PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY: A GUIDELINE TO IMPROVE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

In the context of today's society, education policies are rapidly changing continuously which has forced the education system and continuous improvement to produce global citizens who are able to withstand and compromise the change. Changing and improving the quality of education is a duty that should they take on. Changing in policies in Malaysian contexts since three decades are to improve the quality of education in order to ensure the produce the quality citizens in future. However, initiatives after initiatives introduced by the government are not getting certainty in overall success. This paper highlights the thesis that the key to improve the education system, which ensures the sustainability of school performance improvement is started at the school, where the teachers and the school community as a whole cooperate and collaborate with each other, with a mission to the effectiveness and school improvement. This means that teachers and leaders’ roles as a professional learning community are to keep learning and sharing among each other and increasing their self-professionalism. As a consequence, innovation and improvement will occur in teaching and student achievement. In fact, this improvement does not only focus on student academic but their lives as a human capital.

Introduction

Today, educators’ responsibilities are increasing to ensure their capacities meet the global needs. The history of Malaysian education illustrates the viewpoint through a few changes in education policies that have occurred since last three
decades in order to improve education systems and school quality. However, the initiatives for changes do not achieve the goal. This is because school leaders have been burdened by various improvement programs that had been programmed by the government in order to enhance student learning and school achievement (Huffman, 2003). In addition, to sustain the school effectiveness, teachers are required to involve in all school activities. The acceptance of this direction is started from up to bottom. In other words, teachers have to receive all changes that are spelled out by the policy maker or government without voicing up their dissatisfaction. Therefore, it will be a challenge for school leaders to get teacher involved as an agent of changes instead of being a practitioner. To overcome this challenging, school leaders have to play a crucial role by involving teachers in all changes. In return, the changes will not be successful if teachers are unable to be responsible for the improvement of student achievement.

A Report from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2008) obviously highlighted the demands of today's society upon the schools’ responsibility and accountability to enhance student achievement. To achieve this goal, principal has to come out with a clear and shared school’s vision and mission, increase the motivation and knowledge of the school communities by organizing a learning environment among school communities. Moreover, principal has to play his or her role not only as an instructional leadership but learning leadership (Matthews & Crow, 2010). Many western scholars insisted on the education leaders into becoming professional developer in learning community (DLC) in schools in order to create effective school (Edmonds, 1980; Sweeney, 1992; Murphy, 2000; Eaker, 2006). They stated that principals should serve as instructional leaders, not managers or school administrator. The roles include improving the quality of teaching, which begin with the enormous understanding of the school’s vision and mission, formulation of teaching vision, and setting an outstanding expectation for student achievement. Thus, the principal role in improving student achievement is to develop a conducive learning environment, for all levels of the school community. In other words, educators hopes to have a principal who react as a learning leadership by supporting their learning and teaching (Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003; Starratt, 2003). In fact, the principal plays an important role in determining the
activities to be undertaken at the school and the parents along with the teachers should cooperate to ensure the success of the students learning (Brennan & Brennen, 1998).

In western countries today, the professional learning community (PLC) is a conceptual framework or guidelines for the practice of teachers in school, work culture to a paradigm shift in solitary teacher to teacher collaboration culture (Eaker, Dufour & Dufour, 2002). Sergiovanni (2002) describes learning communities as communities working together, cared for and always dialogued among each other, which can be said to be the culture of learning ‘, through interaction among themselves. By learning, both teachers and students are able to improve their capacities. In turn, their school will keep improving the achievement. In making obvious about PLCs, this article aims at discussing what PLC is, how PLC can catalyse school improvement, develop and improve student achievement, and the role principals to support PLC.

Professional Learning Community

The literature review has been studied widely either through discussion or analysis of the concept of PLC and the role of each individual in the process of improving the school system, starting with school improvement to this date. Historically, Fullan (2006) states the development of the PLC as illustrated by research of Little (1982). Little (1982) found that cohesiveness among teachers fruited success and excellent schools, quality teachers, and created a positive culture which caused a continuous improvement. Little study (1982) also demonstrates that there are closer relationship between the young teachers and senior teachers or administrators lines. They always had discussions with respect to the observation of a more structured teaching, planning and designing school programs or activities.

