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## EFFECT OF LECTURER'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON STUDENTS' EMPLOYABILITY: MALAYSIAN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

As the economy of Malaysian government has transformed from a typical economy to human capital economy, the demand for Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) institutions as a platform to develop human capital is also increasing. TVET based institutions in Malaysia are known as formal and informal learning sector which provide youthful people with the expertise and skills needed in the work sector. However, TVET-based qualifications and careers in Malaysia are perceived poorly and does not receive recognition in the workplace in terms of employability. These institutions cannot achieve their predetermined goals without effective leadership as the success and failure of the objectives depend on lecturers. Over the last three decades, transformational leadership has achieved legitimacy that has been showed to be an effective and influential enabler especially in developing employees' attitudes and behaviours. Thus, the aim of present research is determining the role of lecturer's transformational leadership in effecting students' employability. This study was conducted in ten (10) Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) institutions located at Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. A total of 350 final year students were involved in this research which used the quantitative research design approach. Pearson correlations, linear regression and multiple regressions analysis were used to analyse the collected data. The findings indicated that lecturer's transformational leadership significantly and positively correlated with students' employability. In addition, the result also indicated that students' employability can be affected by role of lecturer's transformational leadership style. Based on the findings, it is indicated that lecturers must display an effective inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation which will then stimulate employability development among students especially in TVET institutions.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Employability, Students, Lecturers, Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET), Malaysia.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) has become an area of priority in the education programme activities of many countries. TVET gets a high priorities by G20, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and International Labour Organization (ILO) in terms of strategic and operational approaches (Yesuf & Buli, 2015). In addition, about 193 member of International Education Aid Community (UNESCO) has stated TVET as one of three essential pillars of the UNESCO education programme (Oviawe, Uwameiye, & Uddin, 2017). Furthermore, TVET has stimulated and fuelled high economic growth in some countries such as Austria, Canada, Paraguay and Philippines by generating skilled human resources as the primary asset of many countries in the region to develop economic through innovation and technology industries (Hiebert & Borgen, 2002). Because of that, TVET is progressively getting popularity at the comprehensive deliberations and government priorities for education development outlines including developing countries such as Malaysia.

Malaysia is well known internationally as one of the quickest developing modern countries that have effectively accomplished a balance between industrial development and traditional qualities and is getting ready to become a completely established nation by the year 2020 (Rethel, 2010). The Malaysian government has switched from a typical economy to human capital economy in order to become a country with a high-income economy. In stepping up into this value chain and achieve this goal, a skilled workforce is needed and have been growing annually at 2% (Bekhet & Mugableh, 2016). This situation leads to the demand on skill training program as one of the platform to develop human capital who are well trained and equipped with the right knowledge, skills and attitude to be able to contribute to economics' growth (Hashim, Judi, & Wook, 2016). As mentioned by Afferro and Hassan (2013), it is estimated that there are about 1.3 million (40%) jobs in Malaysia that will be TVET-related by the year 2020. This is to ensure that the economy has suitable-skilled human capital.

However, the scenario that the country is facing currently is that there is a problem in the growing emphasis on finding the 'right person'. Research by Buntat, Sihes, Jabor, Hassan, and Ahmad (2016) showed that most of the trainers took at least half a year in order to build their confidence and skills in their occupations which lead to a loss for the employers as they need to take a longer time to train and develop the confidence and skills among their workers. The research conducted by Junghagen (2005), found that employability among the trainees is at a low level as they did not have nor meet the skills that they are required to have during real work environment. Besides, only around 28 percent of the graduates who are highly-skilled who works in a big-sized company. Meanwhile, only 60 percent are being employed in small and medium-sized companies (Hussin, Mohamad, Hassan, & Omar, 2017). Furthermore, 68% of employers feel that the quality of technical skills of workers filling TVET occupations is average and low (Mohamad, Ahmad, Sulaiman, Salleh, & Sern, 2016). The situation is getting worse when society has negative impression towards TVET and thinks of it as a disgrace. The common impression by them usually consists of TVET serves as school for drop-outs and as the final retreat for less qualified students in term of academic options (Buntat et al., 2016). This perception has led to situation where, in Malaysia, TVET based qualifications and profession are still ineffectively seen or negatively perceived in the working environment. In order to meet the requirement of this quality labour, great efforts have been set up in order to place a great deal of significance on TVET institutions in producing knowledge workers.

Synchronizing, Saud, Shu'aibu, Yahaya, and Yasin (2011) defines knowledge workers as high employability individual in having a normal capacity to work, proficient capacity to work, an attitude at work and profession planning and certainty. Moreover, there are now worldwide changes in innovation and this impacts the Malaysian industries wherein they have made it a major requirement for having a skilled workforce and inclusive training. That is when an effective role of lecturer's supervision through the process of training and practical is needed (Ibrahim, Rahman, & Yasin, 2014). Transformational lecturers can inspire students to use different problem-solving methods to improve problem-oriented thinking and insights. In other words,



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lecturers can consider students' needs and abilities alongside, dynamically adjusting instructional designs to deliver and share the knowledge, experience and problem amongst team to increase learning opportunities (Omar, Rashid, Puad, & Azman, 2018). Transformational lecturer also stimulates students intellectual by providing a class with real organizations and help them to be prepared for practical work during their studies. Review of the previously conducted research literature showed that lecturers' transformational leadership has a logic explanation in influencing students' employability.

