A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AT THE BASIC EDUCATION HIGH SCHOOLS IN THANBYUZAYAT TOWNSHIP, MON STATE, MYANMAR

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and organizational culture at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzavat Township, Mon State, Myanmar. The participants were 113 full-time teachers from Basic Education High Schools (No.1&2) during the academic year of 2019-2020. The researcher adopted the survey-High Leadership Capacity School Survey by Lambert (2003) and the survey-Organizational Culture (OCS) by Saravanan (2013). The collected data from each survey was analyzed by Descriptive Statistics, Frequency and Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The study results indicated that the level of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity was Moderate, and organizational culture was Positive. Consequently, it was determined that the relationship between the two variables was found to be Significant, however it was interpreted that the relationship between the two was weak due to the correlation (r) value of .388**. The findings suggested that teachers needed to create more opportunities and time for personal reflection for they would help them grow in their profession. In addition, to build collaborative and participative culture which could increase a healthy workplace was also recommended and the school organizations should also upgrade the quality of materials provided to teachers in teaching and learning process as well as innovative technologies should also be realized in order to keep abreast with the 21st century education.

Keywords: Leadership Capacity; Organizational Culture; Education

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Introduction

School organizational culture is recognized as a major agent of school achievement driven by all members of the school. The concept of school culture should be realized as a tool to aid with the process of valuing people by fostering an instrument for classifying, simplifying, and unfolding the human state (Lumby & Foskett, 2011). With regard to leadership capacity, Lambert (2003) claimed that leadership capacity can be understood as organization's capacity for it sustains the efforts of the entire groups such as principals, teachers, parents and community members, and the students. Diana (2011) acknowledged that teacher-leaders are individuals who undergo a myriad of capabilities, advance essential knowledge, and expertise to grow into effective classroom leaders with the capabilities of realizing the present transformation agenda.

Over five decades of under dictatorship, education system in Republic of the Union of Myanmar, known as Burma, has resulted in a declining trend. The system was poorly administered; teaching and learning strategies had not progressed since 1940s and 1950s; very few opportunities for teachers in schools and educators in any educational institutions alike were presented (Hayden & Martin, 2013).

To address the needs in the system, a major educational reform in Myanmar began in 2011 with the aim of developing human capital followed by the country's democratic transaction after the several decades of military government (Soe, 2017). The Department of Education Research Bureau under the Education Department of Myanmar commenced the planning of a new curriculum in 2012 and the first updated syllabus for KG standard was launched in the academic year of 2016-17 by the approval of the National Education Law on September 30, 2014, and with its modification's approval on June 25, 2015 (Phyu, 2019).

Along with the changed in the basic education system in Myanmar currently, both the teachers and the two high schools were experiencing the challenges brought by the reform in the basic educational system. The reform particularly required the teachers and the two school organizations to adapt innovative instructional methods, to model effective leadership, to inspire with a shared vision by keeping a sense of determination to move forward, and to implement the change process successfully.

Having considered the above circumstances of reform in the basic educational system, the researcher was inspired to conduct this study.

Objectives

- 1. To identify the level of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar.
- 2. To identify the level of teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar.
- 3. To determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and organizational culture at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar.

Literature Review

Concept of Teacher Leadership Capacity

Harrison & Killion (2007) claimed that teachers who are in fact performing as leaders in the school environment engage in many roles such as curriculum experts, instructors, mentors, coordinators and data analysts to fulfill the school achievement in this 21st century. Some other activities of the role include designing schedule for the whole academic year, working as liaison among the stakeholders, leading to accomplish school task forces, serving as data analysts for the school committees, mentoring co-teachers and students, learning facilitators, communicating with stakeholders through newsletters or meeting, leading parent-teacher associations, organizing educational conversation in the community (Danielson, 2006).

Harrison & Killion (2007) also noted that teacher-leaders are agents of change and lifelong learners. As teacher leadership plays crucial role, the placement of teacher-leaders has become a critical consideration of school achievement (Danielson, 2007). Teacher-leaders' effects can be witnessed by the impact of school policies, empowering instructional methods, strengthening community and reinforcement of communication (Gonzales, 2001). Diana (2011) noted that teacher leadership is involved in the process of decision-making in school. It is also described that their involvement can enhance teamwork, the change in curriculum, goal setting, and development in teachers' profession (Roby, 2011).