Zuraidah Abdullah (2010), describes the PLC as a group of individuals (communities) who have learned the culture on their own. Both the teachers and students are learning. The whole school community together tried to learn, and always cared and dialogued. Among teachers, PLC is related to the development of learning culture and continuous learning in order to be in line with the current changes. This is consistent with the view of Scherer (2009), quoting the words of Hord (1997), that the PLC is a strategy towards improving
and enhancing the effectiveness of the school through the school community who are always learning. Therefore, schools should nurture and develop effective PLC.

In the context of school improvement, the PLC is seen as one of the symptoms to improve the school's performance. This implies that the school is more focused towards its improvement efforts with the reconstruction of the school culture, compared to school organizational restructuring. PLC caused teachers to collaborate and keep learning until created a positive culture that is based on a changing beliefs of teacher. This means that teachers are striving to develop leadership within them by cooperating with each other in a team on an on-going basis. They are high achievers and easily collaborate with stakeholders in education. These efforts are simply intended to improve students' learning and developing teachers’ professionalism.

**Definition of Professional Learning Communities**

In education, the term learning community is something that is often discussed among authorities in the education and teaching.

Various definitions have been put forward by western scholars, but there is no universal definition. This is due to the development of the study are based on the context and against a different perspective (King & Newman, 2001; Toole & Lewis, 2002).

The clear and concise definitions have been filed by Astuto et al. (1993) earlier, which refers to PLC as a professional group of people. They called the professional community of learners which were formed as a result of the efforts of teachers and administrators at a school to find and identify the knowledge to be learned and shared with other teachers. Henceforth, knowledge is equally applied to improve the effectiveness of their professionalism to maximize the benefit of students.

Dufour and Eaker (1996), see the PLC as a "community" in which the members are professionals or experts in a particular field. They strive to improve the level of expertise, through the action of continuous learning based on curiosity and enhance the knowledge and expertise available. In a PLC’s, the school creates an environment that encourages cultural work in a team, moral support and
positive personal growth as they work together to achieve goals that cannot be implemented individually. Operating as a community school "learning" professional aware citizens need to engage with on-going studies and remains with the practice of an organization that is committed in the implementation of continuous improvement activities.

According to Hord (1997), learning community refers to a community of practice giving and sharing knowledge among members of the school community, including a partnership with parents to discuss the student’s achievement through curriculum improvement activities and student learning programs. It is an ongoing process that involves teachers and administrators working collaboratively to identify and share knowledge, and were followed by the adoption of such knowledge to improve the professionalism in them to benefit students.

The following are definitions of various PLC-based on researcher perspectives:

(a) A group of people sharing and critically investigating their practice in an on-going, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, and encouraging learning-oriented development (McREL, 2003);

(b) A group of people driven by a shared vision of learning supported and collaborated to investigate their practice and together learn new knowledge with better approach. The effort is to improve student learning (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Thomas, Wallace, Greenwood & Hawkey, 2005), and

(c) School teams often collaborate towards continuous improvement in meeting the needs of students through curriculum-focused shared vision (Reichstetter, 2006);

(d) Educators committed to working collaboratively and continuing in action research. The effort is to achieve better results for the benefit of their students (Dufour, Dufour, Eaker & Many, 2006);

(e) A school culture that recognizes and draws on the strengths and talents of the school community collectively (Protheroe, 2008);

(f) A strategy to increase student achievement by creating a school culture that focuses on learning collaborative (Feger & Arruda, 2008);
What is clear from all these definitions is that the PLC is a cohesion or collegial group, in which the members work together, and improve the professionalism of themselves and strive to improve student learning. It can also be referred as a group practice or community members.

Newmann and Wehlage (1995) described three forms of teachers’ practice which usually are exhibited by a professional community that is as follows: i) sharing a clear goal for the learning of all students, ii) collaboratively and actively being involved in activities to achieve the objectives and iii) taking collective responsibility for student learning by teachers. Two years later, Newmann and Wehlage (1995) highlight the literature that described PLC by Horde which specified PLC by listing the five dimensions in terms of shared and supportive leadership, shared values, goals, mission and vision, collective learning and shared personal practices (1997).

