

An Investigation on Factors that Influencing Creative Problem Solving Styles among Principals in Malaysian Secondary Schools

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Abstract:

The main purpose of this study was to examine creative problem-solving styles among participants of the Malaysian National Principalship Qualification for Educational Leaders program. It sought quantitatively to examine factors influencing problem-solving styles and to validate the hypothesized construct. The premise of the construct assumed problem-solving styles were influenced by three factors: Personal Traits, Organizational factors and Change Management. From these domains a 40 item instrument was designed based on several theories: The Adaptive Innovative Inventory by Michael Kirton (1976), Diffusion of Innovation by Everett Rogers (2010) and the Theory of Organizational Creativity by Mumford and Gustafson (1988). The respondents consisted of two cohorts of the Malaysian National Principalship Qualification for Educational Leaders program. A pilot test was conducted on the first batch of 189 respondents and the data were tested using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). Out of the 40 items, only 12 items remained. The remaining items were tested with the second batch of respondents using Confirmatory Factor Analysis to confirm the model fit. Finally, data was calculated for reliability and validity using discriminant validity test. Results indicated problem-solving styles among the respondents were not uni-dimensional and were influenced by the three domains. Thus, to be able to solve problems in schools, principals must have the right competencies especially in personal skills, organizational support from the Ministry and change management.