Learning Organization Practices in Empowerment District Education Office through Indicator of Change Management

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ABSTRACT--- *Nowadays, the effort to empower education organizations is not confined to teachers and schools, but requires the role of all parties especially District Education Office (DEO). In this regard, this study was conducted to explore the practices of learning organization in the DEO through their perspective in indicator of change management. This study was using the qualitative approach and using semi-structured interview as a data collection tool. The protocol question in this study is developing based on issue, literature review, expert opinion, and District Transformation Program 3.0 guided book. The informants were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling method. Analysis data in this study using thematic analysis approach with the assistance Nvivo software. The result in this study show that the themes for learning organization practices in DEO include team learning and shared vision. The successful of change in the DEO requires elements of learning organization such as team learning and shared vision. The implementation of these two dimensions in approving the learning organization will be providing positive results and added value as the process of enhancing the practices and also empowering the role of the DEO in educational organization. Thus, the finding in this study exposed that the dominant feedback from informant to empower learning organization through the team learning and shared vision to achieve a goal DEO. Further research proposals require more in-depth research on aspects related to the issues faced during the empowerment of DEO as a learning organization.*

Keywords--- *Learning organization practice, Education, Indicator of Change Management, District Education Office (DEO), Empowerment.*

I. INTRODUCTION

At the end of the 20th century, the explosion of communication technology had an impact on suitable teaching methods, and helped identify the diversity of student competencies. The Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013–2025 (abbreviated PPPM) wants the District Education Office (DEO) to be empowered to improve the quality of the education system. The District Transformation Program (DTP) aims to accelerate school improvement through a systematic program led by the DEO. The role of the DEO is very important because the organization is most closely related to schools.

The Ministry of Education Malaysia (2002) acknowledged that the following issues in the personnel administration and management system, which is a hierarchical and centralized KPM structure, pose a number of weaknesses related to inefficient and ineffective service delivery due to overly bureaucratic procedures,

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especially in human resource management. In addition, the existence of the large organizational structure of the MOE of the Department or Division and the smaller of the PPD below have made the implementation of an educational policy or program difficult to implement efficiently and effectively. Structures in JPNs and PPDs that are incompatible with the structures in the MOE make it impossible to perform tasks as planned. Therefore, this study will have an impact on the MOE in fulfilling the goals of the DTP program.

There are also other issues in PPD related to the change taking place and the relevance of PPD as a learning organization. There are a number of issues facing PPD in the face of new role changes reported in the NUTP Teacher Malaysia Bulletin (2014) such as the issue of some PPDs that do not have the special facilities for "School Improvement Specialist Coaches +" (SISC +) at the Alor Gajah Melaka PPD and PPD Kuala Pilah. In addition, the issue of the existence of SISC + with the PPD program in which SISC + needs to be measured is based on its role as the school counselor in the PPD where it is located. In 2011, a study by the Academy of Higher Education Leadership (AKEPT) involving 41 schools showed that 50% of content delivery was based on the passive lecture format and provided students with a summative assessment rather than developing high-level thinking skills (Unit Perancang Ekonomi, 2015).

One way to monitor transformation programs is through the construction of change indicators. Without indicators, PPD is difficult to monitor for changes that occur and will cause issues if no indicator is used as a benchmark for DTP change. Requirements for change indicators in the DTP are for red flag and direct intervention instructions within the organization, whether or not they are on the right track. If in implementing a transformation program, there are no indicators that can be used as a guide, then it is difficult to measure and evaluate its effectiveness. This is in support of statements by Mainguet and Baye (2006) who find it difficult to respond to the success of policies or programs implemented without indicators of change. This is because in reality, the process of assessing the success of a policy or transformation program is complex as it is influenced by many factors such as the history, culture and economic situation of a country.

In addition, learning organizations are still new to be understood especially among citizens of educational institutions such as the District Education Office (Muhammad Faizal, 2014). Malek Shah (2005) in Muhammad Faizal (2014) found that traditional work culture, such as excessive bureaucratic behaviour, unproductive and anti-change behaviours that would make education institutions difficult to improve their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the failure of organizational members to understand the concept of learning organization has also led to a culture of positive change resulting from a lack of exposure to the importance of learning organizations in PPD (Nor Foniza, 2012).