The concept of PLC is defined as a group of teachers and administrators who continuously explore and share the learning processes which finally produce an action-based learning. According to Hord (2009), professional learning community refers to the teachers and administrators are always looking for lines and the shared learning where eventually act with what they have learned (1996a). This shows that the main goal of the school community is to enhance the effectiveness and professionalism of teachers through continuing education to the benefit of the increase in students learning. Thus, schools with professional learning communities will be based on the principle of "learning for all." In other words, every individual should aspire to learn and have the opportunity to go through the process of learning whether occurring inside or outside of school.

In conclusion, the PLC is one of the communities that adopt school improvement through restructuring the school culture. PLC is also an ongoing process as to develop teachers’ leadership, administrators and the school supporting staff. In fact, some of the literature review showed that the PLC practice also involves the students and the local community. Thus, with
the involvement of all parties in the PLC practice, teachers are able to improve their leadership capacity when performing tasks.

**Characteristics of a Professional Learning Community**

Generally, the PLC is not a model but a practice of the PLCs which is a process and established approach in all schools. Practices and characteristics of the PLC, when understood and practised, can be used as elements of a mechanism to assess the progress and effectiveness of the implementation of the PLC practice in organizations such as school institutions. PLC’s characteristics, as discussed and in view of the PLC researchers (like Kruse, Louis and Bryk, 1994; Hord, 1997; Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas and Wallace 2005; Dufour, 2004, and Feger and Arruda, 2008), is as follows.

a) **Mutual values and vision.** Teachers, school leaders and administrators share a vision that focuses on the learning of students, and there is a collective effort to improve the activities (Reichstetter, 2006). Visions also serve as a benchmark to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Thus, the vision statement produces collective responsibility and strong inspired that focused entirely on student learning (Leo & Cowen, 2000; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Stoll et al., 2006);

b) **A collaborative culture.** PLC is based on teamwork and collaboration. Teachers in a particular school community share the responsibility and work as a team to enhance the learning of students (Reichstetter, 2006 and Stoll et al., 2006). For example, they establish a networking among colleague as to enable them to talk about teaching, sharing and receiving feedback from their fellow supervisory activities and designing teaching aids for use by all. In other words, the school does not act individually (Dufour&Eaker, 1998). As a result, teachers also benefit from the practice of PLC (Newman, 1994);

c) **Focus on improving learning outcomes for students.** PLC-oriented is to emphasize student learning outcomes and the implementation of the improvement continuously. (Reichstetter, 2006). Samples were also evaluated based on facts derived from the data collected. The
implication, practice improvement activities in the classroom can be implemented collectively, thereby increasing their accountability (White & McIntosh, 2007);

d) **Shared and Supportive Leadership.** PLC is often seen as a platform to develop the professional capacity of teachers and leaders. In this case, school administrators committed to empowering teachers, and give them the opportunity to participate in school decision making process, and even make their own decisions in carrying out the task entrusted to them and have the autonomy to act as leaders (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006 ; McREL, 2003; Olivier & Hipp, 2006). In other words, the PLC is promoting distributive leadership where distributed leadership among the school that serves as a formal and informal leaders. Distribution of leadership is based on the values held, trust and partnership among the school experience (Thompson, Gregg, & Niska, 2004), and

e) **Shared Personal practices.** The main focus of the PLC practice is learning to increase professionalism. Practice means the teachers work and learn among themselves, and share the experiences that benefit them. For example, teachers share experiences, supervising and teaching colleagues to reflect on and discuss the activities done through reflection. In addition, they assess the effectiveness of the practice as well as the needs, interests and skills possessed by their students (McREL, 2003). Implicationally, there will be an increasing relationship among teachers by motivating them to talk about professional practice and helping teachers to develop expertise (McREL, 2003).

