

## School Based Assessment And The Comfort Levels Of Secondary School Teachers In Kuala Langat District When Reporting Issues And Problems To The Management.

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### ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this article is to observe the comfort levels of secondary school teachers in the district when reporting challenges faced in implementing the SBA to their respective school management. Besides, it also seeks to identify the reasons teachers provide for not communicating the challenges faced to the school authorities. The outcome of this study is beneficial to students, teachers, parents, the MOE and all stakeholders in the Education scenario in the country as it will indicate the success and direction of SBA as the standard curriculum across all national type schools in the district as well as the country.

**Keywords:** SBA, Comfort Levels, Reporting, Silence Behaviour.

### I. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to discuss the findings of a study related to the issues and problems faced by secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat District when implementing the SBA, and their comfort levels when reporting the experiences to the school authorities. Holding back and not communicating crucial work-related issues to the management is linked to a concept known as Employee Silence, which has been researched extensively in organizational settings outside the Education field. Besides Employee Silence, other related concepts are also mentioned briefly in this paper. This research seeks to observe the comfort levels of secondary school teachers when deciding to report problems faced in implementing the SBA to their superiors, as well as their reasons for refraining. The paper is divided into the following sections: Research Questions and Research Hypothesis, Literature Review, Methodology, Analysis and Findings, Discussion and Conclusion, and Recommendations.

### II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESIS

#### 2.1 Research Questions

1. How comfortable are secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat district when reporting the challenges faced in implementing the SBA to the management?
2. What reasons do secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat district give for not reporting the challenges faced in implementing the SBA to the management?

#### 2.2 Research Hypothesis

There is a correlation between the challenges faced in implementing SBA and secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat choosing to refrain from communicating issues to the management (the Silence Behaviour).

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 3.1 School Based Assessment: Teachers' Perceptions

Eom (2000) [1] conducted a study on the perceptions of teacher's assessment tasks in their classrooms. The outcome provided several findings which were valuable. First the teachers lacked in their skill and knowledge which is needed to enforce the tests of achievement. As an outcome they had difficulty in making material of assessment which would reveal the advancement of student's achievement in an English class. Additionally, teachers tend to rely on their student's subjective impression as measured at the termination of the semester. Similarly, Lee (2000) [2] also organized a study on the perceptions of teachers of their School Based Assessment. She predicted that still there will be certain teachers who preferred pencil and paper testing to utilize an observation checklist when they enforced their assessments. She also mentioned that still teachers to a great extent had difficulty in examining their students in the classes of English.

Additionally, Kim (2002) [3] organized a study on the perceptions of teacher on performance-based assessment in the classroom. His observations were as follows. The major assessment purpose of teachers was to assess the achievement of students and their advancement. They utilized different technologies such as tests in 4 skills, worksheets, observation and matrices. Although teachers had a positive attitude towards the performance assessment's theoretical rationale but still they felt to a larger extent that the force of inherent practical issues such as time needed and the difficulty of management. He also indicated the teachers who mostly relied on their impression rather than on particular criteria and discussed that the outcomes of assessment were efficient only when they were utilized for recognizing the achievement level of students.

Hamzah and Sinnasamy (2009) [4] in their study uncovered the observations when their participants represented a positive perception of SBA. Their concern at third stage may be indicative of areas which need further development. The participants declare that they require training on management of time when it comes to enforce SBA. For example, they declare that they did not have enough time which they invested on non-academic matters and workload associated to the SBA. Othman, Salleh and Norani (2013) [5] conducted a study on the implementation of School Based Assessment in primary school standard curriculum. This study argues regarding the observations of study and about the SBA implementation in primary school standard curriculum of Malaysia. The study concentrates on the readiness of teachers for school-based assessment implementation in curriculum. The readiness of teacher in the study was restricted to four major perspectives namely understanding of teachers of school-based assessment, capability of teachers to implement school-based assessment, facilities given for implementation of school-based assessment and time adequacy for the School Based Assessment implementation. The outcome of the study reveals that the participants' readiness to enforce School Based Assessment in curriculum particularly on understanding of School Based Assessment, capability of teachers to enforce School Based Assessment and facilities given for the implementation of School Based Assessment. On the other side the participants have negative perception on adequacy of time for the implementation of School Based Assessment.

