

CHANGE MANAGEMENT THROUGH CONTINGENCY APPROACH IN  
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KOTA TINGGI DISTRICT

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## DEDIKASI

*Istimewa buat Ayahanda dan Bonda Tersayang*

***Mohamad Nor bin Paiman & Jariah binti Daud***

*Segala Kesabaran Dan Doa menjadi Semangat Kejayaan Ini. Terima kasih Kerana  
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*Buat Keluarga tercinta*

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## ABSTRAK

Kajian deskriptif ini dijalankan bagi mengenalpasti skala perubahan dan gaya perubahan di Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi (SBT) dan sekolah kebangsaan peringkat rendah dan menengah di daerah Kota Tinggi, Johor. Kajian ini melibatkan 154 sampel dari 2 buah sekolah rendah dan sekolah menengah yang diktiraf sebagai Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi (SBT) serta dua buah sekolah kebangsaan peringkat sekolah rendah dan sekolah menengah yang dipilih secara rawak. Kajian ini dilakukan secara kuantitatif dengan menggunakan borang soal selidik sebagai instrumen untuk mendapatkan data dan seterusnya data yang diperolehi dianalisis dengan menggunakan kaedah analisis statistik deskriptif dengan bantuan Statistical Packages For Social Sciences (SPSS versi 16). Soal selidik dibentuk berdasarkan Model Kontingensi Perubahan oleh Stace dan Dunphy dan mengandungi item yang mengukur skala perubahan yang berlaku dalam sekolah dan gaya perubahan yang diamalkan oleh guru besar/pengetua sekolah berkenaan. Teknik statistik pemerataan, kekerapan, min skor, sisihan piawai digunakan bagi mengukur tahap skala perubahan dan gaya perubahan. Manakala teknik perbandingan purata kekerapan digunakan bagi menjawab persoalan-persoalan kajian. Dapatan analisis deskriptif menunjukkan bahawa skala perubahan di Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi dan sekolah kebangsaan adalah berbeza manakala gaya perubahan diamalkan oleh guru besar/pengetua mempunyai sedikit persamaan. Dapatan Implikasi dan cadangan hasil daripada dapatan kajian dibincangkan pada akhir bahagian penulisan.

## ABSTRACT

This descriptive study was conducted to determine the scale of changes and the style of changes in the High Performance Schools (SBT) and national schools at primary and secondary level in the district of Kota Tinggi, Johor. This study involved 154 samples from a primary school and a secondary school that is acknowledged as a High Performing Schools (SBT) and two randomly selected national schools of primary and secondary level. This study is conducted through quantitative approach by utilizing questionnaire as an instrument to obtain the data. The data were then analyzed by using descriptive statistical analysis with the help of Statistical Packages For Social Sciences (SPSS 16). The questionnaire was developed based on Stace and Dunphy Contingency Model of Changes and consists of items that measure the scale of change taking place in the schools and the style of change adopted by the headmaster/principal of the school concerned. Statistical percentages techniques, frequency, mean and standard deviation are used to measure the scale of change and the styles of change. A comparison on average frequency between the schools is measured to answer the research questions. The findings of the descriptive analysis show that the scale of change in high performance schools and national schools are different whereas the styles of change practiced by the schools leaders indicated some common traits. Implications of the findings and recommendations resulting from the study are discussed in the final part of this study.

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## LIST OF SHORTFORM

SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
No	-	Number
M	-	Mean
SD	-	Standard Deviation
KPM	-	Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia
JPN	-	Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri
PPD	-	Pejabat Pelajaran Daerah
SBT	-	Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi
SKKSM	-	Standard Kompetensi Kepengetuaan Sekolah Malaysia
KSSR	-	Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah
MBMMBI	-	Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia dan Memperkukuhkan Penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris
PPSMI	-	Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa Inggeris
PBS	-	Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah
STS	-	Sangat Tidak Setuju
TS	-	Tidak Setuju
TP	-	Tidak Pasti
S	-	Setuju
SS	-	Sangat Setuju
EPRD	-	Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan
NRKA	-	National Key Result Areas / Bidang Keberhasilan Utama Negara
FPN	-	Falsafah Pendidikan Negara

## LIST OF SYMBOLS

%	-	Percentage
f	-	Frequency
$\alpha$	-	Alpha
df	-	<a href="#">Degrees of Freedom</a>
p	-	Significant value

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

As the dynamic of human needs evolved, time witnessed countless changes took place. From the dawn of evolution to the rise of 21st century, one thing that is constant is change. But none other change is more primal in society than change in education. Although it was not given a name before, education has been around since the beginning of time. It is an important activity in society; it gives an opportunity for man to understand the world around him and his place in it. Having been there throughout history, it has gone through innumerable changes. Some changes accommodate human needs at times while others disintegrate and eventually forgotten by society. As times have shown, human needs for improvement and development prohibit them from getting transfixed to certain ideals but rather changing their ideas of ideals through the course of time. The same goes for education. As idea of what knowledge and skills should constitute in education is continuously evolving in nature, change in pursuit of improvement and development is inevitable. Living in a developing country with a plenty of resources and flourishing in finance, Malaysians have a large advantage because of the access to the highest technologies and devices in assisting schooling that are necessary for a

better education. Although, Malaysian education system seems in a bit of turmoil right now, one always wonders how it can change for the better in the future.