Problem rise up due to TVET students clearly struggling with high unemployment issues due to the low quality of employability (Ismail & Mohammed, 2015). TVET fails to fulfil the labour market demands to provide skilled workforce even though training and skills development is provided (Rajadurai, Sapuan, Daud, & Abidin, 2018). Due to this problem, a large number of previous researchers have studied about the problems and challenges in TVET's education sector. One of the main problem identified is the shortage of qualified lecturers or instructors to represents a severe constraint to the quality improvement (Etuk & Usoro, 2016). Lecturers seem to provide relatively low formal teaching and learning quality without any special preparation for their teaching and learning function. Most of the time, they lack in teaching practical technical to the students (Grollmann, 2008), stimulate creative and innovative thinking of the students (Spottll, 2009). They also lack in stimulating creative and innovative thinking of the students alongside motivating students to achieve success (Hussin, et al., 2017). It seems that TVET students only come directly from school and have a lack of practical technical experiences and competence. Therefore, this area of research is still open for more investigation and some research objectives have been raised up such as:

1. To measure the level of lecturers' transformational leadership practice as seen by students in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.
2. To measure the level of students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.
3. To identify the relationship between lecturers' transformational leadership practice and students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.
4. To identify the relationship between lecturers' transformational leadership practice dimensions (inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation) with students' employability dimension in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.
5. To investigate the effect of lecturers' transformational leadership practices on students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.
6. To investigate the effect of lecturers' transformational leadership practice dimensions (inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation) on students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)*

There is always significant variations happening in the nature of work all over the countries in the world which consists of all stages of development. These changes have had an impact on the evolving and changing areas of emphasis within the TVET research. The definition for TVET can be referred as an education approach in the application of knowledge and practical skill for employment (Maclean & Fien, 2017). Other definition by Arifin, Rasdi, Anuar, & Omar (2017), refers to TVET as a process of technologies and sciences education based with the requiring of practical skills and knowledge application. The idea about TVET in Malaysia is not new since Malaysian government already set up for the demands on K-Workers that bring high attention in developing human capital to stimulate development of economy. TVET has become one of the main streams in Malaysia Education and Training system with the involvement from public and private training institutions (Salleh & Puteh, 2017). Characteristics of TVET in Malaysia are:



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1. Certificate of entitlement by seven ministries at degree, diploma and professional level.
2. Based on Higher Education Blueprint, the demand on TVET will be increasing during 2020 with the additional matrix value of 1.3 million.
3. It is about 1000 TVET institutions in Malaysia which the number of 506 from public institutions.
4. There are five level of skills qualification start from qualification awarded as SKM Level 1, SKM Level 2, SKM Level 3, Malaysia Skills Diploma as Level 4 and Malaysia Skills Advanced Diploma as Level 5.

## ***Transformational Leadership***

Burns has proposed the concept of transformation leadership when he explained that this type of leader is a person who possess qualities in term of mutual cooperation, vision, creativity, enthusiasm, empowerment and can inspire followers with high motivation, performance and values (Pieterse, Van Knippenberg, Schippers, & Stam, 2010). In other words, transformational is the capability of a person to inspire and develop other people as resources and also able to make them be higher in the state of existence. In actuality, a transformational leader is a person who is able to change their subordinates qualities and priorities beyond their expectations, value employees' creativity in looking for new thoughts and are also receptive to challenges around them (Jung, 2001). In summary, transformational leadership also can be called relationship-oriented leadership (Walumbwa & Hartnell, 2011).

Inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation are typical dimension in transformational leadership (Jung, 2001). Firstly, individualized consideration is how the leader tries to be a mentor to their followers, by taking care of the needs of each follower and listening to the needs and worries from their followers. Meanwhile, intellectual stimulation is how much the leader tries to challenge assumptions, take any risk and request ideas from their followers. On the other hand, inspirational motivation is when the leader must articulate a vision which can inspire and engage the followers. Furthermore, he/she also tries to give a good example of high moral behaviour through gaining the appreciation and trust by idealized influence on their followers.

