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PREDICTIVE VALIDITY OF GENDER AND EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS INTO MALAYSIAN WOMEN PRINCIPAL'S INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Farhana Mannan¹, Sailesh Sharma¹ (PhD)*, Kazi Enamul Hoque² (PhD),
Jeyasushma Veeriah¹

ABSTRACT

Malaysia, as a developing country, highly depends on its education system to achieve the Vision 2020 goal of being a developed nation. Therefore school leadership plays a key role in educational settings. As a great number of women principals are involved in leadership positions in this context, this study examined the factors influencing women principal's instructional leadership practices from teachers' perceptions through a survey instrument distributed to 39 Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur public secondary schools. Total of 357 teachers were randomly selected as the sample. The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale encompassing 50 items was applied to find out the levels of instructional leadership practices of women principals. The quantitative data were analyzed by means, standard deviation, Pearson correlation and multiple regression. The results exhibit a moderate level of women principals' instructional leadership practices from the viewpoints of teachers in these schools. The positive inter-relationship among the dimensions of instructional leadership practices were found while experience of teacher ($r = .256, p < .05$) and gender ($r = .122, p < .05$) were significantly perceived on women principal's instructional leadership practices. The findings show that women principals require well-organized training to enhance their learning and teaching in secondary schools and fill up the gap on relationship between women principal's leadership practices and teacher's demographic variables.

Keywords: School Principals, Women, Instructional Leadership Practices, Education, Malaysia

[1] Institute of Educational
Leadership, University of Malaya
MALAYSIA

[2] Faculty of Education,
University of Malaya, MALAYSIA

Corresponding Author:
University of Malaya, MALAYSIA
Email: sharmuco@um.edu.my



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INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is striving to attain developed country status by the year 2020. As in many developed countries, some initiatives have been reserved to endow women in each and every sector in this country. Likewise, an imperative step is to enhance girls' education that cultivates the abilities and confidence of women besides changing perceptions toward women at the national level. This involvement of women in education sectors may boost their contributions in decision making that in turn enable women to advance into leadership positions (Lai, Luen, Chye, & Ling, 2014) in education sectors. As a result, almost half of the secondary schools (49%) in Malaysia are headed by women principals (Ministry of Education, 2015).

In terms of school principal leadership practice, the Malaysia Education Blueprint has underscored instructional leadership practices of school principals, a focus being retained since independence till today (Ministry of Education, 2013). Therefore, many researchers have put effort into finding out the instructional leadership practices in school settings. For example, Noor (2007) investigated women principals and found that they were effective in developing teachers' self-efficacy through instructional leadership practices in Johor schools. Ghavifekr et al. (2015) found that principals' instructional leadership practices have greatly impacted on the shared mission and clear goals, professional leadership, continuous monitoring of teachers' progress, and teacher professional growth in vocational schools.

In addition, Abdullah and Kassim (2011) examined that the higher level of instructional leadership practices developed the higher level of relationship between learning cultures as well as teachers' attitude towards the organization. Likewise, Sazali et al. (2007) discovered instructional leadership practices defined the school mission proper way to create effective schools. Jefri (2004) found a positive and significant relationship between teachers' satisfaction and instructional leadership practices in schools. The instructional leaders have strength to communicate the desired mission and vision among teachers for improving schools (Rahimah Ahmad & Ghavifekr, 2014). In other words, instructional leadership practices exhibit the leaders as responsible for school outcomes. Sharma, Mannan, and Veeriah (2016) have stated that "Effective leaders are proactive and seek help that is needed. They also promote an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth" (p. 163).

To underline effective instructional leadership practices, the internal and external factors associated with collaboration among women principals and teachers need to be addressed. Harris (2015) claimed that if a school wanted to advance its performance, its instructional leadership practices and factors should be investigated and adapted to requirements. Likewise, Noor (2007) found that male teachers highly rated women principals regarding their instructional leadership practices comparing female teachers. In addition, Gumus and Akcaoglu (2013) found the gender of teachers was a significant aspect of perceptions of their principals' instructional leadership practices in Turkish schools. According to this inconsistent information, this study investigated women principals' instructional leadership practices from the standpoint of teacher's demographic variables, such as race, gender, and years of teaching experiences. The current findings could generate ways to improve instructional leadership practices as few studies have been published regarding female principals' instructional leadership practices in this context.

