

# The Influence of Principal's Instructional Leadership and Emotional Intelligence towards the Self-Efficacy of Teachers in Full Boarding Schools

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**Abstract:** *The objective of the study is to analyse two variables which are the principals' instructional leadership and their emotional intelligence which can predict the level of self-efficacy among teachers in full boarding schools in Perak. The quantitative survey design study used the survey questionnaire to collect data. The strongest dominant determinant to teachers' self-efficacy is the dimension of self-management among the principals of the full boarding schools in Perak ( $\beta = .786$ ,  $t = 4.307$  dan  $p = .000$ ). The  $t$ -test conducted showed that the dimension is significant at  $p < .05$  with the  $R$  value of ( $R^2 = .618$ ) indicating that the dimension of self-management contributes 61.8% towards teachers' self-efficacy. The study provides important information and data related to the level of self-efficacy among teachers in the full boarding schools in Perak. This is because the study is a one-of-a-kind study that specifically evaluates the relationship between teachers' level of self-efficacy and instructional leadership of principals and emotional intelligence of the principals. Therefore, this study will become an important guide for future studies aiming to explore the aspects of self-efficacy of teachers in boarding schools.*

**Keywords:** principal, teacher, leadership, instructional, efficacy

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## 1. Introduction

Boarding schools in Malaysia are a prominent part of the Malaysian education system. Boarding schools also represent the most excellent students in the country, which means that the boarding schools also require high-quality education from teachers who are excellent. Teachers' self-efficacy is considered as the most important element of education because it determines the performance of teachers which in return influences overall education effectiveness (Hajovsky, Chesnut & Jensen, 2020). Therefore, a significant amount of research has been dedicated towards understanding teachers' self-efficacy and the aspects that can increase the level of self-efficacy among teachers. One factor is related to the principals in schools where leadership styles and emotional intelligence are related (Li & Liu, 2022). Leadership styles are often regarded as primary factors when it comes to determining school effectiveness and education performance. In one way or the other, the leadership style of a principal will have some level of effect on the teacher especially in terms of their self-efficacy. In that sense, instructional leadership is deemed to be highly influential over the teachers' own self-efficacy (Goddard, Bailes & Kim, 2021). Instructional leadership is a leadership style that has direct effects on teaching performance and thus, can be considered as a powerful

determinant of teachers' self-efficacy when it comes to practicing pedagogy (Ma & Marion, 2021).

On the other hand, principals' emotional intelligence has also been discussed extensively with regards to school performance and ultimately, teachers' self-efficacy (Debes, 2021). Teachers' level of self-efficacy is related to the interpersonal relationships between teachers and the administrator or the principal. In that sense, the principal's emotional intelligence would definitely play a major role in influencing the relationship which in return affects the self-efficacy of teachers. Principal's level of emotional intelligence and the practice of instructional leadership are two vital factors that can influence the self-efficacy of teachers extensively (Polatcan, Arslan & Balci, 2023). Therefore, the current study explores the two variables as indicators of teachers' level of self-efficacy. The study will be conducted based on the boarding schools in the state of Perak.

## **2. Statement of Problem**

The most critical issue is the level of teachers' self-efficacy in Perak which is evident in the teachers' performance report. Based on the report of the Malaysian Education Quality Standard (*Standard Kualiti Pendidikan Malaysia*), only 10 percent of teachers from boarding schools in the Perak obtained excellent level scores (85.00% to 100%) when they were evaluated for Standard 4 which is the standard for teaching and learning (JPN Perak, 2024). This indicates that teachers in the boarding schools have not achieved the required excellent level of teaching and learning qualities. On the contrary, 60 percent of teachers in those boarding schools scored average scores (55 to 69 percent) based on the Standard 4 instrument. This is considered very low because these teachers are teachers at boarding schools. The expectation is to have most teachers in the excellent category of teaching quality in boarding schools. The low teaching quality among teachers indicates that there are several severe problems with their self-efficacy which is affected by the instructional leadership of principals.

There are several indicator standards in the instrument of the Malaysian Education Quality Standard and these standards indicate the overall quality of a school. The fourth standard not only evaluates the teachers' teaching quality but also reflects on the principals' practices. Most importantly, the instrument evaluates the practice of instructional leadership among the school principals. When teachers achieve the average level in standard 4, it directly shows that the instructional leadership practice is also at an average level. There is a relationship between the teaching performance and the principal's instructional leadership (Alanoglu, 2022). Past studies like Jalapang and Raman (2020) and Musa, Nazarudin, Noordin, Juati and Juhumin (2020) have shown that principals' instructional leadership practices have significant effects on teachers' self-efficacy. Although these studies were conducted in schools in Malaysia, the studies did not focus specifically on boarding schools.

