



# Secondary School Principal Instructional Leadership Style and Organization Agility: Level of Readiness Principals Managing Instructional Program with Organisation Agility

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The aim for this quantitative, cross-sectional, non-experimental is to investigate the relationship between instructional leadership and organizational agility, and how these two constructs interact to foster greater adaptability and responsiveness within educational institutions. A total of 177 secondary school principals from Johor, Malaysia, participated by completing a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument originally adapted and modified from Hallinger's Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) and the Organizational Agility Survey by Worley, Williams, and Lawler III. The results showed a high level of readiness within principals to manage instructional programs through agile approaches. highlighted the importance of locating a dedicated individual to coordinate the curriculum and embedding core values that reflect a change-ready organizational culture. Statistical analysis showed that principals consistently exhibited strong instructional leadership alongside high organizational agility. The frequent integration of agile practices into instructional management contributed to improved responsiveness and adaptability to change. These results highlighted the significance of aligning instructional leadership with organizational agility to manoeuvre dynamic educational environments effectively. The study offers significant insights for policymakers, stakeholders and school leaders aiming to strengthen leadership capacity, thus promoting organizational adaptability in schools.

**Keywords:** Secondary school principal, instructional leadership, managing instructional programme, organization agility.

# INTRODUCTION

Principals who are not able to quickly react to changes prudently often face difficulties in managing school (Hoy & Tarter, 2004; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Principals may have wide knowledge on the theory of change management, but what about the action taken. Is that synchronizing with the knowledge they possess? According to Arendse, B.., Phillips, H. N., & Waghid, Z. (2024), if principals cannot handle abrupt and constant change wisely, this may lead students to decline in academic progress gradually. In this case, parents' trust to send their children to that particular school also slowly fade away. It will then lead to the fact that parents will find ways so that their children will be accepted in their desired school. Therefore, it will result imbalance students' enrolment in certain schools. Day et. al (2020), further stated that the school's capability to enhance and maintain its longterm efficacy of principals' understanding and assessment of their school's needs, and the application of clearly express and organizationally shared and applied pedagogical values and combinations and accumulations of context-sensitive methods "layered" throughout and across phases of school growth, progressively integrated through enhancements in the school's operations, culture, and performance.

Academic success in school is an issue that parents have placed a greater emphasis on. Shimi, R. A., Azmi, N. B. M., Ganesh, L. D. A/P, Subramaniam, D. A/P, Vignasveran, Y., Moganaselvan, P. S. A/P, & Rajamogan, V. A/L. (2024) found out a beneficial correlation between parental participation and a child's academic success. Students are more inclined to attain academic achievement when parents actively participate and take charge in their child's education by attending conferences, assisting with homework and build a positive learning

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atmosphere at home. This engagement fosters a collaborative relationship among parents, educators, and students, enhancing academic outcomes while simultaneously elevating students' motivation and self-esteem and reaffirming the significance of education. This issue has been highlighted in the media, particularly by the media, as a representation of parental anxiety in this millennium. Most individuals are fascinated by this phenomenon because community tend to put high expectations and values on school accomplishment, particularly academic achievement. According to Fullan, M. (2002), there seems to have a significant demand for accountability and integrity from all stakeholders within the educational system to enhance student academic achievement and performance. In the twenty-first century, this is a hot topic in education. Since then, mandates have been issued by the government to ensure that all students understand the objectives of the curriculum (McGuinn, 2016). According to Fullan (2007), the principal's leadership has some influence on the success of a change management. The leadership styles of a leader have a substantial effect on an organization's success. In the case of Malaysia, effective leaders may ensure that the Malaysia Education Development Plan 2013-2025 is implemented successfully.

The National Key Result Area (NKRA) is a tool used by education officials to ensure that they are always working to better serve the requirements of Malaysians. Leadership, according to Yukl (2012), is the art of influencing others to understand and agree on what has to be done and how it should be done. This strategy facilitates individual as well as group efforts to fulfil common activities. Leaders can also improve their team's or organization's performance by influencing the processes that determine performance. Most leadership research focused on identifying behavioural characteristics and traits that explain a leader's impact on the success of a team, work unit, or organisation. To make sure it is useful for organising research and creating hypotheses, leader behaviour categories should be observable, distinct, measurable, and relevant for all types of leaders, and classification f leader behaviours should be detailed but brief.