Furthermore, a study by Zuraidah and Rahimah (2017) found that leaders who do not encourage continuous learning organization in schools will result in the lack of practice of sharing knowledge among teachers to improve pedagogical skills in the classroom. This is in support of the study by Muhammad Faizal et al. (2014) found that learning organization leadership practices the practice of providing learning opportunities and opportunities, learning models, encouraging innovation, rewarding and recognizing and successfully developing the potential for satisfying citizens. Therefore, the Head of District Education Officer should play a role in establishing the learning organization at the PPD by establishing the learning environment at the PPD. In this regard, this study was conducted to explore the practices of learning organization in the District Education Office (DEO) through their perspective in indicator of change management

II.   METHODOLOGY

The methodological aspects in this study are explained as follows:

1) Research Design

This study was using the qualitative as a major approach to explore the phenomena to empowerment District Education Office (DEO) through the indicator of change in management based on view of practice and strengthening proses. The qualitative research design in this study is selected in line with a recommendation by Creswell (1998) explained that qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem.

2) Sample and Sampling Design

The informant in this study was selected using two type sampling design like a purposive and snowball sampling. Based on sampling design, two criteria are set up for selected informant. First, informants are totally involved in implementing changes in the DEO empowerment process through the District Transformation Program (DTP) as a learning organization. Secondly, informants also have the knowledge and experience in effectively implementing changes, including the School Improvement Specialist Coaches (SISC+) and School Improvement Partners (SIPartners+) programs and are capable of reflection and can provide a clear explanation. Thus, seven officers were involved, consisting a five DEO including two State Education Department to represent the four zones in Malaysia like north, south, east and central zone.

3) The Instrument Tools

This study, using semi-structured interview as a data collection. The protocol question in this study is developing based on issue, literature review, expert opinion, and District Transformation Program 3.0 guided book.

4) Data Analysis

This study, analysis data uses a thematic analysis approach using Nvivo 11 software to manage the transcribed data. In order to increase triangulation in this study, the researcher has obtained a coefficient of agreement, member checking, peer review and audit trait. Thus, the reliability data in this study, researcher prefer the weighted of agreement in Cohen Kappa approach from expertise who evaluated the suitability of the data (with their consent) provided to the definition of the construct used. The result of Cohen Kappa in this study around 0.82, which deliberated to be very strong as recommended by Landis and Koch (1997).

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) Participant Profile

The profile a seven informant are summarized in Table 1 as follow.

Table 1: The Research Informant

Informant	Position	Service Period	State

HDEO1	Head of District Education Officer	Less Than One Year	Selangor
HDEO2	Head of District Education Officer	2 Years	Melaka
HDEO3	Head of District Education Officer	5 Years	Johor
PM4	Program Manager	More Than 11 Years	Putrajaya
HDEO5	Head of District Education Officer	2 Years	Perak
PM6	Program Manager	3 Years	Kedah
HDEO7	Head of District Education Officer	2 Years	Kelantan

Table 1 shows that seven informants are involved in this study. The informant consists of five in Head of District Education Officer and two Program Manager. The majority participant in this study has an experience of 2 years and only one participant has a more than 11 years', 5 years' experience and less than one year. All participants are involved represent the four zones in Malaysia like Selangor, Putrajaya and Melaka (west), Johor (south), Perak and Kedah (north) and also Kelantan (east).

2) The Practices of Learning Organization in the District Education Office (DEO) Through Their Perspective in Indicator of Change Management