Nowadays, it is going to be hard to disregard the transformational leadership influences especially at numerous aspects in any organization particularly in the education sector as proposed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), who later on improved the transformational leadership model to fit with a school setting. Consequently, Balyer (2012) mentioned that highly successful schools are driven by leaders who have a powerful relationship oriented with the school members. In another opinion by Onorato (2013), transformational leaders turn out to be exceedingly successful in adapting to educational challenges and implementing innovations. Moreover, a few of past studies also showed a significant influence of transformational leadership in the education setting. For example, Ab Samad et al. (2017) found that most of the effective headmasters in Malaysia exhibit a role model behaviour to their followers which is considered as one of the main dimensions from transformational leadership practice. Moreover, according to a past study conducted at 12 diverse Vocational education and Training sites around Australia by Burke and Smith (2009), they found that transformational leadership has positively impacted the independence and empowerment level of their school members. Furthermore, transformational leadership has also become one of the factors in triggering teachers' creativity and innovation during school transformation (Mincu, 2015).

In conclusion, a positive impact has been shown towards the school members' performance and school setting environment regarding transformational leadership. It is expected that having a proper leadership approach practiced in the school setting environment will verify to be more useful in time. Yet, a couple of questions has risen on the researchers' behalf in regards to extent of the transformational leadership's impact in TVET education setting. How do the dimensions possibly influence school members and school setting in TVET



education setting? Therefore, the following section in this study will reveal the answer with substantial empirical evidence.

### ***Students' Employability***

According to Knight and Yorke (2003), the significance of employability has ascended unmistakably in recent years, particularly as the economy took a downturn and negatively influenced the world job market. Employability can be defined as when the people become more effective in choosing occupations, understanding characteristic of each person and are able to set goals. Another definition explained by Tran (2015) referred to employability as a set of qualities, abilities, skills and knowledge which all labour market participants ought to guarantee that they have the capability of being successful in the workplace. In simple words, employability can be said as a gathering of imperative abilities instilled in every person to create a beneficial workforce. Employability skills are not only limited in terms of professions but also in education.

Many previous researches have viewed the construct for employability skills and come out with three main skills. Firstly, it is personal qualities skills that include self-confidence, independence, adaptability, willingness to learn and reflectiveness (Jackson, 2014). Secondly, core skills which more concern with reading efficiency, mathematical ability, verbal talents, self-management, creativity and written communication (Raihan, 2014). And the last main skill is process skills (Agrawal, 2013). These include computer literacy, ethical sensitivity, planning, problem-solving, resolving conflict and decision making. In another research by Wang (2012), it is stated that one of the important factors in searching new employees is regarding the development of a career path. In summary, employability can be concluded as a set of skills that cover up a competence by having a personal quality, core skills, process skills and career development skills.

### ***Transformational Leadership and Employability***

Based on the previous research studies by different researchers, there are various studies about the link between transformational leadership and employability. According to the study conducted by Yao-Ping, Sheng-Hwa and Han-Yu (2018) among 619 undergraduates from Taiwan university, the results showed that the influences of transformational leadership on students' employability are statistically positive and significant. Self-efficacy plays the key mediators between these two variables. Apart from that, other than the direct effect, the result from the research conducted by Yizhong, Baranchenko, Lin, Lau, and Ma (2018), revealed that transformational leadership could also improve employability through skill creation. Other than that, motivation from the supervisor was related to the employability skills. For this study, a quantitative research method was used where the findings proved that employees can develop their process skill (one of employability dimension) when they received inspirational motivation by their supervisor (Camps & Rodríguez, 2011). Moreover, great and relevant leadership style from the principals also enhanced the positive attitudes among 300 training teachers in Nigeria. Through this study, it is proved that principals act as a leader who choose and practice a suitable leadership style alongside being able to influence the effectiveness and productivity of the training teachers employability in this profession (Oviawe et al., 2017). In another study by Van der Heijan and Bakker (2011), it was found that there is a direct positive effect of transformational leadership on worker and manager evaluations of employability. There is some suggestion that transformational leadership heightens employability after a leader controls their personality towards the employees.