As a result, school leaders should improve their job performance in order to foster a more favourable work atmosphere that encourages participation and strong relationships (Ghani, 2018). This requires change management capability skills. Nguyen (2024) mentioned the key components of change management theory, that is to focus on the goal of managing change, analyse the change, clarify the assumptions and identify risks. These components are applied systematically to guide the process of organizational change, particularly in schools, to achieve desired outcomes effectively. The Malaysia Education Development Plan 2013-2025 was created to ensure that all citizens have access to, equity in, and quality education, so that we can all complete 12 years of schooling. This is to ensure that the educational system's and students' visions can fulfil the country's future needs and demands. To meet the goal, Malaysia's educational sector need strong leadership (Ghani, 2018). Therefore, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) has highlighted three measures to enhancing student accomplishment through school leaders' performance improvement. The first step is for school leaders to act as instructional leaders, planning, coordinating, and evaluating the teaching and learning process (PdP) in schools; the second step is for school principals to act as key change agents, ensuring that the school's vision and mission are put in line with the school's goals for the sake of discipleship; and the third step is for school principals to create an environment that is beneficial and supportive of discipleship (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013).

Principals must adapt and enhance their emotional intelligence in order to keep up with the pressures for student accomplishment that schools are currently functioning in Leithwood and Riehl (2003) and Prati et al. (2003). Emotionally intelligent leaders sti,ulate teammates to execute the articulated vision of a school organism by motivating, serving as transformational influencers, increasing group efficacy as well as performance, facilitating and encouraging team members for effective interaction, building interpersonal trust, and facilitating and encouraging team members for effective interaction. Individuals who lack emotional intelligence may get agitated, underperform, and "burn out" as a result of student achievement demands. Heaven and Bourne (2016) stated that leaders are metaphorically regarded as anchors, bearing full responsibility for their organization's success.

The instructional leadership of school leaders are seen practicing under pressure, as the school leader has a huge responsibility in the school. So, what are the criteria of a principal in a secondary school in Malaysia who is generally seen as successful in educational leadership and has a positive attitude towards school change? Too much of a burden of duties where the principal focuses on managing the curriculum. Alias (2009) showed that





the activity in the administration of head teachers and heads of service cannot lead to a better distribution of school leadership and hinders attempt to carefully revise the curriculum book and control student exercises (in the 2009 Monitoring Report of the Department of State Education, Pahang). This is a crucial matter in enhancing the accountability of the school principal, who should be highlighted as a leader in education.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between instructional leadership and organizational agility, and how these two constructs interact to foster greater adaptability and responsiveness within educational institutions. In an increasingly dynamic and complex educational landscape, organizational agility is critical to ensuring schools can respond effectively to internal and external changes, while instructional leadership remains a cornerstone of academic success and instructional improvement. This study examine how the practices of instructional leaders contribute to shaping agile school environments that are capable of continuous learning, innovation, and timely decision-making.

To achieve this, the study outlines several key objectives that align with the overarching goal of enhancing instructional programs through the lens of organizational agility. Specifically, it aims to (1) assess the level of instructional leadership readiness demonstrated by school principals; (2) evaluate the extent of organizational agility within selected educational settings; and (3) determine the strength and nature of the relationship between instructional leadership dimensions and indicators of organizational agility.

The research utilizes a structured questionnaire adapted from the globally recognized Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). The modified instrument captures both traditional instructional leadership practices and additional elements reflecting organizational adaptability, responsiveness, and innovation. This integrative framework offers significant insights regarding leadership can be strategically leveraged to build agile, future-ready schools. Ultimately, the the findings of this investigation are anticipated to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on leadership and school reform, as well as providing practical recommendations for policymakers, educational leaders, and practitioners seeking to navigate the complexities of contemporary education.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this research is to urge us to think differently about future organisational effectiveness. It is basically to study instructional leadership style and organisation agility that can be carried out by a principal. Thus, helping in increasing the students' academic achievement. The aim of this study is also to foster research which enables principals to understand which leadership dynamics lead to organization success and sustainability (Oster, 2018). Leadership is defined in a variety of ways, from counselling or endorsement of a robust hierarchical subordinate relationship (Blom & Alvesson, 2015). Other scholars, such as Charlier et al. (2016), have noted the motivational aspect of leadership. Leadership is defined as an influential process that entails establishing the objectives of a group or organisation, inspiring task-oriented behaviour to achieve these objectives, and shaping group dynamics and culture.

