TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, NOVICE TEACHER MORALE AND EFFICACY IN OMAN

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TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, NOVICE TEACHER MORALE AND EFFICACY IN OMAN

By

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KEPIMPINAN TRANSFORMASI, MOREL DAN EFIKASI GURU NOVIS DI OMAN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh efikasi kolektif sebagai mediator dan efikasi kendiri guru sebagai moderator terhadap hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan morel (*morale*) guru novis di Oman. Sehubungan itu, seramai 951 orang guru daripada 120 buah sekolah kerajaan di Wilayah Muscat, Albatinah, dan Aldhahira telah dipilih secara rawak dengan menggunakan kaedah '*multiple–stage sampling'.* Manakala data pula diperoleh daripada responden dengan menggunakan soal selidik yang terdiri daripada empat bahagian utama iaitu kepimpinan transformasi pengetua (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006), *Collective Teacher Efficacy* (Ross & Gray, 2006), *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), *Teacher Outlook and Perception of Morale Survey* (Anderson, 2000). Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan tahap morel guru novis di Oman adalah sederhana. Sementara itu, didapati beberapa dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap morel, efikasi kendiri dan kolektif guru. Seterusnya dapatan kajian 6menunjukkan efikasi kendiri dan kolektif guru mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap morel guru. Keputusan kajian juga menunjukkan dimensi efikasi kendiri (tugasan dan kompetensi pengajaran) memainkan peranan moderator sebagai pengganti terhadap hubungan antara dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua kecuali memantau aktiviti sekolah, visi dan misi sekolah, dan sokongan individu dengan efikasi

kolektif guru. Manakala efikasi kolektif guru pula memainkan peranan sebagai *mediator* penuh dan separa terhadap hubungan antara dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan morel guru. Dari segi implikasinya dapatan kajian ini membuktikan bahawa pengaruh interaksi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan efikasi kendiri guru dapat meningkatkan efikasi kolektif guru. Seterusnya, efikasi kolektif guru pula berperanan sebagai *mediator* bagi meningkatkan morel guru dengan adanya amalan kepimpinan transformasi. Sebagai kesimpulannya, dapatan keputusan kajian ini tidak menafikan sumbangan amalan kepimpinan transformasi pengetua terhadap '*outcomes'* kajian tetapi menjelaskan cara pengetua boleh menggunakan faktor moderator dan mediator untuk mengukuhkan lagi kepimpinannya dalam usaha untuk meningkatkan morel guru.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, NOVICE TEACHER MORALE AND EFFICACY IN OMAN

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of collective efficacy as a mediator and self-efficacy as a moderator on the relationship of principals' transformational leadership and novice teacher morale in Oman. Therefore, a total of 951 teachers from 120 government schools in Province of Muscat, Albatinah, and Aldhahira were randomly selected using the multiple-stage sampling method. The data was obtained from the respondents using a questionnaire consisting of four key areas of principals' transformational leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006), collective teacher efficacy (Ross & Gray, 2006), teachers' sense of efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), outlook and perception of teacher morale survey (Anderson, 2000). The findings revealed that the novice teachers' morale level in Oman is at average level. Meanwhile, some of the principals' transformational leadership dimension has a significant influence on novice teachers' morale, self and collective efficacy. The result also shows that teachers' self and collective efficacy has a significant influence on the teacher morale. Besides, the dimension of self-efficacy (task and teaching competence) plays the role of a moderator (substitute) on the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions except monitor the activities of the school principal, the school's vision and mission, and support of individuals with collective teacher efficacy. While, the teachers' collective efficacy plays the role of a full and partial mediator on the relationship

between principals' transformational leadership dimensions and teacher morale. In terms of the implications, the findings of this study demonstrated the influence on the interaction of the principals' transformational leadership and self-efficacy would improve teacher's collective efficacy. Next, the collective efficacy of teacher's will act as a mediator to enhance the teachers' morale with the presence transformational leadership practices. In conclusion, the findings of this study did not deny the contribution of principals' transformational leadership practices on 'outcomes' of the study but described how principals' could used moderators and mediators factor to strengthen their leadership in the effort of improving the teachers' morale.