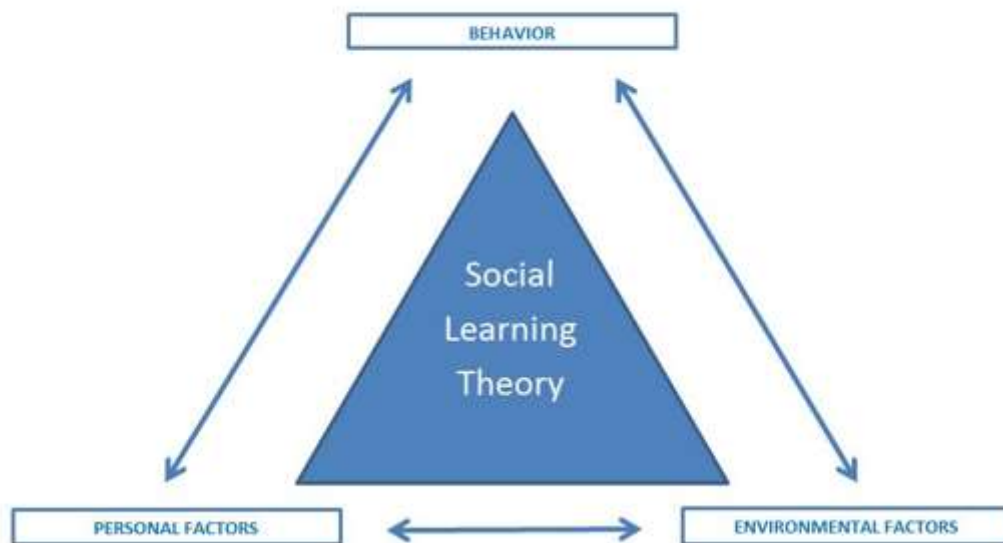
### ***Theoretical Foundations***

This study is based on Social Learning Theory (as shown in Figure 1) in order to understand how lecturers' leadership style can affect student employability in terms of competence in personal qualities skills, core skills, process skills and development of career path. Based on Social Learning Theory, Bandura (1991) stated that the behaviour of a person can be influenced through modelling process which is through observing others'





behaviours. Through observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviour are performed, and on later occasions, this information serves as a guide for action. Motivation, observation and modelling approach by transformational leadership behaviours show to the students either inside or outside the lecture room closely tied with the concept of Social Learning Theory. Students who identify lecturers as representing inspiration, support, gratitude and charisma may give their trust in the lecturers. Stemming from Social Learning Theory, which implies that individuals discover through observations and modelling, students will imitate the behaviours and performance of their lecturers in the future. Given that lecturers who display inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation are perceived as more effective, it can be proposed that students will gain effective and quality employability skills.



*Figure 1. Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1991)*

### **Conceptual Framework**

The dimensions for independent variable of this study was developed based on Transformational Leadership Theory by Bass and Avolio (1993). They mentioned that, transformational leadership have four main dimension which are inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation to transform others and provide positive performance outcomes including individual, group and organizational level. Individualized consideration leaders are regarded as mentors to the followers based on their own needs and demands, meanwhile idealized influence leaders are referred to as a leader who act as a role model by their followers because of respect and trust. On the other hand, intellectual stimulation is referred to as a leader who always encourage followers to be creative and come out with the new ideas. Lastly, for inspirational motivation, a leader should be portrayed as someone who have the ability to motivate their followers.

Meanwhile, for the dependent variable of this study which is students' employability, the present paper specifically referred to Career EDGE Model by Dacre and Sewell (2007) and the compilation of skills and competences done by current researchers on previous studies conducted by Pan and Lee (2011) as the theoretical framework. Career EDGE Model and the present research provides an outstanding review on the employability skills literature to look at the employability agenda and come out with four main employability skills include personal qualities, core skills, process skills and career development skills. Personal qualities refer



to the skill on how a student manage their personal attitude and emotional intelligence. Core skills refer to generic skills listed such as communication skill, team working, language skills and numeracy that a student must have. On the other hand, process skills refer to all the skill that needed to complete a work process such as problem solving, planning and resolving conflict. Lastly, knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes to manage career and lifelong progression is referring to career development skills.

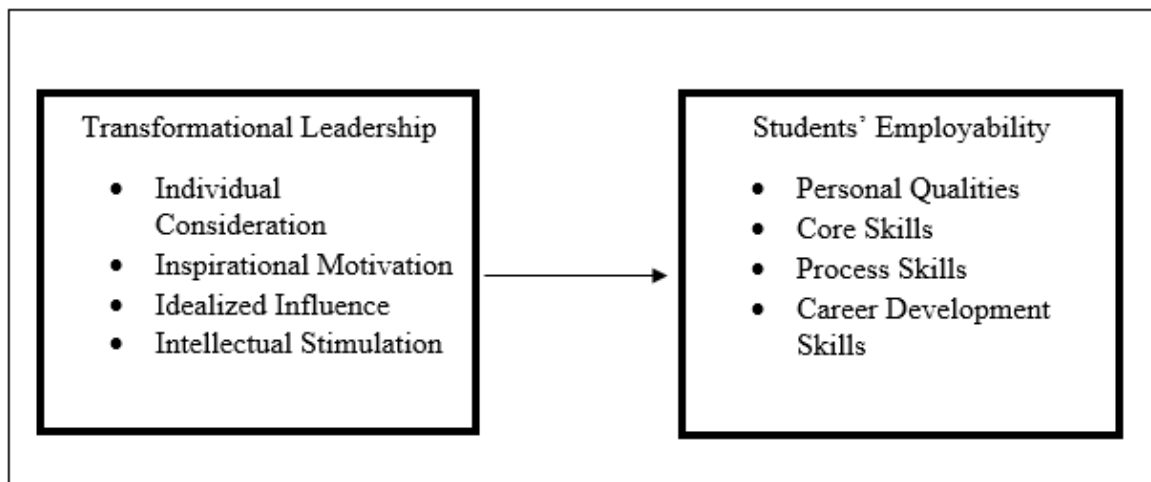


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

## METHOD

### Research Design

As explained by Scandura and Williams (2000), a research must have a rational decision in term of purpose of study and how the data will be analysed to provide a clear research design. Designing the research is the most vital part in conducting research because it describes the research flow to verify the permitted conclusion in the complete study (Choy, 2014). Research design discusses about the inclusive strategy or configuration used to run the entire study including researcher's plan of method and structure to conduct data collection and analysis in the study. This research utilized quantitative approach through survey method. The researcher chose to conduct a survey due to several reasons. Firstly, it is because survey design has been used numerously in different type of research field and very appropriate in collecting information related with human behaviours (Yilmaz, 2013). Secondly, the survey form is useful to investigate a large population (Scandura & Williams, 2000). In addition, cross-sectional approach was used in this research for data collection.