*“Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and the betterment of the society and the nation at large”.*

This Philosophy of Education is held in high regard in developing, managing and running the course of education in Malaysia. As the late Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. In order to develop better society in Malaysia, education is the most influential tool to transform individual to reach his or her potential intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically. The Malaysian education system has to arise to its Philosophy of Education by becoming more adaptive, committed and capable of facing more changes and future challenges. Within this decade itself, Education in Malaysia has shifted from the operation of KBSR to the transitory PPSMI (Teaching Mathematics and Science in English) and today the implementation of PBS in manifestation of the Philosophy of Education. As suggested by Philosophy of Education, to produce the future Malaysians within the intended specs, on going effort to develop individual potential in education is vital. It should stipulate the development of Malaysian society towards a society that has economic competitiveness, active and tenacious in building the nation dream. It should develop a spirit of inquisition and balanced thinking in future Malaysian so as to enable them to understand the society and changing it in accordance with current demand. It is through education that members of society, particularly the future Malaysian, who is the threshold of future leaders, come to understand the working of society. In this



light, the reason of education is not for the glorious of obtaining a degree and job but rather the mastery of the knowledge and skills inculcate within it. If the society is not organized appropriately, jobs will become difficult to acquire, degrees lose their meaning and education becomes a national waste as it is happening in many countries in the world today.

The high aspiration in Malaysian education system is not only apparent within Philosophy of Education but is also indicated in Vision 2020, the nation beacon to be transformed into developed country by 2020. One of the primary focuses in nation development is to furnish Malaysians with ample knowledge appropriate for the present needs. These can only be achieved through education and changes in education are fundamental to conform to the current demands. With the central role that education plays in the development of human capital, it is not surprising that education is seen at the forefront of a country's social and economic planning and is therefore constantly subject to pressure for change. Nevertheless, the implementation of change requires more attention than it currently received. Philosophy of Education unrelentlessly called for the continuous effort towards perfection in its implementation and managing these changes in education in the highest esteem is vital.

Despite the seemingly calm nature, more changes occur in education than in any other endeavor. It can occur whether in bigger scale or smaller scale. In adherence to the ever changing nature, the frequency of change in schools has become more eminent. Despite its frequency of occurrence, the implementation of change is complex and laborious. As the education field in Malaysia has never stopped changing, the implementation of change in school varied and has been shown through the schools' performance. It requires the ingenuity of the organization leads to ensure the efficacy of the implementation. Nonetheless, efforts to change are prone to the scrutinizing eyes of its stakeholders and invigilation on implementation of every stage is inevitable. New strategies and policies are regularly introduced to reform the prerequisite of an education system. Ever since the independent until present, the Malaysian education system has undergone numerous changes. These

changes were intended to cater for the present needs and sometimes made at the urgency to solving certain problems. According to Hall & Hord (2006), change in education field required three to five years to be fully internalized within its multi-layered level. Nevertheless, these durations will depend on the efficiency in implementing the change process. As changes in the education field are far from stopping, the call for competence in the implementation is authoritative.

The speedy changes and increased intricacy of today's world present new challenges and put new demands on Malaysian education system. Everything from the location, to the instructors and even the speed one gathers information is going to change in some ways or the other. There has been by and large a growing awareness of the necessity to change and improve the readiness of students for productive functioning in the constantly changing and highly demanding environment. This is inextricably raising equally important issue on improving the readiness of school administrations and staff to face all these changes. In confronting this challenge, it is necessary to consider the complexity of the education system itself and the multitude of problems that must be addressed. Understandably, no simple, single standardized approach can be applied with the expectation that significant improvements of the system will take place. Indeed, any strategy for change must contend with the diverse factors affecting the education system, the interactions of its constituents, and the obscure interdependencies within it and with its environment.

Schools organization is undergoing a drastic change in the ways it is conducted. As the front runner in education, schools face changes, whether unexpected or premeditated. According to Herman and Herman (1994), there are three types of organizational change in which schools may be implicated with. Herman and Herman believed that schools may face optional change in which change is initiated by the primary groups in school instead of having the change mandated by the school authorities, or the school leader. This could include the changes on menial issues in classroom by a group of educators. Another type of organizational change is incremental change in which the stakeholders take a move

to improve the school current operations by initiating minor changes. This could also include to the suggestions given by Parents and Teachers Association (PIBG). The third category of organizational change which may occur in schools is known as transformational change in which the whole school culture went through dramatic change in structure and rapid in transition. It is conducted when a school is under performing or sometimes pressure of forces from inside or outside of the school insist transformation in its instruction, support services or governance matters. These types of organizational changes provide challenges for school leaders and the schools have to be prepared for pressure from whether internal or external forces as society and nation gearing for high performance in education.