To clarify the existence of PLC’s features in any institutes, McRel (2003) assisted it as in Table 1. Table 1 is a that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the schools.
### Table 1

**Benchmark Implementation of Professional Learning Community of Practice in Schools.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Characteristics of PLC</th>
<th>Less Efficient</th>
<th>Efficient</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared Leadership and Decision Making</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ The input were analysed by the principal from the teachers but the final decision are from the principal himself; and</td>
<td>▪ The principal provides the opportunity and source for the teachers to get involved in the schools decision making. However, the teachers had less information and sources which enable them to act so</td>
<td>▪ Most of the teachers play the role as a leader and involve in most of the school decision making;</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ The teachers involved in the school leadership but without the involving them in the schools decision making; and</td>
<td>▪ The existence of the leadership committee and other committees related to decision making, but the body is less effective. Therefore, it is difficult for teachers to conduct these</td>
<td>▪ Leadership Committee and other committees serve effectively. Therefore, teachers easily implement decision making activities. In addition, the teachers had easy access to information and resources that encourage them to make decisions efficiently and effectively.</td>
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Collaborative Practices
And Research

- Less or no teacher talked about their teaching experiences, and
- Social relations among the people of the school supported the sharing of best practices, but there was a lack in terms of physical structure. For example, there was no extra time in the school schedule for teachers to plan.

- There is a structured opportunity for teachers to share their teaching practice and mastering in new knowledge. For example, the supervisory activities and discussions about teaching among them, and
- Social relations among the people of the school and supporting the sharing practice among teachers by physical structure. As for example, the extension time in the school schedule for the teachers to plan and learn as a team.

- There were formal and informal channels of reflection activities for supervision of teachers, and
- Social relations among the people of the school and physical structures that efficiently and effectively provided a high chance for teachers to connect, collaborate and learn.


Table 1 shows the implementation of the PLC benchmarks within an organization, especially educational institutions, which can be used as a
measurement of school effectiveness. Less effective column in Table 1 shows that the school community features its PLC less robust and requires the school to improve; on the basis that PLC is the key for improving the students learning community. The school community resembles the characteristics of outstanding indoor school is capable of sustaining improvements over time.

Leadership

The success of a school depends on the leadership of principals as educators. When a school is led by an effective principal, it makes such a positive impact on student achievement. Scholars agree that the effectiveness of the school largely depends on the principals, although many evidence showed that there’s a direct link between the student achievements with the principals’ leadership and is still being studied. The interfacing between school climate and achievement is more obvious. Two decades ago, Rahimah (1981) found that leadership style is closely related to school climate and school climate are closely related to student achievement. This is particularly relevant to the question of school as a PLC and the achievement of students, and the importance of leadership developing PLC. The school is actually the starting point of the PLC.

Interests and needs of each organization's leadership, and the school are not in dispute. But many are not aware of any differences in views on leadership. Smith and Piele (2006) and others gave their perspective which stated that there are hundred definitions of leadership in the previous literature review, as early as 1969, where Filley and House stated that leadership is one of the most widely studied phenomenon, but the least understood. As early as 1978, Hoy and Miskel (1978) and the recent Hoy and Miskel, 2010 dealt with the definition of leadership that is equivalent to a study conducted against him. Today more leadership's definition advocated by the scholars, vary according to the aspect of resources, processes and products derived from the leadership, but not different from the aspect that it is a process of influence, or gain the support of members of the group, to achieve the goals of the group which in the organizational context, it is the goal of the organization (Yukl, 2002; Richmond and Allison, 2003; Hoy and Miskel, 2010).
Linda, Erlandson, Reed and Wilson (2001) also defined leadership with a few summary sentences as follows. Objectives, has a direction, private, group, culture and values, shared vision, priorities and plans changing. Linda et al. (2001) concluded on the summary sentences by defining leadership as follows;

In the event of leadership, of course, a person;
   a) Leads to aim and has a direction;
   b) The direction of a leader should be based on the priorities and needs of the majority;
   c) The decision of a leader is variable based on current needs, and
   d) Effective leaders take into account the views of stakeholders of education.