Kellaghan and Greaney (2003) [6] have pointed out that supervision was another challenge in which the overall implementation encountered various obstacles. The observations from both supervision visits and the study of formative evaluation revealed that there was insufficient supervision conducted by the education authorities of the district who had been assigned to supervise, advise and assist teachers in implementing School Based Assessment.

To sum up, the issues and problems faced by teachers in the implementation of the SBA are: Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring. These elements will be the focus of this paper.

### 3.2 Employee Silence and Related Concepts

The concept of Employee Silence in an organization was proposed by Hirschman in 1970. Employee Silence happens when individuals in a workplace decide not to communicate relevant information to the management. Further research indicated that the action for not communicating information occurs for a number of reasons based on situations. The reasons include, avoiding confrontation, promotional desires, work experience, organizational trust, belief that voicing will make no difference, relationship with the management, and fear that voicing will impact others negatively, fear of management retaliation, and peer reaction (Pinder and Harlos [2001], Van Dyne [2003], and Greenberg [2009]) [7,8,9]. Research on organizational behaviour indicated that employee silence has negative consequences on the productivity and overall wellbeing of the organization (Jerald G. and Jason A.C.,2005) [10].

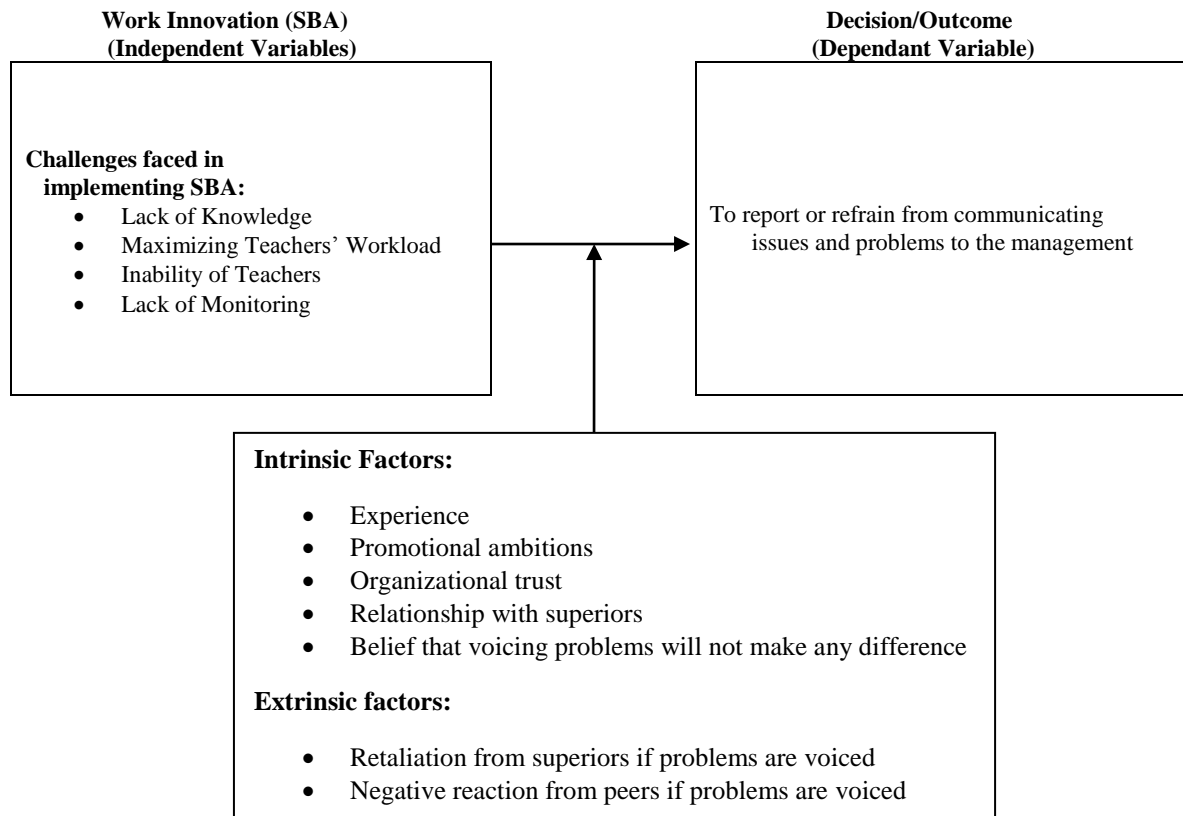
Another concept, loyalty, refers to situations where individuals stay even when they are unhappy with workplace conditions. The reasons for this are due to factors such as appreciation towards the management, long service, personal memories and difficulties in securing a new job. Some may communicate opinions and concerns (voice) while some may decide to leave (exit) (Hirschman, 1970). Besides loyalty, Hirschman explained another behaviour, neglect. Neglect happens when one decides to reduce work effort, pay less attention to quality, and an increase in absenteeism as well as being late. Hirschman explained that it is a passive attitude with negative consequences on the organization. Absenteeism rate is also reported to be high among dissatisfied employees. These individuals make no efforts to rectify the relationship with their superior/s due to lack of trust and this may be a motivating factor to withdraw from the organization (Rusbult, et. al., 1982) [11].