The implementation of each of these changes depends on the administration of the school predominantly the principals/headmaster as the leader. The role of the principal/ headmaster in managing these changes in the school organization is immense. As stated by Fullan (1997), a healthy leadership is decisive to face the storm of problems and potential opportunities in administering major changes in school. Changes bring about challenges and leaders in schools are responsible to ensure the management of changes according to its designated course. School leaders need to prepare themselves to be undaunted by changes as they have responsibilities to drive their schools through the change and triumphant over the challenges to arise as a high performance school. Herman and Herman (1994) stated that a school which enables all of its students to achieve at least the acceptable minimum mastery of essential basic skills required at the next level of schooling is an effective school. A formula for effective schools made popular by Edmonds in 1979 suggested 7 factors including:

- i. *Sense of mission*
- ii. *Building strong leadership*
- iii. *High expectations for all students and staff*
- iv. *Frequent monitoring of student progress*
- v. *A positive, orderly learning climate*
- vi. *Sufficient opportunity for learning*
- vii. *Parent/community involvement*

(Herman & Herman, 1994, pg 84)

As an effective school enables all of its students to achieve at least the acceptable minimum mastery of essential basic skills required at the next level of schooling, it can be outwardly accepted that an effective school is a high performance school. Through this formula of effective schools, Herman and Herman (1994) suggested that these 7 factors could contribute for a high performance. In the first factor, in order for schools to be of high performance, the schools need to be clear of their mission. This sense of mission is shared by all the schools' community. For schools which are striving to achieve high performance, this sense of mission has to be shared by all the schools' community and can be most effectively conveyed through the emphasis from the school leaders. Building strong leadership refers to the school leaders willingness to enrich their knowledge and enhance their skills not only in leadership field but most importantly in today current schooling, in managing change at schools. These second factor is vital because with strong leadership, the school leaders will have no problem to carry out the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh factors. A school leader with strong leadership will be able to monitor the students' progress regularly and create a positive learning climate in school. This positive learning climate can help the schools to provide the students with sufficient learning opportunities. With strong leadership, the school leader will be able to attain involvement and high commitment from the parents and community to enable the school to be of high performance. According to Luthans (2011), measurement is essential in managing for high performance. In order to see the level of performance in schools, school leaders can instil the right expectation through the sharing of expected measurement for the quality and the quantity of students' performance.

John Kotter, an influential figure in the field of leadership studies, mentioned that leadership entails establishing direction, aligning people and then motivating and inspiring to achieve the outcomes planned. As strong leadership is imperative in developing an effective school, school leaders are required to address the imperative for change that comes from these extrinsic sources as well as intrinsic pressure from the growth of knowledge itself. To be effective, the process of change needs to be planned carefully. Constant refinement and development even during the operation of changes is important to maintain its relevance (Burnes, 2004). Therefore, the

effective change management in schools is reflected through the effective role of leaders in schools. Educators are a critical community and will require engagement with their criticism throughout the process. Instead of taking criticism with irritation and contemplating an innuendo, addressing this criticism with an eye for constructivism is essential if change is to be successful and sustained. Basically, leading change involves managing a range of forces which can aggravate the process. As principal/headmaster is the leader of school, he/she plays a pivotal role in moving changes towards the right directions. Leadership skill is not exclusively innate and therefore can be enhanced through practice. Management of change among headmasters or principals is an ongoing process to enable the leaders at school to be competent and equipped themselves with appropriate skills to tackle challenges. The effective role of principal in managing these changes can contribute towards the improvement of the school. Demands on resources and political drives for greater efficiency have led to many restructuring. It is the stated need to improve the quality and effectiveness of their management and to make them more efficient (Pettinger, 2007).

The issue of poor academic performance of students in Malaysia has been of much concern to the government, parents, teachers and even students themselves. The results of PISA indicated a decline in performance of Malaysian students. The quality of education not only depends on the teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties, but there are many factors which can influence school performance. The school environment, which include the classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, teachers' quality, school management, teaching methods, peers, etc. are variables that affect pupils' academic achievement . Hence, the school environment remains an important area that should be studied and well managed to enhance students' academic performance. Nevertheless, all these factors can only be of influenced if the school leaders were incapable of taking coordination of the school environment and managing the change in the education system effectively. A strong leadership will be able to take control of his or her school environment and culminate a positive culture in school to enable learning opportunities for the pupils and professional development among school staffs.

## 1.2 Background of the Problem

Change is now more imperative as change occurs more often and some of the changes are of mammoth magnitude. From the small change of schools' manual to the colossal change through the implementation of PBS, for every schools the things that stay the same is the demand for high performance. Each schools endured different challenges to stick to the mainstream changes and stay afloat in performance. To ensure a successful educational change, the school leaders have to hit a balance between over control and bedlam. The process of change will be cut short if the school leaders decided to stay complacent and become part of the resistance to change instead of becoming the agent of change. The implementation of change will be halt from happening in the school. The process of change in school often went through a rough patch due to measly implementation. Measly implementation may happen due to the lack of emphasis given by the school's leaders, which raise questions and give reasonable doubt on his/her leadership skills. The lack of leadership skills among the school's leaders will cause chaos in implementing the changes.

As supported by Fullan (1997), nothing is more essential and complicated to understand than the role of leadership in educational reform. Nevertheless, the ever changing education landscape provides for a ground of doubt about the ability of the schools' leaders to cater to the changing roles of headmasters and principals at school. The role played by the principals has a ripple effect towards the school's atmosphere, especially in the process of teaching and learning in school. It can also affect the way the students accept the teacher's way of teaching and affecting the teacher's interaction with the students and the teacher's perceptions towards students. The huge responsibilities carried out by the leaders at school can affect the dynamics of the schools in many levels; therefore it is fundamental for the leaders to be fully equipped with essential skills as the leader in schools.

