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# **CONFERENCE PROCEEDING**

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON YOUTH 2013  
(ICYOUTH 2013)**

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Mines Wellness Hotel, Sri Kembangan, Selangor  
Malaysia**

**Hosted by**  
Institute for Social Science Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Poverty Eradication Foundation (YBK)

**Committee of Technical Papers & Proceedings of ICYOUTH 2013 :**

Haslinda Abdullah  
Siti Zobidah Omar  
Nor Wahiza Abdul Wahat  
Adriana Ortega

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# **PREFACE**

These Conference Proceedings contain papers solicited from the key-note speakers and participants of the International Conference on Sustainable Community Development 2001 (ICOSCD2010) organized by Institute for Social Science Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

The inaugural ICOSCD2010 is aimed to provide an international platform for researchers, graduate students and practitioners in the field of sustainable community development to share information and accomplishments, to discover the challenges of the future, and to offer ideas for advance practices that meets the needs of the present and simultaneously recognizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In line with the above objectives, these conference proceedings were developed based on the following 17 subthemes: regenerating community, productive welfare, economic development, community empowerment, social conflict, human and social capital development, agricultural development, rural development, cultural diversity, poverty reduction, environmental education/management, corporate social responsibility, entrepreneurship, human empowerment, health and well-being, cancer education and services, and resource management.

The Executive Planning Committee for the Conference together with its meticulous reviewers have devoted much time and effort to design, compile and edit all the papers available in these Proceedings. We look forward to your continued and productive use of these Conference materials.

**- Editor-**



# ENHANCING YOUTH LIVING SKILLS: USING *PHOTOVOICE* IN ASSESSING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

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## Abstract

The youth is one crucial component of society that should be accorded adequate sustainable livelihood pathways for them to build productive lives. However, much depends on a country's policies and programmes that are available, implemented and well-supported by the government and the private sector. One potential pathway is in providing good living skills for them to lead sustainable and productive lives. *PhotoVoice* is a qualitative research technique that has been experimented with worldwide, to empower the youth to enquire and conduct grounded analysis of specific concerns, phenomena and real situations that they perceive as relevant to local contexts and capture in photographs. Individually and in groups, the youth can discuss and examine the pictures so captured and interpret their findings as well as derive possible solutions and viable response. In the effort to empower the youth, the *PhotoVoice* offer many lessons to be learnt. The initial reaction to the approach is well received by local youth and the preliminary impact indicate that they can better use their skills in enhancing their voice in local development settings

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social scientists have frequently experimented with novel and reliable new approaches in collecting and gathering data. One such method is the use of the *PhotoVoice* where visual data is carefully recorded using cameras. This paper shares with the participants such a plan to use the *PhotoVoice* in a study of sustainable livelihood and pathways among rural in Malaysia. Since it is something new and experimental, the researchers anticipates that there would be some interest in the research project. One significant feature of this study is perhaps in the operationalization of the concept and method itself in that, we are allowing the selected respondents to decide on what they would wish to capture as part of the perceptions of the sustainable livelihood domains being studied. Another significant feature is that the study shall allow for the respondents to explain their captured perceptions. And last but not least, this method in collecting data is one pioneering work in Malaysia itself and there could be some useful lessons to be gained from the experiment.

### *1.1 What is Photovoice?*

Photovoice is a process in which people – usually those with limited power due to poverty, language barriers, race, class, ethnicity, gender, culture, or other circumstances – use video and/or photo images capture aspects of their environment and experiences and share them with others. The pictures can then be used, usually with captions composed by the photographers, to bring the realities of the photographers' lives home to the public and policy makers and to spur change.

