**A Study on the Relationships Among the Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs on Disadvantaged Education, Advocacy Leadership and Their Practice of School Vision in Taiwan**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate relationships among the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education and advocacy leadership and implementation of school vision. Research published by Anderson (2009), Freire (1970), Shields (2013), and Theoharis (2009) was reviewed to develop a theoretical framework for this study. A self-designed questionnaire based on two-stage stratified sampling, which comprised three scales, namely “elementary school principals’ beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” (α = .838), “advocacy leadership” (α = 923), and “implementation of school vision” (α = 913), was administered to 400 principals from public elementary schools across Taiwan. After invalid responses were excluded, 294 valid responses were obtained with a valid rate of 73.5%. These samples were examined using descriptive statistics, an independent samples *t* test, canonical correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling. This study resulted in the following conclusions:

* Elementary school principals displayed higher-than-average perceptions of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education,” with the highest perception being “global awareness” and the lowest being “conscientization.”
* In the dimension of “advocacy leadership,” elementary school principals demonstrated higher perceptions of “authentic leadership” and “political leadership” and lower perceptions of “democratic leadership” and “leadership action.”
* In the dimension of “implementation of school vision,” elementary school principals demonstrated a higher perception of “fostering the abilities for school change” and lower perceptions of “sustaining the motivation for school change” and “improving students’ achievements.”
* In terms of ethnicity, significant differences were observed in the perceptions of elementary school principals in the subdimension of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education”; Hakka principals exhibited the highest perception of this dimension.
* Beliefs among elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and the implementation of school vision were significantly related.
* Significant differences were found in “advocacy leadership” among elementary school principals who had attended multicultural courses.

In summary, the researcher compiled and analyzed the statistical results into the aforementioned six conclusions, which can serve as a reference for future studies.

**Keywords: the elementary school principals, beliefs on disadvantaged education, the practice of school vision.**

**Introduction**

*Background and motivation*

As school education becomes increasingly complex, uncertain, and ambiguous, elementary school principals must act as the bellwethers of the first stage of basic education, practicing their beliefs regarding disadvantaged education to enhance learning and promote positive micropolitical interaction within their campuses. They should also accommodate different ideological views and diffuse their educational beliefs to seek the resources necessary to fulfill school visions of equity and justice. Regarding studies on disadvantaged education that have been conducted in Taiwan, only a study by Chen (2010) indicated that examining the leadership beliefs of a leader precedes interpreting their behavior and indicated a gap in the literature on the leadership beliefs of female leaders. Thus, studies conducted by domestic scholars on the beliefs of elementary school principals are scarce, and studies on the principals’ beliefs regarding disadvantaged education are scarcer still.

Advocacy leadership is an open style of transformative leadership, or democratic and empowering leadership that works at the micropolitical level to instigate profound changes that play a role in the holistic development of schoolchildren and affect both schools and a wider community (Anderson, 2009). Thus, advocacy leadership enables school principals to respond to the varying needs and expectations of groups, organizations, and communities on and off campus, remain loyal to their beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, manage ideological conflicts using micropolitical strategies, promote an inclusive campus environment, help school personnel break away from their deficit thinking toward disadvantaged students’ underachievement, and address challenging issues such as school failure and school accountability. Such advocacy leadership capabilities have recently become a topic of considerable interest among researchers specializing in school principal leadership.

Building shared visions is instrumental in the implementation of equitable adjustments by leaders (Shields, 2013), as exemplified by the No Child Left Behind Act, which was intended to enhance the academic achievement of disadvantaged students (measured by standardized test scores) as the first step toward the realization of school visions of equity and justice. However, the demand for school performance and accountability that were concomitant with the Act aroused intense opposition from school principals and teachers. Moreover, in contrast with the view of leadership expressed by Sergiovanni (1990), based on visionary leaders creating a long-term vision for an organization, identifying the key elements of the vision, and articulating the vision, this study argued that advocacy leadership can further the implications of equitable school visions for the beliefs of school leaders and educators regarding disadvantaged education.

Considering the role of the beliefs of principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and school vision implementation and gaps in the literature regarding these school leadership factors, this study investigated their relationships and thereby, presenting an improved understanding of these areas.