*“Among the factors that made change traumatic in our schools were a lack of leadership skills, unfamiliarity with recent research and practice, inexperience in consensus building, staff discord, the inability to prioritize and focus, the tendency to think in terms of staff problems rather than in terms of student needs, and a reluctance to step off into the unknown (or, rather, an inclination to take, once again, fatal half-measures)”*

(Fullan, 1997, pg 240)

This statement shows that how a change is conducted can determine the reception to change in the future. Resistance to change could arouse if the school staff have prior bad experience in implementing change. Fullan's statement could also be interpreted that weakness of school leaders in carrying out a change could lead to resistance to change in the future. Among the reasons for resistance include the school leaders lack in leadership skills. It shows that school leaders have influences over the reception of change in their schools. If the schools' leaders is undaunted by the change and pay no heed to the implementation of change, so will the rest of the school staff and if the schools' leaders over control the process of change, more people will be resist the change and be uncooperative over the change implementation. Therefore, it is more than essential to ensure that the running of a change is carried out in high esteem. Supported by Hussien (2012), leadership is a critical factor in the sphere of authority and power relations in the school systems. It is undeniable the importance of a leader's role in implementing change in schools. The school leaders equipped with adequate knowledge in change management will be more prepared to face changes and understand the complexity of its process to ensure efficient implementation of changes in schools. Nevertheless, school leaders with less knowledge and the right leadership skill will rather cause confusion and anguish among the school staffs in implementing changes. As described through the statement above, the implementation of change in schools depends on the principals/headmasters leadership skills. As school leaders varied in style, the outcome of change implementation varied. These outcomes are important to determine the practices which constitute an effective school leaders who can assist their schools to strive towards high performance.

*“There are good schools with good principals and there are bad schools with bad principals. In some places there may be bad schools with good principals. But nowhere are there good schools with bad principals. It is a settled matter that the leadership provided by principals is absolute essential for schools of high quality”*

(Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007)

As stated by Byrne-Jiménez and Terry Orr in the statement above, no schools can be of high performance with ineffective school leaders. Schools performance is influenced by the school leaders. Schools with an effective school leader will be able to drive the school to high performance whereas a bad school leader will subsequently exert influences over the school cultura and eventually driving the school performance spiralling downward. As school leaders in Malaysia are appointed on qualification but also time based, there is no guarantee that any of them are of effective leaders. Engaging both in profesional development is crucial. Professional development compels for on going effort from the school leaders to unrelentless commitment towards improving one own practice. Essential knowledge and additional skills to enhance pre requisite knowledge and skills can empower the school leaders to drive their schools to high performance. Eventhough what is considered as essential knowledge and skills for the school leaders constantly evolved just as much as the public perception of what an education system should have as its priorities, there is undisputed call for knowledge on change management as the frequency of change hits schools increased.

School leaders are the key part in developing a high performance school. Not only school leaders have the responsibility to manage change effectively but also to manoeuvre the schools towards high performance. Whether leaders in primary or secondary schools, both play significant part in producing the future Malaysian. Whether Malaysia will be filled with languid and lethargic Malaysians or rather industrious and inspiring Malaysians in the future, it depends on the pupils produce



by the schools today. The demands for high performance and for each pupil to achieve their highest potential is omnipresent in the atmosphere but also evident in Philosophy of Education. In order for school to achieve high performance, it is obvious that school leaders have to play vital role. They have to be of high performance in order to develop a high performance school. All these involved accountability in school leaders' parts to reform their work in curriculum, instruction and organization and invigilation to improve pupils' performance (Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007).

Neufeld in his study based on 23 interviews of middle school principals, concluded that school leaders need to advance themselves in leadership by on the looking out for new knowledge and skills (Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007). It is crucial to understand the relationship between the leaders' role to manage changes in schools and the schools' performance to see the importance of change management among principals/ headmasters. For that, the leaders at schools have need of a new management concept to lift up their awareness on the importance of change management in schools. According to Ang and Balsandran Ramiah (2009) prior researches have shown that a quality style of leadership can bring prosperity and continuous improvement in school. It is quintessential in bringing quality in managing changes in schools as it can undoubtedly influence the school performance. As more changes affect the nature of public education, it demands corresponding shifts and increase workload among school leaders. It gives pressure on schools to maintain high achievement in their pupils' performances. It is now acknowledged and widely accepted that leading in schools is a complex and demanding work. It involves strong leadership in an ambience of relentless and volatile change (Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007).

Many theories have been formulated in conjunction to a leadership style. Nonetheless, most of these theories condone to a style of leadership for all change scenarios. Change is not stagnant and researches have proven that it is not only the leader's style that affect the implementation of change, but many factors can contribute to the efficiency of change implementation. Nevertheless, as a school

leader, the principal / headmaster would want to empower their practice so that they can become the catalyst for successful transformation in their schools. Lussier (2008) maintained that organizational success depends on the organizational's adaptations to environmental changes. In order to help school leaders to lead success in schools, it is important that they lead the schools to become accustomed to change.

Hersey and Blanchard (1993) suggested that it was not the leadership style which led to success, but rather the ability of the leader to adapt his/her style (Aitken & Higgs, 2010). Leaders need to be flexible with their own leadership style in order for them to carry out numerous changes which will require different strategies. Contingency approach, as stated by Dunphy, Griffiths & Benn (2007), is not about pursuing 'one best way' but rather of determining the appropriate strategy for each distinctive situation. It is one of the theories that remain a mystery due to the lack of study on it. It is largely unstudied and inadequately understood (Palmer, Dunford & Akin, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the researcher believes that understanding change management through utilizing the dimensions of contingency approach can help uncover the appropriate change management practice for different situation. As school leaders confronted with high expectations for growth in students' performance level. The success of school leaders depends on the accomplishment of their students' performance and the speed on which they are able to advocate school improvement (Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007).