In Mum-effect, there is a tendency for persons to avoid communicating information with negative consequences (bad news) to the relevant recipient (Rossen and Tesser, 1970) [12]. People in this situation believe that communicating such messages will be detrimental to the relationship between the sender and receiver in the communication process (Rossen and Tesser, 1970). Mum Effect happens mainly because individuals

deliberately choose to avoid the negative emotion it stirs in the receiver. Individuals who communicate bad news tend to be blamed and negative feelings are directed toward them even when they are not totally responsible for the news. The outcome is the "Mum Effect": subordinates with good survival instincts manipulate bad news to make it sound and appear better or avoid communicating the news to their bosses at all (Rossen and Tesser, 1970).

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized in this study is based on a survey method. The questionnaire response format is a five-point Likert type scale ranging from "strongly disagree", "disagree", "somewhat agree", "agree" and "strongly agree". The instrument contained items, under the 6 main categories. The framework for the study is as follows:



#### Influencing/Moderating Variables (MV)

A pilot test was conducted to observe the reliability of the test items. On the average, the Cronbach coefficient was 0.78 (Lack of Knowledge:  $\alpha = 0.78$ , Maximizing Workload:  $\alpha = 0.83$ , Inability of Teachers:  $\alpha = 0.82$ , Lack of Monitoring:  $\alpha = 0.78$ , Reasons for the Silence Behaviour:  $\alpha = 0.73$ , and Teacher Comfort Levels:  $\alpha = 0.77$ ). Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) [13] recommend that a reliability index of  $\leq .70$  is sufficient for Social Science studies. The survey instrument was a questionnaire distributed to a total of 320 secondary school teachers in the selected district. The return rate was 0.9125% or 292 responses. Data gathered was analysed using a Correlation Analysis, Multiple Regression (all assumptions were observed to avoid Type 1 and Type 2 errors) as well as Descriptive Statistics.

#### V. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Data Analysis and Findings in this study are discussed and presented according to the analysis of the Hypothesis and the Research Questions:

##### The Hypothesis

There is a correlation between the challenges faced in implementing SBA and secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat choosing to refrain from communicating issues to the management (the Silence Behaviour).

The hypothesis can be tested by analysing the statistical data collected from the respondents for questionnaire items Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4. These questions are sub-categories and will be analysed individually in order to provide a better understanding of what is intended in this study. The analyses to test the hypothesis are as follows:

**a. Correlation Analysis:**

The following table explains that Comfort Levels (Dependent Variable) are significantly and negatively correlated with all the Independent and Moderating Variables (all  $r$  values are negative,  $-1 < r < +1$ ).

Pearsons Correlation	Comfort Levels when voicing issues and problems	Impact of Lack of Knowledge	Impact of Maximising Workload	Impact of Inability of Teachers	Impact of Lack of Monitoring
Comfort Levels when voicing issues and problems	1.000	-0.508	-0.465	-0.336	-0.473
Impact of Lack of Knowledge	-0.508	1.000	0.713	0.562	0.698
Impact of Maximising Workload	-0.465	0.713	1.000	0.403	0.753
Impact of Inability of Teachers	-0.336	0.562	0.403	1.000	0.613
Impact of Lack of Monitoring	-0.473	0.698	0.753	0.613	1.000

The Independent Variables (IV) in this study are issues and problems faced by secondary school teachers when implementing the Work Innovation (SBA) in their respective schools in the district. These are represented as Lack of Knowledge (LK), Maximizing Workload (MW), Inability of Teachers (IT), and Lack of Monitoring (LM). The Moderating Variables (MV) are Factors operating together with the Independent Variables to cause an effect on the Dependent Variable (Comfort Levels). As problems and issues in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA) increases (with the presence of moderating factors operating simultaneously), the Comfort Levels among teachers will naturally decrease, thus a negative correlation between the Independent Variables (operating together with the Moderating Variables) and the Dependent Variables.