Next, Welte (1978) distinguished the concept of management and leadership. Management includes the mental and physical aspects of performing an activity in order to achieve organizational goals. Intended-management activities involve planning, implementation, staffing, directing and controlling. Meanwhile, leadership involves aspects of natural ability to learn skills and personality traits a person to handle the relationship between partners to influence them to perform certain activities.

Furthermore, the leadership and management have different definitions in terms of managing its subordinates in order to achieve organizational goals. Leadership is more to influence the subordinates while management focuses on directing subordinates to conduct an activity to achieve organizational goals.

**Principal Leadership**

Principals’ leadership or school leadership has also been discussed, and obtained the agreement where the principal is better known as a leader more than a manager. (Eg Cuban, 1998). In fact, the many discussed question of the principal dilemmas are in carrying out his duties as leaders and school managers. Studies of leadership in the early 1980s, discovered the concept of
"principal" in general is based on their behaviour (Boyan, 1988; Silva, White & Yoshida, 2011). However, recent studies of effective school principals focus more on the relationship with student achievement. This is supported by studies involving principals and instructional leadership (Hallinger, Bickman, L., & Davis, 1998).

In describing the principals of leadership, Bossert, Dywer, Rowan, and Lee (1982) and among others, stated that the effective principals should provide the school with a conducive environment through the existence of the instructional program, describe the teaching goals, setting the academic standards of the school, concern with the development of policy and education policy problems of teachers, monitor classroom management, create a reward system and retain outstanding level of discipline – where particularly principals are the instructional leaders, because the main focus of principals is to ensure that learning takes place in school. Dwyer (1996) in his study of the qualitative nature of principals reported more use of thinking skills in the performance of a task than direct counterpart for the purpose. In other words, principals interact with the vision that has been enacted and the use of school facilities and environment already existing in the performance of daily tasks.

The effective principals will act with numerous attractive strategies (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1992; Ronald & Hallinger, 2009). Effective principals are able to develop a culture that encourages more good things happen than changing the unwanted items (Fullan, 2001). Therefore, educators should be able to manage the changes for school improvement. The most effective method is through professional development of teachers, especially in the school context as the PLC. Thus, the role of the principal, as a shortcut to develop, change and improve the school, is to develop the PLC. Teachers’ attitude and ability to embrace change is an important element (Saipo, 2008) and this must be dealt wisely by principals. Therefore, principals must aid in developing the teachers so that they are always ready to perform all the school planning.

In short, the latest concept of transformational leadership is focused on the efforts of principals to support teachers in school teaching, or instructional
leadership. To have this style of leadership, principal responsible to develop teachers’ capacities, to create the learning climate in the schools, and eventually to teach share knowledge and skills to all levels of school communities (Hord, 2009). Thus, the principals’ leadership is preceded by supporting teachers’ self-development as professionals. Principals’ leadership is no longer compatible with traditional leadership, where the leadership as a sub-set of management, and the main task is merely the management of school principals.

Role of School Leaders in Creating a Professional Learning Community

Effective schools have excellent school leaders. This is not a new thing among the educators. This has been proven in many studies on the management of the school (Edmonds, 1979; Mortimore, 1991) where they found an association that showed the effectiveness of schools is closely related to the school leadership (Marzano, 2003). Jackson and Davis (2000) noted no significant individuals in starting and maintaining improvement activities towards the achievement of students, unless the school principal. Similarly Lotteze and McKee (2006), state that the models selected improvements, have shown the effectiveness of a school in implementing and maintaining improvements rely heavily on the outstanding principal leadership.

Thus, principals have devised a strategy to create a PLC in their school. The following is a discussion of the role of school leaders in the strategy to create a PLC.