A study by Buchanan and Boddy on the skills and competences necessary to achieve successful change emerges a picture of change agent who is highly skilled and well-trained political operator who has not only an in-depth knowledge of change processes and tools, but also the personal qualities and experience to use them both in the open and, especially, behind the scenes (Burnes, 2004, pg 310). Yet, the ever increasing speed and rapidity of change altered the metabolism of schools and demanded schools to boost their capacity to become accustomed and adjust to new circumstances and environments. With the increasing demands for schools to perform, school leaders are pressured to transform the school systems and culture by adding more and more changes. There is more pressure to study the practice of high

performing school leaders in order to identify the effective way of managing schools and replicate this practice in their own schools.

Based on Ang & Balsandran Ramiah (2009), a successful change agent requires knowledge and skills and the best teacher of change is someone who is in the same field. High performing schools experience the almost similar changes when it comes to implementing the latest amend from the Education Ministry as prescribed through the provision of law. Nevertheless, not much study has been taken to measure the difference of change practice between high performing schools with the ordinary schools. The differentiation of the practice in implementing these changes between the two should be identified for future reference. Therefore, this research will focus on the scale of change and style of change implemented by headmasters/principals of primary and secondary schools in the district of Kota Tinggi.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

As the front runner in creating the future Malaysian, schools have to carry out numerous changes and face abundant challenges on its course. As many programs have been conducted to empower the school's leaders, not much effort is pulled to explain the complexity and the effective way of running the course when it comes to change management. As change becomes frequent, school leaders need to empower themselves with knowledge and skills to manage change in schools. It is a huge number of losses in human capital to the country and for producing the future Malaysian, education could not afford to fail in implementing its changes. The contingency approach offered a plausible explanation of not only why changes were causing problems for organizations, but also how to resolve them (Burnes, 2004).

Different leadership styles are introduced and promoted, yet some schools triumph in leading their schools towards high performance despite the tenacious demands of changes and many remain stable at their previous level and struggling

with the implementation of change. As school leaders manoeuvring their schools towards high performance in accordance, they are also managing changes in schools. Based on that, in order to implement change fruitfully a leader should understand the different types of change and the importance of using suitable models for understanding organization problems. The contingency approach draws a connection between the style and situation. It looks for leadership by identifying particular related situations and determines the style of leadership most suitable for each. As promoted by contingency approach, since changes can differ in terms of its magnitude, the leaders need to be aware that their leadership style has to cater to the needs of his/her staff in order to ensure that the efforts to implementing the change are parallel to the task completed in its course. Leaders need to identify the appropriate change style according to the scale of change.

A study conducted by Stace and Dunphy on change management found that the most successful organizations deliberately use a mix of change management styles and move through different scales of change depending on context and organizational needs (Graetz, Rimmer, Lawrence & Smith, 2006). It is important that leaders understand the need to assess the scale of change as to perform the change styles that suit in order to implement the changes effectively. In order to replicate the success of the other organization, it would be creditable to adapt to their way of managing change. The success of implementing change can be determined through the performance of the organizations. In order to identify the appropriate change practice in schools, the leaders of high performance schools are identified as the most suitable subject of study. To be able to understand the difference between the practice in managing change, the researcher decided to compare the change management practice of the leader of high performing schools (SBT) with the leader of ordinary national schools.

## **1.4 Objectives**

The main objective to carry out this research is to identify any differences in the change management practices between the school's leaders of High Performance Schools (SBT) and the school's leaders of ordinary national schools through three dimensions of contingency approach – Scale of Change, Style of Change and Form of Change. These dimensions are adapted from Stace and Dunphy Contingency Model of Change. Through this study, the researcher wants to identify the frequency of the scale of change occurring in each school and the style of change frequently practiced by the school's leaders. In addition, the linking relation between the scale of change and style of change towards a form of change also being measured. Therefore, this research is mainly to address this particular issue:

1. Identify the scale of change frequently occurs in particular schools within Kota Tinggi district
2. Identify the style of change practiced by leaders in particular schools within Kota Tinggi district
3. Identify the form of change implied by leaders in particular schools within Kota Tinggi district
4. Compare the scale of change, style of change and form of change between High Performance Schools (SBT) and average national schools at primary and secondary level

## **1.5 Research Questions**

Overall, this study will try to find the answers to these questions listed below:

- i. What is the scale of change in SBT schools and the national schools for both primary and secondary levels?

- ii. What is the style of change in SBT schools and the national schools for both primary and secondary levels?
- iii. What is the form of change for both primary and secondary levels?
- iv. Are there any differences in scale of change, style of change and form of change between the two types of schools?