Research purposes

On the basis of the aforementioned motivations, this study aimed to

1. Examine the differences regarding background variables in the beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and the implementation of school vision.
2. Investigate the relationships among the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and the implementation of school vision.

**Literature Review**

*Beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education*

Beliefs regarding disadvantaged education are essentially premised on the theory of “removing cultural prejudices,” namely the values and beliefs the general public hold regarding disadvantaged communities and relevant issues. Shields (2013) proposed three approaches for fostering school integration and helping disadvantaged students overcome marginalization: (1) eliminating deficit thinking, (2) holding high expectations for students, and (3) creating more integrated and deeper democratic politics. Thus, this study proposed that school principals can engage in conscientization (reflecting on their values and practices with respect to education for disadvantaged students) to ingrain their beliefs regarding disadvantaged education. Moreover, because elementary school principals are increasingly aware of the impact of the marketization of education, they are working to maintain positive parent–teacher relationships and the relationships between their schools and parent–teacher associations (Tsai, 2011). Further investigation is necessary to understand how these school leaders propagate their beliefs regarding disadvantaged education against a backdrop of education marketization to ensure the rights of their students to an education and the fulfillment of their learning needs.

*Advocacy leadership*

Advocacy leadership in educational settings was first proposed by Anderson (2009) in his book of the same name. “Advocacy,” as Matthews and Crow (2010) argued, essentially means transformation. Grant (2013) equated “transformative leaders” with “advocacy leaders” and used these terms alternatively in her PhD dissertation. In addition, Anderson (2009) drew on the findings of Blase and Anderson (1995) regarding political negotiation among principals, teachers, students, and parents within the school context to develop a micropolitical leadership matrix based on two leadership values presented in continuum (Fig. 2-1). This matrix divides micropolitical leadership into four quadrants, with the vertical axis denoting two leadership styles marked respectively by “transformative” on the upper end and “transactional” on the lower end, and the horizontal axis representing two leadership characteristics marked respectively by “open” on the right end and “closed” on the left end. In this matrix, open, empowering leadership (advocacy leadership) lies in the upper right-hand quadrant; transactional, facilitative leadership in the lower right-hand quadrant; transactional, closed, and adversarial leadership in the upper left-hand quadrant; and transactional, closed, and authoritarian leadership in the lower left-hand quadrant. On the basis of this matrix, Anderson (2009) defined advocacy leadership as the use of a school by educational leaders as a site for power interactions among materials, cultural resources, and ideologies and struggles. Specifically, advocacy leadership occurs when a principal uses their school as a site for power interaction; adopts an open and empowering leadership style; and promotes equity and justice as the yardstick for materials, cultural resources, ideologies, and struggles, thereby uniting their teaching personnel behind the school vision.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Transformative | | |
| adversarial leadership | advocacy leadership (empowering leadership) | Open |
| authoritarian leadership | facilitative leadership |
| Transactional | | |

**Fig. 2-1** Micropolitical leadership matrix (Anderson, 2009, p. 38)

*Implementation of school vision*

Sergiovanni (1990) discussed leadership from the perspective of visionary leaders, arguing that they are capable of inspiring people to undertake the missions of a school. Sashkin (1996) defined visionary leadership as the ability to craft a long-term vision for an organization, identify the key elements of the vision, and articulate the vision. In addition, on the basis of the overriding aim of “school vision implementation in the context of equity and justice,” Sergiovanni (2009) and Sashkin (2013) have created an inclusive educational environment that involves students of different backgrounds and with special learning needs, provides a sense of belonging, enhances students’ academic achievement, and promotes the development of reconceptualized awareness, knowledge, and skills (Anderson, 2009; Shields, 2013). This study proposed conceptual and operational definitions of the “implementation of school vision” as follows: Conceptually, school leaders adopt teaching and curriculum leadership that involve all stakeholders in the implementation of educational objectives to promote excellence, equity, justice, and inclusion, thereby ensuring a quality education for every student. The operational meaning of school vision implementation could be applied to assess the extent to which the visions of equity and justice have been achieved in school education: the more involved all stakeholders are in vision implementation, the higher perceived quality of school service is observed in all students.