### Population and Sampling

In this study, the population consisted of final year students in 10 different TVET based institutions in Malaysia. All 10 TVET institutions involved various institutions located at Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak and Sabah. The population in this study consisted of about 3000 final year students. Out of this large sum, the researcher decided to use a total of 350 respondents. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample table (Scandura & Williams, 2000), it was suggested that 341 respondents are appropriate for this number. However, the researchers increased the number of samples to 350 in order to ensure that there is no doubt and in order to increase the quality of research findings. The samples were chosen by using a random sampling approach. The information about a number of TVET institutions involved in this study is presented in Table 1 below:



Table 1  
*Number of TVET institutions involved in this research*

Region	State	Number of TVET Institution Involved	
<b>Peninsular Malaysia</b>	North of Malaysia	Perlis and Kedah	2
	South of Malaysia	Johor and Malacca	2
	West of Malaysia	Selangor	2
	East of Malaysia	Terengganu and Kelantan	2
<b>Sarawak</b>			1
<b>Sabah</b>			1
<b>Total</b>			<b>10</b>

### ***Instrument***

Instrument of questionnaires were used in this study to collect the primary data because it is possible to collect the information for a large number of respondents. Besides, question responses can be highly structured and easily coded and standardized (Choy, 2014). The instruments for this survey was a three-section questionnaire. The section of the questionnaire explained as below:

i. Section 1 – Demographic Information

The demographic section was about individual's personal information. For this section, the respondents were ensured that their anonymity and confidentiality of the information are secured. Demographic information consisting of 6 items on the respondent's personal information include information about gender, age, race, religion, education level and type of institutions.

ii. Section 2 - Transformational Leadership Style

For this study, researchers utilized The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5X) from Avolio, Bass, and Jung (1999) to measure students' perceptions about their lecturers' transformational leadership style. It consists of 20 items that measure about transformational leadership style with four subscales: intellectual stimulation (4 items), idealized influence (8 items), inspirational motivation (4 items) and individual consideration (4 items). Respondents responded to Likert scale five-point (0 = not at all; 1 = once in a while; 2 = sometimes; 3 = fairly often and 4 = frequently, if not always).

iii. Section 3 - Students' Employability

The items of the questionnaire regarding students' employability were concluded from Pan and Lee (2011). The total number of 18 items were included the social psychological constructs which include subjective and objectives aspects cover up four components; core skills (8 items), process skills (4 items), personal qualities (3 items) and career development skills (3 items) in five-point Likert scale (1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree and 5 = totally agree).





### **Reliability and Validity**

Method of internal consistency was utilized in analysing the data from the pilot test to confirm the reliability and validity of each instrument. To test the reliability and validity of the items, Cronbach's alpha test was used. As shown in Table 2 and 3, the value for Cronbach's alpha for this study was indicated and proven to be acceptable.

Table 2  
*Reliability test for Transformational Leadership*

Constructs/Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Intellectual Stimulation	4	0.88	All items are accepted/reliable
Idealized Influence	8	0.87	All items are accepted/reliable
Inspirational Motivation	4	0.82	All items are accepted/reliable
Individual Consideration	4	0.84	All items are accepted/reliable

Table 2 shows that there are 4 items under intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership. The value of the Cronbach's Alpha for these 4 items under intellectual stimulation is 0.88. It further reveals that there are 8 items under idealized influence of transformational leadership with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.87. In addition, 4 items from inspirational motivation of transformational leadership contributed matrix value of Cronbach's Alpha at 0.82 while individual consideration has 4 items with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84. According to Miller et al. (2011), value of Cronbach's that is greater than 0.60 and 0.70 is the best matrix value in considering the acceptable of items and represent a good reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha values for 4 dimensions of transformational leadership were around 0.80 specifically ranging between 0.82 and 0.88. Generally, the values suggested that the questionnaire employed for the study had relatively good internal consistency.