## **1.6 Rationale**

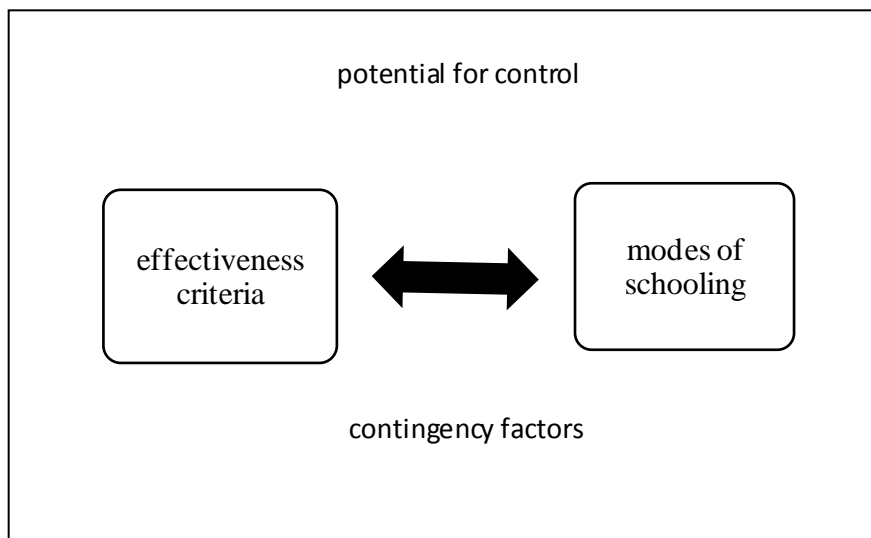
This study is important because of its contribution towards the education development. It could provide important information to Malaysia Education Ministry, State Education Department and District Education Office with regard to change practice in Kota Tinggi district. This information could help these officials to respond, plan and drafting future courses related to change management in schools. Through the finding of this research, improvements can be made in the practice of change management to encourage the move towards high performance in all schools. This research is also important to add more literature in education and could be beneficial towards other researchers to be developed through different perspectives. This research could also encourage the school's leaders to improve their practice and move towards high performance.

The third National Key Results Areas (NKRA) which is to broaden the access of quality and affordable education, giving focus on four NKRA sub and one of it is High Performance School (SBT) (Jamilah & Yusof, 2011). The school leaders set the bearing and tone of the schools (Jamilah & Yusof, 2011). Hall & Hord in their educational change research pointed out that different leadership style has an effect on the quality and effectiveness of implementation progress (Byrne-Jiménez & Terry Orr, 2007). This is also mentioned by Muhammad Faizal (2012) in his research on two High Performance Schools (SBT) which found that these schools practiced principal leadership in competency and conducted in an effective manner.

According to Scheerens and Bosker (1997), schools can enhance their effectiveness by striving for multiple effect criteria and modes of school organizational functioning which serve as point of impact. The school leaders can elevate their schools potential if they have the ability to manipulate these modes to achieve high performance, depending on three additional desiderata:

- i. The ability of the school leaders to actively manipulate or control internal and external situation;
- ii. Contingency factors or situational characteristics
- iii. The instrumental knowledge in presuming type of effect occurs from changes in the state of a certain mode of schooling

Another reasoning for contingency approach is due to its relation to high performance. Its rationale with effectiveness is significant with the study on change management practice towards high performance. Contingency thinking indicates yet another source of complexity in dealing with school effectiveness. It is used as a meta-principle to give more choices to increase effectiveness criteria and enhances modes of schooling in order to making it more or less plausible (Scheerens & Bosker, 1997). This is as illustrated in Diagram 1.1 below:

**Diagram 1.1:** Scheerens & Bosker Contingency factors

(Scheerens & Bosker, 1997)

A study of effective schools by Scheerens and Bosker (1997) found that an effective school appear to converge around more or less these five factors. It is acknowledged as Five Factors Model of School Effectiveness. The first factor is strong educational leadership. An effective school leader plays an important significance in manoeuvring the school into high performance. This requires ample knowledge and skills in the school leaders part to ensure everyone in the schools understand his or her vision of the schools. The second factor which is emphasis on the acquiring of basic skills is influenced by the first factor. A strong school leader will be able to encourage the school staffs and pupils to elevate their performance. The pupils will strive to master the basic skills if they were striving for high performance. The third factor is providing an orderly and secure environment. With the influence and upperhand of school leaders, they will be able to understand that human needs for safety is part of the driving to increase human motivation. When human feel safe, their motivation will increase. This is also applicable for pupils when they feel safe and secure at school and in their classroom, their motivation to learn will increase and thus encourage the possibility for high performance. In the fourth factor, an



effective school is also a school which put high expectations of pupils attainment. Pupils will strive to high performance when they are given emphasis in schools whether by the teachers or school leaders on the importance of the schools expectations. In the fifth factor, school leaders have the upperhand to help school to become an effective school by giving emphasis on the teachers to give frequent assessment of pupil progress. This is also as supported by Jamilah and Yusof (2011) who mentioned that the school leaders has huge influence over excellence and the success of school organisation.

### **1.7 Limitation**

Due to the nature of this study, a few limitations are inevitable. This study is only conducted in 2 primary schools and 2 secondary schools in the district of Kota Tinggi. The result of this study should not be generalized as applicable for all the schools within this district. In addition, the data collected in this research are based on the questionnaire distributed in the four particular schools. The finding of this research is based on the respondents sincerity in answering the questionnaire.