The conclusion based on the above analysis with regards to the Independent (IV) and Dependent Variable (DV) is: There is a significant relationship between all IVs and the DV. As such, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**b. Regression Analysis:**

The  $b$  values in the Coefficients tables of the Regression Analysis below show the relationship between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable.

- i. Regression Model of Predictors (Lack of Knowledge and Moderating Variables) of Comfort Levels

	$b$	$SE\ b$	$\beta$
Step 1			
Constant	4.620	0.218	
LK	-0.642	0.064	-0.50

- ii. Regression Model of Predictors (Maximizing Workload and Moderating Variables) of Comfort Levels

	$b$	$SE\ b$	$\beta$
Step 1			
Constant	4.269	0.206	
MW	-0.539	0.060	-0.465

- iii. Regression Model of Predictors (Inability of Teachers and Moderating Variables) of Comfort Levels

	$b$	$SE\ b$	$\beta$
Step 1			
Constant	4.231	0.294	
IT	-0.522	0.086	-0.336

- iv. Regression Model of Predictors (Lack of Monitoring and Moderating Variables) of Comfort Levels

	b	SE b	$\beta$
Step 1			
Constant	4.618	0.239	
LM	-0.670	0.073	-0.473

The Sig  $t < \alpha$  for each relationship between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable.

The Regression Analysis show that the alternative hypothesis is true that there is a significant relationship between the Independent Variables (IV) and Dependant Variable (DV).

### Research Question 1

What reasons do secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat district give for not voicing to their superiors about the challenges faced in implementing SBA?

Questionnaire items 5a to 5g gathers information on the reasons why teachers choose to be silent when faced with issues and problems related to the SBA. The data gathered is tabulated as follows:

Reasons Responses	R1		R2		R3		R4		R5		R6		R7	
	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P	F	P
Disagree	0	0	59	20.2	44	15.1	51	17.5	0	0	35	12	60	20.5
Agree	292	100	233	79.8	248	84.9	241	82.5	292	100	257	88	232	79.5
Total	292	100	292	100	292	100	292	100	292	100	292	100	292	100

\*\*F=Frequency P=Percentage

### Interpretation:

#### R1: Fear of negative reaction from peers.

All 292 respondents agree that one reason for teachers to be silent when facing issues and problems in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA) is because of the fear of negative reaction from peers.

#### R2: Limited work experience.

A total of 59 (20.2%) respondents disagree that limited work experience causes them to be silent when faced with issues and problems in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA). However, 233 respondents (79.8%) agree that limited work experience is a cause for teacher silence with regards to problems encountered with the implementation of the SBA.

#### R3: Relationship with management (not close).

A majority of teachers (248 individuals) agree that a distant relationship between management and teachers is a determining factor for teachers choosing to be silent when faced with problems related to the implementation of the SBA in their respective schools. These teachers make up 84.9% of the total respondents, as compared to 15.1% (N=44) who disagree that a distant relationship between management-teachers is a cause for such a behaviour among teachers facing issues with the SBA.

#### R4: Voicing will not make any difference.

Data collected for this aspect show that 51 (17.5%) teachers disagree that voicing issues and problems faced in implementing the Work Innovation (SBA) to the management in their respective schools, will not make any difference. However, this was not the case with the majority of respondents (241 individuals) who agree that voicing issues related to the SBA will not make any difference or changes. These teachers consist of 82.5% of the total respondents.

#### R5: Lack of organizational trust.

The statistics for this aspect shows that all 292 respondents agree that teachers who face issues and problems when implementing the Work Innovation (SBA) in their respective schools choose to remain silent because of lack of organizational trust.

#### R6: Fear of retaliation from management.

A total of 35 (12%) teachers responded to this item by disagreeing to the statement that teachers remain silent when faced with problems implementing the SBA in their schools because they fear retaliation from the management. However, 257 (88%) respondents agree that fear of retaliation from the management is a reason for teacher silence when faced with difficulties related to the implementation of the SBA.