Table 3  
*Reliability test for Students' Employability*

Constructs/Variables	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Core Skills	8	0.86	All items are accepted/reliable
Process Skills	4	0.74	All items are accepted/reliable
Personal Qualities	3	0.78	All items are accepted/reliable
Career Development Skills	3	0.80	All items are accepted/reliable

Meanwhile, for Table 3, all the instruments for variable of students' employability have been determined. This variable consists of 4 main dimensions which are core skills, process skills, personal qualities and career development skills to measure employability among TVET's students. For dimension 1 (core skills), the value for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.86 covering up to 8 number of items. Next, process skills as the second dimension of students' employability has 4 items with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.74. The table also represent the Cronbach's Alpha for the third dimension of students' employability which is personal qualities with the value of 0.78 and 0.80 for dimension of career development skills. In summary, all instrument items for students' employability used in present research are acceptable and reliable for the respondents and inferential analysis.



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## *Data Collection and Data Analyses*

Data collection for this research was conducted through distributing questionnaires to the respondents. Ten (10) TVET based institutions agreed to take part in this research and six (6) institutions rejected to take part due to confidential issues. The researchers followed all the formal and standard procedures in terms of conducting a research within government educational institutions provided by Department of Educational Planning and Research Division. As for private educational institutions, the researchers first contacted the Human Resource Development from each of private educational institutions first to request a permission to conduct a research with their students. After permission was granted from both educational institutions (government and private), the questionnaires were then distributed to the respondents. After about 2 to 4 weeks, all the answered questionnaires were given back to the researchers by email and written questionnaires. In summary, about 375 set of answered questionnaires were given back to the researcher. Unfortunately, only 350 set of answered questionnaires were used in this research to be analysed since the other 25 questionnaires' answer sets was incomplete. SPSS version 21.0 was used to analyse the research data. Pearson correlation analysis and multi-regression analysis was involved as inferential data analysis in order to identify the relationship between both variables, and to report the overall effect of the independent variable towards the dependent variable.

## *Demographic Information of Participants*

Both the descriptive and inferential analyses are presented in this section. Firstly, an analysis of the demographic information is mentioned. Then, the findings for the listed research hypothesis are stated. Table 4 represents results for the demographic data.

Table 4  
*Respondent's Demographic Information*

	Frequency (n=350)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	218	62.3%
Female	132	37.7%
Total	350	100%
<b>Age</b>		
18-20 years	98	28.0%
21-23 years	100	28.6%
24-26 years	127	36.3%
Over 27 years	25	7.1%
Total	350	100%
<b>Race</b>		
Malay	211	60.3%
Chinese	56	16.0%
Indian	43	12.3%
Other	40	11.4%
Total	350	100%



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<b>Religion</b>		
Islam	212	60.6%
Buddha	55	15.7%
Hindu	43	12.3%
Other	40	11.4%
Total	350	100%

<b>Education level</b>		
SPM	106	30.3%
Diploma	117	33.4%
Professional Certificate	127	36.3%
Total	350	100%

<b>Types of Institution</b>		
College	141	40.3%
Public University	134	38.3%
Private University	75	21.4%
Total	350	100%

Out of 350 respondents, 218 respondents (62.3%) are male and another 132 respondents (37.7%) are female. Based on the average age of the respondents, table 2 indicated that 98 (28%) are respondents between age 18-20 years, 100 of the respondents (28.6%) are between 21-23 years and majority of the respondents are between age of 24-26 years (n=127, 36.3%), and the rest are over 27 years with the number of 25 respondent (7.1%).

In the aspect of race, 211 respondents (60.3%) are Malays, while 56 respondents (16%) are Chinese, 43 respondents (12.3%) are Indians and other 40 respondents (11.4%). Meanwhile, from the religion aspect, 212 respondents (60.6%) are Muslim, 55 respondents (15.7%) are Buddhist, 43 respondents (12.3%) are Hindu and the other 40 respondents (11.4%) falls under category of other religion.

In terms of their education background, the majority of the respondents are professional certificate holder with 127 respondents (36.3%), diploma holder with 117 respondents (33.4%) and 106 respondents (30.3%) are SPM holder. Focusing on the types of institutions that involved in this research, there are 141 respondents (40.3%) are from college institutions, another 134 respondents (38.3%) are respondents from a public university, and the other 75 respondents (21.4%) are from private university institutions.

### ***Level of Lecturer's Transformational Leadership***

**Objective 1: To measure the level of lecturers' transformational leadership practice as seen by students in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.**

This section consists of items that give feedback from the students about their perception and judgment on their lecturer's transformational leadership practice. Table 5 describes the mean and standard deviation for each of dimensions for lecturer's transformational leadership and also overall result for level of transformational leadership practice among lecturers.