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KEPIMPINAN TRANSFORMASI, MOREL DAN EFIKASI GURU NOVIS DI OMAN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengaruh efikasi kolektif sebagai mediator dan efikasi kendiri guru sebagai moderator terhadap hubungan antara kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan morel (*morale*) guru novis di Oman. Sehubungan itu, seramai 951 orang guru daripada 120 buah sekolah kerajaan di Wilayah Muscat, Albatinah, dan Aldhahira telah dipilih secara rawak dengan menggunakan kaedah '*multiple–stage sampling'.* Manakala data pula diperoleh daripada responden dengan menggunakan soal selidik yang terdiri daripada empat bahagian utama iaitu kepimpinan transformasi pengetua (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006), *Collective Teacher Efficacy* (Ross & Gray, 2006), *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), *Teacher Outlook and Perception of Morale Survey* (Anderson, 2000). Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan tahap morel guru novis di Oman adalah sederhana. Sementara itu, didapati beberapa dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap morel, efikasi kendiri dan kolektif guru. Seterusnya dapatan kajian 6menunjukkan efikasi kendiri dan kolektif guru mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap morel guru. Keputusan kajian juga menunjukkan dimensi efikasi kendiri (tugasan dan kompetensi pengajaran) memainkan peranan moderator sebagai pengganti terhadap hubungan antara dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua kecuali memantau aktiviti sekolah, visi dan misi sekolah, dan sokongan individu dengan efikasi

kolektif guru. Manakala efikasi kolektif guru pula memainkan peranan sebagai *mediator* penuh dan separa terhadap hubungan antara dimensi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan morel guru. Dari segi implikasinya dapatan kajian ini membuktikan bahawa pengaruh interaksi kepimpinan transformasi pengetua dengan efikasi kendiri guru dapat meningkatkan efikasi kolektif guru. Seterusnya, efikasi kolektif guru pula berperanan sebagai *mediator* bagi meningkatkan morel guru dengan adanya amalan kepimpinan transformasi. Sebagai kesimpulannya, dapatan keputusan kajian ini tidak menafikan sumbangan amalan kepimpinan transformasi pengetua terhadap '*outcomes'* kajian tetapi menjelaskan cara pengetua boleh menggunakan faktor moderator dan mediator untuk mengukuhkan lagi kepimpinannya dalam usaha untuk meningkatkan morel guru.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP, NOVICE TEACHER MORALE AND EFFICACY IN OMAN

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of collective efficacy as a mediator and self-efficacy as a moderator on the relationship of principals' transformational leadership and novice teacher morale in Oman. Therefore, a total of 951 teachers from 120 government schools in Province of Muscat, Albatinah, and Aldhahira were randomly selected using the multiple-stage sampling method. The data was obtained from the respondents using a questionnaire consisting of four key areas of principals' transformational leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006), collective teacher efficacy (Ross & Gray, 2006), teachers' sense of efficacy scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), outlook and perception of teacher morale survey (Anderson, 2000). The findings revealed that the novice teachers' morale level in Oman is at average level. Meanwhile, some of the principals' transformational leadership dimension has a significant influence on novice teachers' morale, self and collective efficacy. The result also shows that teachers' self and collective efficacy has a significant influence on the teacher morale. Besides, the dimension of self-efficacy (task and teaching competence) plays the role of a moderator (substitute) on the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions except monitor the activities of the school principal, the school's vision and mission, and support of individuals with collective teacher efficacy. While, the teachers' collective efficacy plays the role of a full and partial mediator on the relationship

between principals' transformational leadership dimensions and teacher morale. In terms of the implications, the findings of this study demonstrated the influence on the interaction of the principals' transformational leadership and self-efficacy would improve teacher's collective efficacy. Next, the collective efficacy of teacher's will act as a mediator to enhance the teachers' morale with the presence transformational leadership practices. In conclusion, the findings of this study did not deny the contribution of principals' transformational leadership practices on 'outcomes' of the study but described how principals' could used moderators and mediators factor to strengthen their leadership in the effort of improving the teachers' morale.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The role of the school principal is recognized as one of the most basic employment and it is important in education (Fullan, 2010; Marzano, 2005; Neil, Carlisle, Knipe, & McEwen, 2001; Oluremi, 2013; Sweeney, 2001). In meta-analysis conducted by Marzano (2005), it was discovered that the success of a school is solely dependent on a few crucial factors, such as the style of management and leadership that is practiced and administered, while the sustenance of a school's development depends highly on the effective leadership that is being practiced (Simkins, Sisum & Muhammad Memon, 2003; Muijs& Harris, 2007). Meanwhile, DiPaola and Walther-Thomas (2012), and Lashway,(2012) listed the following as the three most evident traits possessed by effective leaders: interpersonal factors, cognitive factors, and administrative factors. These interpersonal factors contain items such as integrity, sensitivity, consistency, emotional stability, self-confidence, communication skills, and conflict management skills. Cognitive factors are said to be related to leadership whereby leaders with high level of intelligence are better at problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, and creativity.

