PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY (PLC) PRACTICES AND EDUCATORS EFFICACY (EE) LEVEL AMONG THE FORM SIX EDUCATORS

Gunasegaran Karuppannan[1], Hatnin Bin Duari[2] and Melissa Wane Manogharan[3]

[1]Centre For Graduate Studies, Universiti Selangor, Malaysia
[2]SMK Tandek Kota Marudu Sabah,
[3]Senior Business Lecturer, President College, 16-1, Jalan Raja Laut, Kuala Lumpur, 50400 Kuala Lumpur

ABSTRACT: *This research is done to identify the Professional Learning Community (PLC) Practices and Educators Efficacy (EE) Level among the Form Six Educators in schools of the four districts in the North West Coast of Sabah. Around 108 respondents were involved in this research. Data were collected using questionnaire form that measured PLC and EE respectively. PLC Practices were measured with 42 items and EE Level with 12 items. PLC research aspects were Norm and Value Development Domain, Student's Learning Domain, Collaborative Practice Domain, Personal Mutual Practice Domain and Reflective Dialogue Domain. Whilst EE level research aspects was Self-Control and Achievement in the Community. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 software. Analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistic of T-test, Pearson Correlation and Regression. The result of the data analysis showed that PLC Practices and EE Level among the form six educators was moderately high. Pearson Correlation analysis showed that there was a significant relation between the PLC Practices and EE Level (r=0.662, k<0.01), where the relation was positive and average. The result of the independent T-test sample showed that there was no significant difference of PLC Practices according to gender (t=0.518, k>0.05). Parallel to PLC Practices, the EE Level independent T-test sample too showed insignificant difference where the EE Level score was (t=1.188, k>0.05), in a sense that both male and female were indifference. This implies that demographic factor such as gender did not show significant difference to the PLC Practices and EE Level.*

KEYWORD: Professional Learning Community, Educators Efficacy, Teacher Quality

INTRODUCTION

The growing national education demands for change towards improving the quality of the national education system in order to realize the aspiration of becoming an education hub in the region. There are various reformations of knowledge and information boom that becoming the trends in the benchmarking of national education quality. This change happened so drastic, demanding every individual in the field of education to do a paradigm shift,and also streamlining their own knowledge and professionalism skills. In realizing this goal, the country has high hopes for educators in the country. Educators at all levels throughout their careers need to master this new knowledge and understanding so that they are always relevant to current demands and to be effective and impact on student's learning. (Amin Senin, 2008).

Today's educational changes require the leadership of a school to be responsible in ensuring the teacher's capacity is at a high level. To ensure that this level remains good and effective,

school leaders should play an important role in determining their teachers to always learn and dare to implement changes in determining the students to learn efficiently. In other words, this process requires the involvement of all teachers as a whole from the bottom-up. Education is seen as a field that plays an important role as a catalyst for economic development and nationhood. The ability of the education world to provide knowledge to the community can create economic, social and political players that would become the assets in developing the country as what Malaysia wished. Education must be developed to achieve the goal of national vision. World-class human development can bring Malaysia into the global economic competition of the 21st century.

At the administrative level, school needs a dynamic and daring leadership to develop quality human capital among teachers and students. Hence, the approach of school leaders towards the development of human capital should be holistically aimed at the development of knowledge, skills, intellectuals, and progressive attitudes in culture with high ethical and moral values (Senge, 1990). To achieve this goal, school leaders should not deny the importance of developing the potential of teachers as well as lifelong learning opportunities among teachers. According to Senge (1990) to effectively manipulate existing human resources in an organization, leaders in an organization should ensure that all individuals within an organization are ready to learn at every opportunity. Hence, school teachers can be led and encouraged to study continuously (Du Four &Eaker, 1998) to improve the education quality of a teacher as a human resource that can be honed through learning. This practice is in line with the era of globalization that characterizes a community not based on its size but on the basis of its knowledge.