Table 5  
*Level of Lecturer's Transformational Leadership Practice*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Dimension of Individual Consideration	2.44	0.249	Moderate
Dimension of Inspirational Motivation	2.63	0.267	Moderate
Dimension of Idealized Influence	2.35	0.234	Moderate
Dimension of Intellectual Stimulation	2.78	0.271	Moderate
Overall Level of Lecturers' Transformational Leadership Practice	2.56	0.258	Moderate

The analysis presented in Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for all dimensions of transformational leadership. As a whole, the interpretation of students about transformational leadership practice among Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions lecturers of Malaysia is at a moderate level with the mean score of 2.56 and standard deviation of 0.258. Observation in every dimensions of transformational leadership (individual consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence and intellectual stimulation) shows that most of the aspects are at the moderate level. Other than that, idealized influence shows a mean score of 2.35 and standard deviation 0.234 where it is the lowest dimension compared to the other aspects of transformational leadership dimensions. The dimension of inspirational motivation which should be given emphasis on in term to encourage students is also at a moderate level (Mean = 2.63, SD =0.267). This indicates that lecturers do not fully apply this style of leadership towards their students. Most of the lecturers perhaps use other style of leadership in approaching the students. This is happening either during the class or outside of the class as there are a lot of other leadership styles that can be used in education sector.

#### ***Level of Students' Employability***

**Objective 2: To measure the level of students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.**

This part of the analysis concentrates on the mean and standard deviation value that show level of students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.

Table 6  
*Level of Students' Employability*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Dimension of Core Skills	2.79	0.442	Moderate
Dimension of Process Skills	2.45	0.339	Moderate
Dimension of Personal Qualities	2.82	0.480	Moderate
Dimension of Career Development Skills	2.26	0.319	Moderate
Overall Level of Students' Employability	2.70	0.233	Moderate



Table 6 explains further on the means and standard deviations for every measured dimensions of students' employability such as core skills, process skills, personal qualities and career development skills. As an overall result, students' employability at Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia is at a moderate level (Mean = 2.70, SD =0.233). In addition, among four dimensions of employability, the findings showed that respondents have a low mean in term of career development skills (Mean = 2.26, SD =0.319). From the result, it indicates that students' skills and knowledges about their career planning need to be improved in order to increase their employability skill as the employers see it as valuable in the actual workplace and has an important influence on the individual's livelihood and prospects for the future. One of the reasons behind this finding is probably due to lack of exposure given to the students about the importance of career planning and employability to fulfil the employers' requirements.

### **Correlation Analysis**

**Objective 3: To determine the relationship between lecturers' transformational leadership practice and students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.**

This section consists of findings on correlation analysis between independent variable and dependent variable of the research.

Table 7

*Correlation analysis for lecturer's transformational leadership and students' employability*

		<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	<b>Students' Employability</b>
<b>Transformational Leadership</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.843**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
<b>Students' Employability</b>	Pearson Correlation	.843**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

Table 7 signifies the correlation approach in order to find the relationship between the variables of study. According to research objective 3, as an overall, a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and students' employability is found and this finding leads to the acceptable of research objective 3. Transformational leadership has a significant and positive relationship with students' employability with matrix result .843;  $p < .000$ .

**Objective 4: To determine the relationship between transformational leadership dimensions (intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation and individualized consideration) and students' employability.**

In addition, correlation for each of transformational leadership's dimension with students' employability also had been analysed in this research.



Table 8  
*Correlation Analysis for Variables in the Study*

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Intellectual Stimulation	3.58	.594	1				
2. Idealized Influence	3.70	.665	.723**	1			
3. Inspirational Motivation	2.82	.583	.595**	.555**	1		
4. Individual Consideration	3.61	.889	.662**	.513**	.745**	1	
5. Students' Employability	4.13	.634	.671**	.713**	.779**	.584**	1

\*\*p < 0.01

According to Table 8, the correlation between intellectual stimulation of transformational leadership and students' employability is (0.671;  $p < 0.01$ ). This is a positive and significant relationship between these variables. In addition, for idealized influence of transformational leadership, this dimension also found positively and significantly correlated with students' employability with matrix result 0.713;  $p < 0.01$ . In another two dimension of transformational leadership which are inspirational motivation and individual consideration, its findings have found the matrix result to be 0.779;  $p < 0.01$  and 0.584;  $p < 0.01$  respectively. This indicates that, both of these dimensions have a positive and significant relationship with students' employability as well. The findings as of now lead to the answer for research objective 4.

#### **Linear Regression Analysis**

##### **Objective 5: To identify the effect of lecturers' transformational leadership practice on students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.**

This part of the analysis demonstrates the linear regression finding that measure the effect of lecturer's transformational leadership on students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.

Table 9  
*Linear Regression Estimates for Transformational Leadership and Students' Employability*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.620	0.609	0.508	0.374

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership

Value of transformational leadership considering students' employability was based on a linear equation. Considering Table 9, transformational leadership has been affected 60.9% by students' employability regarding of R Square value from the table. Thus, the result showed that transformational leadership practiced by the lecturers can give effect on students' employability.