High Leadership Capacity Building Theory

Lambert (2003c) defined six critical factors in building leadership capacity: (1) Broad-based, Skillful Participation in the Work of Leadership (Participation), (2) Shared Vision Resulting in Program Coherence(Shared Vision), (3) Inquiry-based Use of Information to Inform Decisions and Practice (Inquiry-based use of information), (4) Broad Involvement, Collaboration and Collective Responsibility Reflected in Roles and Actions

(Roles and Responsibilities), (5) Reflective Practice that Leads Consistently to Innovation (Reflective Practice), and (6) High or Steadily Improving Student Achievement (Student Achievement).

Concept of School Organizational Culture

The study of schools' culture commences with the broad phenomena of the term *culture*. Since there is no concise definition of school culture, a unique culture exists in every school: the ethos of school refers as the school's personality and culture (Cunningham, 2003; Novak, 2008). Schools' organizational culture embodies many components such as celebrations, symbols, teacher expectations, communication and many other activities occur at a school. Teachers' expectation can be viewed as the degree of students' achievement expected by the teachers (Craig, 2011).

Looking at the cultural components allows to increase a full understanding of school culture. Barth (2002) claimed that school's culture influence on students' achievement and learning is stronger than any external influences such as school board or the state education department. Noddings (2003) remarked that effective schools should bear a resemblance to the best homes which adhere continual caring relationship, attend to both assumed and articulated needs, communicate to build up shared interests and individual interests, cooperate to achieve the tasks, uplift joy in true learning, guide to develop morally and spiritually and finally, educate to develop self-understanding and communal understanding.

According to Phillips & Wagner (2003), student and staff's self-efficacy is one of the crucial components of school culture. Bandura (1993) cited in Sandoval (2013) defined self-efficacy as the confidence and ability to plan and accomplish the sequences of action demanded for the achievement. School leaders and teachers with high level of efficacy are confident that they can deliver a great impact on learning and achievement. To attain a greater positive effect on students' achievement, McGuigan & Hoy (2006) asserted the importance of collective sense of self-efficacy among the staff because collective efficacy has a higher relationship to how students achieve regardless of their socioeconomic status.

If school culture is fabricated with a foundation of collaboration, there are more chances of collective efficacy to enhance (Goddard, 2002). Researchers have also discovered that if positive school culture and climate exists, the schools achieve effectiveness in risk prevention, teaching approaches advancement and learning outcomes (Cohen & Pickerall, 2007).

Organizational Culture Theory

Saravanan (2013) defined four critical factors contributing organizational culture: (a) Physical Factor, (b) Social Factor, (c) Organizational Commitment Factor, and (d) Cultural Factor.

Physical Factor

Physical environment stands a critical aspect to any organizations for it considerably influences peoples' choices through resources they interact with (Saravanan, 2013). Physical factor highlights the visible and tangible conformity such as symbol, artifacts, architectural structure, technology etc.

Social Factor

Social factor highlights social situation that relates members' behaviors and interaction in their work environment through various leadership styles adhered by both leader and members in the organization (Saravanan, 2013). When social factor is strong, people who work collectively in a project feel no sense of competing rather they share best interests, partner for learning, share benefits among the colleagues Saravanan (2013).

Organizational Commitment Factor

According to Saravanan (2013) organizational commitment can be observed as members' psychological attachment to the organization. Buchanan (1974) asserted that organizational commitment serves as a bonding factor between the members and the organization cited in (Cheah, Chong, Yeo, & Pee, 2016). Organization commitment stands a pivotal role in determining whether a member withholds a retention at the organization and passionately contribute and work towards organizational goals (Saravanan, 2013).