**R7: Promotional desires.**

A vast majority of teachers (N=232), consisting of 79.5% of the total respondents agree that one reason for the silence behaviour among teachers facing difficulties in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA) is contributed by a desire for promotions in the near future. On the other hand, the statistics also indicate that 60 teachers (20.5%) do not agree that promotional desires is a cause for teachers choosing to be silent even when faced with difficulties implementing the SBA in their respective schools.

**5.1 Summary:**

A summary of the statistical data indicates that all of the above reasons motivate teachers to adopt the silent behaviour when faced with issues and problems implementing the SBA in their respective schools in Kuala Langat district. More than 75% of the respondents have indicated that they “agree” to each category of causes for the silence behaviour among teachers facing problems when implementing the SBA at their respective workplaces. This information is tabulated as follows:

Reasons Responses	R1 Percent	R2 Percent	R3 Percent	R4 Percent	R5 Percent	R6 Percent	R7 Percent
Agree	100	79.8	84.9	82.5	100	88	79.5

To sum up, it can be concluded that the majority (more than three quarters, or 75%) of the respondents agree that the reasons for their silent attitude for not communicating issues and problems related to the SBA to their superiors are influenced by all the factors mentioned above.

**Research Question 2**

How comfortable are secondary school teachers in Kuala Langat district when reporting to their superiors about the challenges faced in implementing SBA?

A summary of the data collected based Question 6a and 6b are tabulated as follows:

**Comfort Level- Q6a**

Descriptors	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	44	15.1
Disagree	105	36.0
Somewhat agree	129	44.2
Agree	14	4.8
Total	292	100.0

The statistics above indicate that a total of 51.1 percent of the respondents consists of teachers who do not feel comfortable when voicing issues and problems related to the SBA to the management. The mean for Comfort Level is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Strongly disagree (value: 1) X 44} &= 44 \\
 \text{Disagree (value: 2) X 105} &= 210 \\
 \text{Somewhat agree (value: 3) X 129} &= 387 \\
 \text{Agree (value: 4) X 14} &= 56 \\
 \text{Total value} &= 697
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Mean} &= 697/292 \\
 &= 2.39
 \end{aligned}$$

It can be deduced that the Mean is closer to *Disagree*, moving towards *Somewhat Agree (Neutral)*.

## Comfort Level- Q6b

Descriptors	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	17	5.8
Disagree	115	39.4
Somewhat agree	149	51.0
Agree	11	3.8
Total	292	100

The statistics above indicate that a total of 45.2 percent of the respondents consists of teachers who do not feel comfortable when voicing issues and problems related to the Work Innovation (SBA) to the management. The mean for Comfort Level is calculated as follows:

Strongly disagree (value: 1) X 17	=	17
Disagree (value: 2) X 115	=	230
Somewhat agree (value 3) X 149	=	447
Agree (value 4) X 11	=	44
Total value	=	738
Mean	=	738/292
	=	2.53

It can be deduced that the Mean is *Disagree* moving closer towards *Somewhat Agree (Neutral)*.

An average Mean for Comfort Level based on Q6a and Q6b is as follows:

Q6a:	2.39
Q6b:	2.53
Total:	4.92
Average Mean:	4.92/2
	= 2.46

It can be concluded that the Average Mean for Comfort Level is closer to *Disagree* which indicates that the respondents generally do not feel comfortable voicing issues/problems to the management when implementing the SBA in their respective schools.

## VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The discussion of results is matched with the framework of this study. The framework is designed based on previous research work on issues and problems faced by teachers when implementing the SBA, as well as, research in business organizations on Employee Silence. Although most research on Employee Silence is outside the Education field, this research begins with an assumption that teachers too have tendencies to hold back crucial information (holding back information about issues and problems related to the SBA in this study) from the school authorities.

The issues and problems faced by teachers in the implementation of the SBA have been identified in previous research to be Lack of Knowledge, Maximization of Workload, Inability of Teachers, and Lack of Monitoring of Teachers. These elements have been selected as the Independent Variables for this research. The reasons for individuals adopting the Silence Behaviour, which were identified in previous studies were selected as the Moderating variables in this research. This research studies the effect of the Independent Variables operating with the Moderating Variables on the Comfort Levels of teachers when deciding to communicate problems encountered during the implementation of the SBA in their respective secondary schools in the Kuala Langat district in Selangor Darul Ehsan.