Women as Educational Leaders

The aspect of women's leadership in education sectors has come into a significant variable among researchers from the 20th century to date (Abu-Tineh, 2013; Atieno, 2013; Bissessar, 2013; Kaiser & Wallace, 2016; Shakeshaft et al., 2006). Women's journey in history as yet has been filled with obstacles as well as achievements throughout the years.



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Besides this, women involvement in education sectors also plays a vital role in social perspectives to balance the gender equality in society. Therefore, hiring and retaining women teachers have come into main concern in order to advance girls' education and contribute to women making career choices as decision makers and future leaders (Shapiro et al., 2015).

Hence rapid reconstruction and modernization movements in society seem to have been much influenced by opportunities for women and might overcome the barriers and enhance the number of studies of women leadership practices in educational settings across the world (Sperandio, 2010). Besides, women principals have expressed as supportive leaders because they were able to solve the problems of their employees. This supportive role of women principals easily motivate teachers for their job responsibilities and encourage them to participate in the decision-making process. This attitude of women principals has maintained the good relationship among their staff that has enhanced the relationships among the school community with communication of apprehension and greater fairness and sincerity with loving characters. Subsequently, this expressiveness, cooperation, awareness responses of women principals motivate others for their organizational duties that has impact on developing teaching and learning practices in schools (Alexander, 2013; Zikhali & Perumal, 2015).

Furthermore, women have spent a long time in classroom teaching, curriculum development, organized instructional program which transferred them easily for taking the leadership positions in schools (Nogay & Beebe, 2008; Grissom, Loeb & Mitani, 2015). The vast knowledge and understanding in curriculum and evaluation of teaching works promote women principals to perform as a resource provider, instructor, communicator and presenter within schools. These practices of women principals, however, have emphasized to monitor student progress and assist to resolve classroom problems and to empower teachers' professional growth for teaching and learning the process in schools (Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2013). Hence, women have great potential to develop the school mission, focus on instructional priorities and implement a consultative, collaborative work environment to foster an open, supportive atmosphere in meeting the demand for school success. These leadership practices have proved women's capability as instructional leaders in the education sector (Hallinger, 2011).

Among different competing models in educational leadership, instructional leadership practices have countless roles on teaching and student learning than any other leadership models (Bush & Glover, 2014, 2016; Hallinger, Heck & Murphy, 2014; Price et al., 2015). The instructional leaders set up the direction for administering instruction, observing and supporting learning and teaching as their central work for school improvement. These practices of instructional leadership have been recognized as a role model for the academic performance of students in educational settings (Brenninkmeyer & Spillane, 2008).

Hallinger and McCary (1991) stated that some factors, such as level of school, the composition of staff, school location, student socioeconomic position and the school resources can play a role in sustaining instructional leadership practices of principals within schools. Likewise, some scholars have conducted studies indicating the association between instructional leadership practices of women and gender, race, age, educational background and experience of teachers. For instance, Fackler and Malmberg (2016) found that gender significantly affected instructional leadership practices in schools. Atieno (2013) also found no differences based on the gender of teachers about the perceptions of female school leaders. In contrast, another researcher showed that male teachers, unlike female teachers, rated higher their female principals for supervising and evaluating instructional activities (Nogay & Beebe, 2008). This issue, alternatively, is inimitable to explore in Malaysia though a wide-ranging of women principals are working in public secondary schools. Thus, this study aims at finding the extent of women principal's instructional leadership practices in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur public secondary schools as perceived by teachers. The following objectives are formulated to achieve this aim.



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OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research were:

1. To investigate teachers' perceptions of instructional leadership practices of women principals.
2. To find the inter-relationships among the variables of instructional leadership practices.
3. To find the best demographic predictors to predict instructional leadership practices of women principals.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The survey study designed a descriptive-correlational approach to collect the data from Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur public secondary school teachers' perceptions regarding the level of women principal's instructional leadership practices. So, this approach was employed to describe inter-relationship among the dimensions of instructional leadership practices as well as determining the relationship between demographic factors of teachers and their perceptions of instructional leadership practices of women principals.