Oluremi (2013) found that there is a significant correlation between principal's style and school's effectiveness. In coherent with this, it is realized that there are six main existing dimensions of leadership, namely instructional leadership, transformational leadership, moral leadership, participation leadership, contingency leadership and management leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a). In relation to this, the styles of school leadership by school leaders are influenced by environmental differences, diversity of situation, and demands.

However, Oluremi (2013), Reeves, (2009), Fuller, Loeb, Arshan, Chen, and Yi (2012) discovered that transformational leadership poses a positive impact on attitude changes, perception, and teacher's behavior. Oluremi (2013) added that when teachers assume principals who practice transformational leadership for example, being supportive in initiative changes, approachable, having a close rapport with the principal or teachers, satisfied with teaching, concerned about the teacher's salary or the teacher's status, providing community support, workload, curriculum, school facilities and services, and joining in community services, such actions aforesaid were found to have effects on the changes of teacher's perception of self (in terms of the amount of satisfaction experienced) or known as teachers' morale. However, if the leadership of the school often causes the teachers to feel not being treated as professionals, not appreciated or overworked, this will lower the teachers' morale.

On the other hand, teachers with a high morale level may compliment their principal as to be very supportive or whereby they are able to focus on teaching instead of having to perform an abundance of clerical tasks (Oluremi, 2013; Reeves, 2009). In addition to the many roles of the position, principals must also understand that they have a tremendous influence on the morale of the teachers.

It is commonly apprehended that the success and excellence of a school is mainly dependent on the leadership of the principal in general. The principal acts as the catalyst that determines the directions of the school's excellence (Marzano, 2005). Thus, Fuller (2010) iterated that the school's leadership should be based on flexible leadership, new paradigms, participation and transformation. This was further advocated that the primary fundamental of leadership refers to the influences toward others in ensuring and propelling the workforce towards achieving the goals of an organization. Nevertheless, even though the principal's leadership is of high importance and crucial in achieving the goals of an organization, yet it is still undeniable that the role of all the organization's members is equally important in ensuring the success of a school. Apart from that, the overall concept of leadership in a school organization is based on the belief that every individual of the school's organization possess the capability and leadership attributes (Neal, 2011).

Nevertheless, teachers are the ultimate professional entities in a school that are privileged to have the access and contact with students throughout the day and

this greatly influences the school's environment. When teachers feel positive about their position, feelings referred to as teachers' morale, they pose a tremendous positive influence towards the students and the school. Such occurrence is similar the vice versa; when teachers have negative feelings about the school, they may negatively influence the students and the school (Fuller, Loeb, Arshan, Chen, & Yi, 2012; Oluremi, 2013; Reeves, 2009). Either as a group or as individuals, teachers possess a great domain of influence to the school's environment. It is very important for educational leaders to be aware of the factors that affect teacher's morale and how this creates a ripple effect in student's achievement.

Moreover, Muijsand Harris (2006) claimed that the school is also a professional community that allows the exchange of ideas and functions as a working and learning avenue for the members of the professional community, both within the school or in an external environment. Thus, if collective leaderships are cultivated and developed positively, it will definitely enhance the progress and growth of a school to achieve a higher level of excellence.

Moreover, Fuller, Loeb, Arshan, Chen and Yi (2012) from Stanford University produced a study on principals in California and stated these schools are currently not being managed effectively to support and encourage teaching and learning where in fact, the teaching and learning quality of students should be prioritized and given the utmost attention. In general, the standard of teaching is

solely dependent on the teacher's quality; high quality teachers will reflect a parallel quality of teaching which in return enhances the learning standard for the students (Miller & Lieberman, 2012; Neal, 2011). Moreover, teachers' knowledge should always be updated and enriched to maximize their performance as effective educationists and disseminators of knowledge (Ash & Persall, 2010). Besides, the school administrators and teachers are the relevant authorities and entity that lead the changes from varied perspectives in relation to education (Neal, 2011).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) stated that the challenges in restructuring school besides the unstable environment in the educational field contribute towards the changes in the school leadership from instructional leadership to transformational leadership. Researches concerning transformational leadership conducted by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) were generally unrelated to schools; meanwhile studies on the similar topic by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990); Leithwood (1994); Leithwood and Jantzi (1999a; 1999b; 2000) reflected the effectiveness of school.