Another limitation of this study lies in its conceptual limitation. This research does not deem contingency approach as the most effective approach towards change management, but rather utilizing the dimensions of change management to further investigate any differences between the change management practice between high performance schools (SBT) and ordinary national schools. This study does not explore the relationship between the dimension but rather utilizing the dimension to measure and compare the change management practice using the dimension as endorsed by Dunphy and Stace Contingency Model of Change.

## **1.8 Definitions of Terms**

### **1.8.1 Change**

Change is about making things different from its former state. It also refers to any alteration or modification of the status quo (Hodge, Anthony & Gale, 2003). Change at schools can occur not only through structural level but also in the role of people and frequently it occurs in the overall work environment of a school (Bhatia, 2007).

### **1.8.2 Change Management**

Management is a body of knowledge, skills and expertise which must be applied in ways demanded by the particular organization in which the individual manager is working; and in ways demanded also by the particular environment in which activities are being conducted. It is also partly the process of getting things done through people; and partly the creative and energetic combination of scarce resources into effective and profitable activities, and the combination of the skill and talents of the individuals concerned with doing this (Pettinger, 2007, page 6). Change management in organizational change refers to transition processes at organizational, group and individual levels (Hughes, 2007). It also refers to a holistic approach to implementing change at large scale which integrates an organization's strategy and processes with its people and culture (Whelehan, 1995). For the purpose of this study, change management refers to the practice utilized by leaders to organize change within the schools through strategy, process or people. The responsibility in implementing change in school is not shouldered by an individual solely hence the knowledge in managing change is equally essential for every individual in schools.

Indeed, the employee does not have a responsibility to manage change - the employee's responsibility is no other than to do their best, which is different for every person and depends on a wide variety of factors (health, maturity, stability, experience, personality, motivation, etc.). Responsibility for managing change is with management and executives of the organization - they must manage the change in a way that employees can cope with it.

The manager has a responsibility to facilitate and enable change, and all that is implied within that statement, especially to understand the situation from an objective standpoint (to 'step back', and be non-judgemental), and then to help people understand the reasons, aims, and ways of responding positively according to employees' own situations and capabilities. Increasingly the manager's role is to interpret, communicate and enable - not to instruct and impose, which nobody really responds to well. In short, organizational change is a structured approach in an organization for ensuring that changes are smoothly and successfully implemented to achieve lasting benefits. In the modern business environment, organizations face rapid change like never before. Globalization and the constant innovation of technology result in a constantly evolving conducive environment.

### **1.8.3 School leaders**

Leaders may differ in of outlook, skills, and behaviors. Good leaders should strive to be good leaders and good leaders, need management skills to be effective. Leaders will have a vision of what can be achieved and then communicate this to others and evolve strategies for realizing the vision. They motivate people and are able to negotiate for resources and other support to achieve their goals. School leaders ensure that the available resources are well organized and applied to produce the best results.

For the purpose of this study, the term school leader is used to replace the principals for secondary schools and headmasters/headmistress for primary schools. It refers to the individual in a school who is responsible for

the work performance of one or more other persons. His/ her job includes helping the school achieve a high level of performance through the utilization of its human and material resources (Lunenberg, 1995).

Indeed, there is a growing body of evidence that school leadership has an impact on student outcomes second only to the influence of teachers in the classroom (Hattie, 2003; Leithwood et al, 2006; Tooley, 2009; Day et al, 2009; New Leaders for New Schools, 2009; Day et al, 2010; Barber et al, 2010).

More recently, research has emphasized the importance of school leadership in improving outcomes for a school and its students. But make no mistake: this is not the school leader as drill sergeant, or the charismatic leader whose skill-set is impossible to replicate. Instead, it is a school leader who is capable of transforming a school environment so that its students and teachers can flourish. It is important to keep in mind that while school leadership is essential, consistent, strong leadership at the district level must not be overlooked. While principals create conditions that encourage great teaching, administration can create conditions that allow principals to become even better leaders.

In this way, administrations can lay the groundwork for successful school leaders by setting a clear direction and tone, investing in professional development, setting up mentors for new principals, giving principals the authority to make key decisions and elevating the importance of academic achievement – sometimes even going so far as to making it a part of a principal's evaluation.

### **1.8.4 Contingency Approach**

Contingency is described as a thing dependent on an uncertain event and contingent as true only under certain conditions. It is an assumption that no one theory or method for business management can apply to all businesses or to all circumstances. From a business perspective, using a contingency approach to problem solving would indicate that issues need to be understood and then addressed in ways that depend on the environment and context in which they occur. In organizational science contingency theory is also referred to as the situational approach or contingency approach, is taken as the perspective in which the optimal structure of an organization is seen as dependent on a number of other factors or conditions.

The contingency factors comprise both internal and external conditions to the organizations (Scheerens & Bosker, 1997, pg 284). Contingency theorists challenge the assumptions that there is one best way of producing organizational change. They believed that the style of change will depend on the scale of change and the receptivity of organizational members for engaging in the change. According to Palmer, Dunford & Akin (2009) the best developed change contingency approach is the one by Dexter Dunphy and Doug Stace – Stace and Dunphy Contingency Model of Change. They argue that the style of change (collaborative, consultative, directive or coercive), as well as the scale of change (fine-tuning, incremental adjustment, modular transformation, or corporate transformation) has to be matched to the needs of the organization.

