



Modelling Resilient Educational Leaders for Resilient Schools: Malaysian High Performing Primary School Head Teachers

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, we explore the modelling of resiliency among educational leaders which promote to resilient schools. The pandemic has a firmer grip on everybody and batters each of people more physically, mentally, and emotionally. Disruptions and change in daily activities caused by the pandemic have led to uncontrolled feelings of stress. Stress is, however, normal in daily life. It could stimulate creativity, promote diligent and increase performance. As a result, in most studies, the key to coping strategy is positive thinking which inhibit self-development. It is between being good stress and being positive thinking. They could have the best of intentions of spending their time on issues that matter most. The high performing head teachers have sustainable work done and they find ways to develop the resilience to focus their work from distractions. Resiliency is an absolute must keep people engaged, passionate, and committed to achieve challenging situations. This study lighted up effective ways on courage to support others. This study explored resilient factors and challenges of seven of high performing head teachers and two expertise from a few states in Malaysia. Based on the data collected through semi-structured interviews the study seeks to identify the positive relationship between resilience and positive school outcomes. The findings would provide useful ideas for head teachers in primary schools and future researchers. The concept associated to the leaders' need to help resilient leaders thrive as individuals and as leaders in educational leaders' resiliency.

Keywords: Resilience Educational Leaders, high-performance, head teachers, challenging goals, case study

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1. INTRODUCTION

Educators are considered to indicate the greatest influence on student achievement. However, it is acknowledged to be comparable only to school instruction in terms of its role on student performance, with the biggest effect observed in schools wherein students' learning needs and potential development would be most apparent. As during pandemic covid-19, it is critical for institutions, homes, and societies to work with each other to give collaborative efforts and to generate greater and developmental skills. Nonetheless, there seems to be a broad issue with assistance and promotion of student objectives, as well as growing students' capabilities. Hiring, roles and duties, engagement, performance management, administration, continued teacher training, and compensation will be among them. Head teachers work with people, and educators, students, and families weren't alone in their concerns about employment issues. It is unfair to blame movement order and face-to-face communication restrictions during the pandemic for their failure to achieve outstanding performances even though others thrived. Minimizing stress when facing this pandemic is vital. Letting stress drag on may bring about depression and it can also affect everyday life. A better understanding of stress as well as having high empathy for others are also part of to be resilience to survive the

pandemic successfully. Stress in workplace is recognized by major business news outlets, such as Forbes, and leading management consultant. The capacity of a stochastic process to endure or emerge from substantial stresses that affect its health and progress is referred to as resilience, Anghel, R. E. (2015). Intellectual or educational resilience is viewed as a determinant of course engagement and studying ambition, as well as a sign of scholastic adaptability. Yeung, W. J. J., & Li, H. (2021). The components of course correction include concentration, mental agility, and learning from mistakes. These high achievers were able to have positive perception of opportunity, critical points where they could institute course correction to keep within the challenges of their critical path but also to achieve more. This means that school leaders with broader leadership and the organisational culture could impact everyone resilience in school.

Educational resilience leader is a risk taker and model that resiliency for the teachers in the school. The leader also must be very mindful to stay in good health and intentionally regulate their own well-being. Healthy lifestyles that include regular exercise and nutritious foods are foundational to both mental and emotional resilience. Getting enough rest, spending time outdoors, eating well, taking mental breaks, all

play a role in keeping you emotionally balanced and resilient. Courage is another capacity for resilient leader to succeed at risk-taking. Leading with core values centered on equity, excellences, fearlessly focusing on what matter most, and modelling resiliency when disappointments occur. The educational resilient leaders must be prepared for the failure, missteps, and setbacks, but they must also look forward to success, and embrace the process as they learn and grow. Risk taking build courage and enable to stand by their core values, solve problems with innovative thinking, focus on the things that matter most the children, and develop the resiliency for continuous school improvement need self-efficacy. According to Cherian and Jacob (2013), efficacy is positively related to employee performance. Resilience is frequently characterised as an institution's ability to mitigate the impacts of severe interruptions to its aims, or simply the ability to "overcome adversity". Conversely, numerous companies have faced difficulty but used the experiences to strengthen the organization's chances, Parsons, D. (2010). This might imply aggressive gain, prestige, or improved employee while decreasing the need for state interference and higher control.