In addition, the principal's and the teachers' role have both changed and enhanced with increasing accountability. The expectations towards teachers have changed whereby the focus is now shifted from what the teacher is doing to what the students are learning. Teachers are no longer expected to adhere to a set of rigid and structured criteria in teaching a lesson as outlined in educational textbooks,

rather, they are expected to facilitate learning in classrooms so that the students are able to acquire information more independently and learn necessary skills to perform well in examinations. Due to this shift that aims towards a higher accountability, teachers face greater pressures and demands. These pressures and demands can be very burdensome and may cause teachers to succumb to a lower morale level or even subjecting to resignation (Hardy, 1999; Tye & O'Brien, 2002).

Students' disciplinary issue is also one of the reasons that cause teachers to have a low morale level. Teachers who have difficulties in handling disciplinary issues in classrooms or receiving little support from the administrators in handling these delicate matters may have a low morale level or even to the extent of quitting their profession (Tye & O'Brien, 2002). It is important for principals to make their teachers feel supported in order to keep quality teachers in the profession while maintaining the morale in the ever demanding education field.

Principals' capability has immense impact on the well-being of a school in many aspects. They have a list of roles in their job description. One of the most important and influential is the effect the principal has on the teachers of the school. A good teacher can be successful under the management of a bad principal. This good teacher knows how to handle the pressures of the profession and ignores the incompetence of this principal. This teacher is interested primarily in what is good for the individual students in the classroom. For the others - the teachers who need

some support, a little guidance, or just the occasional pat on the back -- the principal plays a vital role in their morale. Blase and Blase (1994) stated that praise by the principal provides teachers with an increased efficacy, self-esteem, and creates greater motivation.

Nevertheless, the influences of transformational leadership, the ability or self- efficacy or teachers' collective efficacy as well as the morale are still under grey areas and largely not explored or investigated for elaboration of actual and precise situation as well as lack of attention on this field especially in the Sultanate of Oman from the perspective of masters' research.

1.2 Background of the Study

1.2.1. Leadership for Innovative Omani Schools: Shifting Identity from Managers to Leaders

Located at the farthest south-eastern point of the Saudi Arabian peninsula between the Strait of Hormuz and the Arabian Sea, Oman's geography includes mountain ranges, arid deserts, fertile plains, and a stunning coastline. The modernization of the country is credited to Sultan Qaboos, whose effort is highly respected and "unquestionably is one of the most popular rulers in the Arab world" (Curtis, 19995, p.50). The Sultanate has a "moderate, independent foreign policy"

aimed at maintaining "a good relation with all Middle East countries" (Central Intelligence Agency, 2009). Through their 2020 vision, Oman aims to establish 'broader horizons of comprehensive, sustainable development and retains education as a key strategy with a new focus on enhancing the quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of the general education system to produce world standard graduates" (UNESCO, 2009).

Consequently, one of Oman's strategies in enhancing the efficiency of its system of educational administration and management is to restructure and revitalize the administrative system (UNESCO, 2000). In order to achieve this goal, Oman's Deputy Director General of Education, Al-Shaibani (2006) stated that the core roles of the school principals' should shift from tasks managers to more influential roles, such as leaders of change, learning, and professional development besides being collaborators with teachers, parents, and communities. In relation to this, a study conducted by Alas, Tafel and Tuulik (2007) pointed out that the work of leaders in Middle East requires more charismatic and transformational styles, eyeing more in future and performance orientation rather than the typical styles practiced in these cultures. This strengthens the findings from Abdalla and Al-homoud (2001, p.524) concerning characterizing leadership in this region as paternalistic and centralized, which is said to be "consistent with the local social values and organizational practices; however what is desirable is largely different from what is practiced and what fits the local culture."

Consequently, Abdalla and Al-Homod (2001), Al-Shaibani (2006) and Al-Sulaimi (2007) suggested that one of the changes that will be taking place is to eliminate the perception towards the principal's as "the manager". The assumption and expectation towards the principal as the manager that adheres to a set of routines institutionalized as school policy should be erased. On the other hand, the typical perception of the principal's role as the problem solver must be minimized. Instead, he should see himself as a contributor and facilitator in instilling problem-solving skills among the organization members. In this context, the principalship in terms of participatory leadership should be coupled with intrapersonal communication skills. At the same time, a principal should also enhance the staffs' confidence, encourage participation and build internal support structure that leads to the formation and development of a leadership team. In addition, in the efforts of presenting himself as an instructional leader and practitioner empowerment, a principal should adjust his role from a chief executive to a *`leading professional'.*

1.2.2. Education Reformation and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness in Oman

According to the Ministry of Information (2010), education in Oman has undergone four stages: the first stage occurred before 1970; second stage at 1970-1988; third stage at 1998-2003; and fourth stage happened from 2003 to the present. Four percent of the country's GDP is spent on education and Oman's per student

expenditure for secondary education is the fourth highest in the Middle East and the North Africans' countries (The World Bank, 2008, p.12). In addition, an emphasis was placed to highlight the importance of education for women, thus birthing this country among the many that gives equal opportunities for women to work. Statistical figures shows that fifty-six percent of teachers and half of the first degree university students are women (Ministry of Information, 2010).