Cultural Factor

The culture of an organization greatly impacts its abundant decisions and engagements (Saravanan, 2013). "Culture refers to values, beliefs, and customs that exist in a society" (Schmitz, 2012, p. 78). Culture factors can be realized by seven dimensions: innovation, progression, outcome-oriented, stability, humanistic ideals, team focus and detail-oriented, and these dimensions are emphasized with regards to organizational goals, according to Carpenter, Bauer & Erdogan (2010).

Previous Studies

Kujur (2016) conducted a study on relationship of teachers' perception towards leadership capacity and organizational culture in the Marianists Schools. The study discussed that there was a very strong positive and it was also discussed that although the participant-teachers hosted high perceptions

towards their leadership capacity, they had never noticed their efforts that concerned students' achievement, community involvement and school progress from the perspectives of leadership.

Nevertheless, forming governance groups and shared authority needed to be enhanced to thriving better outcomes of collaborative and collective responsibilities within the organization. With regards to teachers' perception of school culture, it was showed as high. Moreover, Kujur (2016) suggested that teachers should create more access to professional network to share resources and information to one another; there should be teaching observation practices to improve their instructional skills in teaching based on each other's feedback.

Harris (2016) conducted a study to explore the relationship between building teacher leadership capacity and campus culture in a suburban East Texas school district by designing mixed methods study to identify significant relationship between teacher leadership capacity and campus culture. The findings showed that teachers and administrators expressed the same value concerning leadership capacity and campus culture which led to a significant relationship between the two variables.

Harris (2016) also suggested that to develop teacher leaders and cultivate a positive school culture should be originated at the school community and state or district mission alike. On the other hand, if the members of the school did not build leadership capacity by supporting each other, shared responsibilities would fail, and it could have led to result in negative campus cultures.

Additionally, Harris (2016) highlighted that administrators should try to recognize the various leadership practices of teachers according to their years of teaching experience. The leaders of the school should encourage all teachers to voice during the formal or informal conservation regardless of their leadership qualities and demographics.

Mansour (2011) conducted a study on building leadership-capacity for sustained school improvement, a dissertation required for Department of Education University of Leicester. The researcher suggested that the work of building leadership capacity should be with the practices of learning circles, a culture of inquiry and mutual trust among the teachers to be able to share responsibilities, commitment, and their experiences. The findings showed that schools were believed to be more responsive to improvement efforts through the presence of collaboration and trust at different levels within the organization.

Norman (2019) conducted a study of school culture and student achievement of central Mississippi Schools by utilizing School Culture Survey Gruenert (1998a) and student achievement which the data was retrieved from the Mississippi Department of Education. The findings showed that collaborative learning and professional development factors influenced students' achievement. The researcher presented that class-size ratio was another contributor to foster student achievement, however, students' capacity to learn stood as another important role regardless of the class-size. Some other factors such as teachers' morale, ability and instructional capacity were also considered as effective drivers for students' achievement.

To sum up, the previous studies with regard to teachers' leadership capacity and school culture or organizational had given a myriad of insights to the current researcher to consider all capacity building perspectives, cultivating healthy culture, driving students' achievement, etc. It could be considered that the two factors, leadership capacity and organizational culture, contributed each other's improvement. For example, previous studies proved that there had been strong relationship between the two, and it could be regarded that when the perceptions of one factor increased, another factor improved despite some specific areas needed more attention which had been discussed and suggested by the previous researchers. In addition to it, the two factors play very important roles to enhance students' achievement.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework showcases the hypothesized relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and organizational culture. The following figure depicts critical elements of teachers' perceptions towards leadership capacity based on Lambert's (2003) High Leadership Capacity Theory on the left and the right side presents factors of organizational culture based on Organizational Culture Theory by Saravanan (2013).

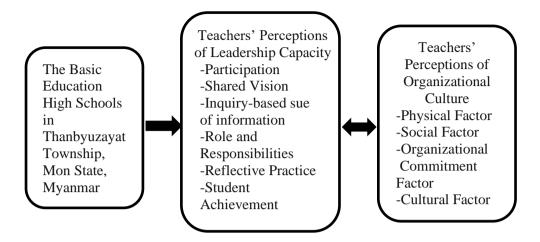


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Method/Procedure

To determine the three research objectives, the researcher of this study employed quantitative and correlation research design by adopting High Leadership Capacity School Survey (HLCSS) by Lambert (2003), and Organizational Culture Survey (OCS) by Saravanan (2013). The study utilized means, standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation for data analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables.

