

**PRACTICES, PROGRAMMES, AND CULTURE OF  
HIGH-PERFORMING PRIMARY SCHOOLS  
IN TERENGGANU**

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
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TERENGGANU**

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**Thesis submitted in Fulfillment of the  
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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family whose faith, love, support and encouragement have sustained me through this process: my husband; Mohamad Noor Azhar, my late father, my mother, my daughters; Siti Hawa, Siti Hajar, Siti Hanis, Siti Huda, my son; Mohamad Arif and my helper, Cik Mas. It is because of their actions that this level of education was within my reach.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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**OCTOBER 2009**

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**Faculty : Management and Economics**

Terengganu state has led fifteen other states in Malaysia in a national standardized examination, *UPSR* for seven consecutive years starting from 2001 to 2007 (*JPNT, 2007*). Thus, a qualitative case study method was employed to capture and explore the details of the remarkable phenomenon.

The purpose of this study was to examine the practices of these high-performing primary schools in terms of their leadership practices, programmes, and culture that impact student high academic performance. Research questions have targeted the essence of this study through leadership four frames-structural, human resource, political, and symbolic (Bolman and Deal, 2003).

Six school principals participated in the interview as the respondents. Data were transcribed and then triangulated by surveys, non-participant observations, and document review. Major findings of this study include: 1) the human resource was the primary frame used; 2) the structural frame is the second most frequently used frame; 3) the political frame was the least used

frame; 4) all the participated leaders utilized multi-framing which no wonder these leaders are effective due to their ability to change frame appropriately to any situation. Findings support previous researches of Bensimon (1989); Bensimon *et. al*, (1989); Bolman and Deal (1991); Rivers (1996); Jellander (2004); Onoye (2004); Maitra (2007); Baker (2008); Jessup (2008); and Sypawka (2008).

Good quality programmes were identified as three major programmes namely 1) Excellent Public Examination or value-added, 2) Excellent Critical Subjects; English in Mathematics and Science (EMaS), and 3) Student Self-Development whereby targeted to not only increase student high academic performance as well as to improve student well being, physically, emotionally, and spiritually in line with Terengganu mission, vision and slogan, *Memahat Sejarah, Mencipta Tamaddun* in producing balanced individuals of the *Ulul Albab* generation.

After analyzing a computer software, NVivo (Gibbs, 2002), five salient themes emerged from the study: 1) smart leaders, 2) caring teachers, 3) academic focus, 4) sense of ownership, and 5) consistent monitoring. A model of high-performing primary schools in Terengganu which consists of the three important elements of school practices: strong leadership, effective programmes, and positive culture is proposed.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Malaysia Terengganu sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**AMALAN, PROGRAM DAN BUDAYA SEKOLAH RENDAH BERPRESTASI  
TINGGI DI TERENGGANU**

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Negeri Terengganu telah berjaya mendahului lima belas negeri lain di Malaysia di dalam peperiksaan nasional, UPSR selama tujuh tahun berturut-turut mulai tahun 2001 hingga 2007 (JPNT, 2007). Justeru itu, satu kajian kes secara kualitatif telah dijalankan bagi meneroka fenomena yang menakjubkan ini secara terperinci.

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji amalan-amalan sekolah dari segi amalan pemimpin, program, dan budaya sekolah yang memberi impak kepada kejayaan akademik pelajar. Kajian disasarkan melalui empat rangka kepimpinan iaitu struktur, sumber manusia, politik, dan simbolik (Bolman and Deal, 2003).

Responden kajian adalah terdiri dari enam orang Guru Besar telah mengambil bahagian dalam temu-ramah. Data dianalisis melalui sebuah komputer program, Nvivo (Gibbs, 2002). Seterusnya data ditafsirkan dan kemudiannya ditriangulasi melalui survei, pemerhatian tidak serta dan tinjauan dokumen.

Kajian dapatan mendapati bahawa 1) rangka sumber manusia merupakan rangka yang paling digunakan, 2) rangka struktur merupakan rangka kedua digunakan, 3) rangka politik merupakan rangka yang paling kurang digunakan, dan 4) semua responden menggunakan ke-empat-empat rangka yang mana tidaklah menghairankan pemimpin-pemimpin ini merupakan pemimpin yang berkesan di mana mereka mempunyai kebolehan menukar rangka yang sesuai bergantung kepada sebarang keadaan. Dapatan ini disokong oleh kajian-kajian yang telah terdahulu seperti Bensimon (1989); Bensimon *et. al*, (1989); Bolman and Deal (1991); Jellander (2004); Onoye (2004); Rivers (1996); Maitra (2007); Baker (2008); Jessup (2008); dan Sypawka (2008).

Terdapat tiga program bermutu yang dikenalpasti: 1) Program Kecemerlangan Peperiksaan Awam, 2) Program Kecemerlangan Subjek Kritikal EmaS, dan 3) Pembangunan Diri Pelajar yang bukan hanya meningkatkan prestasi akademik pelajar, tetapi juga meningkatkan kecemerlangan pelajar samada dari segi fizikal, emosi dan juga spiritual sejajar dengan misi, visi dan slogan Terengganu, *Memahat Sejarah, Mencipta Tamaddun* dalam melahirkan insan gemilang generasi *Ulul Albab*.

Pengkaji mendapati bahawa terdapat lima tema penting dalam budaya sekolah rendah berprestasi tinggi: 1) pemimpin yang bijaksana, 2) guru yang *cakna* dan perihatin, 3) fokus akademik, 4) perasaan kepunyaan; dan 5) pemantauan yang berterusan. Pengkaji juga mencipta sebuah model tentang amalan-amalan sekolah dari segi amalan pemimpin, program, dan budaya



sekolah yang memberi impak kepada kejayaan akademik pelajar UPSR di Terengganu.