In order to achieve success in education modernization, the strategies applied in enhancing the efficiency of its system include efforts to upgrade the teachers' qualifications besides enhancing their knowledge, skills, competencies and increasing the number of school hours per day, and the number of school days per year (UNESCO, 2009). Therefore, various attempts have been made by the Oman's government. Through the US State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative, Creative Associates International Inc. invited Seward Inc. in 2006 to work with Oman's MOE to train the principals as well as teachers (Seward International, Inc., 2008). It is compulsory for principals to attend the workshop as it improves their management method and administration skills through this program, while teachers are exposed to teaching methods, the use of ICT in teaching, improving school based assessment and evaluation. However, the effects of various reformations in organizational behavior are fresh and unfamiliar causing teachers to feel pressured (Alas, Tafel & Tuulik, 2007). Teachers' belief on the ability to cultivate student's learning, efficacy and professional commitment is

considered to be low (Al-Shaibani, 2006), such situation is similar to the changes of teacher's self-perception (teachers' morale) (A-Sulami, 2007). Consequently, a report from the Ministry of Education (2010, 2011) revealed that almost 25% of the novice teachers who were placed in schools after graduation were found to have changed their employment to private schools in private sectors that offer more lucrative salaries.

1.2.3 School Leadership Effectiveness in Oman

School leadership effectiveness is a field which is considered to be a fresh area that has yet to be explored in depth in the Sultanate of Oman. Even though this field is relatively new, discussion on matters related to it has always been given utmost attention and focus. School effectiveness is transcribed as school that attains achievements in academic way higher that of the targeted value. Meanwhile, quality school refers schools that are able to fulfill various demands (Fullan, 2010).

In studies conducted concerning effective schools, Mortimore (1997) outlined eleven factors related to school effectiveness. Firstly, practice of professional leaderships. Secondly, shared vision and mission. Next, the existence of environment that promotes learning, and the fourth factor, the focus on teaching and learning, while the following factor being vision teaching. The next factor is the presence of appreciation and high desire, followed by positive enhancement

practices and observation of school development. The ninth factor is to award students of their rights and responsibility and the tenth factor is the sharing of school – home sense and lastly, the school as a learning organization. Based on these factors, the study is focused in four main factors, namely leadership practices, teaching and learning, learning organization and teachers' efficacy and morale.

Luyten, Visscher, and Witziers (2005) in reference to the model developed by Scheerens and Bosker (1997) claimed that most of the studies conducted on school effectiveness are concerted between the relationship of school input and contextualization of schools, and school process with school achievements. The financial resources of a school and the rich experiences of professional teachers' are categorized as input. These factors are believed to pose a high and direct effect in the internal process of a school and the general achievement of the school. In a contextual factor, a school ranges from the types of school, location, socioeconomic factor, parents, and teachers intake (Bush & Glover, 2003). In terms of the style of school leadership, teachers' cooperation is considered one of factors that characterize the level of school which affects the students' achievement in the classroom coinciding with the quality of teaching, either in a direct or indirect manner (Luyten et al., 2005). Thus, the school's leadership, teachers' skills and cooperation are considered the entities that portray the success of a school. The relationship is illustrated in Diagram 1.1.