(A) The Principal as a leader in the learning process. PLC leaders need to focus on learning over teaching activities as the main focus of a school setting. Thus, the principal focus was shifted from inputs to outcomes or from beginning to the results of the implementation (Dufour, 2004). The leaders will implement the mission of teaching in daily school activities. To achieve this, they will create systems and processes that encourage educators specifically the school teachers to work collaboratively. Eaker and Gonzalez (2006) have suggested the teachers to implement the
learning activities to establish a mission in the daily activities of the school;

I. Identify the needs of students' knowledge and skills for each subject, age and unit for each lesson;

II. Design of an evaluation mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of student learning on an on-going basis, and

III. Implement a comprehensive school plan to ensure students have the extra time and motivation to learn.

In this case, the school is more focused on the students on the following question of "what they learned" rather than "what is taught";

(B) The principal of creating a conducive culture continuously. The traditional approach in improving a school is to change the structured organizations’ involving the change of policies, rules, schedules and the size of the school workforce itself. However, the nature of such changes has taken an insignificant long-term impact on student learning. In other words, the effectiveness of a school improvement can be achieved through changing the culture of their school principals (Dufour, 2002; Eaker & Gonzalez, 2006).

Principals will change their habits and practices, values, and beliefs of the school community that has long been practised by them (Sarason, 1996). The effort was a complex task. Eaker and Gonzalez (2006) support this statement with the view that it is difficult for a leader to change the culture that has been passed by a school staff. The reason is because culture has become a practice in the daily life of the school. Thus, Eaker and Gonzalez (2006) have proposed that the principals implement the following strategies to create a culture that supports the practice of the PLC.

- The Principal should lead a collaborative team work. Senge, Ross, Smith, Robert and Kleiner (1994) that history has proven that the essential component of any business is teamwork. Component is an effectiveness of pre-requisite in decision making and implementation of an activity. In the context of the team principals
as school leaders who work collaboratively, their role is to develop activities and monitor the effectiveness of these activities. For example, principals create activities as to ensure that school staffs work as a team in order to resolve issues related to student learning. Furthermore, the principal will monitor the implementation of those activities to ensure a product is able to be formed based on the task in a team. There is a possibility that a team could form a solution to students' learning strategies, curriculum which is able to guide their students, the criteria to evaluate the quality of the students work and formative evaluation mechanism. In other words, the principal is not responsible for solving the problems among school staffs who work in a team, but their role is to develop a systematic activity and monitor the effectiveness of the activities (Dufour, Dufour&Eaker, 2005). This effort is aimed at improving the professionalism of the school work and help students increase their achievement level of education;

• Giving the freedom of autonomy to the schools controlled by the leadership of the school. According to Eaker and Gonzalez (2006), school leaders need to give autonomy right to the people of then school of their maximum levels. However, the granting of autonomy is crucial by the efficient and effective control of the school leaders. It is important that the autonomy is also due in the PLC decision-making on important issues as to perform a task. For example, school leadership should insist with the school especially the teachers who implement the PLC as the following activities after they were given autonomy. The schools should work collaboratively, students should be given adequate learning activities, and the students' efficiency must be assessed using formative assessment mechanisms and standards that students should have been provided with additional time and support if they face difficulties in learning. However, the leadership of the school should give freedom to the schools in the implementation of activities based on the approach that fits the needs and budget at the same time. The school community are clear about the controlled autonomy granted and they also feel their involvement is greatly appreciated as the implication (Dufour, 2005), and
To support, protect and defend mission recognizes by the PLC and the school community values. Lezzote (1996) stated that efforts to create a school community that shared value are the primary role of a school leader. In the context of the PLC, the principal as the learning leadership should focus on the following values which encouraged the school to implement the PLC mission through their support for the development of school teams that work collaboratively. Furthermore, the principals will protect and defend every positive action on the implementation of the school community of the PLC practice. Finally, the school will be aware of things that are important in implementing the PLC practice through monitoring of school leaders on their behavioural assessment, and

(C) The leader among leaders. Major success in the practice of the PLC is the extent of distribution of leadership power among the school leadership in place. Smylie, Wenzel and Ferguson (2003) stated there are many findings about school improvement (Harris, 2002) emphasized on the importance of distribution of leadership power among the schools. In other words, principals as learning leaders will strive to develop leadership capacity among the school especially the teachers and educators. They will improve the structure of the school as to enable teachers to exercise and practising leadership in a team on an on-going basis. In addition, the existing leadership committee will monitor and guide management leadership among teachers where the committee worked with the teacher's emotion. Eaker and Gonzalez (2006) explained the statement specifying the PLC leaders should plead school staff to ensure they are performing a task. PLC leaders will motivate and support teachers to do a particular given task. The school has produced leaders among the educators who feel confident with their leadership.