On top of that, studies have reported that the emotional intelligence of principals has an effect over teachers' self-efficacy. For example, Abdul Said and Haniza Jadin (2020) stated that teachers feel demotivated and lacked the self-efficacy needed to achieve better teaching performance when their principals fail to show proper level of emotional intelligence. In a study involving secondary schools in Malaysia including fully residential secondary schools, Kin and Kareem (2020) found that principal's emotional intelligence had significant impacts towards teachers' self-efficacy, and this affected their teaching performance. However, these boarding schools or fully residential secondary schools were not the schools from Perak. Additionally, the fact that principal's emotional intelligence plays a major role in determining

the principal's performance at work further asserts that it can have critical implications towards teachers' teaching and learning performance (Andriansyah, Rafsanjani & Priastuti, 2022).

There are several gaps which motivate the current study. Firstly, beginning from the year 2020, not many studies involving teachers and principals in boarding schools in Perak have explored the variables such as teachers' self-efficacy, principals' emotional intelligence and instructional leadership. A current study is crucial because it will provide valuable information about the level of self-efficacy among teachers in the boarding schools in Perak. Next, there is an overall gap in terms of studies focusing on boarding schools and its principals in Malaysia.

### **3. Research Objective**

The objective of the study is to analyse two variables which are the principals' instructional leadership and their emotional intelligence which can predict the level of self-efficacy among teachers in full boarding schools in Perak. As such, the hypothesis of the study states:

H01: There are no dimensions of principals' instructional leadership and emotional intelligence that predict the level of teachers' self-efficacy.

### **4. Theoretical Framework**

Primarily, there are three models that make up the theoretical framework in the current study. The models are Goleman's emotional model (2001), Hallinger's instructional model (2000) and self-efficacy model by Tschannen-Moran dan Hoy (2001). Hallinger's (2000) model of instructional leadership is based on the theory of three major elements for instructional leadership. The three aspects of instructional leadership by Hallinger (2000) are defining the school mission, managing instructional programs and formulating the school climate. Based on Hallinger (2000), these are three main aspects of leadership under the instructional leadership theory. Goleman's emotional intelligence theory suggests that there are four important aspects of emotional intelligence. Goleman (2001) suggested that self-realization, self-management, social awareness and management of relationships are four important elements that make up the emotional intelligence model. Finally, Tschannen-Moran dan Hoy (2001) states that the self-efficacy model is made up of three important elements. The elements are efficacy in teaching strategies, efficacy in classroom management and efficacy in terms of student participation. These are the models that make up the conceptual framework of the current study.

### **5. Review of Past Studies**

A study by Siti Nazalia Kiprawi (2020) explored the leadership styles of school headmaster and the level of self-efficacy of teachers in a primary school in Negeri Sembilan. The survey found that most of the practices employed by the headmaster indicated the use of instructional leadership. At the same time, the study also found that the level of self-efficacy among the teachers was also high. It clearly shows that a high level of instructional leadership can influence a higher level of self-efficacy among teachers. This is further confirmed by Liu, Bellibaş and Gümüş (2021) who used the structural equation model to find that instructional leadership is positively and directly related to teachers' self-efficacy. On the other hand, a study by Özdemir, Sahin and Öztürk (2020) reported a moderate level of relationship between the principal's level of instructional leadership and teachers' level of self-efficacy. Additionally, Goddard, Bailes and Kim (2021) reported that when school principals have confidence to apply

instructional leadership, it can have positive effects towards the level of self-efficacy among the teachers. Goddard's et al (2021) study is considered to be highly significant because it involves a large sample of 1623 teachers across midwestern schools in the United States of America. On top of that, their study also found that when instructional leadership is applied confidently, teachers' level of self-efficacy increases and causes a significant impact in students' achievement in the schools. The difference in terms of results, especially in the relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' self-efficacy is often related to the context of the studies conducted which involves teachers and principals of differing backgrounds.