Population and Sampling

The population of the study is represented by public secondary school teachers from Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. There were 61 public secondary schools administered by women principals in three zones of Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur (Education District Office, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, 1July, 2015). On the basis of 5,268 teachers, the minimum number of respondents needed was 357 where the significance level is $p = .05$ and margin error of 5% according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Hence, 390 survey questionnaires were distributed but 375 were returned (a 96% response rate) and 357 were randomly selected to undergo further analysis.

Instrumentation

Creswell (2009) stated that 'an instrument is a tool for measuring, observing, or documenting quantitative data' (p. 14). The instrument was designed to answer specific questions and possible response that are required for doing this study. This study selected the questionnaire as a research instrument. Questionnaire is appropriate for educational research especially for teachers because questionnaires reduce the burden or any pressure in answering the items besides enabling quick response hence not intruding into teachers' free time. The close ended questionnaire comprised two parts; Section-A; demographic part; Section-B: The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) (Hallinger, 2013; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985) was offered in two versions: *Bahasa Melayu* (Language of Malaysia) and English from Hallinger (2013). This instrument, PIMRS has been translated and applied by researchers in their studies in more than 30 countries across the world (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Wang, 2015). This survey was ratio-scale typed with 50 items and the numerical rating scale was numbered from 0 to 10 where the first endpoint "0" was anchored with the words "not agree at all" and "10" was anchored with the words "strongly agree". The researcher applied this numerical rating scale because of suggesting the highest level of measurement accuracy and acceptability in performing a mathematical action (Hair et al., 2010). The survey had three dimensions. First, defining a school mission was referred to implement strategies for framing and communicating direction and encouragement to achieve school goals (Hallinger, 2013). Second, managing the instructional program was acknowledged for supervising and evaluating the needs of instruction and monitoring student progress as well as co-ordinating the curriculum (Hallinger, 2013).



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Thirdly, developing a positive school learning climate was defined for planning and scheduling others' instructional time and high visibility so that resources are used properly for professional development and incentives for teaching and learning practices (Hallinger, 2013).

Data Analysis

Data analysis means analyzing and interpreting the data which is conducted simultaneously. Analyzing information involves examining the ways that reveal the relationships, patterns, trends, and so forth, that can be found within the data. Quantitative data were analyzed using the SPSS computer program. This data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods to answer the three research questions of this study. The descriptive statistics state the features of the variables in a population directly by the descriptive indices (Chua, 2013). The researcher used ratio scale data in this study; therefore these data were presented by mean (*M*), and standard deviation (*SD*) scores (Chua, 2013). Mean (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*) and analysis of items of each dimension of instructional leadership practices have measured the level of perception of teachers regarding their women principal's instructional leadership practices in the selected secondary schools. Ratio scales were used to measure the perceptions of teachers where the starting point of this scale was "0" and the ending point was "10". The measured mean scores of the variables were divided into three levels with an equal interval, interpreted as follows: 0 to 3.33 as low; 3.34 to 6.67 as moderate; 6.68 to 10.00 as high.

In order to uncover the inter-relationship among the dimensions of instructional leadership practices and instructional leadership practices and teachers' demographic variables, this study used inferential statistics. Inferential statistics also help in making a conclusion regarding the relationship of different variables of a quantitative study (Creswell, 2013). Before proceeding with inferential statistics, one of the fundamental conditions is to check whether the data show normal distribution or not. Regarding measure of the normality test, skewness and kurtosis were used (Hair et al., 2010). It was found that the data were normally distributed. Therefore, Pearson product moment correlation was computed to investigate the relationship for explaining the research question two on the relationship of instructional leadership practices of women principals and three dimensions of instructional leadership practices. The correlation coefficient (*r*) is a value that measures the direction and strength of the relationship between two variables (McMillan, 2012). The *r* value ranges from +1.00 to -1.00 and the strength of the correlation is based on Chua (2013). In addition, multiple regression analysis was used to answer the third research question. This statistical technique is used to find out the change in two or more dimensions or factors of independent variables that contribute to change in a dependent variable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). In this study, it was used to find out which demographic variables contributed most to instructional leadership practices of women principals. The researchers used frequency distribution and percentage for the profiles of respondents in terms of demographic variables, such as gender, race, and teaching experience.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1