In this study will explain briefly about the constitute resilience in educational leadership. Thus, there also explain about the challenging situations that face by head teachers in primary schools that require resilience. Then, from the challenges there will be high-performing primary school head teachers develop and sustain resilience in challenging situations. Lastly, there will develop the core practices of the high-performing primary school head teachers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Resilient Educational Leaders

Resilience education (school aimed at fostering individuals' resilience) intersects with academic activities promoting moral personality and student engagement, as well as therapeutic treatments aimed at preventing instability, substances abuse, and perhaps other undesirable consequences. CASEL, for instance, describes children's learning as "the process of receiving the expertise to identify and understand feelings, accomplish specific objectives, recognise others' viewpoints, create and establish rapport, behave maturely, and effectively solve anger management skills", Gillham, J., Abenavoli, R. M., Brunwasser, S. M., Linkins, M., Reivich, K. J., & Seligman, M. E. (2013). Resiliency is defined in the literature as the effort to rebound or bounce back from challenges, uncertainty, failure, or increased responsibility, Pury & Lopez (2010). In simple word, resilience is strong and not fragile. Given the high stakes work in schools today, resiliency is an absolute must to keep people engaged, passionate, and committed to meeting challenging goals. The highly resilient people are flexible, adapt quickly to the uncertainty, new circumstances, and thrive in dynamic situations. The resilient mental state that has mental agile and strong emotion. School leaders must have courage starts with the right mindset which is the ability to be concentrate on what matters most and completed task by engaging in the right kind of practice. Anders Ericson, renowned psychology professor at Florida State University, has dedicated his entire career to understanding how practice works to help people become the best at what they do. He has found, after 20 years of research that no matter what your field of work, the most effective kind of practice were all follows the

same set of general principles. In his new book, *Peak: Secrets from The New science of Expertise*, he writes, "the most effective and most powerful types of practice work by harnessing the adaptability of the human body and brain to create, step by step, the ability to do things that were previously not possible" Ericson & Pool (2016). He reminds us that there are no shortcuts in becoming great at anything, but practice can help a lot! Over the years, he has seen deliberate practice debunk the myths about natural talent and born endowments time and time again. Ericson considers this type of practice the "gold standard" for lifting people to expert performance. School leaders need to concentrate on the purposeful practice by choosing one area, one specific skill, and practicing that skill deeply until it is mastered, then moving on to a very specific next skill and doing the same thing. Ericson has found that more and more of the same practice does not make you better at what you do. For example, being a leader for 20 years does not make you an expert leader. Becoming an expert leader with resilient capacity takes years of practice on the specific skills, such as school administrative, school financing, classroom management, establishing relationships, implementing research based instructional strategies, creating quality assessments, analyzing data, differentiating instruction to meet students' needs, teachers' need and so on. Engaging in purposeful practice is important for leaders who want to be excellent and resilient at their work which develop the capacity of knowledge contribute to the best performance.

High Performing Head Teacher: Nurturing the Nurtures

Fostering educator resilience is the priority for high performing head teacher with hope to have a positive outcome on students, teachers, and communities. Teachers who are not resilient will be stressed, dissatisfied, frustrated, and poor role models for their students. In fact, they are likely to be in difficulties rather than progress for the development of students' resiliency. Healthy, self-confident, effective teachers will be able to support the resiliency needs of the students. For many years we have known about the power of teachers' resilient. Teacher resilient is related to teacher efficacy. Resilient leaders will result to the resilient teachers, students and at the end resilient school and community. Various research have shown that attitudes impact because when school officials desire to change things in the development of their pupils, they do so. Conversely when the school leaders believe that they cannot make a difference in the learning of students, then they do not.