According to Gómez-Leal, Holzer, Bradley, Fernández-Berrocal and Patti (2022), emotional intelligence is very important for principals because it determines effective leadership styles. 35 articles analysed by Gómez-Leal et al (2022) showed that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of effective leadership strategies among school principals. A very relatable past study to the current study is a study by Chen and Guo (2020). Although their study did not specifically explore teachers' level of self-efficacy, the study evaluated the principals' emotional intelligence and instructional leadership practices to predict the teachers' instructional strategies. The study was conducted based on the premise that principals who have high levels of emotional intelligence and are able to practice instructional leadership effectively are able to help teachers improvise their teaching strategies. The basis for emotional intelligence in the study by Chen and Guo (2020) is similar to the current study because it is based on Goleman's emotional intelligence theory. Chen and Guo (2020) confirmed that the high level of emotional intelligence of principals and their practice of instructional leadership predicts a higher level of instructional strategies practiced by teachers. Chen and Guo (2020) conducted the study based on primary schools in a province in China.

The analysis of past studies found that there are many studies which have studied the variables, instructional leadership, emotional leadership and self-efficacy. Studies conducted locally such as Abdul Said Ambotang and Haniza Jadin (2020), Siti Nazalia Kiprawi (2020), Hassan, Ahmad and Boon (2019), Hassan et al., (2019), Anita Ithnin (2018), Ismail, Don, Husin and Khalid (2018), Ismail et al., (2018), Tai and Kareem (2018), Chong, Chow, Lee, Tiow and Wong (2017) and Shafinaz Maulod, Piaw, (2017) have all researched the variables related to the current study. Overseas, studies by Salamiah Sari Dewi (2022), Dalimunthe (2022), Muhardi Darma (2022), Constantia et. al (2021), Pellerone (2021) and Anusha Selvadura (2021) have all shown similar results where principals' emotional intelligence and instructional leadership predicted the self-efficacy of teachers. However, the analysis showed that there are no current studies which focus specifically on full boarding schools.

## **6. Limitations**

There are several limitations in the current study. Firstly, the study depends entirely on the quantitative approach whereby teacher respondents provide the data for the leadership aspects and the emotional intelligence levels of the principals. Therefore, the data is limited to the teachers' point of view. There is no data collected to understand the level of instructional leadership practiced and the level of emotional intelligence from the principals themselves. Additionally, the study is limited because of the location of the study. The study focuses on a very specific population due to the nature of the problems that encouraged the study in the first place. However, the study still has great significance.

## 7. Research Significance

The study provides important information and data related to the level of self-efficacy among teachers in the full boarding schools in Perak. This is because the study is a one-of-a-kind study that specifically evaluates the relationship between teachers' level of self-efficacy and instructional leadership of principals and emotional intelligence of the principals. Therefore, this study will become an important guide for future studies aiming to explore the aspects of self-efficacy of teachers in boarding schools. This study will bridge the gap between the past studies which have not addressed certain matters pertaining the teachers' level of self-efficacy in boarding schools in Malaysia. The findings can be used for future studies focusing on issues related to boarding schools' teachers and principals.

## 8. Methodology

The study is basically a quantitative survey design study. The primary data collection tool used by the researcher is the survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher by giving specific focus to the variables studied. The purpose for choosing the quantitative survey method is mainly because it allows the researcher to be unbiased when collecting the data (Mohajan, 2020). Plus, it allows the researcher to access more respondents on a larger scale. The population of respondents in the current study are teachers at full boarding schools in the state of Perak. Based on the data from the Perak State Education Department (2021), there are 476 teachers in full boarding schools in the state.

The researcher used a simple random sampling method to select the samples for the current study. The random sampling method is proven to be a simple method of forming a sample group without any kind of biasness (Mohajan, 2020). The names of the teachers were placed in a box. 35 samples were randomly picked out to form the unit of analysis for pilot study. 130 samples were chosen randomly for the exploratory factor analysis. Subsequently, the confirmation factor analysis was conducted for the variables in the study.

## 9. Results

The main purpose of the study is to determine the variable which is the dominant determinant that encourages the self-efficacy of teachers in the full boarding schools in the Perak state. A multiple regression analysis is used to identify the dominant determinant of teachers' self-efficacy. The regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis of the study which is:

H01: There are no dimensions of principals' instructional leadership and emotional intelligence that predict the level of teachers' self-efficacy.

Table 1 shows the multiple regression analysis (stepwise) whereby the results indicate that one out of four dimensions of principals' emotional intelligence which is the dimension of self-management has a correlation of 61.8%. Additionally, one out of the three dimensions of instructional leadership which is the dimension of managing instructional programs has a correlation of 58.3% which is also statistically significant to teachers' self-efficacy. In relation to the findings, the strongest dominant determinant to teachers' self-efficacy is the dimension of self-management among the principals of the full boarding schools in Perak ( $\beta = .786$ ,  $t = 4.307$  dan  $p = .000$ ). The t-test conducted showed that the dimension is significant at  $p < .05$  with the R value of ( $R^2 = .618$ ) indicating that the dimension of self-management contributes 61.8% towards teachers' self-efficacy.