Demographic profile of the sample

Demographic	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	67	18.8
	Female	290	81.2
Race	Malay	261	73.5
	Chinese	57	18.0



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	Indian	39	10.9
Teaching Experience	Less than 5 years	90	25.2
	5-10 years	100	28.0
	More than 10 years	167	46.8

N=357 teachers

Among 357 respondents, sixty-seven (18.8%) teachers were male, while the remaining two hundred and ninety (81.2%) teachers were female. In terms of race, two hundred and sixty-one (73.5%) teachers were Malay, fifty-seven (18%) were Chinese and the rest or thirty-nine teachers (10.9%) were Indian. In terms of teaching experience, there were ninety (25.2%) teachers who had less than 5 year teaching experience, while one hundred (28.0%) teachers had teaching experience of between 5 to 10 years and one hundred and sixty-seven (46.8%) teachers had teaching experience more than 10 years.

In short, the majority (81.2%) of the respondents were females whereas only 18.8% respondents were male in schools. As Malaysia is a multi-racial country, the researcher has focused on race where most of the participants (73.5%) were Malay, followed by the Chinese (18.0%) and Indian (10.9%). Regarding teaching experience, most (46.8%) of the teachers had experienced between 5 to 10 years of teaching.

Reliability and Normality

Table 2 shows the distribution of data as reliability and normality

Table 2
Reliability and Normality Measurement Indices (N=357)

Test	Measurement	Threshold value	Test value
Internal reliability	Cronbach alpha (α)	$\geq 0.65 - 0.95$	0.95
Normality	Skewness	$\pm 1.96. p < 0.05$	-.289
	Kurtosis	$\pm 1.96. p < 0.05$	1.02

Table 2 shows that the values of Skewness and Kurtosis are within the threshold range, +1.96 and -1.96 (Chua, 2013). Therefore, data was found normal and thus suitable for further analysis.

Levels of instructional leadership practices of women principals

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Instructional Leadership Practices (IL) of Women Principals (N=357)

Factors	Mean	SD	*Level
Dimension- Define the School Mission	6.35	1.00	Moderate
	6.22	1.09	Moderate
	6.48	1.24	Moderate
Dimension- Managing the instructional program	6.51	0.93	Moderate
	6.32	1.24	Moderate
	6.32	1.15	Moderate
	6.64	0.98	Moderate
Dimension- Developing school learning climate	6.82	0.96	High
	7.03	1.40	High
	6.42	0.79	Moderate



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Provide Incentives For Teachers	6.74	0.75	High
Promote Professional Development	6.94	0.84	High
Provide Incentives For Learning	6.97	1.40	High
Overall	6.64	1.04	Moderate

*(Mean 0 to 3.33 as Low; 3.34 to 6.67 as Moderate; 6.68 to 10.00 as High)

Table 3 shows that women principals have been rated at moderate level regarding their instructional leadership practices by the secondary school teachers in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. Developing a school learning climate has scored the highest level of mean ($M = 6.35$, $SD = 1.00$) followed by managing the instructional program ($M = 6.51$, $SD = 0.93$) and defining a school mission ($M = 6.82$, $SD = 0.96$) of instructional leadership practices of women principals. In conclusion, these findings show that two dimensions of instructional leadership practices of women principals are rated at moderate level by these teachers in secondary schools. An in-depth analysis was carried out; the items rated highly of three dimensions of instructional leadership practices are described as follows.

Table 4
Items of Higher Mean in Defining the School Mission (N=357)

No	Statement	Mean	SD	Level
5	develops goals that are easily understood by teachers	7.16	0.98	High
4	uses data on student performance for academic goals	6.68	0.89	High
6	communicates the school's mission effectively	7.15	0.16	High
7	discusses school's academic goals with teachers	6.76	0.20	High

Source: Hallinger & Murphy (1985); Hallinger (2013)

Based on Table 4, the four items of defining school mission are rated a higher level of mean scores. Women principals are rated highly due to focusing on the school's goals and for providing the clear understanding to carry out the goals among teachers. In addition, women principals have been rated at a high level for communicating school mission and school goals effectively. From the findings, it can be shown that women principals are concerned with framing and communicating the school goals.