Leadership quality as well as teacher quality is actually built so that the goal of creating a student with the best achievement is easy to achieve. School leaders and teachers are actually given training for their respective professionalism enhancements by specific units in the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE), such as the Teacher Education Division (BPG) and Aminudin Baki Institute (IAB). Among the initiatives undertaken by IAB for principals and head masters is the NPQL Course. It is a leadership course principals and headmasters. Similarly, for teachers, BPG has the initiative to introduce the Professional Learning Community (PLC) to ensure the sustainability of teachers' quality, the topic that to be highlighted in this study focusing on the practice of Professional Learning Community (PLC) and teachers' efficacy in Form Six School.

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a conceptual framework that demonstrates the paradigm shift in school, where teachers who work independently become collaborative working culture. Schools who have the PLC feature are encouraging schools and create collaborative learning values that emphasize dynamic discussions among teachers, pupils, principals, parents and school communities to improve the quality and learning of school children. School Learning Community is a professional group that continuously meets with the aim of improving learning among teachers and students. They are members of different communities in forms and contexts but share the basic beliefs and values. (Roslee Talip, 2011).

Research Problem: This study was conducted to identify the relationship between   PLC on teacher efficacy. Most teachers are still practicing traditional methods in delivering their teaching, which relies solely on passive lecture methods whereas   PLC have already been introduced. This further contributes to the decline in performance achievement among students, especially those with low achievers.

The quality of learning and teaching is often an issue and is often a topic of discussion when it comes to talking about the quality and performance of student achievement in school. The learning and teaching aspect is indeed a key element and is especially important in addressing today's student learning issues. As the findings that have been obtained. In the Ministry of Education report (2013), from the data collection in 2011, there are only 12% of the 41 research schools who are using the high level teaching methods, with the application of many pedagogical best practices, while 38% were moderate and 50% of teaching is delivered at the unsatisfactory level. Based on the findings of the study, it has shown that the following situation has also occurred in the research school.

Although various initiatives and methods have been planned and some have been implemented by the school to improve the performance of each student in the school, it shows discouraging results due to lack of cooperation among the school community (HamidahYusof, 2014). As such, as highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, the ministry has introduced a Professional Learning Community module (KPP / PLC) to address issues and problems related to teaching and learning in schools.

In the context of this study, the implementation of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) module is still in its early stages and it was found that many teachers in Malaysia are less familiar with the concept of the implementation. Based on the experience of researcher, the lack of exposure about the Professional Learning Community among teachers in schools and teachers are less prepared to share personal practices with other colleagues caused a low level of understanding of PLC. The personal practice here referred to the teaching methods and strategies, self-developed modules or exercises as well as other teaching aid tools. Workload factors and time constraints also contribute to the lack of sharing of personal practice among teachers such as teaching materials and teaching methods.

Despite, collaborative cultures in the teachers'community alsohave been found to be less practiced in improving the progress and achievement of students in school. The statement was supported by Elbousty and Bratt (2010), in their study that there were teachers who felt the collaboration was inappropriate and irrelevant and considered it as a waste of time. If this is not resolved immediately, the learning environment at school will be bland and school goals will not be achieved in tandem. Therefore, in order to resolve the issues, the researcher sought to find the answers through this study. The researcher has tried to explore the understanding, acceptance and practice among teachers towards the implementation of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) towards the improvement of learning and teaching in schools.

While it is believed that PLC could have an impact on the improvement of teachers' professionalism and subsequent teacher self-efficacy and their relationship with self-efficacy of teachers but study by Cowley (1999) and Wheathers (2009) found that there is no significant influence for PLC on teacher"s self-efficacy. However, is the findings of this study can be generalized into the context of education in Malaysia? Does PLC promoted by MOE have significant influence on teacher's self- efficacy? This could not be answered accurately as studies on these two aspects have not been conducted comprehensively in schools in Malaysia. Therefore, the study on PLC and the self-efficacy of the teachers is carried out on a small scale, at the North West Coast Division of Sabah which comprises four districts and involves 15 schools to get a brief overview of the influence of PLC on the efficacy of teachers in Malaysia.