**Methods**

Research framework

背景變項

1. 性別
2. 擔任校長年資
3. 最高學歷
4. 曾修習課程

數目

1. 原生族群
2. 學校規模
3. 學校類型

自變項

校長弱勢教育信念

1. 意識覺醒
2. 差異政治理念
3. 全球意識

中介變項

倡議領導

1. 真誠領導
2. 民主領導
3. 政治領導
4. 行動領導

依變項

學校願景實踐

1. 改善學生成就
2. 厚植變革能力
3. 持續變革動能

**Fig. 3-1** Research framework

自變項

校長弱勢教育信念

1. 意識覺醒
2. 差異政治理念
3. 全球意識

**Independent variables**

Principals’ beliefs regarding disadvantaged education

1. Conscientization
2. Beliefs regarding politics of difference
3. Global awareness

中介變項

倡議領導

1. 真誠領導
2. 民主領導
3. 政治領導
4. 行動領導

**Mediators**

Advocacy leadership

1. Authentic leadership
2. Democratic leadership
3. Political leadership
4. Leadership in action

背景變項

1. 性別
2. 擔任校長年資
3. 最高學歷
4. 曾修習課程

數目

1. 原生族群
2. 學校規模
3. 學校類型

**Background variables**

1. Gender
2. Year(s) of experience as school principal
3. Highest level of education
4. Number of multicultural and administrative courses attended
5. Ethnicity
6. School scale
7. School type

依變項

學校願景實踐

1. 改善學生成就
2. 厚植變革能力
3. 持續變革動能

**Dependent variables**

Implementation of school vision

1. Improving students’ achievements
2. Fostering the abilities for school change
3. Sustaining the motivation for school change

**Methodology**

Fig. 3-1 illustrates the framework of this study. The framework comprised mediators and background, independent, and dependent variables. The background variables were gender, year(s) of experience as school principal, highest level of education, ethnicity, number of courses attended, school size, and school type. The independent variables referred to the principals’ beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, which comprised the dimensions of conscientization, beliefs regarding politics of difference, and global awareness. The mediators referred to subitems of “advocacy leadership,” which comprised the dimensions of authentic leadership, democratic leadership, political leadership, and leadership in action. The dependent variables referred to the dimensions of the implementation of school vision, namely improving students’ achievements, fostering the abilities for school change, and sustaining the motivation for school change.

*Hypotheses*

On the basis of the study purposes, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Significant differences exist regarding background variables in the beliefs among elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and the implementation of school vision.

H2: Significant relationships exist among the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision.

*Sampling and sample size*

A questionnaire based on stratified sampling was administered to the principals of 2650 public elementary schools (who were incumbent throughout the academic year of 2013–2014) by different geographical regions of Taiwan: north (27.02%, *N =* 108), central (31.36%, *N =* 125), south (28.83%, *N =* 116), east (10.26%, *N =* 41), and outlying islands (2.53%, *N =* 10). Questionnaires were distributed on April 10th, 2015, and were retrieved through telephone reminders by April 30th. Incomplete responses were deemed invalid. A total of 304 responses were returned with a return rate of 76%. Of all responses returned, 294 were valid with a valid rate of 73.5%. All data were compiled and subsequently entered into a computer for statistical analyses to verify the proposed hypotheses.

*Instrument*

A self-designed questionnaire, “Advocacy Leadership Among Public Elementary School Principals, Their Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education, and Their Implementation of School Vision” was adopted. Developed according to the study purpose, theoretical framework (constructed by summarizing the results of a review of the literature review), other instruments with advantageous reliability proposed in previous studies, and a review of the characteristics and educational settings of public elementary schools, this questionnaire comprised only positively worded items organized in three 4-point Likert scales. The respondents were asked to rate the items, with 4 being *very important* and 1 being *least important*, according to how important each of the items was to them.