Table 5
Items of Higher Mean in Managing the Instructional Program Arranged (N=357)

Item	Statement	Mean	SD	Level
12	reviews student work products	6.89	0.96	High
17	draws upon the results of school-wide testing	6.88	0.96	High
22	discusses academic performance results with the teachers	6.89	0.97	High

Source: Hallinger & Murphy (1985); Hallinger (2013)

In the dimension of managing the instructional program, Table 5 shows that women principals are rated highly for review of student work. In addition, women principals are rated highly due to concern about the student results in preparing curricula for schools and maintaining discussion regarding student performance with the teachers. This analysis shows that women principals have managed sometimes for doing instructional work.



Table 6
Items of Higher Mean in Developing a Positive School Learning Climate (N=357)

Item	Statement	Mean	SD	Level
37	compliments teachers privately for their performance	6.95	0.28	High
39	rewards teachers for professional recognition	6.76	0.15	High
40	creates professional growth opportunities for teachers	6.74	0.48	High
43	obtains the participation in service activities	7.10	0.95	High
42	supports the use of skills acquired during in-service training	7.05	0.94	High
45	provides time for teachers to share ideas or information	6.97	0.41	High
41	in-service activities consistent with the school's goals	6.92	0.67	High
44	leads teacher in service activities related to instruction	6.70	0.97	High
47	honors students for academic accomplishments	7.58	0.73	High
49	contacts parents to communicate improved student	6.93	0.80	High

Source: Hallinger & Murphy (1985); Hallinger (2013)

The results shown in Table 6 suggest that women principals are rated highly for developing a positive school learning climate in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur secondary schools. Women principals allow teachers to share ideas and information regarding student achievement. Furthermore, the principals are rated highly by teachers in all items of promoting teacher professional development. The principals actively engage in arranging for incentives for learning and to accomplish the students in formal and informal writing for their great achievement in schools. In conclusion, women principals, however, maintain the liaison with the parents in communicating improved student learning and student outcomes.

Inter-Relationship Among the Dimensions of Instructional Leadership Practices

The inter-correlation analysis (see Table 7) shows a moderate and positive correlation ($r = .65$) between the dimensions, developing a positive school learning climate and defining school mission; a strong and positive correlation ($r = .76$) between managing the instructional program and developing a positive school learning climate and a moderate and positive correlation ($r = .65$) between managing the instructional program and defining school mission. All these correlations are significant at $p < .01$. The results indicated that the instructional leadership practices of women principals have a significant and positive association with the three dimensions of instructional leadership practices.

Table 7
Pearson Correlation Among Dimensions of Instructional Leadership Practices

Dimensions	MIP	DPSL
DSM	.647**	.652**
MIP		.762**

DSM: Defining School Mission

MIP: Managing Instructional Program

DPSL: Developing Positive School Learning Climate

** Significant.0.01 (2-tailed)



Influence of Teacher Demographic Factors on Instructional Leadership Practices of Principals

Results of the Stepwise Multiple Regression Test in Table 8 show that the demographic factor of teachers, gender, and teaching experience was an only significant predictor of instructional leadership practices of women principals. While the experience of teachers ($\beta=.256, p<.05$) contributed 6.7 % to instructional leadership practices of women principals [$R = .258; R^2=.0.067; F (1, 355) =25.551; p < .05$]. Furthermore, experience of teachers ($\beta =.256, p < .05$) and gender ($\beta=.122, p <.05$) contributed (8.2-6.7)% or 1.5% on instructional leadership practices of women principals $R=.286; R^2=.0.082; F (2,354) =15.814; p < .05$. Hence, based on Cohen’s benchmark (Cohen, 1988, as cited in Chua & Ting, 2014), teaching experience and gender have a small effect on instructional leadership practices of women principals with R^2 is smaller than .13. In this case, another demographic variable, race, was not a significant factor of instructional leadership practices of women principals. Hence, the multiple regression model of this study is:

$$\text{Instructional leadership practices} = .256(\text{experience of teachers}) + .122(\text{gender})$$

Table 8
Results of Multiple Regression Test on Factors of Instructional Leadership Practices

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	β		
Teaching experience	.421	.084	.256	5.045	.000
Gender	.401	.167	.122	2.396	.017