The target population of this study was 113 full-time teachers teaching in the different levels from KG to G-11(10th Standard) during the academic year 2019-2020. It had been considered to cooperate with 75 teachers from B.E.H.S (No.1) and 38 teachers from B.E.H.S (No.2). This population was suggested to be accessible in each school according to the observation and permission of the principals.

Findings/Results

Research Objective One

The research objective one was to identify the level of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity through the High Leadership Capacity School Survey (HLCSS) with a total of 30 questions developed by Lambert (2003). The researcher analyzed the means and standard deviations of each question item which clarified the following process of interpretation through the use of a five-point Likert scale: (1.00-1.50= Very Low, 1.51-2.50= Low, 2.51-3.50=Moderate, 3.51-4.50= High and 4.51-5.00= Very High).

Table 1: The	? Summary	of Means	and	Standard	Deviations	of	Teachers'
Perception of	their Leade	rship Capa	acity ((n=113)			

No.	Leadership Capacity	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	Participation	3.35	.772	Moderate
2.	Shared Vision	3.65	.742	High
3.	Inquiry-based Use of Information	3.44	.668	Moderate
4.	Role and Responsibility	3.40	.762	Moderate
5.	Reflective Practice	3.42	.704	Moderate
6.	Student Achievement	3.67	.666	High
	Total	3.49	.540	Moderate

Table 1 presents the summary of the level of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity based on the six constructs with 30 questions designed to assess each area. According to the total mean which resulted at (3.49), the level of teachers' perceptions was interpreted as *Moderate* in their leadership capacity.

Research Objective Two

The research objective two was to identify the level of teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture through Organizational Culture Survey (OCS) with a total of 20 questions developed by Saravanan (2013). The researcher analyzed the means and standard deviations of each questions items which clarified the following processes of interpretation through the use of a five-point Likert scale: (1.00-1.50= Very Negative, 1.51-2.50= Negative, 2.51-3.50=Moderate, 3.51-4.50= Positive and 4.51-5.00= Very Positive).

Table 2: The Summary of Means and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Perceptions towards Organizational Culture (n=113)

No.	Organizational Culture	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1. Phys	sical Factor	3.46	.635	Moderate
2. Soci	al Factor	3.82	.359	Positive
3. Organizational Commitment Factor		3.59	.360	Positive
4. Cult	ural Factor	3.77	.418	Positive
	Total	3.66	.324	Positive

Table 2 presents the summary of level of teachers' perception towards *Organizational Culture* comprised of the four factors with 20 questions in the survey. It had been interpreted that teachers' perception towards organizational culture was *Positive* due to the total mean was (3.66) which fell within the range of 3.51-4.50.

Research Objective Three

The researcher utilized Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine if there was a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity and organizational culture.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between the levels of Teachers Perceptions of their Leadership Capacity and Organizational Culture (n=113)

		Leadership	Conclusion
		Capacity	
Teachers' Perceptions	Pearson	.388**	There is a
of their Leadership	Correlation		significant
Capacity and			relationship
Organizational			between the two
Culture	Sig. (2-tailed)	.01	variables

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the result of Pearson Correlation between the levels of Teachers Perceptions of their Leadership Capacity and Organizational Culture. According to the findings the significant value was .01 which was smaller than .05. Therefore, the researcher concluded that there was a significant relationship between teachers' perception of their leadership capacity and organization culture at B.E.H.S (1&2) in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar. The researcher accepted the research hypothesis and rejected the null hypothesis in this study. The researcher also asserted that there was a weak relationship between the two variables due to the correlation (r) value was .388**.

Discussion

Teachers' Perceptions of their Leadership Capacity at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar

The findings in this study indicated that teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity considered relatively good due to the total mean of six constructs scored (3.49) which also meant *Moderate*.