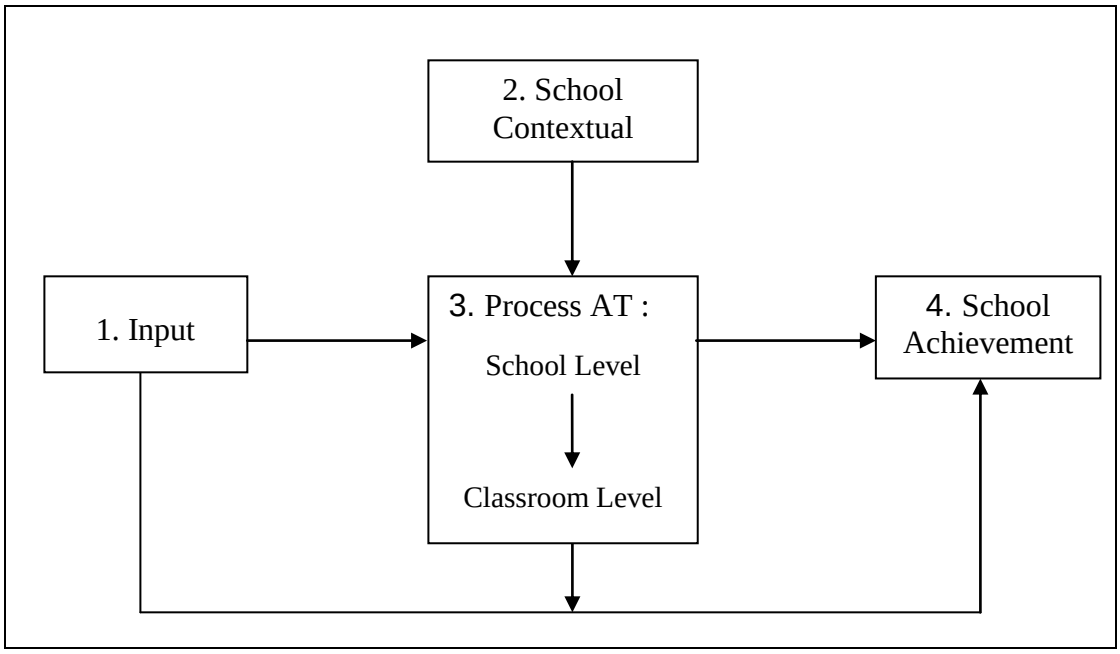

Figure 1.1: School Effectiveness Process
(Source: Scheerens & Bosker, 1997, pg. 255)

In relation to the above, Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) stated that school transformational leadership poses no direct or indirect effect towards the achievement of students. Meanwhile Bass (1997) on the other hand, claimed that transformational leaderships are applicable in any place or situation. Apparently, Yu, Leithwood and Jantzi (2002) deliberated that there are empirical evidence that the above statement has low impact in schools. Nevertheless, Ross and Gray (2006) agreed to findings of previous studies that support the presence of four relationships. Firstly, leadership with professional commitments. Secondly, leadership with teachers' efficacy namely the belief in teachers' ability to bring about to effective learning. Thirdly, teachers' efficacy with individual and collective professional commitments towards learning in school. Fourthly, teacher's

morale which is related to important elements necessary for organizational growth and stability, including teacher's retention, teacher's absenteeism and students' achievement.

"Clearly, the principal is the key figure in raising teachers' morale and commitment" (Lester, 1990: 274). Others have concurred that a school's leadership has a vital role in the total climate of the school and the morale of the school's teachers (Butt, Lance, Fielding, Gunter, Rayner, & Thomas, 2005; Evans, 1997; Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004).

1.2.4. Teachers Morale

Morale is an elusive concept though a significant one. According to Sinclair (1992), morale is a prominent factor that influences the progression and success of a school. It manifests itself through one's perception of self in the context of the organization. Teachers' morale has been defined by Bentley and Rempel (2010) as "the professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays toward the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation" (p. 2). They discussed morale as the interaction between individual needs and the organization's goals. Thus, a high morale would only emerge when the process of achieving the organization's goals managed to satisfy the individual's needs. Morale is an internal feeling a person possesses that is free from the perceived reality of others. Morale is

not an observable trait; rather, it is an internal feeling or set of thoughts. “Low staff morale results from professional lives that bear little meaning, besides the frustration and the inability to change what is happening”

Cook (2009) discussed three major areas that affect teachers’ morale. Firstly, Administrative Leadership (a positive morale that is achieved when teachers feel their administrator is competent). Secondly, Administrative Concern deals with the teacher’s need to feel appreciated, and thirdly, Personal Interaction which is defined as the need for individuals to communicate and receive support from other teachers and the administrators. Meantime, Bentley and Rempel, (2010, p. 12) discovered that teacher’s perception of self (in terms of the amount of satisfaction experienced) is determined by many factors, including the “rapport with principal, satisfaction with teaching, rapport between teachers, teacher’s salary, teacher’s status, community support, workload, curriculum, school facilities and services, and community services”.

1.2.5 Teacher Efficacy

Teachers’ self–efficacy is defined as the considerations or beliefs that an individual has concerning the capability to implement or carry out an action with the purpose of achieving a certain level of performance as dictated. Apparently, it is

related to the consideration of an individual on matters that can be fulfilled with skills inherited (Bandura, 1986).