Research Objectives: the purpose of the study is to identify the implementation stage of the practice of Community Professional Teaching and Teacher Efficiency among the Form Six Teachers. Is also to analyze the gender differences with the Form Six teacher's Efficiency. The third objective is to evaluate the relationship between the Professional Learning Community practices with the Form Six teacher's efficacy.

Literature Review: The Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a school-based professional development program that has proven to be very successful abroad and is increasingly popular in most countries. PLC refer to teacher-centered development programs at the school level and need to be created so that teachers are vulnerable with the opportunity to proactively improve their professionalism by developing a professional learning community with co-workers. PLC is a continuous practice of teacher professional development and encourages teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues support and reflective practices seen to have the potential to change the practice of teacher teaching and improve the effectiveness of student learning.

Hord (1997) defines PLC as 'professional communities of learners' and refers to it as an effort of teachers and administrators in a school to identify knowledge and share the learning. While DuFour (2006) defines PLC as a highly committed teacher in executing collaborative work, especially in collective inquiry activities and action research to produce better insights. Hence, it can be explained that the PLC is a community that forms a culture that shows all the school's students learn and become pupils. Every individual in the school community plays their roles and is responsible for each other to learn to ensure the well-being of all school members. They always seek and share learning to improve the effectiveness of school and pupils' learning. The establishment of this knowledge culture shows PLC as a community that practices lifelong learning among the school community. The existence of this culture can develop internal capacity which is an effort towards promoting teachers to become experts in their respective fields.

The term PLC appears from the Organization and Literature Theories in human relationships. Outside the country, the same term emerged in educational research in the early 1960s when researchers introduced the concept as an alternative to reduce teacher isolation culture. When the PLC concept was introduced in the field of education overseas, this concept was widely accepted among educators. Research now shows that the school, which is a bureaucratic organization, is transformed into a school that practices PLC practice that emphasizes collaboration between colleagues (Dufour&Eaker, 1998).

According to Nolan (2009), schools operating with PLC practices encourage learning in the community. According to the PLC Model by Hord (1997) and Hipp and Huffman (2003), the dimensions for PLC are: a) Sharing and supporting leadership dimensions show that leadership is distributed among school community based on the values they possess and trust among each other. b) The dimensions of values, mission and vision goals refer to teachers and school administrators who share their vision and work collectively to improve school activities.

c) The collective dimension of learning and application illustrates team learning culture in an organization. d) The dimensions of sharingpersonal practice is considered in the observation, encouragement and sharing of new practices e) The dimension of the supportive situation reflects a committed school by showing support in maintaining the school improvement process continuously.

The primary purpose of creating a professional learning practice in schools is to improve the quality of teachers. Teacher's quality is a critical issue as the need for radical and large-scale improvements in education, especially schools, is very urgent and globally (Hallinger, 2010). Even according to Mustafa and Norasmah (2008), lately many criticisms have been voiced about the quality of teachers. There is still a gap between what is expected to be born through a curriculum that is formulated with the practice that exists in the delivery of the curriculum by the teacher. Thus the ability of teachers to apply knowledge and implement improvements in school is very important. This statement is supported by Harris (2011) stating that the most important thing in doing lasting improvements is improving the quality of teaching and learning of teachers or in other words developing professionalism in teachers.

In fact, the quality of the teacher is also on the individual's own teacher. Among the individual self-esteem of teachers commonly studied are teachers' motivation (Hoy &Miskel, 2006); moral teachers (Weathers, 2009; Rowland, 2011), and teacher self-efficacy (Weathers, 2009; Ross & Gray, 2006). However, this study focuses only on the self-efficacy of teachers. Teacher's self-esteem refers to the self-esteem of one's ability to teach and motivate students regardless of family's ability and background (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The term is also referred to as an individual's balance of self-esteem in carrying out teaching tasks that drive towards planning and coordinating the behaviors needed to achieve the expected task goals.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), in his explanation divide the teacher's self-efficacy into three dimensions: a). Teaching strategy refers to teacher's consideration in using strategies to ensure students understand what teachers are learning. b) The involvement of the student is the strategy used by the teacher to encourage the involvement of students in the classroom c) Class management referring to the determination of teachers in class control and providing a conducive learning environment.