Photovoice was developed by Caroline Wang and colleagues to describe their work with the Yunnan Women's Reproductive Health and Development Program in China. Its theoretical basis brings

together Paulo Freire's theories on participatory education, Feminist theory focusing on giving voice to the disadvantaged, and documentary photography techniques representing societal realities (Wang & Burris, 1997). The process of information sharing is not limited to the verbal and textual world. Photo elicitation methods have long been used in the fields of Anthropology and Sociology to provide visual cues to stimulate participant responses in research interviews. By integrating visual information in research practices researchers can stimulate the evolution of deeper processes of understanding in an attempt to gain deeper insight into the human consciousness (Harper, 2002). What separates Photovoice from the majority of photo elicitation methods is its requirement that the images used in the interviews be participant generated. This strategy empowers participants to engage more deeply in the research process by being in control of the images used in the study. Informed by its theoretical background, Photovoice places a large emphasis on the potential for action-oriented results where the researchers and participants can take the data and insights gained from the process and use them to affect policy and social change

The concept has existed for many years, but much of the theoretical background of current programs comes from the work of Caroline Wang. In 1992, Wang and Mary Ann Burris developed Photovoice based on a combination of Paulo Freire's notion of "critical consciousness" (a deep understanding of the way the world works and how society, politics, and power relationships affect one's own situation); feminist theory, which emphasizes the importance of voice; and documentary photography, which is often used to help bring about social change.

Wang and Burris gave cameras to a group of rural village women in Yunnan Province in China, who documented their lives and environment for an entire year. Groups of women gathered at regular intervals to view and discuss the pictures they took. At the end of the project, the group hosted an exhibition of their photographs, and used it to raise the consciousness of the general public and of policy makers about their needs. The women had gained a voice, greater self-respect, and a sense of increased control over their lives. Wang, now a professor at the University of Michigan, became a founding mother of Photovoice.

Wang defines five key concepts for Photovoice in [Photovoice: A Participatory Action Research Strategy Applied to Women's Health](#), a 1999 article in the Journal of Women's Health.

These five concepts include:

- Images teach.
- Pictures can influence policy.
- Community members ought to participate in creating and defining the images that shape healthful public policy.
- The process requires that from the outset planners bring policy makers and other influential people to the table to serve as an audience.
- Photovoice emphasizes individual and community action.

As expounded by Wang, the PhotoVoice technique follows a simple logic in the use of the technique and it follows the following sequence, especially in the run-up to how the pictures captured are processed and analysed.

### **One way of exploring photographs**

What do you **S**ee here?

What's really **H**appening here?

How does this relate to **O**ur lives?

**W**hy does this problem/condition/strength exist?

The Photovoice technique has been used in many countries with people including youth in difficult circumstances, people with disabilities and particular medical conditions (e.g., tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS), the very poor, groups subject to violence, and with many others whose experiences are unknown or seemingly ignored by the community and by those in power.

### *1.2 Why should you use Photovoice?*

There are a number of reasons why Photovoice can be a particularly powerful way to approach empowerment and advocacy.

1. **The rewards of taking photographs are immediate.** A camera, especially a digital one, produces nearly instant results, thereby encouraging participants to continue.
2. **Photography is fun and creative.** Often, survival is the main focus of people living in difficult circumstances. The opportunity to create art can be a powerful and fulfilling experience, and can lead to viewing oneself in a different and more positive light. In addition, for many people, it opens the door to talent they didn't know they had.
3. **Taking photographs or videos of familiar scenes and people can change participants' perceptions about their social and physical environment.** When they're forced to think about how they want to picture the scenes they're recording, participants themselves may start to see those scenes differently and to think about alternatives in new ways.
4. **Basic photography is easy to learn and accessible to almost everyone.** Anyone who can see and hold a camera, from children as young as four or five, to people with disabilities, to seniors, can take pictures. They may not be artistically excellent, but they will tell a story. Even those who can't see or hold a camera can participate with the help of someone who can, by indicating what they want pictured.
5. **"A picture is worth a thousand words."** Seeing what someone else sees is more powerful than being told about it. Effective advocacy conveys a need for change, and photos or videos can almost always make a far better case than words alone.
6. **Images can be understood regardless of language, culture, or other factors.**
7. **Policy makers can't deny reality when it's staring them in the face.** It is often easy for policy makers to assume – or to claim – that anyone with a need or problem is exaggerating it. When faced with photos or videos of actual conditions, they have to acknowledge reality.
8. Pictures, by creating a clear record of what exists at a particular point in time, can be used to hold policy makers and others accountable.
9. Photography and video provide a means for empowerment without requiring people to stand up and speak in public.

### *1.3 Who should use Photovoice?*

The main goal of Photovoice is to help people whose needs – and sometimes whose very existence – are often ignored gain some sense of control over their lives. We'll list some examples of both population groups and organizations that might be able to use Photovoice to their advantage. (Neither list is meant to be complete.)