### **1.8.5 High Performance Schools (SBT)**

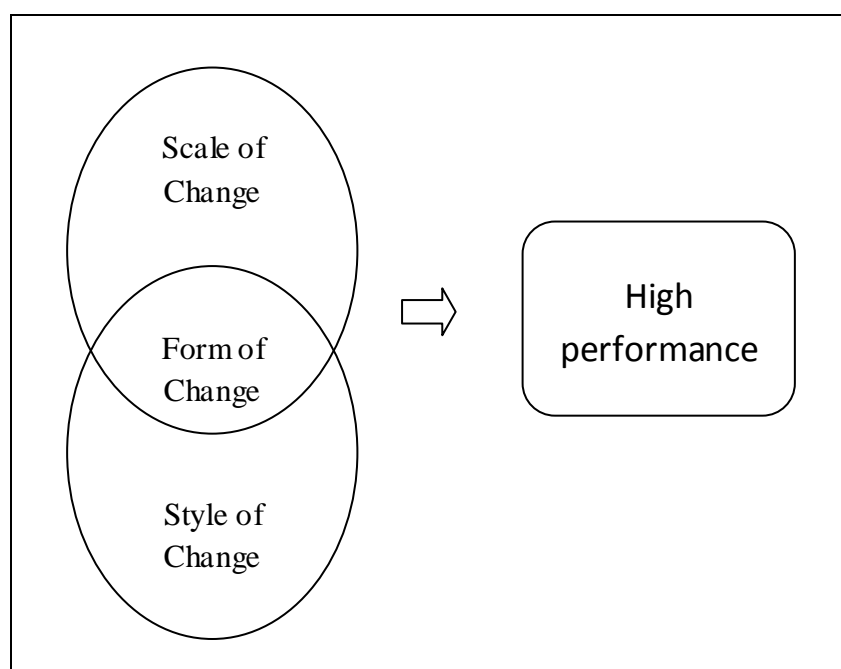
Jamilah and Yusof (2011) defined High Performance School as school with distinctive and unique ethos, characters and identity and are also outstanding in all aspect of education and are able to compete on the world stage. High Performance School or known as Sekolah Berprestasi Tinggi (SBT) or also known as High Performance School is a title awarded by the Education Ministry towards schools that achieved the highest level according to a standard determined by Jemaah Nazir dan Jaminan Kualiti (JNJK). High Performance School (SBT) exhibit high achievement in the national examinations and sginificantly show high learning culture. It is a prestigious title initiated by the Education Ministry under NKRA (National Key Result Areas) to motivate schools towards high performance. These schools are successful in drafting aplenty programme to maintain or elevate its performance in addition guiding other schools to improve their performance (Rosnah & Muhammad Faizal, 2013). High performance schools received incentives to upgrade the schools facilities to improve the learning environment while saving energy, resources, and money. The key is through understanding the lifetime value of high performance schools and effectively managing priorities, time, and budget during the design and construction process. "High performance school" refers to the physical facility — the school building and its grounds. Good teachers and motivated students can overcome inadequate facilities and perform at a high level almost anywhere, but a well-designed facility can truly enhance performance and make education a more enjoyable and rewarding experience. Creating a high performance school is not difficult, but it requires an integrated, "whole building" approach to the design process. Key systems and technologies must be considered together, from the beginning of the design process, and optimized based on their combined impact on the comfort and productivity of students and teachers.

## 1.9 Research Conceptual Frame work

This research conceptual framework is built from understanding of Stace and Dunphy Contingency Model of Change with an objective to illustrate the relationship between scale of change, style of change and form of change. In addition, this research conceptual framework is built to draw comparison between scale of change, style of change and form of change between high performing schools (SBT) and ordinary national schools in primary and secondary levels in the district of Kota Tinggi.

The independent variables in this study are scale of change and style of change. The main variable in this study is form of change. This form of change is determined by the degree of change in scale of change and style of change employed by the leaders of schools. The relationship between the variables are shown through Diagram 1.2 below:

**Diagram 1.2:** Research Conceptual Framework



## 1.10 Conclusion

At present, numerous schools across the country have accepted the challenge of updating and upgrading their services. However, as administrators and faculties forge ahead to rethink their educational mission, organizational structure, academic program, teaching methods, personnel roles, or community relationships, their renewal efforts often falter because schools lack effective action plans. Many involved in efforts to change are unaware of guidelines for the successful initiation and implementation of an innovation. By working with a game plan, even if it requires frequent modification, schools can avoid unnecessary wheel spinning and prevent excessive time loss to process issues. Determining where a school is going and how it will arrive can make educational reform less stressful, more predictable and manageable, and most importantly, more successful for all involved. While the restructuring experience will vary from school to school, renewal efforts at any site can be well strategized and coordinated.

As leadership is a crucial factor inside the realm of authority and power relations in the school systems, it is fundamental for the leaders to be fully equipped with essential skills as the leaders in schools. As promoted by contingency approach, since changes can differ in terms of its magnitude, the leaders need to be aware that their leadership style has to cater to the need of his/her staff in order to ensure that the efforts to implementing the change are parallel to the task completed in its course. The main objective to carry out this research is to identify any differences in the change management practices between the school's leaders of High Performance Schools (SBT) and the school's leaders of ordinary national schools through three dimensions of contingency approach – Scale of Change, Style of Change and Form of Change. Through the finding of this research, improvement can be made in the practice of change management to encourage the move towards high performance in all schools.



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