According Nawai (2006) say that, learning organization refers to an organization that always sport organizational members to build learners with provides space and facilities. Learning organization practices also pushing every person in DEO to increase their knowledge, skills and information that enables them to respond to dynamic educational changes (Maidin, 2012). From the thematic analysis conducted show that, only two principle of learning organization are report, such as (1) team learning and (2) shared vision is illustrated in Figure 1.
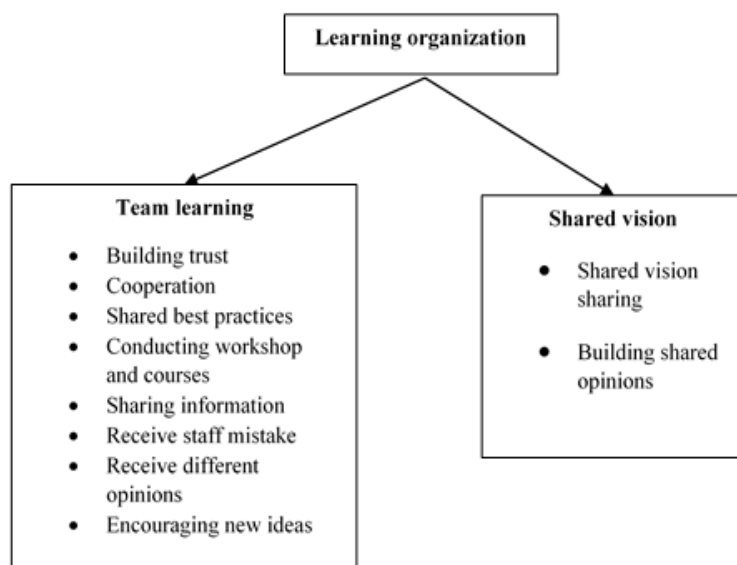

Figure 1: Feedback on learning organization practice

2.1. Learning organization in team learning practice

Figure 1 explained that team learning dimension defined in context of learning organization consist eight expect, such as (1) building trust, (2) cooperation, (4) shared best practice, (5) conducting workshop and courses, (6) sharing information, (7) receiving staff mistake and opinion also (8) encouraging new ideas. Generally, teamwork is a collaboration between a team to achieve the organizational goals. The mission in a team learning is a practice of learning and sharing knowledge with a diverse group of staff with a variety of experiences, expertise and ideas in multiple perspectives. In this perspective, the finding show that a good relationship between staffs and school will be impact the successful DEO learning organization. For instance, the statement about relationship of cooperation clearly stated by the HDEO (HDEO3):

"We really don't have a problem when we are out of the field, we are playmates, jokes and so on. But when it comes to work, it works and needs to be serious." (HDEO3)

In practice implementing of change in DEO, HDEO created the value of trust among staff through a friendly relationship, where it recognizes the weaknesses and strengths of staff and has a good relationship with the school. This finding in line with a study conducted by Yaakob and Ramle (2017) explained that collaboration practices can foster a sense of belonging among teachers in schools an also cooperation practices are well implemented in DEO. There are several aspects of cooperation include that cooperation between Human Resource Development, formal council cooperates, effective communication, and mutual support between sectors. In terms of cooperation, staff at DEO have always adopted a cooperative attitude towards achieving the goals of DEO. For example:

"…so this (cooperation) must be felt by all staff as a team, not necessarily the title of the boss so that we can work in the team, it's important that they respect, they know we are the boss. But in other words, co-existence exists if we do not put ourselves from top to bottom, bottom to top." (HDEO3).

The practice of cooperation is very important in the DEO because in order to bring about change, the cooperation of all citizens is necessary in order to attain change in common. The findings of this study supported by Hussein et al. (2016), which state that teamwork and learning are closely related to organizational innovation. In other word, teamwork and learning is a crucial element to contribute a high achievement. This finding supported by Ghani et al. (2014) state that organizational structures and systems need to support organizing people to form a workforce in solving problems in a team needs to be implemented across disciplines or departments. However, in terms of cooperation also involves the effective communication aspect of obtaining support from other officers. Among them is the Deputy DEO state that statement as follow:

"…how we communicate with all the officers and get the approval and support of all the officers, it is only natural that some employees are dissatisfied. That is usually the end they will accept and do the work together …" (PM6).

From the finding in this study, state that the aspect of communication is also important to ensure that all the discussion can make up reach a decision as part of discussion making in a team. This statement supported by Ismail and Ismail (2018) state that communication is a very important aspect of applying the 21st Century Learning (PAK21) concepts in teaching and learning (P&P) in schools. Besides, sharing of best practices is also often practiced in DEO and this is the depiction of improving individual and school performance. Based on analysis found that team learning also involves the sharing the best practices within the school and within that

DEO itself. The best practice decorated three aspects to best practice sharing, which consisting of PLC sharing, best practice benchmarks and cluster formation. For PLC partnerships where they share teacher innovations in the classroom. For example, the HDEO (HDEO2) states that:

"So we created a PLC partnership and for the rest of the day we were able to bring together all the teacher's innovations in the classroom and we created a carnival at DEO." (HDEO2).

