with the nature, value and ethical conduct. Leadership is defined as the ability to influence a group toward goals. This can be proved by efforts to increase the country productivity. The government has launched a policy look east, require the recording of working time, to campaign spending power, and organized a campaign lead by Mahathir. In accordance with this objective, a massive campaign to promote what known as the "Leadership by Example" was launched in March 1983 with the hope of creating a civil servant who appreciate good values leadership, practicing leadership and noble behavior fuelled examples leadership that is clean, efficient and trustworthy. The ultimate goal of this campaign is to improve the work.

## 2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to identify effectiveness of leadership skills among technical and vocational educators and the difference between leadership skills and work experience. The study is based on the existing skills that they have which are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment. Accordingly, there are two research questions that require answers, namely:

1. What is the effectiveness leadership skills among Technical and vocational Educators?
2. Is there a significant difference in the level of effectiveness of leadership skill based on Technical and Vocational educators gender?
- 3.

### **3 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **a. Definition of Leadership**

The definition of leadership according to Winston and Patterson, a leader is a person who could select, equips the person, trains and influences one or more followers who have a variety of different abilities and skills and still focuses on that person until the organization mission and objectives causing the person who follow willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional and physical energy and fully effort to achieve the organization mission and objectives.

A leader also presents a clearly vision in contrast to the present status of the organizational with using critical thinking skills, insight, intuition and interpersonal communication including listening and positive impact to the follower. The leader need always to seek by own self of personal growth, renewal, regeneration and increased stamina (Winston and Patterson, 2006).

#### **b. Leadership Skill**

The leadership improved among the educator to develop a positive attitude towards using a skill. The educator should be capability up to date, planning and good communication. Firstly, teach it to network. It is teach a educator how to communication to network. The skills is more important especially lecturers. Besides that, the gain leadership skills among educator, it should be a mentor-mentee relationship. The staff can improved a leadership skill in office or workplace. Then, a educator can be given an opportunity to right experience in manage a programme or project. After that, create a ownership mentality to increase a leadership skill. It is how to make smart, informed decisions, but still require that it can be run every idea (Savage and Sales, 2008)

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According to Katzenmeyer and Moller, leadership skill in staff and lecturer has three main factors. First is leadership of students or other lecturers such as facilitator, coach, mentor, trainer, curriculum specialist, new approach creator, leading a study group. The second factor is leadership of operational tasks that are keeping the school organized and moving towards its goals, through roles such as head of department, dean, and member of task force. The third factor is leadership through decision making or partnership. Member of school improvement teams, member of committees, instigator of partnerships with business, higher education institutions and parent-lecturer association (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2009)

Gehrke found a similar functions of staff or lecturer leader such as continuously improving their own classroom teaching, organizing and leading reviews of school practices, providing curriculum development knowledge, participating in university decision making, giving in-service training to university and participating in the performance evaluation of teachers (Gehrke, 2005)

Leadership in a recent time had been assumed as a subject that attracts attention because often associated with influence, power and wealth. According to Yusof, leadership state that the four dimensions of transformational leadership that has been used in transformational leadership are individual influence, inspiring, motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Yusof et.al, 2005).

Rasid mentioned that transformational leadership style as a way of comprehensive that could be benefit for individual excellence and able to make a meaningful contribution o the organization and the community. There are four dimensions of transformational leadership discussed the charisma, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, motivation and inspiration. The charisma is the main characteristic of transformational leadership that will convince the subordinates with properties owned by the leader. These properties are able to realize all the proposed changes with ease. Intellectual stimulation also seen as approach taken by intellectual leaders who pushed them under supervision to constantly strive to improve a new approach and has an imaginative thinking, creative and innovative in accordance with the challenges and demands of the time (Rasid, 2007).