People whom Photovoice can help to empower:

- Children and youth in difficult circumstances. These might include orphans and the homeless, children forced to work rather than go to school, children and youth living under the threat of violence because of war or crime, those who are being or have been abused, or simply those who see a problem – destruction of the natural environment, for example – that they want to help to solve.
- Homeless adults and families.

- People with physical and mental disabilities or mental health issues.
- People with chronic diseases or medical conditions – tuberculosis, diabetes, heart disease.
- Members of racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious or cultural minorities. Members of these groups may be discriminated against, or they may simply want to share elements of their culture and lives with the majority.
- People whose way of life is threatened. The [Southern West Virginia Photovoice Project](#) involves women documenting their communities, their way of life, and what’s happened to them as a result of mountaintop removal coal mining.
- People who are discriminated against because of class, caste, way of life (as in “Born Into Brothels”), or poverty.

#### *1.4 Why use Photovoice?*

Experiences from the field have shown that the PhotoVoice technique has yielded many useful insights and they include:

- Powerful way to approach empowerment and advocacy
- Rewards of taking photographs are immediate
- Photography is fun and creative
- Taking photographs can change participants’ perceptions about their social and physical environment
- Basic photography is easy to learn and accessible to all
- “A picture is worth a thousand words”
- Images are understood regardless of language or culture
- Policy makers & program planners cannot deny reality when images are staring them in the face

#### *1.5 Advantages of using Photovoice Technique*

Photovoice is valuable because it empowers the youth to become more aware of their surroundings. The youth see themselves as researchers collecting data, analyzing those data, and doing something with them to help solve problems. It provides a process and resources for youth to amplify their voices in order to influence and gain power to shape the local youth development policies.

Photovoice facilitates greater involvement of the participants compared to many conventional research methods. Not only do participants provide data, but through their selection of photographs and the group discussions of themes and issues, participants are also involved in data analysis. This increased participation adds to the validity of Photovoice studies by reflecting results that are determined and emphasized by the participants studied, not by the researcher.

Photovoice offers an innovative way to triangulate research results as multiple streams of information gathering are used: visual verbal information, focussed group discussion, and individual reflection in taking photos. The data from the PhotoVoice can also be compared with the quantitative survey data and further adds to the reliability of the whole study. This can certainly increase the probability that new programs accurately reflect the youths’ needs.

The camera itself offers a unique opportunity to advertise the research aims and goals to a wider community. By allowing participants to record images of their own life they are interacting with the community; this creates the potential for interaction with non-participant community members and a discussion of the activity, itself which can promote the research to a wider audience than can be reached in a study confined to the four walls of a laboratory.

As a way of enhancing interview data, Photovoice can act as a memory trigger aiding in the recall of past experiences. It can aid in the illustration of participants' perspective by allowing an audience to not just hear their words, but also experience the world the way they see it. Photovoice has proven to be a method for engaging groups who may have difficulty articulating their views in traditional research (e.g., youth, homeless, marginal groups), thus increasing the scope of potential participants.

**Photovoice is a research tool that integrates key principles of community-based research. The partnership intends to:**

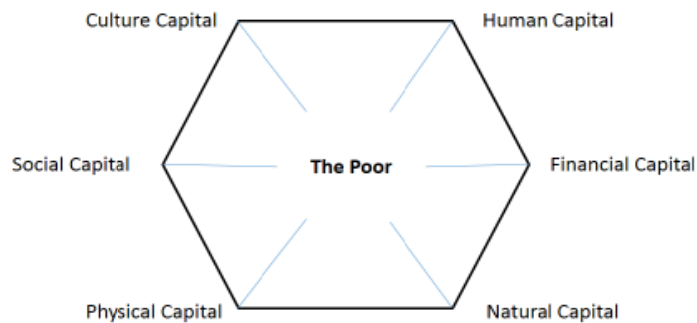
- recognize the community as a unit of identity
- build on strengths and resources within the community
- facilitate collaborative partnerships in all phases of the research
- integrate knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners
- promote a co-learning and empowering process that facilitates the reciprocal transfer of knowledge, skills, capacity, and power
- address health from a model that emphasizes physical, mental, and social well-being, and biomedical, social, economic, and cultural factors as health determinants
- engage policy makers to enhance change

Virginia LI - Photovoice - 10 Nov 2008

## **2. THE MALAYSIAN STUDY**

In the Malaysian study, the livelihood assets or capitals being examined include the five original capitals as found in the Pentagon Model (Human, Financial, Natural, Physical and Social) and including an additional asset of Cultural Capital postulated as being a critical component for the development of pathways for sustainable livelihood. This is exemplified as in the Figure 1 below.