Behavioral outcome their conceptual understanding in major content areas and established methods of involving various disciplines this through method of interaction education, Vazir, N., & Meher, R. (2010). Such team exercises proved highly received by selected students, who responded positively and encouragingly. According to Hicks, D. K. (2020), people that feel themselves can reach the aim they set outside to pursue are now more inclined to partake in the actions required to reach the objective and to persevere when faced with hurdles. Individuals with strong identity are often more willing to waste energy and keep trying than those with terrible self. When a someone has a strong sense of self, he or she is more likely to succeed in intellectual, full time position, and perhaps fitness activities than when they have a moderate degree of

self. Motivating people in efficacy is the most important part of leadership, "Leadership is getting people or inspire to do something they might not want to do," "It's impossible to please everyone, especially when the head teacher has to concentrate on the overall good of the group," and "You need to be a good follower in order to be a good leader." Whereas if principal can help more students and faculty obtain such understanding, they should be well on the approach to becoming real teacher leaders who can help create a successful future by raising standards from inside. It is clearly important to concentrate on the resiliency of leaders and educators, both are for their own well-being, and for the well-being of the students.

Handling Challenges Well

Resilience is the tendency to eventually recover or endure some type of hardship and hence have good consequences notwithstanding an adverse event or scenario is frequently defined as resilience, Vella, S. L. C., & Pai, N. B. (2019). Previous study also stated that, resilience is widely considered as a complex and multifaceted concept with neurological and behavioral roots that manifests itself throughout emotion, intellectual, organizational, relational, and cognitive dimensions of performance. As little more than a result, in general terms, researchers define resilience as emotional regulation following hardship, and this working can thoroughly examine dimensions. Yet, oftentimes when disaster, adversity and change occur, leaders respond as if it were unexpected. This response may cause people to fear the leader, and result in performing their daily work from a position of fear, rather than confidence with mental agility, positive emotion, and empowerment. Challenges and uncertainty spread just as fast as COVID-19 unexpectedly changes the school management and administration. Schools were suddenly closed, with no return date. If it did open and closed again the closure and the reopens remains unknown and it depends to the cases. Early years teachers face several hurdles when they begin their careers. This one has been recognized as a moment when they frequently feel extremely burdened, and the intricacy of the difficulties they confront leads many to abandon the field, Sullivan, A., & Johnson, B. (2012). The field has recognised these challenges and has made ongoing efforts to assist trainees through activities such as basic training, mentorship setups, and focused continuing education. Earlier studies have highlighted of policy and practise approaches that benefit newly qualified teachers in geographically isolated campuses. For instance, new methods that use browser technology to prevent occupational segregation, provide therapeutic induction, include excellent mentors, promote support networks, offer customized which was before educational programs have already been discovered. Principal schools and teachers could indeed predict which students will arrive with fresh or worsened trauma that would impair education. Something researchers can be certain of was that some of the heading back students have had severe disruptions in their lifestyles. The Education Ministry proposed a guidance for the head teacher to operate the school with guidelines in class and to ensure all the teachers and students safe. However, parent involvement may increase the level of success in reducing symptoms, intervention. Implemented by mental health professionals may be slightly more effective than those implemented by teachers and paraprofessionals. Therefore, it

is important to have a process in place for how changes and disaster will be handled: those made by the leader and those made by staff members. This will enable the high performing head teacher and team to derive benefits from changes and challenges from the disaster. Successful changes require committed and effective leadership to shape and communicate values, vision, and expectations. Those who lead such efforts need to model expected behaviours, to support and reward those who participate, and keep the focus on purposes. The emphasis should be on the function of high performing leaders, not on leaders per se, to encourage shared responsibility and initiative taking and to promote members' resiliency as they assume responsibilities and engage in the change effort.

Partnership of School and Communities

The environment is significantly affecting the leader's resiliency. Ultimately, the community is the locus in which the long-term ability of the school to promote student and educator resiliency is determined. If active partnerships of schools and communities are forged, resiliency can be promoted for everyone. There are countless examples of how citizens have united for a cause with the result of positive influence for the greater good. Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future (TLSF) is a UNESCO teacher scholarship program, Moore, M., O'Leary, P., Sinnott, D., & Russell O'Connor, J. (2019). This identifies eight fundamental lessons: project - based learning, narration, character building, differentiated instruction, provision, future issue solving, acquiring knowledge just outside of the classroom, and public lateral thinking. Along with information development, skills, beliefs, and behaviours must be considered. Self-control, specular reflection techniques must make way for more interdisciplinary, participatory instructional strategies.