#### **d. The Effect of Ethical Leadership of Moral Identity**

The social learning theory assumes that much learning occurs vicariously. Vicarious learning should be particularly important for learning about ethical and unethical behavior in organizational contexts. Ethical leaders set high standards for moral and ethical conduct, and for moral emulation (Savage and Sales, 2008). In addition, 'barrier score' for each respondent's perception of barriers to staff leadership initiatives was calculated, it was evident that educators do experience barriers to staff leadership of the respondents indicated that they sometimes, often or always experience barriers to teacher leadership. Respondents never or rarely experience barriers to staff leadership. The barriers identified in this instance are lack of confidence, an unclear

understanding of the concept of staff leadership, lack of time for professional development, the belief that ‘too many cooks spoil the broth’, the fact that teachers are not rewarded for extra input and the fact that staff leadership is not taught in pre-service courses.

Ethical leaders have strong moral values and goals, which lead to behaviors and decisions to promote ethical policies, procedures, and processes within their organizations. After that, Ethical leaders appear as high ethical role models or moral exemplars to encourage followers to establish their own internal set of moral principles and ideals, which helps establish a basis for follower moral identity, and ultimately moral action (Avolio, 2005).

The further proposed familial and social transmission models for morality, which means that moral values, standards, and behavioral patterns are transmitted via family and social networks, among which leadership could be an important source of social influence (Bandura, 1991).

#### **e. Definition of Vocational School**

The American Heritage Dictionary (2009) stated that vocational school is the secondary level school that offers instruction and practical introductory experience in skilled trades such as mechanics, carpentry, plumbing and construction. In addition, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) defines vocational education as technical and vocational education to aspects of educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life (UNESCO and ILO, 2002). In Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 stated that vocational school is the center that prepares students for skilled, semi-skilled, technical and professional careers acquiring expertise in a specific set of techniques.

#### **f. Vocational Educators**

As a teacher, their leadership skills are the needs for vocational school (Boateng, 2012). Teacher in vocational school not only knowledgeable but they are also equipped with abilities and skills in the specialization areas. Teachers’ ability does matter a lot as they are the one who delivers the knowledge, information, skills and experiences (Sacks, 2013). The teacher ability cultivates specialization in the vocational school as the teaching content and requirements build its own characteristics in the vocational teachers (Guo G. and Zhan Q, 2013). Therefore, as a teacher in the vocational schools the exposition to the leadership skills which include the technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills as introduced by Katz R. (1955) are truly needed (Kartz, 1955).

### **4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The seven dimensions by Katzenmeyer and Moller of staff or lecturer leadership are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2009). The researches have used two types method which are data collection and questionnaire. The data collected in Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM). Respondents were given a period of 1 weeks to respond and follow-up were made to ensure all feedbacks from the respondents were obtained. The instrument is using questionnaire on 4-point Likert scale (never, seldom, sometimes and routinely) designed to measure the extent of leadership in UTHM among staff. A total of 36 questions comprising of 1 gender question and 35 question of leadership effectiveness form seven dimension. A sum of 30 respondents vocational educators have been select by using random sampling technique and have been analyses with descriptive method and difference between leadership effectiveness and gender using t-test. The analysis had been conducted by using SPSS 16.0. The seven statements constructed for researches leadership skill among staff.

### **5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Confirmatory factor analysis to the seven dimension according to Katzenmeyer and Moller that are developmental focus, recognition, autonomy, collegiality, participation, open communication and positive environment . The *Cronbach's alpha* values which have been analyzed show that value 0.89. This mean that the value near to 1 could be inserted in the model. The reability is high. The reliability analysis intend to determine whether the measurement tool is consistent and stable and could show the goodness of a measurement. According to Sekaran the value of *Cronbach's Alpha* higher than 0.6 means that the variables used is good and reliable (Sekaran, 2003). Respondent that had been analyzed comprising man and women. Table 1 reveals the summary of respondent distribution. From the total of 30 respondents, there are 22 respondent (73.3%) technical and vocational educators are man and 8 (26.7%) technical and vocational educators are women.