The findings reveal that there is a tendency for secondary school teachers in the district to refrain from communicating issues and problems implementing the SBA and hold back crucial information from their respective management at schools. Analysis of data indicated that 51% of respondents felt uncomfortable communicating or reporting issues faced regarding the SBA to the management. In a respond to another questionnaire item, 45% of the respondents indicated that they rather choose to refrain from reporting the problems faced with SBA to their superiors. The reasons for teachers to remain silent when faced with issues are selected from previous research work in business organizations. These reasons are used in this research and have produced results that are parallel to the outcome in business organizations. A summary of the findings is as follows:

### Fear of negative reaction from peers.

All 292 respondents agree that one reason for teachers to be silent when facing issues and problems in the implementation of the SBA (specifically, Maximizing Workload, Inability of Teachers, Lack of Monitoring) is because of the fear of negative reaction from peers. This reason for being silent is consistent with organizational research conducted by Pinder and Harlos (2001) [7].

**Limited work experience.**

20.2% of the respondents disagree that limited work experience causes them to be silent when faced with issues and problems in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA – specifically, Maximizing Workload, Inability of Teachers). However, 79.8% agree that limited work experience is a cause for teacher silence with regards to problems encountered with the implementation of the SBA. Work experience was found to be a motivating factor for employee silence by Van Dyne et al., (2003) [8].

**Relationship with management (not close).**

A majority of teachers (248 individuals) agree that a distant relationship between management and teachers is a determining factor for teachers choosing to be silent when faced with problems related to the implementation of the SBA (specifically, Lack of Knowledge, Maximizing Workload) in their respective schools. These teachers make up 84.9% of the total respondents, as compared to 15.1% (N=44) who disagree that a distant relationship between management-teachers is a cause for such a behaviour among teachers facing issues with the SBA. Research by Greenberg & Edwards (2009) [9], had provided similar result, whereby a poor relationship between employer-employee is a reason for the silent behaviour among employees at the workplace.

**Voicing will not make any difference.**

Data collected for this aspect show that 51 (17.5%) teachers disagree that voicing issues and problems faced in implementing the Work Innovation (SBA- specifically, Lack of Knowledge, Maximizing Workload, Inability of Teachers, Lack of Monitoring) to the management in their respective schools, will not make any difference. However, this was not the case with the majority of respondents (241 individuals) who agree that voicing issues related to the SBA will not make any difference or changes. These teachers consist of 82.5% of the total respondents. This result is similar to the findings by Pinder and Harlos (2001) [7] where employees feel that their opinions and suggestions at workplace situations will not be given due attention by the management.

**Lack of organizational trust.**

The statistics for this aspect shows that all 292 respondents agree that teachers who face issues and problems when implementing the Work Innovation (SBA- specifically, Lack of Knowledge) in their respective schools choose to remain silent because of lack of organizational trust. Lack of organizational trust was found to be a motivating factor for employees to hold back information and not voicing them to their superiors by Van Dyne et al., (2003) [8].

**Fear of retaliation from management.**

A total of 35 (12%) teachers responded to this item by disagreeing to the statement that teachers remain silent when faced with problems implementing the SBA (specifically, Lack of Knowledge, Maximizing Workload, Inability of Teachers, Lack of Monitoring) in their schools because they fear retaliation from the management. However, 257 (88%) respondents agree that fear of retaliation from the management is a reason for teacher silence when faced with difficulties related to the implementation of the SBA. This result is parallel to the research by Greenberg & Edwards (2009) [9], when it was discovered that fear of retaliation from management was a deciding factor that led employees to hold back information and not communicating them to the management.

**Promotional desires.**

A vast majority of teachers (N=232), consisting of 79.5% of the total respondents agree that one reason for the silence behaviour among teachers facing difficulties in the implementation of the Work Innovation (SBA- specifically, Maximizing Workload, Inability of Teachers, Lack of Monitoring) is contributed by a desire for promotions in the near future. On the other hand, the statistics also indicate that 60 teachers (20.5%) do not agree that promotional desires is a cause for teachers choosing to be silent even when faced with difficulties implementing the SBA in their respective schools. Van Dyne et al (2003) [8] had discovered this element as being a reason for employee silence in organizational settings.

In conclusion, the statistical data indicates that all the reasons identified through research on the Employee Silence and other related concepts motivate teachers to refrain from communicating issues and problems implementing the SBA to the management in their respective schools in Kuala Langat district. More than 75% of the respondents have indicated that they “agree” to each category of causes for the silence behaviour among teachers facing problems when implementing the Work Innovation (SBA) at their respective workplaces.



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