Table 10  
*Linear Regression Coefficients for Transformational Leadership and Students' Employability*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.555	0.132		5.386	0.000
Transformational Leadership	0.676	0.092	0.502	5.657	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Employability

Based on Table 10, the regression model is: students' employability = 0.676 (transformational leadership) – 0.555. The standard regression weight of transformational leadership for students' employability is 0.502,  $p < 0.001$  which means that the increase in transformational leadership among lecturers by 1 is responsible for increase in students' employability by 0.502 and vice versa. It also indicates that the effect in increasing and decreasing students' employability can be affected by lecturer's transformational leadership. In summary, lecturers' transformational leadership has significant effect on students' employability in TVET institutions in Malaysia.

#### **Multiple Regression Analysis**

**Objective 6: To identify the effect of lecturers' transformational leadership dimensions (intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation and individual consideration) and students' employability in Technical and Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Institutions in Malaysia.**

Meanwhile, this part provides more specific findings on multiple regression to measure the effect for each of transformational leadership dimensions on students' employability.

Table 11  
*Multiple Regression Estimates for Transformational Leadership and Students' Employability*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.609	0.516	0.498	0.412

a. Predictors: (Constant), Intellectual Stimulation, Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Individual Consideration

Value of transformational leadership considering students' employability was based on a linear equation. Considering Table 9, transformational leadership has been affected 60.9% by students' employability regarding of R Square value from the table. Thus, the result showed that transformational leadership practiced by the lecturers can give effect on students' employability.



Table 12  
*Coefficients for Transformational Leadership and Students' Employability*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.457	0.382		6.291	0.000
Intellectual Stimulation	0.132	0.211	0.185	1.566	0.038
Idealized Influence	0.082	0.215	0.212	1.820	0.215
Inspirational Motivation	0.042	0.212	0.291	2.244	0.012
Individual Consideration	0.411	0.208	0.434	2.146	0.042

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Employability

Taking Table 11 for consideration, students' employability has been affected 51.6% by transformational leadership dimensions. To analyse the level of significance effect for each of transformational leadership dimension on students' employability, it mentioned that only intellectual stimulation ( $t = 1.566$ ,  $Sig = 0.038$ ) and inspirational motivation ( $t = 2.244$ ,  $Sig = 0.012$ ) were significant and have positive effect on students' employability (as shown in Table 12). In summary, effect in increasing and decreasing students' employability can be affected by the dimension of intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation of lecturer's transformational leadership.

#### RESEARCH IMPLICATION

Based on the findings and discussion, the current research draws several implications from both theoretical and practical perspective. In the case of theories, the study contributed to the research on analysing the dimensions of transformational leadership influencing students' employability among TVET students. In addition, the findings also contributed to the emphasis of employing the Career EDGE Model, particularly the conceptualization of variables related to students' employability skills. The practical implication of the study includes the revealing of lecturer's transformational leadership dimensions that can affect students' employability. By knowing the reliable predictors, lecturers are able to provide proper leadership style to enhance and improve students' employability skills and performance.

The findings revealed that lecturers' transformational leadership dimensions significantly affected the students' employability. This may help the lecturers to revise their leadership style as they could be aware on which of the dimension from transformational leadership are appropriate in approaching and teaching their students especially from TVET perspective. In addition, institutions especially the human resource department could take appropriate actions regarding lecturers' training based on the insight given through the research findings. Training or workshop need to provide for the lecturers to build up the personal strategies in terms of enhancing their transformational leadership potential to deal with students' characteristics. In addition, conducting training and workshop in employability skills is also important to students since research findings showed a moderate level of employability skills among TVET's students.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the two main variables, it can be concluded that lecturers' transformational leadership has a positive and significant relationship with students' employability in Malaysia TVET institutions. In addition, results stated that lecturers' transformational leadership has a significant and positive effect on students' employability. It is likely similar to the results of previous research by Balyer (2012). Transformational



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leadership is known as the major leadership driver in influencing and forming new individual behaviours. It has an effective role in establishing students' employability. It is believed that by using relational process approach which is provided by transformational leadership practice, students are more encouraged in developing their normal capacity and proficient capacity at work alongside, inculcating an attitude at work and profession planning and certainty (Shatzer, Caldarella, Hallam, & Brown, 2013). Basically, there are three approaches to how a lecturer who practices transformational leadership can help in improving students' employability especially in the context of TVET institutions. Firstly, the interaction between lecturers and students especially in class and during lecture can convey educational concepts and learning values as skills and knowledge development. Secondly, students' employability can be influenced by transformational lecturers by positive inspiration and guidance, thus promoting students' active learning attitude and cultivate good employment. lastly, studies have confirmed that lecturer with transformational leadership practice is better able to lead students to achieve higher learning satisfaction, thus willing to pursue refinement. Learning institutions need to consider lecturers' transformational leadership in order to be able to effectively enhance the employability among students and promote it across the institutions. The study points out that lecturers' leadership practice which is more concerned primarily as an inspiration, to be an example, to encourage creative ideas. In addition, the study points out that there is a need to take account that lecturers' individual differences can promote the development of students; employability and influence their improvement in learning motivation. Thus, lecturers' teaching activities should be regarded as some kind of leadership course.

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