Generally, teaching efficacy refers to the general beliefs of the teachers towards the relationship between teaching and learning. A teacher should be able to grasp and influence the students learning with the assistance and presence of external factors. Meanwhile, self–teaching efficacy is the belief of the ability and skills that assist students' learning. Relatively, Bandura (1986, 1997) explained that efficacy is formed from four main sources, they are: competency experience, replicating experience, social persuasion, affective conditions.

According to Bandura (1997), competency experience is based on the personal experiences related to a particular task and very much influences each individual's self- efficacy. Affective situation on the other hand refers to the self-drive of an individual that is dependent on the social context whereby it is pertinent to the place where an individual teacher works.

The social context strongly influences self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Apart from that, the replicating experience refers to the success or failure of an individual in the process of completing a particular task. In the collaborative working environment, teachers usually replicate their peer's working style or nature. Meanwhile, the formal or

informal social persuasions come from the leaders, colleagues or peers, based on the relationship of an individual with the source of persuasion. Hence, all four sources of efficacy are important in increasing a teacher's self-efficacy.

Leaders play an important role in developing a teacher's self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Leithwood et al., (1999) identified nine dimensions of transformational leadership that are able to assist in improving teachers' self-efficacy. The dimensions revolve around the formation of school's vision and mission while interlacing the school's aim in order to collaborate and move together towards a similar direction or focus. The formation of a productive school culture births forth the existence of teachers that are superior from the distractor factor and students that act as distractors. Intellectual stimulation on the other hand is able to promote innovations.

The preparation of individual support indicates the flexibility in dissemination and distribution of duties in classroom and the preparation of resources. The formation of good values, practices and important organizational values are able to assist teachers to explicate reasonable habits. By showing high performances, leaders are able to prepare appreciation based on performance. The stimulation of development involving the structure of decision making in schools creates an interaction between teachers, thus providing opportunities to learn from

others. Forming a strong relationship with the parents on other hand will provide positive feedbacks in their child's learning.

Individuals that possess a high level of self-efficacy will be diligent in their work performance compared to those with low self-efficacy (Wood & Bandura, 1989). The transformational leadership variables and instructional leadership are not the dominant variables in teacher's efficacy. Thus, the teachers' efficacy variables can be improved through the ability variable, experience, training, and knowledge. Besides that, the school authorities should also give priority a more enjoyable and entertaining type of task variables, clear and precise work scope, routine and consistent besides the formation of formal regulations (Leithwood et al., 1999).

Collective teachers' efficacies are related with the belief within the members in the organization towards fulfilling a particular task successfully. Self-efficacy refers to the behaviors from an individual's perspective in comparison to the collective efficacy list of behaviors from the perspective of a group. According to Bandura (2000), there are groups that comprise of members with knowledge and skills but unfortunately do not achieve success. This is due to the nature of the group members who are unable to work together as a unit. Therefore, a school that functions as an organization involving various parties such as the principal, middle

managers, teachers, students, and support staffs need to work collaboratively as a team to achieve the desired success or excellence.

Pertaining to this matter, Draper and Fraser (2000) claimed that a teacher's perception about the working environment needs to be given prior attention in order to make room for improvement in the school's performance or achievement. Therefore, this study is deemed to be important as till recently it seems to be in existence in schools in the Sultanate of Oman.

1.3 Problem Statement

Teacher's morale refers to the professional concern and eagerness shown by a teacher, in which it is a major concern for managers (Certo & Fox, 2002). Factors such as lack of faculty influence and autonomy, dissatisfaction, students' misbehavior and lack of interest in academics, inadequate compensation and support for teachers are said to be the causes of the lack of teachers' morale. A study in Georgia on reasons teachers choose to stay in this profession was conducted. It is discovered that a large number of new teachers left their job during the first 2-5 years of teaching because they realized that they have chosen the wrong career (Darling-Hammond, 2003) while those who stayed in the profession were found to have a low level of passion towards teaching. Meanwhile, the transitions of pressure from students to teachers and from administrators to teachers have also

been described in the study as “a reality shock” by Bobbitt, Faupel and Burns (2011). When reality shock is merged with characteristics of the school and organizational conditions, for instance, the lack of administrative support, low salary, student’s disrespectfulness towards authority, lack of student motivation, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate planning time, and lack of opportunities for progress as described by Ingersoll (2001), these factors can cause teacher’s morale level to be substantially affected.