This projects that when principals’ emotional intelligence scores increase by a unit, the self-efficacy of the teachers increases by 786 units. The findings clearly show that the principals’ emotional intelligence for the dimension of self-management is the primary determinant that contributes towards teachers’ self-efficacy. On the other hand, the other determinant which contributed 58.3% towards teachers’ self-efficacy is the dimension of management of instructional programs ( $\beta = .763$ ,  $t = 5.601$  dan  $p = .000$ ). Similarly, the t-test conducted showed that the dimension is significant at  $p < .05$  with the R value of ( $R^2 = .583$ ). This means that every time the score for principals’ instructional leadership for the dimension of management of instructional programs increases by one unit, the self-efficacy of teachers increases by 763 units. The results clearly reflect that the dimension of managing instructional programs is the second strongest determinant contributing 58.3% towards teachers’ self - efficacy.

**Table 1: Multiple Regression Analysis (Stepwise): Predictors of Teachers’ Self-efficacy**

Dimension	B	Beta ( $\beta$ )	Nilai t	Sig. t	R <sup>2</sup>	Prediction (%)
Self-Management	.271	.786	2.475	.000	.618	61.80
Managing Instructional Programs	.388	.763	5.363	.000	.538	58.30
Constant	3.11		9.879	.000		
R	.786					
R <sup>2</sup>	.618					
R <sup>2</sup> (Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> )	.614					
(Standard Error)	.672					
dk	2					
F		163.173				
Sig. F	.00					

Table 2 shows the results of the T-test whereby there is a relationship between the two independent variables towards the dependent variable. The principals’ emotional intelligence dimension which is self-management has a significant relationship with the teachers’ self-efficacy,  $F(2, 202) = 163.173$ ,  $p < .05$ . This shows that the results of the multiple regression showing the value of ( $R^2 = .618$ ) indicates that a change existed in the two dimensions, self-management and management of instructional program which predicted 61.8% of changes in teachers’ self-efficacy. This also means that there is 38.2% of changes in terms of teachers’ self-efficacy which cannot be predicted because of other factors which were not studied in the current study.

**Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis (Stepwise): Analysis of Variance**

Source	R <sup>2</sup>	DF	Mean	F	Significance (p)
Regression	147.701	2	73.851	163.173	.000
Residual	91.423	202	.453		
Total	239.124	204			

Note: \*significant at  $p < .05$

Based on the overall predictions, there are two dimensions which are self-management under the principals’ emotional intelligence domain and management of instructional programs for the principals’ instructional leadership domain which have statistically significant to the self-efficacy of teachers. The two dimensions are the dominant predictors of teachers’ self -efficacy. Therefore, the regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 3.11 + .786B2 + .763A2 + .672$$

Whereby:

Y = Teachers' Self-efficacy A1 = Defining School Vision

A2 = Managing Instructional Programs A3 = Forming School Climate

B1 = Self-awareness B2 = Self-management

B3 = Managing Relationships B4 = Social Awareness Constant = 3.11

Error = .672

## 10. Discussion

The findings of this study are in line with findings by Anusha Selvadura; Azlin Norhaini Mansor (2021) and Abdul Said Ambotang, Haniza Jadin (2020) which showed that the principal's emotional intelligence and instructional leadership have a significant correlation and contribution to the self-efficacy of school teachers. This explains that there is an importance of instructional leadership in influencing the principal's emotional intelligence. So, in ensuring that the school's goals can be translated and cultured in the classroom by monitoring student performance and achievement as an effort to strengthen all academic programs implemented. Therefore, it encourages principals to understand their own emotions, so it is not only necessary to have knowledge and leadership skills, but also to promote controlled emotional intelligence with good management planning (Shafinaz et al., 2022). Therefore, the principal also needs to have positive and stable emotions, superior personal qualities and can be expressed in the form of attitude and behavior so that all efforts to manage the instructional program can build a conducive school environment.

## 11. Conclusion

This study provides very clear findings of the influence of principals' emotional intelligence and instructional leadership towards the self-efficacy of the teachers in the full boarding schools in the state of Perak. As mentioned before this, the study is very significant because it is one of the pioneer studies in exploring these variables in the context of full boarding schools in the state of Perak. Therefore, the study contributes largely to the field of study. The future recommendations are mainly related to the improvement in terms of methodology. Future studies should employ more rigorous methods to collect data from various resources.

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## Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study.

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