During the development of the first draft of the questionnaire, most of the items used in the scale of Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education were based on the concept of “changing the dominant classroom practice” (Shields, 2013) and extracted from the Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey—Teachers’ Form (D’Andrea et al., 2003), Teacher Cultural Beliefs Scale (Hachfeld et al., 2011), Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (Ponterotto et al., 1998), Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy and Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy scales (Siwatu, 2007). The items for the scale of Advocacy Leadership of Principals were based on the “authentic leadership characteristics” (Anderson, 2009), suggestions on “the development of multicultural teaching activities” (Tan et al., 2008), the concept of “excellence and equity” (Sirotnik, 1994), and “deep democratic knowledge construction” (Shields, 2013), with some items designed on the basis of the micropolitical matrix (Blase and Anderson, 1995). The items for the scale of Implementation of School Vision were based on the “three-legged approach to social justice and school reform” (Theoharis, 2009), “transformative leadership on school change” (Shields, 2013), and the concepts of a “school within a community” and “community within a school” (Lin, 2002).

Upon completion, the first draft of the questionnaire was sent to three incumbent public elementary school principals and six education academics for content validity. After the questionnaire was revised on the basis of expert suggestions, a pretest questionnaire was prepared. The final draft of the questionnaire was composed following discussions between the researcher and her advisor.

*Data analysis*

Data were analyzed using SPSS 22.0 for Windows. The distributions of variables were presented in the form of means; a one-way analysis of variance was performed to determine the differences among the variables; and canonical correlation analyses (CCA) were conducted to explore the relationships among the elementary school principals’ beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision.

**Discussion**

1. Descriptive statistics

Of all the questionnaires distributed across Taiwan, 81 valid responses were returned from the northern region, 92 from the central region, 88 from the southern region, 24 from the eastern region, and 9 from the outlying islands. Valid sample sizes for northern, central, and southern regions were almost identical to sample distribution sizes for northern, central, southern, and eastern regions and outlying islands (2: 2: 2: 1: 1). Although fewer questionnaires were distributed to the eastern region and outlying islands, the return rates for both populations were sufficiently high.

Male respondents (69%, *N =* 203) outnumbered female respondents (31%, *N =* 91), approximating the ratio of male to female elementary school principals (7:3) for the 2013–2014 academic year as reported by the Department of Statistics of the Ministry of Education (MOE). Thus, the sampled population was representative of public elementary school principals nationwide. The majority of the respondents had fewer than 4 years of experience as a school principal (34.7%, *N =* 102); only a minority had 8 to 12 years of experience (19.4%, *N =* 57). Most of the respondents held a master’s degree (74.8%, *N =* 220), followed by those who had a bachelor’s degree and completed a 40-credit-hour on-the-job graduate program (15.3%, *N =* 45) and those who had received a Ph.D. degree (9.9%, *N =* 29).

The respondents were mostly of Hokkien descent (75.9%, *N =* 223), followed by those of Hakka descent (14.6%, *N =* 43) and of neither descent (9.5%, *N =* 28). In terms of school scale, a preponderance of respondents reported six or fewer classes (31%, *N =* 91), which was close to the number of public elementary schools of similar scale reported by the Department of Statistics of the MOE for the 2013–2014 academic year (35.3%, *N =* 935). A minority of respondents reported 49 or fewer classes (10.2%, *N =* 30).

2. Reliability and validity analysis

The questionnaire exhibited sufficient content validity and construct validity; all dimensions had an α coefficient greater than .6, except for “conscientization” (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1 Reliability of the Scales of Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education, Advocacy Leadership, and Implementation of School Vision

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education | Dimension | α | α of the scale |
| Conscientization | .511 | .838 |
| Beliefs regarding politics of difference | .688 |
| Global awareness | .845 |
| Advocacy Leadership | Authentic leadership | .842 | .923 |
| Democratic leadership | .832 |
| Political leadership | .856 |
| Leadership in action | .846 |
| Implementation of School Vision | Improving students’ achievements | .863 | .913 |
| Fostering the abilities for school change | .851 |
| Sustaining the motivation for school change | .846 |
|  |  |

**Findings**

3. Relationships among background variables, beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision

*The role of background variables in perceptions among elementary school principals of multiframe leadership*

Significant gender and ethnic differences were found in the respondents’ perceptions of a few questionnaire items in “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness” of the Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education scale. Significant differences were also observed regarding respondents who attended different number of multicultural courses on some items in “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action” of the Advocacy Leadership scale, and “improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change” of the Implementation of School Vision scale. However, no significant difference was found regarding respondents who attended different number of administrative courses or were affiliated to different types of school in their perceptions of the three main dimensions and the respective subdimensions.