Similarly, schools and communities are composed of individuals who may be ordinary people, but together they can do extraordinary program or activities to develop the schools. For a community to be healthy and resilient, it takes collaboration. Unfortunately, many schools and communities do not partner in productive ways. In fact, they may even view each other as rival. Educators and communities can choose to recognize their common destinies and create partnership for mutual benefit, or they can choose to struggle along in isolation from each other. Resilient schools and communities work together as partner. They work at understanding each other, finding common ground, building a shared vision, mission, commitment, and fostering the skill needed to make the partnership effective. The focus is on building close relationship between schools and their communities. This study will explore ways to increase awareness of the need for partnerships between schools and communities as well as strategies to make this happen. School leaders that place a priority on improving partnerships with their communities can create more positive relationships.

The need to do so is extremely pressing, not only because of the importance of partnering effectively but also because schools are being pressed to do more with fewer resources. When normal sources of support are limited or inadequate, school leaders have to seek more resources from their communities. This need is driving even more schools to tap

community resources and to work more collaboratively with them. In almost all communities, there are extraordinary resource people who are ready and able to provide voluntary services. For example,

- Many senior citizens have the time and interest to work with young people.
- Young retirees often want to contribute their energies and talents and give back their community.
- Accomplished individuals may want to “give back” by mentoring others; and
- Skills professional may want to share their interest with students.

Reform and restructuring efforts have required educators to rethink the ways they operate and see the necessity to partner with their communities. Site-based management and shared decision making are formats that encourage school leaders to collaborate with the community. School leader that opens their school’s door to community participation for site-based

management activities have experienced positive results. Slowly but surely, attitudes begin the change. Schools that have taken this route have discovered that the need to use all available resources from the community as well as from within the school.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

The transcripts were reread for familiarization. This was followed by a line-by-line coding of data individually. As for reference, each head teacher is defined by a number (HT1-HT7). The characteristics associated with each head teacher and their school are set out in Table 1. Reseacher’s intention was to explore through interviews at what degree to which the personality, experiences, behaviour, strategies to overcome challenging situations and outlook of each head teacher have an impact on his or her resilience and how their beliefs about themselves and their environment affect their ability. In order to get clear view, the role and the need to be resilient, the researcher was be able to probe it from two participants from state education department officer and the Ex-President of Head Teacher Council (A1 & A2).

Table 1. Key to High Performing Malaysia Primary School (6-12 Years old Pupils; Pre-school to Year 6 Pupils) Head teacher references used in the text.

Headteacher	Age	*GrEEL Batch (Year)	Number of pupils during the interview (Year 2020)	Male/Female	Year of Experience in headship
1	56	2018	300	Male	10
2	56	2018	750	Female	15
3	50	2018	300	Male	5
4	55	2018	550	Male	7
5	48	2018	450	Male	6
6	56	2020	850	Male	7
7	54	2020	1150	Male	21
Advisor to head teacher (A)					
State Education Department Officer (A1)	56	-	-	Male	None
Ex President of Headteacher Council (A2)	60	-	-	Male	26

*GrEEL – Great To Excellent Leader- 6 months leadership course for high-performing head teachers organized by Malaysian Educational Leadership Institute (Institut Aminudin Baki)

4. FINDINGS

Rather than providing researcher’s description of resilience and which was presented to participants, researcher probed the participants the meaning of resilience from their point of view and experience within their service as educator and administrator. Through language they used in the interview session, it revealed the same point of view for the interpersonal skill and the engagement of parents and community. HTs 1, 2, 4 and 5 all think of resilience as something which help them to overcome challenging situations. They believed it was developed within their experience since they were educator and administrator in previous schools. As administrators they realized that a lot of experiences of adversity and changes developed in them to

be more resilient. HT6 suggested that he feels himself to have the capacity and good command of interpersonal skill when he experience deals with challenging issues and crisis with a good command of communication skills and he did create an effective team with teachers, parents and community to solve the problems and issues at school which is Parents’ Buddy Support or ‘*Kumpulan Sokongan Ibu Bapa (KSIB)*’. HT6 had recently appointed as the president of state head teacher council. He is very confident and committed to lead effectively and rarely get stress. He said that inspiring and good role model will give impact to the school and community.