Overall, school leaders especially principals should play a role in establishing the PLC. Principals are the key in determining the school administration and management system in order to runs smoothly and orderly. In the study by Abdullah, Z. (2010), has revealed that the principals who have shown their sincerity in the performance of his duties as a leader, led an effective school by adopting a democratic behaviours, lowering his empowerment and always
provide guidance and coaching to the teachers in improving the quality of their teaching which succeeded in creating a culture of learning among teachers. This clearly demonstrated the influence of the school leadership. This is due to certain behaviours of the leaders who gave significant influence towards the working environment in schools. The practice of the school leadership is exemplary and is a positive impact to all levels of school management and teachers which are helpful to one another.

Attitude and behaviour of principals have a positive impact on the teachers where they feel important at school, appreciated and even feel the school "believes" them in performing on a given task. Attitudes of principals and school leadership community have been able to motivate teachers to keep putting their effort to work harder (Tracy, 2000) as to improve their potential through learning. In other words, the school leadership is a factor that can promote and create a positive environment for teachers to continue to learn and motivate themselves through changes in needs, wishes and interests from one of the activities that enhance their knowledge and skills.

**Conclusion**

The main function of the school is to ensure that students are learning. Perhaps the most important and significant factor is to ensure that the learning of the student, firstly is the quality of teaching, and the atmosphere or environment that encourages and supports the learning. Hord (2009) also noted improved quality of teaching if the teacher also learns continuously and growing process. This can only be realized in the learning community, and to maintain the professionalism of teachers, the community should be a PLC. Learning process in a community school is complex and time consuming. Thus, a person needs to understand the various dimensions of school learning if they intend to create an effective learning culture in their school community, and professionalism among teachers.

The principal leadership is not only focused on learning and teaching, but also the kind of leadership pursuits, that the practice was to support and develop teachers, empowering leadership among teachers so that teachers could act
independently in making decisions on matters that they are experts at the time being. This means that developing teacher leadership through their empowerment means a distributive leadership practices. Literature review showed that one of the PLC characteristic is a distributive leadership.

The school especially school leadership community should always play an important role in educating and guiding the teacher as a professional. Therefore, teachers are entitled to a briefing session from time to time in conjunction to the concept of the PLC. Teachers need to be exposed to a conducive learning environment so that they can improve knowledge related to (i) students development, (ii) diversify teaching strategies, and (iii) skills to apply strategies based on context. This is because each student has a variety of backgrounds that required teachers who are knowledgeable, skilled and understand their duties in a variety of teaching contexts.

PLC is an approach that has gained place among the educators who are committed to the development and improvement of learning, which is the basis for school improvement which in particular improving the education system. The approach emphasizes a continuous learning activity without the regard to hierarchy among staff and students. By implementing such approaches in schools, the involvement of teachers in the school improvement process is to rise if they are unable to improve performance. Our aspirations will be met with school leadership strategies for creating the PLC. In other words, the role of school leadership is needed because there was strong evidence that school leadership is able to change schools and sparked revolutions by improving the education system of any country. PLC is able to develop the school, the education system and students, where the improvement is not limited to academic achievement but to overall human development as the development and improvement is of the place-based learning experiences and lasting.

Education has faced a learning revolution that focuses on the school as a professional learning community that is able to trigger a sustained changes and sustainable improvements, in addition to the right aim in the endless learning improvement of the students. The PLC are in needs of teachers, supporting staffs and principals to continue learning together as to ensure that their school
communities continue to exist, remain current, and thrive in success. This is because the school will not change as long as the capacity and capability of the teachers are not well developed individually and as a team. Recognizing the importance of the study of learning practices among teachers, the school secondary leadership and principals was conducted by applying the concept of PLC’s (Hord, 1997, Huffman & Hipp, 2003).

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