*The role of background variables in* *perceptions among elementary school principals of advocacy leadership*

Whereas significant differences regarding “year(s) of experience as school principal” and “number of multicultural courses attended” were found in the respondents’ perceptions on some items in “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action” of the Advocacy Leadership scale, no significant difference was determined among respondents classified by other background variables in their perceptions of these four subdimensions. For example, in terms of the “number of multicultural courses attended,” respondents who did not attend this type of course demonstrated higher perceptions of advocacy leadership and democratic leadership than did those who attended one. On the basis of previous studies, this finding was attributed to the fact that many of the respondents had a limited understanding of advocacy leadership and democratic leadership and might therefore have reported no impact of the number of multicultural courses attended on their perceptions of both leadership notions.

*The role of background variables in perceptions among elementary school principals of the implementation of school vision*

Significant gender and ethnic differences were found in the respondents’ perceptions of some questionnaire items in “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness” of the Elementary School Principals’ Beliefs Regarding Disadvantaged Education scale. Significant differences were also observed regarding “number of multicultural courses attended” in the perceptions of some items on “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action” of the Advocacy Leadership scale and “improving student achievement,” “fostering the ability for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change” of the Implementation of School Vision scale. However, no significant difference was found in respondents who attended different number of administrative courses or were affiliated to different types of school regarding their perceptions of the three main dimensions and the respective subdimensions.

4. Relationship between the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education and advocacy leadership

A CCA was performed on “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” and “advocacy leadership,” with the perception scores of “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness” as a set of *X* variables (predictor variables) and those of “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action” as a set of *Y* variables (criterion variables). Table 4-2 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4-2 Results of the canonical correlation analysis of the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education and advocacy leadership

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Control (independent) variable (*X* variable) | Canonical factor  *x*1 | Criterion (dependent) variable (*Y* variable) | Canonical factor  η1 |
| Conscientization | -.632 | Authentic leadership | -.876 |
| Beliefs regarding politics of difference | -.824 | Democratic leadership | -.838 |
| Global awareness | -.899 | Political leadership  Leadership in action | -.830  -.774 |
| Variance explained (%) | 62.893 | Variance explained (%) | 68.952 |
| Redundancy (%) | 33.056 | Redundancy (%) | 36.2 |
|  |  | ρ | .7250\*\*\* |
|  |  | ρ2 | .5256 |

\*\*\*p<0.001

As Table 4-2 shows, the dependent variables (“authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action”) were largely affected by the independent variables of “beliefs regarding politics of difference” and “global awareness.” Because the perception scores of all these variables were negative, and that the canonical correlation coefficient was positive (*p* = .7250; Wu, 2008), the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables were positive, indicating that the higher the perception scores the elementary principals provided for “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness,” the stronger the beliefs they held regarding disadvantaged education; and that the higher the perception scores the principals gave to “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action,” the more crucial they perceived advocacy leadership to be.

5. Relationship between the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education and implementation of school vision

A CCA was performed on “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” and “implementation of school vision,” with the perception scores of “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness” as a set of *X* variables (predictor variables) and those of “improving students’ achievements ,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change” as a set of Y variables (criterion variables). Table 4-3 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4-3 Results of the canonical correlation analysis of the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education and implementation of school vision

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Control (independent) variable (*X* variable) | Canonical factor  *x*1 | Criterion (dependent) variable (*Y* variable) | Canonical factor  η1 |
| Conscientization | -.608 | Improving students’ achievements | -.886 |
| Beliefs regarding politics of difference | -.816 | Fostering the abilities for school change | -.902 |
| Global awareness | -.910 | Sustaining the motivation for school change | -.877 |
| Variance explained (%) | 62.137 | Variance explained (%) | 78.921 |
| Redundancy (%) | 27.461 | Redundancy (%) | 34.878 |
|  |  | ρ | .6648\*\*\* |
|  |  | ρ2 | .4419 |

\*\*\*p<0.001

As Table 4-3 shows, the dependent variables (“improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change”) were largely affected by the independent variables of “beliefs regarding politics of difference” and “global awareness.” Because the perception scores of all these variables were negative, and that the canonical correlation coefficient was positive (*p* = .6648), the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables were positive, indicating that the higher the perception scores the elementary principals provided for “conscientization,” “beliefs regarding politics of difference,” and “global awareness,” the stronger the beliefs they held regarding disadvantaged education; and that the higher the perception scores the principals gave to “improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change, ” the greater fulfillment they achieved regarding the implementation of school vision.