$R = .258; R^2=.0.067; F (1, 355) =25.551; p<.05$ (teaching experience)

$R=.286; R^2=.0.082; F(2,354) =15.814; p<.05$ (gender)

Predictor variable: gender, teaching experience; Dependent variable: Instructional Leadership Practices

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that secondary school teachers have perceived their women principals as having a moderate level of instructional leadership practice in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur public secondary schools. The instructional leadership practices have three dimensions, while two dimensions namely defining school mission and managing instructional program are perceived at moderate level of mean by these school teachers but developing positive learning climate has only rated as a higher mean score. Though the two dimensions of instructional leadership practices are depicted as at moderate level of mean scores, so that instructional leadership practices in these schools are depicted as a moderate level of mean scores in these schools. These finding of this study support those by Nichols and Nichols (2014) who found women principals were rated as being at a moderate level on their instructional leadership practices in elementary schools in the USA following quantitative study. This finding of this study might be affected by demographic factors. In this study, most of the teachers are females, so it might be influenced by instructional leadership practices of women principals.



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Gumus and Akcaoglu's (2013) quantitative study in Turkish primary schools revealed that female teachers rated their women principals lower than their male principals. Similarly, these findings align with the findings by Noor (2007).

On the other hand, these findings are inconsistent with Noor (2007) and Chua et al. (2014) who reported that women principals were rated a higher level of instructional leadership practices by their teachers in Malaysia. Another study by Aas, Brandmo, and Bryant (2016) mentioned that women leaders rated themselves as being more instructional than male leaders. Besides this, women principals have followed more instructional leadership practices than male leaders when they were rated by their followers in quantitative studies (Atieno, 2013; Nogay & Beebe, 2008). These discrepancies are needed to be explored by further studies in this context.

The first dimension, defining the school mission of instructional leadership practices of women principals is perceived as at moderate level by the teachers in the schools investigated. The item analysis of this dimension shows that most of the items are rated at a moderate level of means by the teachers. However, the item analysis shows that women principals have highly focused on developing the school goals and provided clear understanding to carry out the goals among teachers. In addition, women principals have communicated school mission and school goals effectively in these secondary schools. These steps of women principals in these investigated schools are very crucial which involve them in determining a performance goal. These findings are sustained by researchers such as Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008).

In contrast, the findings show that women principals often frame the school's goals for distributing staff tasks properly besides incorporating that into their daily routine in these schools. Underlining these findings, it can be added that it is not possible for principals to set up school goals individually but they are required to frame the goals with others. Therefore, Liljenberg (2015) suggested principals need to set up the collaborative approach to achieve the school goals. DuFour and Eaker (2010) suggested that principals have to emphasize academic goals in setting the aims and direction of schools. Schools may have many goals that sometimes make the teachers confused or unsure about the significant academic goals. Sun and Leithwood (2015) suggested that principals communicate the school goals in staff bulletins, article writing, newsletters, handbooks, besides using parent conferences, teacher conferences and other discussions with staff.

In terms of the second dimension of IL, managing the instructional program is perceived at moderate level by the teachers in these investigated schools. The item analysis of this dimension shows that most of the items are rated at moderate level by the teachers. The findings of item analysis display that the teachers have rated highly their women principals for casual observations in classrooms on a daily basis. This finding is vital for developing classroom instruction which can enhance school achievement. These findings are supported by Hallinger et al. (2014). Another item analysis of this dimension shows that women principals are perceived as being at a moderate level of mean scores for observing the consistency of classroom practices with curricular objectives of schools. Emphasizing this issue, the researchers stated that principals require maintaining the high level of continuousness in the curricular sequences through collaboration among teachers (Eacott & Asuga, 2014). Another important finding is that women principals are rated at high level due to inform teachers regarding school's success in written form and meet with them on a regular basis for discussing student progress. These practices of women principals are essential factors in building up the schools as effective for student achievement. These findings are supported by other researchers such as DuFour and DuFour (2015) who found that these practices of principals develop student progress in schools.

The third dimension, developing a positive school learning climate is rated a higher level of mean in the current findings. This higher level of developing a positive school learning climate might be the higher level of mean scores of most of the items in this dimension. These findings are supported by other researchers (Nogay & Beebe, 2008; Murphy, Hallinger & Heck, 2013).