...that ability to overcome challenging situations need to have experience deals with crisis and good communication skill with teachers, staff and communities. Resilience at school comes from good communication skills

and positive inspiration to students, teachers, and parents. (HT6)

The findings of resilient head teachers from resilience school revealed two major contexts. Each of these are explained in the following sections.

Internal Context

The issues stated are only the edge of something like the iceberg in terms of a leader's social standing. Several problems and difficulties appear to be insurmountable. Education, pupils, relatives, and societies are all intertwined and tied to one another, both favourably and adversely. Figure 1 depicts this fundamental relationship. As seen in Figure 1, each component intersects with everything else. Whether institutions deal with high school senior concerns, for example, the links are mutual. Through another case, the linkages are multidimensional, like when parents and individuals communicate with educational establishments during the educational process. Strictly concentrating on one component ignores the possible implications, both good and bad, that the other organisms can have. This is critical to recognise it was not due to the interrelated and impact each other. Striving to modify one of these without somehow taking steps to improve the other is unlikely to have a long-term benefit. The key driving force there is a need to dimension comprises alliances throughout the three main components.

Resilient leaders know what it looks when done well. People that are resilient maintain their optimism in the face of adversity, Taylor, J. L., (2013). Several of the respondents had raised the concerns before to and throughout their educational practices. Individual difficulties have included lack of economic means required to complete a college education, physical sickness, live except for their marriages out of, and separation. The interviewees maintained their optimism over all the hurdles. People expressed ambivalent emotions when they learned that the schools will be completely treated as equals. Understanding that others in the class developed the diversity strategy, which resulted in some demoralisation and depression, the respondents stayed consistent and committed in the face of adversity.

They remain positive and optimistic even in the face of challenges or disappointments. They can inspire action toward the goal even after failed attempts. Comfortable to talk to and learn from. They can keep things in perspective and what techniques they use to model resiliency to the students, teachers, parents, and community. Research shows us that optimistic leaders get much better results than pessimistic ones. Leaders with a positive outlook are likely to get the same from their people. A proactive approach to modelling resiliency for the school by predicting or anticipating disappointments. And failures and planning the responses before it happens. Anticipating disappointments can help prepare the responses with resilience and thus model for others and develop resilient culture. The job of the school leaders is to guard their time from distractions that take them and their people off mission or focus. They have to keep the main thing the main thing. When the leader can model focus and deliberate action toward a few but powerful areas of work, the staff will follow suit. Fearlessly focusing is about leadership practices that will

move the school toward the goals and vision. Resilient leader lead with core values of excellence, Equity, and inclusion. It serves as a North Star for the leader and teachers and steadies the organization during difficult times.

External Context

The research authors addressed the traits and abilities of a resilient instructional leader, as well as the severity and intricacy of the position of an elementary school principal. Throughout this study, resilient teaching staff were recognised as somehow being self-sufficient, courageously focused on what makes a difference greatest, positive, having success and personal, spiritual, or religious concern, personality, consciousness, and becoming a strongly respectable man who emphasised the social component of the governance organisation and partnering with the community members.

They have moved any further than a limited logical, administrative perspective of their function in particular instances towards a more comprehensive, value systems strategy informed by first-hand opinion and choices, particularly when the school re-opens following the covid-19 mobility decision. They adhere to their basic beliefs, and a creative long-term vision is essential for most principals. Participants were put through their paces in demanding settings such as leading an eLearning lesson at school. According to Southworth (2008: 421), school leaders and managing directors are today confronting a wide variety of obstacles, which may be classified into five interconnected issues:

- Ensures that school leaders are prepared to address the diverse set of difficulties that they presently confront.
- Providing experienced, emerging, and prospective school leaders with the taking appropriate action, abilities, and capabilities they require.
- More widely disseminating strong leaders to lessen performance differences.
- Ensuring that centralized point in schools are suitable and durable in their setting.
- Enhancing administration and, when required, altering governance structures