6. Relationship between the advocacy leadership of elementary school principals and their implementation of school vision

A CCA was performed on “advocacy leadership” and “implementation of school vision,” with the perception scores of “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action” as a set of *X* variables (predictor variables) and those of “improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change” as a set of *Y* variables (criterion variables). Table 4-4 shows the results of the analysis.

Table 4-4 Results of the canonical correlation analysis of the advocacy leadership of elementary school principals and their implementation of school vision

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Control (independent) variable (*X* variable) | Canonical factor  *x*1 | Criterion (dependent) variable (*Y* variable) | Canonical factor  η1 |
| Authentic leadership | -.819 | Improving students’ achievements | -.860 |
| Democratic leadership | -.883 | Fostering the abilities for school change | -.875 |
| Political leadership  Leadership in action | -.757  -.877 | Sustaining the motivation for school change | -.925 |
| Variance explained (%) | 69.816 | Variance explained (%) | 78.686 |
| Redundancy (%) | 45.327 | Redundancy (%) | 51.086 |
|  |  | ρ | .8058\*\*\* |
|  |  | ρ2 | .6492 |

\*\*\*p<0.001

As Table 4-4 shows, the dependent variables (“improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change”) were largely affected by the independent variables (“authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” and “leadership in action”). Because the perception scores of all these variables were negative, and that the canonical correlation coefficient was positive (*p* = .8058), the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables were positive, indicating that the higher the perception scores the elementary principals provided for “authentic leadership,” “democratic leadership,” “political leadership,” and “leadership in action,” the more crucial they perceived advocacy leadership to be; and that the higher the perception scores the principals gave to “improving students’ achievements,” “fostering the abilities for school change,” and “sustaining the motivation for school change, ” the more crucial they perceived the implementation of school vision to be.

7. Relationship among the beliefs of elementary school principal regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision As Table 4-5 shows, the X variables were significantly correlated with the *Y* variables (canonical correlation coefficient = 0.5).The three predictor variables of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” affected the four criterion variables of “advocacy leadership” through a canonical factor, with a canonical correlation coefficient of .7250 (*p* < .001) and a total variance explanation of 52.56%. The three predictor variables of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” affected the four criterion variables of “implementation of school vision” through a canonical factor, with a canonical correlation coefficient of .6648 (*p* < .001) and a total variance explanation of 44.19%. The four predictor variables of “advocacy leadership” affected the three criterion variables of “implementation of school vision,” with a canonical correlation coefficient of .8058 (*p* < .001) and a total variance explanation of 64.92%. In sum, the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision were significantly related.

Table 4-5 Results of the canonical analysis of the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | Predictor (*X*) variable | Factor | Criterion (*Y*) variable | Canonical correlation coefficient |
| Beliefs regarding disadvantaged education | Conscientization  Beliefs regarding  politics of difference  Global awareness | Advocacy leadership | Authentic leadership  Democratic leadership  Political leadership  Leadership in action | χ1 η1  .7250\*\*\*  52.56% |
| Beliefs regarding disadvantaged education | Conscientization  Beliefs regarding politics of difference  Global awareness | Implementation of school vision | Improving students’ achievements  Fostering the abilities for school change  Sustaining the motivation for school change | χ1 η1  .6648\*\*\*  44.19% |
| Advocacy leadership | Authentic leadership  Democratic leadership  Political leadership  Leadership in action | Implementation of school vision | Improving students’ achievements  Fostering the abilities for school change  Sustaining the motivation for school change | χ1 η1  .8058\*\*\*  64.92% |

\*\*\* *p* < .001

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

*Conclusions*

1. Significant ethnic differences in beliefs regarding disadvantaged education, with Hakka principals demonstrating the highest perception of these beliefs