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The item analysis of this dimension shows that women principals allow time with the teachers to share their ideas and information regarding student achievement. Furthermore, the principals are aware of promoting teacher professional development. Women principals actively engaged in arranging for incentives for learning and to accomplish the students in formal and informal writing for their great achievement in these investigated schools. Women principals, however, maintained the liaison with parents for improving student learning in the investigated schools. This culture nurtures the expansion of high values and expectations that raise the rewards of ceaseless learning which is supported by Leithwood and Sun (2012).

In terms of maintaining high visibility of women principals, some items are depicted at a moderate level in these findings. Regarding this, Malaysian researchers mentioned that principals occupied themselves with administrative and managerial work, keeping them away from instructional duties in schools (Tahir et al., 2015). Although a noteworthy serving of the principal's time is out of her control, principals need to be fix priorities on how the residual time is to be expended. Besides this, visibility in classrooms accelerates the relationship among the principal, students, and teachers which will positively influence classroom instruction and student manners (Murphy et al., 2013).

The data from the analysis of inter-correlation moreover revealed that women principals are associated significantly and positively with the three dimensions of instructional leadership practices in Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur public secondary schools. While the dimensions of developing a positive school learning climate and defining school mission have a strong and positive correlation between instructional leadership practices of women principals. To be effective, leaders must be able to foster a learning climate for developing student outcomes and encouraging divergent teaching and learning within the organization (Price et al., 2015). These findings were contradicted by Sharma and Kannan (2012). They discovered that Malaysian secondary school teachers were not receiving proper support in designing and creating the learning environment in schools. Regarding this issue, Suraya and Yunus (2012) mentioned that as a human being, it was impossible for principals to pay attention in each and every sector in schools. So, this issue needs further exploration.

Results of demographic variables show that teacher gender has positive and significant relationship with instructional leadership practices of women principals. Similar result was revealed by Nogay and Beebe (2008) indicating a significant relationship between gender and female principals' supervising and evaluating activities in leadership practices. These findings were supported by other researchers (Fackler & Malmberg, 2016; Gumus & Akcaoglu, 2013; Noor, 2007). Another demographic factor, teacher working experience, has a positive and significant correlation with instructional leadership practices of women principals. This finding was contradicted by Gumus and Akcaoglu's (2013) study in Turkish schools. The third demographic variable is race that has no significant relationship with leadership practices of women principals in this study. This finding aligned with that of Lai et al. (2014). Because Malaysia is a multiracial country, it is imperative for researchers to consider this aspect.

Overall, the findings of this study show a clear picture regarding instructional leadership practices of women principals and provides information for proper guidance in creating a learning culture within schools. In addition, women principals in this context have the potential to set up the accountabilities into the wider circumstances to attain its possessions within schools and sustain the effort over the medium to long term results in education sectors. Hence, we need to look after the IL dimensions, defining school mission and managing the instructional program to find out the gap of leadership practices of women principals.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study shows that women principals are passionately committed for delivering a collaborative manner and concerned with caring culture in schools. They have a willingness and tend to be student concerned with emphasizing on fairness and maintained a relational atmosphere in schools.



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In addition, they have a potential to develop a positive learning climate in schools. Hence, the researchers would like to offer that further and well-organized training based on learning and teaching improvement is required for women principals to enhance secondary school student achievement. The Ministry of Education Malaysia should come up with supporters among the principals, thoroughly train some of them who will be in a position to offer assistance and more guidance to their counterparts. Besides that, delegating administrative responsibilities to senior superintendents should be stimulated to diminish the administrative liability of the principals. This kind of transformation could enhance the principals' further timing for doing the instructional leadership practices in schools for student learning and teaching practices. Moreover, this study exposed a platform for policy makers to pay special attention regarding the relationship between women principal's instructional leadership practices and demographic variables of teachers such as experience and gender.

It is also encouraged for further researchers to find out the connection between women principal's instructional leadership practices and school success followed blended research method. This relationship should also be discovered in this country; due to many Malaysian schools are overloaded getting good scores in international assessments such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) (Aziz et al., 2015).

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