Participants shared views and experiences that such group of school and families that work cooperatively for common causes are relatively unique. Covey (1989) identified communication as one of seven effective habits. The essence of this habit is to seek to understand and to be understood. They need to be nurtured, supported, and learn relationship skills or they will be in constant turmoil. Groups development is about building capacity through relationships. According to Vaida, S., & Şerban, D. (2021), there are five phases of group growth: forming, storming, norming, performing, and disbanding. Positive group development requires careful facilitation and leadership during each of these phases. Schools, students, families and communities requires effective communication skills. It true that, with sufficient motivation, communities can be mobilized to engage in improvement efforts. There were communities, individuals, and nations join together to help the victims of flood in Kuala

Krai in 2014 and recently Selangor and Padang 2021. People joined together and be resilient for common cause. Between these qualities was the significance of developing trusted connections with the community in order to enhance the probability of achieving, not just during the financing period, but also during the intended endurance period, Brindis, C. D. (2017). To be deeply embedded of the public, support team were required, as well as a tendency to participate and respond to relevant sectors such as relatives, suppliers, as well as other interested parties; and an acknowledgement that actually trying to simplify the project plan could conceivably establish far increasing difficulties to full integration than conducting proper years to completely start engaging societies. As in Figure 1, schools, students, families and communities are connected and challenges are frequently shared. Adolescents with familial issues who demonstrate deviant traits in work and in the classroom are some instances from the research. Those problems are unlikely to be solved except school leaders respond by focusing on the development of all three main parts.

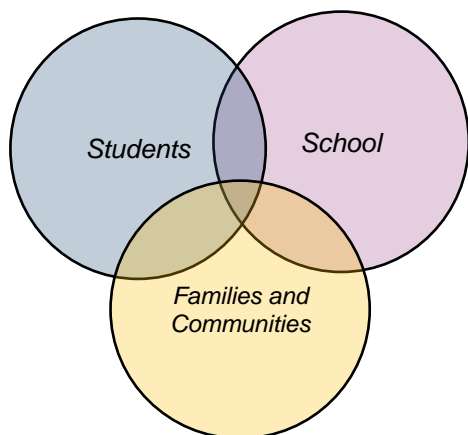


Figure 1: The Relationship Between Students, School, Families, and Communities

Obstacles that appear to be distinctive and restricted to one of the components, including such pupil intellectual disabilities, elementary school teacher anxiety, a negative classroom surroundings, a family instability for children and adults with disabilities, or obstacles to the community's overall fellow human, are, in fact, linked as well as integrated per each

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component. These constraints that the principals encountered were numerous and varied. The unskilled senior leader, middle leader and teachers in management and administrative work are much more challenging for head teacher to overcome. Considering the obstacles and adversity that educational institutions face. It's indeed easy for a head teacher towards becoming fascinated with complete problem-solving strategies. Admittedly, the resilient approach represents a dramatic fundamental change away from an emphasis on failure, destruction, disease, and obstacles. The concept of resilience focuses on happiness, tolerance, potential treatments, training programmes, and progress. That is a general plan that focuses on the bravery and believing that things could and would succeed. As Bennis (2007) noted that he believe in adaptive capacity or resiliency is the significant quality in a leader, of anyone else for that matter, who have the inspiration to lead in a healthy and meaningful life.

5. CONCLUSION

Each school is unique. However, there are common organizationally based dynamics that cut across the school levels and geographic locations. Head teachers need to understand the dynamics of modifying attitudes, structures, and behaviours and respond to them effectively. If they do, they can make a positive difference for students, educators, and the community. Research has emerged that personal resiliency resulted from the capacity of being positive in social relationships, positive in attitude and emotion, the ability to control one's own behaviour, and capacity of competence in personal character. They also must inhibit growth and development. They remain positive and optimistic even in the face of challenges and disappointments. The study shows us that optimistic leaders get much better results than pessimistic ones. Head teachers with a positive outlook are likely to get the same from their teachers, staff and students. Head teachers whom narrowly focus on academic basics and are preoccupied with maintenance tasks such as budgets and books, miss the opportunity to support the development of students, educator, staff, and community members' life-guiding skills. Head teachers need to take a comprehensive perspective about their role in life-guiding skill development, a perspective that views all participants as members of learning communities. Learning communities are concerned with the growth needs of all, not just some, of the members.

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