Organisational agility refers to the capacity to identify unforeseen environmental changes and adapt promptly and effectively by leveraging and reorganising internal resources, hence achieving a competitive advantage (Žitkienė & Deksnys, 2018). Human factors are one of the most important determinants of organisational agility. Managers should take the appropriate steps to ensure that employees are involved, that they are trained to be flexible, that their skills and abilities are strengthened, that risk management capacities are increased, and that inter-functional teams are formed. Other elements that influence organisational agility include organisational factors. Managers are encouraged to strengthen the culture of change in educational institutions and to do their best in terms of learning and development.

Leadership in an agile organisation is widely regarded as advantageous, enhancing product and service quality, fortifying competitive standing, accelerating knowledge acquisition, fostering a superior organisational culture, and improving customer service efficacy (Hopp et al., 2004). Leadership in an agile organization can foster great benefits, provided that agile characteristics are progress in leaders. The leader must promptly react to alterations in the corporate environment. He should ensure the ongoing enhancement of his own competencies and evaluate them accurately. Rapid adaptation to novel working situations is essential. Sharing responsibility and enabling

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subordinates to engage in decision-making is a desirable practice. Research by Abu Bakar et al. (2023) indicated that agile approaches instigated substantial organisational transformations, encompassing alterations in team dynamics, leadership models, and cultural values.

According to this theory of leadership, the principal's duties include overseeing the curriculum, fostering a supportive learning environment, and clearly stating the school's mission (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985). According to Hallinger's (2003) leadership vision, the principal must devote time and energy to the educational programme and possess experience in both teaching and learning. All things considered, however, there is little evidence to suggest that principals of elementary and secondary schools are more actively involved in directed, hands-on classroom monitoring of teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005). Still, data does show that principals are doing a good job of identifying their school mission and creating a supportive school culture—two of the three pillars of instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2005). In educational institutions, agility is crucial for adapting to factors that impact academic quality and overall learning experiences, Woods (2007).

Instructional leadership is seen as an enabler of agility by embedding clear instructional priorities, fostering collective efficacy as well as reinforcing data-informed culture (Leithwood et al., 2004). Organizational agility involves four primary dimensions—robust strategy, adaptable design, shared leadership, and value creation (Teece et al., 2016). According to Teece, Peteraf, & Leih, S. 2016, schools should not only have systems that are not only operationally efficient but also strategically flexible and collaborative in leadership distribution. Supported by Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017), leadership agility becomes critical in these turbulent educational environments, where quick iteration, experimentation, and stakeholder co-creation are very much needed for sustained improvement. Study by Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2016) found out that leaders who adopt instructional leadership approaches tend to develop schools with more agile and innovative organizational cultures.

# **METHODOLOGY**

Two research concepts are the basis of this research. (1) the concept of instructional leadership and (2) the concept of organization agility. This is a quantitative study. The aim of this descriptive study was to analyse the distinctions and connections that resulted from the principal instructional leadership style. Overall satisfaction was examined in regards to gender., education level and the number of years the present principal has been in charge. The study evaluated at gender, education level and number of years under current principal to gain a better understanding of the level of readiness principals' agile instructional leadership style in managing instructional program with organisation agility, principals' agile instructional leadership style in promoting a school climate with organisation agility and significant difference between novice and experienced principal in regard to agile principal instructional leadership style

The aim of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study is to determine different variables at the same time for school principal at Johore, Malaysia. This research design enables the researcher to collect data from many different principals at a single point in time. This study will be conducted by comparing self-reported characteristics, behaviours and leadership style using an instrument that was based on the leadership scales that have been chosen is the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), developed by Philip Hallinger in 1985 and Agility Survey by Worley, Williams and Lawler. This quantitative cross-sectional survey study is to determine an instructional leadership style that contribute to organization agility. This study will be conducted using modified construct in PIMRS and Agility Survey. This questionnaire is using Likert Scale from 1 to 5.