This finding is in line with the findings of Yaakob and Ramle (2017) who found that collaborative practice enables teachers to share teaching practices in the form of knowledge or physical activity such as sharing of teaching aids; excellent teachers giving guidance to novice teachers so that novice teachers are exposed to knowledge and new skills in the teaching and learning process (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2001). The analysis also found that the practices of conducting workshops and courses related to PAK21, PILL and courses at IAB by DEO for principals and teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in PdPc in more interactive and fun way according to the DTP goals. This is clearly stated by the HDEO (HDEO2) i.e.:

"…we have a PAK21 workshop. We always call the teacher, but this time I want the Headmaster to participate in the workshop. He needs to know PAK21 because he's an instructional leader…" (HDEO2)

This finding supported by Amrullah et al. (2018) state that the high levels of confidence in implementing EHE in teaching as they have been trained in EAT-based pedagogy since at teacher educational institutes and universities. Other than that, the confidence also been gained through the attended courses which organized in school and DEO. Next, HDEO also conducts information sharing with staffs and schools, including information sharing using social media like DEO website page, Facebook, and Compact Disc (CD) as a platform to share resources PdPc PAK21 with all teachers including principals. Based on a finding that supported the study by Sabri (2017) who found that knowledge sharing is an informal study among three principals and three senior assistants, and also two committee chairmen and teachers an Mathematician who conduct informal discussions through telephone and the booklet (Facebook). Generally, sharing information takes place at each DEO where they regularly conduct discussions such as performance dialogues, morning briefings, in-person meetings, group discussions, sharing attending courses idea and sessions with DEO leaders. The statement Information sharing within the DEO is usually briefed as stated by the Deputy DEO (PM6):

"…our morning briefing is on Sundays which is the first day of the week, for example there is an important briefing where an officer goes to the course, and we can share in two to 15 minutes we report in the morningbriefing what other DEO officials need to know." (PM6).

This study also found that information sharing can encourage people in the organization with a new knowledge that can be used to perform their responsibilities. The findings of this study in line with research conducted by nor Forniza (2013), who stated that team learning is a process of sharing and collecting information with staffs with varied experiences, expertise and ideas from various perspectives. This finding also supported by Farrukh et al. (2015) by stating that information sharing factors are the critical factors that must be in place for organizations to become learning organizations.

In addition, the analysis also showed that KPP acknowledged staff error in a prudent way; through good language style, the use of social media Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Practically, a common practice for HDEO to accept staff error by admonishing them to use soft language style and intonation to avoid conflict between headmaster and DEO. This statement in line with the findings of Humairah (2017) who found that

Madrasah's leaders practiced democratic leadership in enlightening the quality of Madrasah Aliyah State 1 Medan, where Madrasah's leaders openly received criticisms and suggestions from subordinates, accepting others' opinions, joint decision-making between staff and leaders, always motivating staff and adopting high quality relationships and also tolerance among all children.

The finding state clearly showed that HDEO acknowledged different opinions through managing perceptions and through meetings. Also, all good opinion is accepted and always ensures that the final decision is satisfactory to all parties. This finding supports by Zainuddin (2015) showing that accepting others' opinions is one of the most effective leadership qualities in school management. The role of school leaders and administrators is very crucial in accepting the ideas and opinions of others, especially teachers when implementing a policy, program or activity where such ideas or views are analysed and discussed to achieve the best results. For example:

"I always see any staff who always offers ideas in discussions. I always see these kind of officials (meetings)because they always give me ideas." (HDEO1)

Other than that, in depth inquiries are directed to HDEO1 about how mediums stimulate new ideas through discussion?