According to the current trend, teachers primarily work as individuals in isolation. They are rarely able to access and obtain feedbacks of their teachings from peers. This notion is similar to the ideas contributed by Ash and Persall (2000) exclaiming that teachers usually work in isolation and are not given the opportunity to solve problems collaboratively. They do not share information nor learn together and do not have plans to enhance students’ performance and achievements. Teachers are engrossed with workload and their individual nature thus leading to the absence of the realization and practice in assisting and helping each other. According to Al-Shaibani (2000), it is unfortunate that such situation was found to be similar in the Sultanate of Oman.

In classrooms, teachers engage in various activities such speaking, thinking and kinesthetic movement while students either remained seated and listen or accept and disperse back the facts. The teaching culture in schools is highly dependent on

the nature of teachers according to the source of information (Miller & Lieberman, 2012; Neal, 2011). This view is coherent with the studies conducted by Miller and Lieberman (2012) which revealed that the teachers' quality in teaching is tolerable or at a mere satisfactory level due to the lack of usage of ICT tools and teaching aids during teaching. The teaching and learning process is usually in a single direction or a one way process. It is prone to teacher centered instruction and eventually fails to evoke real understanding or in generating students' responds. It is sad to say that the school authority still lacks in giving prior attention towards programs that aim to enhance the level of teachers' professionalism. Besides, matters related to aspects of academic and implementations of school curriculum are not thoroughly discussed in the school management meetings (Mulford, 2005).

Based on the discussion above, it was generally assumed that transformation leadership in schools is able to change the way teachers think while increasing the level of teachers' morale (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999a) as school is a feasible unit in the community (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Thus, the practices of transformation leadership at the school level are essential. Nevertheless, the changes in the attitude of the teachers and level of morale are very much dependent on the administrator and the teachers' self-belief. Apart from that, the teachers' belief in their ability to change and influence the achievement is an important element in the teaching profession (Hoi Yan Cheung, 2008). Teachers need to possess adequate knowledge related to classroom management (Oluremi, 2013).

In a general assumption, the success of a school depends on effective leadership. In addition, it is measured based on the academic achievement of the students. Meanwhile, the academic achievements of the students are dependent on the teaching quality and morale in school whereby these two factors are closely related with the ability of teachers to teach, either individually or collectively and thus influencing greatly the students' achievements. Based on this premise, the leadership factor and the teaching ability of the teachers are the determinant in terms of teachers' teaching quality and this will indirectly influence the teacher's morale. The manner in which teachers perceive their leader's administrative style and behavior greatly influences their psychological state and attitude towards their job. As such, it is important to study and identify, through empirical research, these leadership behaviors perceived by teachers as being essential to positively influencing their psychological states and attitudes (Oluremi, 2013; Turpin, 2009).

However, no specific research studies conducted in the Sultanate of Oman is identified in the literature review of this study. Researchers have yet to find any studies concerning the relationship between transformational leadership and morale during the review of studies conducted, especially the influence of the transformational leadership and morale with the teachers collective efficacy as moderator and self–efficacy as mediator. In other words, studies pertaining to the role of collective efficacy as moderators, and self-efficacy as the mediators in the relationship between transformation leadership and teachers' morale are not being

explored extensively in the context of education, especially in the Sultanate of Oman.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of collective efficacy as mediator and self-efficacy as moderator in the relationship between schools with transformational leadership and novice teachers' morale. Thus, telescopically, the aims of this study are to:

(a) Identify the level of teacher's morale among novice teachers in Oman.

(b) explore the differences of teachers' morale based on novice teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, age and teaching experience)

(c) Investigate the influence of school transformational leadership on teachers' morale.

(d) Investigate the influence of school transformational leadership in the collective efficacy and self-efficacy among novice teachers'.

(e) Investigate the influence of novice teachers' collective efficacy and self-efficacy on teachers' morale.

(f) Investigate the moderating influence of novice teachers' self-efficacy towards the relationship between school transformational leadership and collective efficacy.

(g) Investigate the mediating influence of novice teachers' collective efficacy on the relationship between school transformational leadership and teachers' morale.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the aim of the study above, the following are the research questions that the study will be focusing on:

(a) What is the level novice teachers' morale in Oman?

(b) Are there any significant differences of novice teachers' morale based on the demographic characteristics (gender, age and teaching experience)?

(c) Is there any significant influence of principal's transformational leadership on the novice teachers' morale?

(d) Is there any significant influence of principal's transformation leadership on the novice teachers' self and collective efficacy?

(e) Is there any significant influence of teachers' self and collective efficacy on novice teachers' morale?

(f) Is there any significant moderating influence of teachers' self-efficacy in the relationship between the principal's transformational leadership and collective efficacy?