Firstly, to discuss further, the finding showed that the teachers usually involved in vision sharing and improving student achievement because it resulted the highest mean among the six constructs with the mean of (3.65) and (3.67) respectively. This could be assumed that the teachers from the two schools were informed about the vision and encouraged to perform their tasks to assess their students' learning based on their respective responsibilities.

However, the findings presented that there was one practice the teachers needed more attention within the construct of *Shared Vision* was that *Ask each other questions that keep us on track with our vision*. In other words, although the vision had been shared, it was not frequently articulated among the teachers. According to Freed (2014), a shared vision assists the school members to enhance their managing ability, expend their network of professionalism more productively and it urges the individual members to engage in the process of implementation more effectively through regular reflective practices.

In this study, the findings indicated that *Talk with families about the student performance and school programs* needed more improvement although the area of *Provide feedback to children and families about student progress* was perceived highly. This highlighted that the schools and the teachers had an organized system of giving feedback or report cards to children and their families, however, less time was spent to talk personally to the individual family about students' performance and their participation in the school programs.

Thirdly, teachers' perceptions towards the three constructs such as *Inquiry-based Use of Information-*(3.44), *Role and Responsibility-*(3.40), and *Reflective Practice-*(3.42) had been regarded as *Moderate* due to the means were within the range of 2.51-3.50. It meant that although the teachers practiced the fore-mentioned constructs, they still needed to improve to enhance their leadership capacity. It could also be viewed that the teachers had been occupied with some teaching unrelated tasks or the teachers had little time spent on personal reflection, peer evaluation and involved in decision making. Lall (2013) asserted that some complaints have been raised about abundance of teachers' time consumed on dealing with managerial issues such as structure problems, school compound safety, and shortages in funding.

To explore in detail, there were three areas needed more attention in the construct of *Inquiry-based Use of Information*: *Use a learning circle that involve reflection, dialogue, inquiry and action, make time available for this learning to occur (e.g. faculty meeting, ad hoc groups, teams)*, and *Have designed a comprehensive information system that keep everyone informed and involved.* Mansour (2011), a previous researcher, conducted a study on building leadership-capacity for sustained school improvement, a dissertation required for Department of Education University of Leicester. The researcher suggested that the work of building leadership capacity should be with the practices of learning circles, a culture of inquiry and mutual trust among the teachers to be able to share responsibilities, commitment, and their

experiences. The findings showed that schools were believed to be more responsive to improvement efforts through the presence of collaboration and trust at different levels within the organization.

Interestingly, teachers' perception on *Focus on student learning* was the highest mean (4.52) and understood as *Very High*. Lastly, the teachers in both schools also had a relatively good system of keeping data evidence to inform the decision teaching practice with the mean (3.55). In this regard, teachers should be really proud of their practices and they should realize that these practices could be viewed as intrinsic leadership capacity rather than a demand of a school system.

Finally, the findings showed that teachers' perceptions toward the construct one, *Participation*-(3.35), scored the lowest among the six constructs despite its interpretation as *Moderate*. It meant that teachers needed to work hard to improve in this area so that they could attain a well-rounded leadership capacity. There could be many reasons for getting the lowest score. Among the seven questions in the construct one, *Shared authority and resources* needed the most improvement and the findings also indicated that more attention was needed in the area of *Participate in representative governance groups*.

What could be the reasons behind? These could be the differences in teachers' working experience, educational levels, gaps in age ranges, and some cultural influences that differ the teachers' participation in the certain programs, and current ongoing change in respective grades. Pierce (2007), a previous researcher, studied *Determination of the reliability and construct validity of the leadership capacity school survey*. This study results showed that middle school teachers perceived lesser leadership capacity than primary school teachers. Then, high school teachers perceived higher leadership capacity than the middle school teachers. In fact, primary schools' teachers had the highest perceptions on leadership capacity according to Pierce (2007).