"Yes, discussion. Sometimes I see in the monthly meetings, there are management meetings, sometimes executive meetings involving these principals who are responsible for creating subordinate excellence in him." (HDEO1)

The interesting finding, the practice of giving ideas is also using virtual mediums such as WhatsApp group or Telegram group where opinions are always taken into account by HDEO to evaluate the impact of the idea. This finding supported by Zainuddin (2015), who found that quality leaders always listen, evaluate and accept ideas and opinions from others; even when the ideas are given by their subordinates, where good ideas are accepted to be implemented, while the views the less well-intentioned will be rejected for better by giving reasonable reasons.

Further, for the thinking system, the analysis found that only HDEO was able to adapt through knowledge by understanding these two aspects; open-mindedness and discussion meetings or workshops. Based on adapting change occurring the open-minded HDEOs more tend to receive knowledge from employees, especially the one that is technology related. This is supported by the statement of Deputy Director (PM4):

"So, that meant for me to adapt to change, one I had to open up to and I had to learn even though I knew, but we weren't good at computers. So, we have to be more open and I catch up with technology because otherwise I would miss it. So that's my preparation to adapt to the environment."(PM4)

2.2. Learning organization in personal mastery practice

Based on thematic analysis in Figure 1 explained that, there are two aspects of personal mastery practiced in DEO, to be precise (1) knowledge enhancement and (2) experience sharing. This finding is in line with the study of Ghani et al. (2014) that is related to the order of learning organization practices, where individual learning within the organization is followed by cooperative learning culture, legislative leadership, managerial climate and structure as well as the vision and mission of the learning organization. The thematic analysis findings indicate that there are four ways in which the HDEO has taken steps to improve its knowledge, attend workshops and courses, read and conduct dialogue sessions. To be present workshops and courses such as organized

courses, DEO officials attend courses organized by PADU and the Ministry. This statement is supported by the Deputy DEO (PM6):

"…courses organized by the Department, through the courses I attend, at least I have new knowledge, like newprograms from the Ministry, new policies that we need to work on, such as moving forward." (PM6).

HDEO inspires staff to attend a proper course, as well as staff with their own initiative to attend courses to enhance their knowledge and skills so that tasks can be implemented better. The findings of this study supported by Azeez et al. (2015), which show that among the principals that need to be compensated attention to is the focus on efforts to improve teachers' knowledge and skills through continuous capacity building to overcome student violence. Attending courses helps staff to improve their expertise and knowledge in performing tasks. The finding of this study in line with study conducted by Ishak et al. (2014), which in relation to the leadership practice of learning organizations in Malaysian high schools where the findings indicate the need to attend courses as important to enlightening one's skills and knowledge. Other than that, the learning organization practices are well practiced in each DEO, where the sharing and gathering of information between experienced DEO staff and leaders is ongoing and individuals in DEO are constantly striving to improve their knowledge and desire to remain in a state of continuous learning. For a dialogue session with colleagues to enhance their knowledge, the HDEO (HDEO3) stated that:

"…I prefer brainstorm sessions with friends who have different backgrounds because in terms of communication, I really like those who have ideas, for discussions because I can quickly pick up instead of reading which just atheory is probably. But talking to people in different fields will improve our knowledge quickly." (HDEO3)

This finding also supported by Keong et al. (2018), by showing that school teachers share response or educational information particularly on learning improvement and teaching activities related to student's achievement. Thus, HDEO practices the learning organization for the dimension of personal mastery well in DEO.

IV. CONCLUSION

The effort to empower the education system is not confined to schools and teachers, but it has to involve many people especially District Education Office (DEO) Hence, DEO requires changes that need to be implemented to ensure that educational institutions keep abreast of current developments to be more dynamic and competitive. This change can do it through by the District Transformation Program (DTP) is largely focused on strengthening the DEO and students' learning in schools. Effective enactment of DTP through the change management indicators entails the principles of organizational learning and its practice among leaders and staff. Other than that, the empowerment process is also indispensable to make DEO a learning organization on specifically in terms of support and accountability. Based on this finding state that the two dimensions of learning organization are frequent on practices among DEO to empower a learning organization through team learning and shared vision. The implementation of these two dimensions in authorizing the learning organization will be providing positive results and added value as the process of enhancing the practices and also empowering the role of the DEO in educational organization. Thus, the finding in this study exposed that the dominant feedback from informant to empower learning organization through the team learning and shared vision to achieve a goal DEO.

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