## LIVELIHOODS ASSETS



### The Six Assets

<b>Human</b>	skills, knowledge, good health, ability to work
<b>Financial</b>	savings in the form of cash, bank deposits, liquid assets such as grain, livestock and jewelry, income, credit
<b>Natural</b>	land, forest, rivers, wildlife, marine life, air quality, biodiversity
<b>Physical</b>	roads and transport, buildings, sanitation, communications, health clinics
<b>Social</b>	network between individuals, relationship of trust and reciprocity, membership of groups, political capital and access to wider institutions in society
<b>Culture</b>	the general cultural background, knowledge, disposition, and skills that are passed on from one generation to another. The ways of talking, acting, and socializing, as well as language practices, values, and types of dress and behavior

### 3. SUGGESTED PLAN OF ACTION IN USING PHOTOVOICE BY SELECTED YOUTH

In the conduct of the PhotoVoice data collection, the following procedural guide shall be followed. This is to ensure that the participants understands the whole process, their responsibilities involved and the necessary code of practice in taking the photographs.

1. Selection of youth respondents (8 per area) This number is limited by the number of cameras available
2. Briefing session and training (one day)
  - a. Use of camera
  - b. Taking photos and saving
  - c. Briefing on 6 types of capitals and alternative pathways
3. Trial run
  - a. Taking photos and group discussion
4. Field photo recording (two weeks)
5. Group workshop and elaboration of photographs (1-2 days)
  - a. Printing out photos
  - b. Selection of photos (best 2 per category of capital and pathway)



- c. Making notes of photographs
  - d. Recording of descriptions
6. Content analysis of photo descriptions