The study by Richardson (2011), shows that high efficacyteacher improves student achievement. In addition, his study also found that the achievement of students learning has significant relationships with the dimensions of classroom management, teaching strategies and student engagement.

Teacher's efficacy is often linked as a key to improving the quality of a school and is found to have significant relationships with some research findings such as teacher behavior in the classroom, student's learning and teacher changes through staff development (Smylie in Ebmeier, 1999). According to Bandura (1977) in social cognitive theory, humans have the ability to do something they want but rely on several factors that act in reciprocity; personal factors, environmental factors and behavioral factors. These three factors affect someone to determine self-esteem and be influenced by the choices and actions taken. One's behavior is not merely dependent on environmental and biological factors but resulted from the dynamic relationship between the external factors, the internal factors and the current and past behavior of individuals (Bandura, 1977).

Many studies have been conducted on efficacy such as Khalid Johari, Zurida Ismail, Shuki Osman & Ahmad Tajuddin Othman (2009), which examines the influence of teacher background factors on teacher's self-efficacy, that found the significant differences in the level of teacher self-efficacy between teachers different levels of teaching profession (diploma and degree) and teaching experience. This study is contrary to Robert and Ming (2010) and Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) who found that there is no significant relationship

93

between teacher's self-efficacy and their teaching experience. While Johari (2010) who conducteda study on experiential teaching and self-efficacyfound that there is a weak significant relationship between the two variables.

The study by Coladarci (1992) related to the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher's commitment found that the self-efficacy of teachers became a significant predictor to the level of teacher commitment. This means that teachers with high level of self-efficacy tend to have a high level of commitment as well. Highly trained teachers have the ability to bring changes to attitudes, motivation and student's learning. In contrast, teachers with low teaching practices that use teacher-centered teaching will result in lower student achievement. According to Lim (1997), many early retirement teachers feel less confident about their ability to teach and carry out their duties at school. Low-performing teachers will try to avoid facing difficult teaching tasks, focusing on obstacles without focusing on efforts to overcome such obstacles. It is also easy to give up and implicate school performance.

Research Method: This study uses survey method, using questionnaire as an instrument in the collection of research data. According to Noraini (2010), the questionnaire method is an effective way because it does not require much time and expense, even allowing large amounts of data collection. This study involved teachers of the Form Six schools in the North West Coast Division of Sabah.

Pilot research, according to MohamadNajib (1999), is necessary to determine whether the items of the questionnaire should to be maintained or modified to obtain the reliability value of each measured dimension. In this study the reliability test results show alpha cronbach values for each dimension are between 0.861 - 0.961 as described by Noraini (2010) to be acceptable for use in a study. Overall, the instrument of study has high reliability (cronbach alpha) ($\alpha \geq .90$).

A total of 108 out of a total of 150 Form Six Academic Teachers in Sabah's North West Coast Division schools have been randomly selected as respondents for the study. The sample size of this study was determined based on the proportion of study population (Krejice& Morgan, 1970).

FINDINGS

Table 1: Professional Teaching Community practice level

Dimension	min	sp	level
Construction of Norma and Value	59.96	4.97	High
Student Learning	36.92	3.93	High
Collaborative practice	35.56	3.36	High
Sharing personal practice	16,74	1.98	High
Reflective dialogue	24.31	2.67	High
	34.69	3.38	High

The level of practice of Professional Teaching Community is analyzed based on mean value and standard deviation. Based on Table 1, the study found that the level of practice of Professional Teaching Professionals (PLC) was entirely high with a mean score of 34.69 (3.38). Based on the dimensions, the analysis shows that the dimensions of Construction Norms and Values are the highest, mean score = 59.96 (sp = 4.97) followed by student

learning with min score = 36.92 (sp = 3.93), collaborative practice with mean score = 35.56 (sp = 3.36) the dimension of Reflective Dialogue is the score = 24.31 (sp-2.67) and dimension Sharing personal practice with mean score = 16.74 (sp = 1.98). This result shows that the Form Six School teachers in the North West Coast Division of Sabah have a high level of professional Learning Community (PLC).