Table 1: Summary of respondent distribution

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of respondent</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Man	22	73.3
Woman	8	26.7
Total	30	100

Table 2 show the mean and standard deviation between each item in leadership effectiveness between technical and vocational educators. The highest mean between each item is 4.17 in developmental focus dimension that in university strategies and collegiality dimension in discussion of strategies.

Table 2: Mean score and standard deviations for leadership effectiveness among technical and vocational educators

Variable	Mean	SD
<u>Development Focus</u>		
1. New knowledge	3.73	0.45
2. Guidance and coach	3.53	0.78
3. Share new ideas	3.87	0.73
4. University strategies	4.17	0.38
5. Opportunities	3.97	0.41
<u>Recognition</u>		
6. Admin confidence	3.90	0.48
7. Recognized	4.10	0.55
8. Professional skills	4.10	0.31
9. Idea accepted	3.90	0.89
10. Work recognized	3.90	0.31
<u>Autonomy</u>		
11. Vission and mission	3.63	0.89
12. Lead other	3.90	0.31
13. Planning	4.10	0.31
14. District culture	3.73	0.58
15. Building team		
<u>Collegiality</u>		
16. Share ideas	3.87	0.35
17. Supportive	4.00	0.30
18. Discussstrategies	4.17	0.38
19. Work together	3.93	0.45
20. Observing	4.13	0.35
<u>Participation</u>		
21. Make decision	4.00	0.45
22. Idea	3.97	0.32
23. Screening staff	3.37	0.85
24. Make decision	4.13	0.35
25. Make choices	3.50	0.82
<u>Open communication</u>		
26. Listen carefully	3.77	0.57
27. Presentation	3.57	0.73
28. Thoughts and feeling	4.10	0.31
29. Keep group member	3.87	0.73
30. Everyone participate	4.23	0.45
<u>Positive environment</u>		
31. Enjoy working	3.87	0.35
32. Work effective	3.97	0.41
33. Freedom	3.87	0.63
34. Improvement	4.00	0.56
35. Positive	3.97	0.49

The descriptive analysis in Table 3 show that highest min distribution according to leadership dimension is collegiality followed by autonomy, positive environment, open communication, recognition, participation and lastly developmental focus. The leadership effectiveness in technical and vocational educators in Universiti Tun Hussein Onn need collegiality as the main core. It mean the cooperative relationship of collagenous and collaboration with all the educators member.

Table 3: Leadership effectiveness dimension

Dimension	Mean	Interpretation mean
Developmental focus	3.45	High
Recognition	3.89	High
Autonomy	3.97	High
Collegiality	4.04	High
Participation	3.73	High
Open communication	3.91	High
Positive environment	3.93	High
<b>Leadership effectiveness</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 4 show that null hypothesis accepted because the significant value  $p=14.655$  not qualified requirement  $p<0.05$ . There had no significant difference between leadership effectiveness between technical and vocational educators and gender. The data variation is not equal.

Table 4: Difference analysis effectiveness leadership between gender

Effectiveness Leadership	N	Mean	t	df	Nilai P Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Man	22	0.469	1.457	14.655	0.136	0.4903
Woman	8					

## 6 CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the positive environment that had been conducted from effectiveness of leadership skills among UTHM staff need to be highlighted and the highest mean among seven dimension of Katzenmeyer and Moller was collegiality. It will be the main contributor in leadership skills that will increase the quality of an organization. This result is parallel to Hershey that state open communication has a great influence in organization iclims. Leadership skills that take care the virtue of the organization follower will increase the positive interpersonal like mutual assistance, mutual respect, a sense of belonging and partnership working problems.

Negative leadership style like does not care workers, will form a negative climate in interpersonal such as creatingnot cheerful an environment which can stunt the growth of an organization that can affect employee motivation. This result could be enhance with the study by Fritz that state organization need to have clear mission that could give a brilliant idea and promote staff to work in a team.

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