This is also basically a non-experimental study where the research is predominantly observational, with outcomes intended to be exclusively descriptive. The research topic is going to focus on rates of prevalence or a related aspect, rather than causality. They may offer certain recommendations, although they lack the ability to substantiate them. The non-experimental study likewise concentrated on the independent variable attributes. These are the traits that participants possess before entering the study that are not regulated by the researcher. (Gliner et al., 2017). In this current study the independent variable is instructional leadership and the dependent





variable is organization agility. The dempgraphic of this study is secondary school principals in the state of Johore, Malaysia. These non-experimental studies use survey as a data collecting methodoogy (Gueri, 2019).

#### FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

The statistical data reveals that principals consistently have a high degree of readiness in managing instructional programs (M = 4.24, SD = 0.43) and exhibit strong organization agility (M = 4.20, SD = 0.37). Based on mean value, the interpretation of *Always* in the context of managing instructional programs and *Agree* in the context of organisational agility. This result suggested that frequent engagement in managing instructional program consistent with outstanding instructional leadership and organization agility. Persistent engagement in managing instructional program consistent with effective instructional leadership and organization agility, improving organisation responses and adaptability to change.

The statistical findings show that principals show a high level of readiness in managing instructional programs (M = 4.24, SD = 0.43) and demonstrate strong organizational agility (M = 4.20, SD = 0.37). The mean score for managing instructional programs matches to the interpretation of "Always," indicating consistent and active engagement in instructional leadership tasks. Meanwhile, the score for organizational agility falls under the "Agree" category, reflecting principals' strong capacity to bring changes and lead their schools effectively in dynamic contexts.

These results align closely with Hallinger's Instructional Leadership Model, particularly the aspect of supervising the teaching curriculum. This domain includes supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student performance. Principals' frequent involvement in these tasks, as indicated by the high mean score finally suggests a deep commitment to instructional quality and academic outcomes, which is central to Hallinger's conception of effective school leadership, Hallinger (2005)

Furthermore, the relationship between instructional program management and organizational agility directs to an important synergy. Persistent engagement in instructional leadership appears to reinforce the school's overall agility. In the context of Hallinger's model, this points out that by maintaining instructional focus, principals create the structural and cultural conditions necessary for adaptability. Their instructional leadership efforts support defining a clear mission and promoting a positive school learning climate, both of which contribute to a shared vision, collaborative practices, and a responsive organizational culture.

Organizational agility, in this framework, can be seen as an unexpected result of strong instructional leadership. Principals who define clear academic goals, monitor teaching and learning rigorously, and foster a supportive climate are better positioned to adapt appropriately to change. This adaptability is increasingly important in the 21st-century educational landscape, where rapid policy shifts, technological advancements, and diverse student needs demand agile and forward-thinking leadership, Doz and Kosonen (2010).

#### Assessing the Level of Instructional Leadership Readiness Among School Principals

The reported mean score of 4.24 (SD = 0.43) for principals' readiness in managing instructional programs indicates a generally high level of instructional leadership competency. This suggests that school leaders perceive themselves as well-prepared in core instructional tasks such as defining school vision, supervising instruction, promoting a positive learning environment, and utilizing data for informed decision-making. This finding is in line with prior literature emphasizing the important role played by instructional leadership in influencing school efficacy and student outcomes (Hallinger, 2011; Robinson et al., 2008).

High readiness scores reflect a solid alignment with Hallinger's (2000) model of instructional leadership, which emphasizes three dimensions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate. Effective principals in high-achieving schools have a tendency to demonstrate consistent behaviors in curriculum supervision, teacher development, and instructional quality assurance (Blasé & Blasé, 2004; Southworth, 2002). Moreover, such readiness signals the principals' capability to respond adaptively to instructional challenges and to promote continuous professional growth among teaching staff.