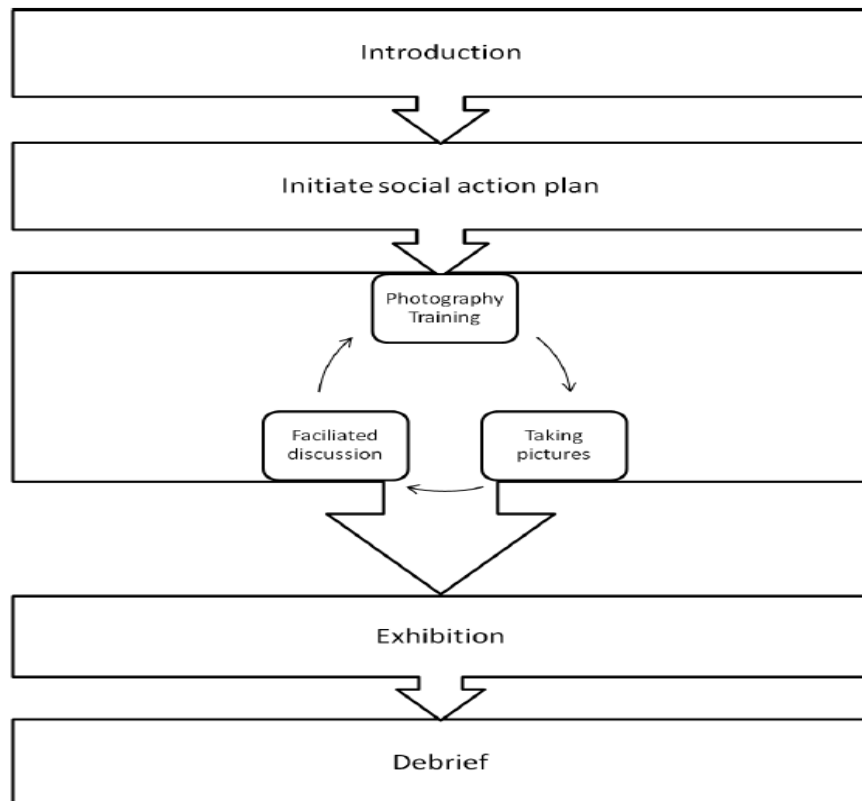


Figure 1.1 Photovoice Planning Process

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The PhotoVoice technique is considered as a new method in data collection in Malaysia, even though it has been frequently used in many other contexts globally. The use of the technique is a challenge that is worthy of being observed, both for its utility and also for its reliability to complement social research. In Malaysia, it remains to be seen whether the technique is well received by researchers and study respondents as the various issues associated with this novel technique remains to be uncovered and further discussed. Suffice it is to say that as one looks at the potential of empowering respondents in research, scepticism amongst policymakers and even researchers can be expected as well.

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# **EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL ACTION IN INDIA: ENDEAVOUR OF DEPT. OF SOCIAL WORK, WALCHAND COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE, SOLAPUR, M.S. INDIA**

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## **Abstract**

This study is based on a systematic process recording of Master Students' participation in 45 days Summer Placement Training (SPT) focused on 'hands-on' social actions across different areas in India. The paper describes the process in which young people became empowered and how such empowerment reflected in their competencies, learning process, wellbeing and social intelligence. After completing their SPT participating students display noticeable increased confidence in expressing views and opinions and assertiveness in their interaction with seniors and professors. They also became participative and involved in classroom discussion and extracurricular activities; demonstrated knowledge and understanding of systematic planning. Students also exhibited improvement in their interpersonal communication and overall physical and psychological wellbeing. These positive changes had a spill-over effect in the students' involvement and engagement with their communities. For example, they wrote a number of articles published in local newspapers; participated in radio programs broadcasted nationally; and produced and published a book based on their SPT experiences. In the present conference paper, the author discusses how youth engagement is not only innovative, but also effective approach to youth empowerment. Furthermore, the author proposes SPT is an example of best practice for youth empowerment programs, as it allows youth to explore learning opportunities and provide them with the platform to articulate and put in practice their acquired skills.

**Keywords:** *Youth empowerment, Engagement, Youth-adult partnerships, Social Work Education, Summer Placement Training*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The advent of postmodernism era is conspicuous in all sections and sectors of society. The visible and invisible influences of postmodernism especially on college system are worth exploring. The academic demands and pressures are increasing for colleges. They must maintain healthy and empowering environment and provide sound and conducive climate in all academic systems Channaveer (2008). Thus, apart from attending and participating in class room teaching students should be engaged and involved in social activism. According to Modi (2009), it is necessary to raise awareness regarding developing employable skills is necessary; nowadays for students only having academic and theoretical knowledge is not sufficient to secure jobs. In other words, it is necessary that students are given the opportunities and tools to gain skills and enhance their prospects for employment. In this connection it is need of time for engaging youth for their competency development. According to the Centre of excellence for children's well-being, youth engagement can be defined as the meaningful participation and sustained involvement of a young person in an activity, with a focus outside of him

or herself. That is, youth engagement can be achieved through virtually any activity in which youth can get involved with, for example sports, arts, music, volunteer work, politics, social activism; therefore, youth engagement can occur in almost any kind of setting (Centre of excellence for children's well-being, 2009).

This study is based on a systematic process recording of Master Students' of Social Work education programme participation in 45 days Summer Placement Training (SPT) focused on 'hands-on' social actions across different areas in India. The paper describes the process in which young people became empowered and how such empowerment reflected in their competencies, learning process, wellbeing and social intelligence. After completing their SPT participating students display noticeable increased confidence in expressing views and opinions and assertiveness in their interaction with seniors and professors.

Summer Placement Training (SPT) is a part of the Social Work educational training. The practical and theoretical pedagogy of social work education in India can be divided into concurrent fieldwork training and placement training, the concurrent fieldwork training refers to on-going training activity throughout the year and placement fieldwork training refers to placing the students for a given period of time in a particular fieldwork settings. Fieldwork training in social work education is recurring and it aims to develop competency and education is imparted with larger dimensions. Fieldwork provides opportunity for students to gain knowledge in different situations; it is an empirical way of learning new things with creative and innovative ideas. Moreover it fosters the development of intellectual and emotional balancing to shape and strengthen youth capabilities. Fieldwork gives opportunities for the students to understand the scientific knowledge and social phenomenon. According to Mujawar and Sardar (2010), the importance of field placement (fieldwork) in social work education cannot be overemphasized, that is because as an applied discipline social work education must place emphasis in acquainting students with the profession by providing hands-on experience in the field.