Male principals had a higher perception of “conscientization” of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” than did their female counterparts. This indicated that the female respondents of this study were relatively prudent and conservative when they completed the questionnaire. However, this finding contradicted with those of Chen (2010), who suggested that female principals had a higher perception of these beliefs. In addition, Hakka principals had a significantly higher perception of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” than did principals of neither Hokkien nor Hakka descent. This finding agreed with those of Hung and Cheng (2008), who argued that the Hakka people is an emerging minority and observed growing academic attention to the disadvantages facing Hakka students in higher education settings. This study also assumed that because of their underrepresentation and disadvantageous circumstances during their schooling and the recent launch of Hakka language proficiency certification, Hakka principals in Taiwan were more sensitive to issues on conscientization.

2. Significant relationships among the beliefs of elementary school principals regarding disadvantaged education, advocacy leadership, and implementation of school vision

There were canonical correlations between “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” and “implementation of school vision”; “advocacy leadership” and “implementation of school vision”; and “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” and “advocacy leadership.” Accordingly, beliefs regarding disadvantaged education and advocacy leadership affected the implementation of school vision: elementary school principals with a high perception of beliefs regarding disadvantaged education demonstrated strong advocacy leadership, which could facilitate their implementation of school vision. Beliefs regarding disadvantaged education also affected advocacy leadership; principals with a high perception of beliefs regarding disadvantaged education were more likely to implement advocacy leadership.

3. Significant differences regarding “the number of multicultural courses attended” in the perception of “advocacy leadership”

Significant differences were observed regarding “number of multicultural courses attended” in the perception of “advocacy leadership” (but not of “beliefs regarding disadvantaged education” or “implementation of school vision”), which agreed with the findings of Chen and Liu (2005) and Lai (2008) that the cultivation of leadership beliefs among school principals is related to the courses they attend. Thus, education authorities can add multicultural courses to the curricula of principal education and professional advancement programs and develop such courses in a way that equip participants to meet the learning needs of minority pupils who are not of indigenous or immigrant descent to aid the principals in addressing student cultural diversity on campus.

*Recommendations*

1. As an administrative and curriculum leader, elementary school principals should use critical introspection in the beliefs regarding disadvantaged education to address inequity and injustice and avoid abusing leadership power.

As an administrative and curriculum leader, a school principal can host events (such as Mother Tongue Day, International Day, debates, and art activities) that cater to disadvantaged populations on and off campus and ensure the interests of disadvantaged students are incorporated into policymaking on school education. The principal can also lead their personnel to engage in critical self-awareness and reflection and examination of inequity and injustice to develop an understanding of the consequences of power misuse or abuse as a result of inappropriate educational policymaking. This can facilitate the reconciliation of divergent ideologies within the campus, thereby achieving a vision of equity and justice and creating an inclusive, equitable educational environment.

2. Elementary school principals should demonstrating moral courage as an advocacy leader and acting against education policies that compromise equity

Principals can adopt authentic leadership to encourage their personnel to move away from their deficit thinking of the family backgrounds of disadvantaged students and draw on their moral courage to challenge unfair educational resource allocation schemes, power structures, and educational policies and implement necessary countermeasures.

3. Elementary school principals should build a value system of beliefs regarding disadvantaged education by deepening the knowledge of education for students of different cultural backgrounds and those at disadvantage and improving conscientization

Principals can attend in-service courses and academic conferences related to multicultural education and education for disadvantaged groups and adopt leadership styles that may facilitate the fulfillment of equity- and justice-based school visions. This would enable school leaders to not only improve their conscientization and professional competence but also develop leadership knowledge and the skills necessary to implement advocacy leadership.

4. Elementary school principals should improve leadership in the design of courses tailored to the life skills of students and academic achievement during the implementation of school vision

To fulfill the core values of advocacy leadership, principals can engage in deep self-awareness and critical thinking regarding, for example, (1) what type of advocacy campaign can effectively promote ethnic equality and (2) whether such campaigns can enhance exchanges, cooperation, and brainstorming among participants, their trust and understanding of each other, and their knowledge of each other’s cultures.

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