Table 2: The Difference between Professional Learning by Gender

Gender	N	Min	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
Male	47	172.30	14.13	0.518	0.605
Female	60	170.87	14.22		

Based on Table 2, shows the results of independent sample t-test has no significant difference in Professional Learning Community Practice by gender. This means that the Professional Learning Community Practice for male and female teachers is the same.

Table 3

Gender	N	Min	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
Male	47	49.74	4.40	1.188	0.237
Female	60	48.54	5.77		

Table 3 describes the results of independent sample tests showing that there is no significant difference in teacher efficacy by gender. The relationship between the Professional Practice of the Community with Teacher's Efficiency shows the results of the findings in detail, where (r = .662, k <0.01). This indicates that if Professional Learning Community Practice scores increase, the Teacher's Efficiency score will also increase and vice versa if a Professional Learning Community Practice score decreases, the Teacher's Efficiency score will also decrease.

Table 4: Relationships between Professional Learning Community Practices and Teacher Efficiency

		Teacher's Efficacy
Professional Learning Community Practice	Pearson Correlation	0.662**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	107

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 (2 ways)

The conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between the Professional Learning Practice and the efficacy of teachers in the Form Six schools in Pre-U schools of the North West Coast Division.

CONCLUSION

Teacher's efficacy is one of the most important aspects of teachers who are often associated with their contribution in improving school effectiveness. The findings show that the level of self-efficacy of teachers in the school is high. The findings of this study are parallel to the study by Khalid Johari et al. (2009), ZaidatulAkmaliah (2008) and Kiu (2006) who found that the teachers who responded to their studies also have a high degree of self-efficacy. This study found that there was a significant relationship between KPP / PLC practice and teachers' efficacy. This finding is consistent with the findings of Stegall (2011), Rhyne (2011) and Wheathe

The findings show that there is a significant relationship between KPP / PLC and teacher efficacy but the relationship is at a weak level. This is in line with the findings of Romeo (2010) which also found a significant but weak relationship between these two dimensions of the variable in his study. This finding suggests that PLC and teacher's efficacy have very poor relationships to relate to each other. The findings also found that the differences in practice of professional learning community by gender showed independent results of independent samples that showed that there was no significant difference in the Professional Learning Community Practice by gender (t = .518, k> .05). This means that the Professional Learning Community Practice for male and female teachers is the same.

The discussion on the topic of the Professional Learning Community (KLPP / PLC) has open our eyes and minds to see and evaluate several things, such as the advantages and benefits of PLC. In addition, it has also made us aware of some of the weaknesses that we can improve. Through the findings of this study, we have been given a new perception of what needs to be improved on the school and human resources of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE). In order to smoothen the concept of PLC amongst these teachers, it is imperative that all school administrators, especially principals and teachers, should be given a clear explanation of the objectives and ways of implementing PLC in school. Based on the findings from the observations of the Ministry of Education (MOE), the absence of the principals' knowledge of the concept of Professional Learning Community (PLC) has been a stumbling block to the implementation of this Professional Learning Community concept.

Principals or school administrators are the key to the smooth running of all the programs implemented at the school level, the strong knowledge of this party on the concepts intended to help the successful implementation of the PLC concept. The Ministry of Education has been responsible for building and preparing entities involved in the realization of each planned program such as the implementation of the Professional Learning Community (PLC), organizing in house training to school leadership and teachers - in order to understand the transformation agenda and be able to implement the agenda whenever they need, such as the PLC concept. Hence, it is hoped that the Ministry of Education, the State Education Department, the District Education Office and the schools will provide the best possible spaces for teachers to further improve school achievement.

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