# **Evaluating the Extent of Organizational Agility in Educational Settings**

The organizational agility mean score of 4.20 (SD = 0.37) further supports the presence of adaptive and responsive leadership behaviors among principals. Organizational agility in education encompasses the ability of schools to quickly adjust strategies, restructure processes, and reallocate resources in response to dynamic environmental conditions (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). High agility scores suggest that school principals are not only managing instructional programs efficiently but are also adept in navigating complex changes, such as those introduced by curriculum reforms, technological integration, and stakeholder expectations.

Organizational agility involves four primary dimensions—robust strategy, adaptable design, shared leadership, and value creation (Teece et al., 2016). The high score indicates that these schools have systems that are not only operationally efficient but also strategically flexible and collaborative in leadership distribution. As mentioned by Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017), leadership agility becomes critical in turbulent educational environments, where quick iteration, experimentation, and stakeholder co-creation are needed for sustained improvement.

# Determining the Strength and Structure of the Relationship Between Instructional Leadership and Organizational Agility

While the provided data does not directly mention a correlation coefficient, the closeness of the means (Instructional Readiness M = 4.24; Organizational Agility M = 4.20) with relatively low standard deviations implies a strong alignment and potential positive association between these two variables. Prior empirical studies have confirmed this interrelationship. For instance, Al-Husseini and Elbeltagi (2016) found that leaders who adopt instructional leadership approaches tend to develop schools with more agile and innovative organizational cultures. Similarly, Fullan (2014) argued that agile school systems thrive when leadership promotes deep instructional focus while remaining open to structural evolution and stakeholder input.

Instructional leadership serves as an enabler of agility by embedding clear instructional priorities, fostering collective efficacy, and reinforcing data-informed culture (Leithwood et al., 2004). Furthermore, agile organizations often depend on strong leadership that supports distributed responsibilities and leverages the collective intelligence of the staff—an aspect that aligns with the shared leadership component of instructional leadership (Spillane, 2005).

These theoretical underpinnings are corroborated by the study's findings, which suggest that principals who demonstrate high instructional readiness also tend to cultivate agile organizational behaviors. Such a synergy points to a reciprocal relationship: instructional leadership nurtures agility, and agile environments empower leaders to respond more effectively to instructional demands.

**TABLE I** Descriptive Statistic Table

N = 177

Group	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std	Interpretation
				Deviation	
Managing Instructional	3.00	5.00	4.24	0.43	Always
Program Organization Agility	3.40	5.00	4.20	0.37	Agree

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the high levels of engagement in managing instructional programs, as shown in the data, reinforce the foundational principles of Hallinger's Instructional Leadership Model. At the same time, the exposure of

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strong organizational agility among principals suggests that instructional leadership plays a very important role in building adaptive and resilient schools. When principals lead instruction effectively, they not only improve teaching and learning but also build up and strengthen the school's collective capacity to respond to challenges and embrace change. This dual strength, deep instructional focus combined with organizational adaptability eventually forms the cornerstone of sustainable school leadership in the current educational era. indicators of organizational agility. The research utilizes a structured questionnaire adapted from the widely recognized Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS). The modified instrument captures both traditional instructional leadership practices and additional elements reflecting organizational adaptability, responsiveness, and innovation. This integrative framework offers valuable insights into how leadership can be strategically leveraged to build agile, future-ready schools. Ultimately, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on leadership and school reform, while providing practical recommendations for policymakers, educational leaders, and practitioners seeking to navigate the complexities of contemporary education.

In summary, the statistical results indicate that principals in the study demonstrate a high level of readiness in managing instructional programs and operate within schools characterized by significant organizational agility. These findings highlight the critical importance of developing leadership capabilities that simultaneously prioritize instructional excellence and systemic adaptability. The close alignment between instructional leadership and organizational agility emphasizes the need for leadership development programs that integrate both domains, supporting the broader goal of educational transformation and resilience. Therefore, the findings affirm the relevance of Hallinger's model in contemporary school leadership practice. High engagement in managing instructional programs not only fulfils a core leadership function but also enhances the school's agility. This dual capacity ultimately leads to more resilient, innovative, and student-centered schools.

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