Teachers' Perception towards Organizational Culture at the Basic Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, Myanmar

The findings in this study highlighted that teachers' perceptions towards organization culture had been considered relatively positive with the total mean (3.66) of the four cultural factors. To explore in depth, *Physical Factor* was perceived to be the lowest among the four factors with the mean of (3.46). This was because the teachers felt natural opinions with certain areas such as the workplace, the quality of materials provided by the school and the new technologies and methodologies introduced to improve teaching process.

In contrast, according to the current study, the teachers' perceptions towards the school's provision to suitable and adequate training, and their opportunity to voice the issues and problems at school were positive. With this evidence, it could be viewed that teachers in both schools received proper training for their professional development as well as the opportunities to discuss their needs or problems openly to some extent.

Moe (2016) studied the relationship between teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School in Insein Township. The study also showed that the relationship between the two variables was a moderate negative relationship. In addition to it, Moe (2016) also discussed that teachers expressed their dissatisfaction in some items such as working environment and quality of provided material for teaching, learning and office use. Leaman (1995) stated that when the members of the organization become uncomfortable with the working environment and materials, their productivity and concentration reduce.

Current study, *Social Factor*, *Organizational Commitment Factor* and *Cultural Factor* were perceived to be positive for their means were between 3.51 and 4.50 in the findings. However, the teachers' needed to improve the practice of giving a proper appreciation for each other work to nurture a collegial working milieu. Moe's (2016) study also found teachers' relationship with their colleagues and *the attitude towards work become more positive* was perceived highly. Nevertheless, Moe (2016) claimed that if the item of *You receives a proper appreciation for your work* in *Social Factor* was achieved, the school could harvest a more positive culture. It is believed that collegial culture in a school organization produces a shared achievement, decreases work frostiness and increases individual self-esteem based on how positive the society (Marzano, 2003) is.

With regards to Organizational Commitment Factor, teachers' satisfaction with their job was positive (3.84) as well as their perceptions on morale, teamwork and participation in decision-making was positively perceived as well. In addition, the teachers had little intention to leave the job which resulted as moderate level (2.84) based on the score. Polanyi (1969) proposed that organizational commitment can be realized when the members share knowledge which emphasizes meaningful plans, dispositions, and proficiency.

Remarkably, *Cultural Factor* had been perceived as positive with all the included items graded between 3.51 and 4.50. This could be viewed that teachers were aware of the changing trends in current educational reform, they had been encouraged to involve in educational policies and future plans.

However, it was important to accept the fact that organizational culture should be firm but easily adaptable and changeable depending on the circumstances, trends and advancement in leadership.

In conclusion, Fiore (2004) noted that re-culturing the school may takes 3-5 years to create a school community in which responsible people embrace the change willingly. A change in school organizational culture is challenging, however, once the cultural change is achieved, other significant improvement initiatives at the schools will be supported in return (Gruenert, 2000).

The Relationship between Teachers' Perceptions of their Leadership Capacity and Organizational Culture at the Education High Schools in Thanbyuzayat, Mon State, Myanmar.

The researcher concluded the findings as there was a significant relationship between the two variables because the significant value was smaller than 0.05. However, the researcher asserted that there was a weak relationship between the two variables as the correlation (r) value was resulted .388**.

It was noted in this study that, the overall level of teachers' perceptions of their leadership capacity was *Moderate* (3.49). This was because only two constructs: Shared Vision-(3.65) and Student Achievement-(3.67), were perceived as *High* and the rest of the four constructs: *Participation, Inquiry-based use of information, Role and Responsibility*, and *Reflective Practice* as *Moderate* with the means between 2.51 and 3.50. Therefore, the researcher of this study considered that when teachers could increase their leadership capacity for the fore-mentioned *Moderate* areas, the relationship with the organizational culture could have been stronger because teachers' perceptions was already Positive (3.66) towards the organizational culture.

To sum up the discussion, the researcher of current study proposed that if teachers' leadership capacity improved, there would be a strong relationship between the two variables: Leadership Capacity and Organizational Culture. Positive school organizational culture would also allow and encourage individual teacher to model highly effective leadership in return. In other words, the higher teachers' leadership capacity is performed in the schools, the more positive culture the schools harvest, or vice versa.

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