It is highly necessary to prepare the students for the practical exposure. Fieldwork is a technical process and functional in nature; thus, systematic plan for fieldwork training should be made to develop students' competencies. Fieldwork is a guided interaction process between students and the actual and practical life situation in which social work as a profession has abiding and deep concerns. According to Lawani and Subhedar (2006), Social work being oriented and intervention oriented profession education, therefore education in Social work should aim at helping trainees to acquire and internalized deep knowledge of theories and techniques of social work objectives. The social work trainees have to learn every practical aspect within the two years of training programme. Hence the importance of fieldwork training programmes, the main aim of fieldwork in social work education is to provide the opportunity to the student to learn and practice the professional skills in the fieldwork that are taught in the class. And it is the authors believe that during fieldwork training social work students are prepared to be competent professional social workers.

### *1.1 What is Summer Placement training?*

According to the guidelines given by University Grants Commission India (UGC)(2001), it is increasingly recognized and accepted that a part of summer vacation, after completing the first year of the post graduate studies in master of social work programme, could be used fruitfully to integrate practice skills and techniques learnt. Although not all fieldwork programmes have in place Summer Placement training, the time frame recommended for the summer placement is a minimum of three weeks. During the Summer Placement training the trainees (students) should work directly with client system and the management operations of day to day work of the setting. Therefore for a minimum of three weeks students are placed in different social work settings.

### 1.2 Objectives of the summer placement training

The main objectives of summer placement training include providing students with the opportunities to (1) experience direct practice and management operations; (2) improve, enhance and integrate practice of social work method and strategies; and (3) first-hand experience of the role of a professional social worker.

In line with the UGC 2001 guidelines, the Department of Social Work at Walchand College of Arts and Science, decided to conduct a summer placement training for students who had completed their Second Semester MSWI course work. That is because Fieldwork needs scientific understanding of the field and sound technical knowledge; often students are placed in the field without any preparation for the fieldwork setting they are assigned to. The students' experiences from unplanned fieldwork settings and unsupervised guidance results in their loss of interest in fieldwork and the outcomes are not positive. As stated by Gore (1981) 'if the practical experiences are to be an integral part of the educational programme, then there must be clarity connecting what the student is to be learnt in it'. Thus it is highly necessary to prepare students for fieldwork training and teachers/supervisors should have conceptual understanding of what it is actually needed to be studied and/or addressed during the fieldwork training. During summer placement training youths (students/trainees) are first trained for the placement and in social action and then sent directly into the social action field. Social action is one of the methods of social work that allows youths to become involved and engaged with their fieldwork tasks.

## 2. SOCIAL ACTION TRAINING: A METHOD OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN SUMMER PLACEMENT TRAINING

Social action in India has vast ancient experience, right from Indian freedom movement to present struggle for development. Social action is a secondary method of social work education; and one of the models of community organization. Social action it is an organized group effort to change or improve social or economic institutions, or to solve mass problems. Social action is a legally permitted and it is mass activity. Social action is an effort to bring about changes or prevent change in current social practice or situations through education, propaganda, persuasion or pressure, to achieve the desirable goals or objectives, it seeks to inform and influence public opinion and/or official policy so informed decisions can be made. As stated earlier in the introduction, social work education is a practice oriented programme and social action as methods provides youth (students/trainees) to get involved and engaged, so that, they can analyse, understand and apply the theories learnt in the classroom; and develop and manage their own learning process from their experiences. The following table (table 1) provides the names of the current social actions that are taking place in India, and the issues that these groups deal with. Students are allocated to one of these groups during their summer placement training.

Table 1: Current social actions programmes for summer placement training.

<i>Sr.no</i>	<i>Social Action in India</i>	<i>Issues</i>
1	Narmada Bacho Andholan, Badvani, Madhya Pradesh,	Tribal village rehabilitation and construction of new dams in tribal forest areas.
2	Majdoor Kishan Sakthi Sanghatan, Rajasthan	Right to Information Act and anti-corruption movement.
3	Loksnagarsh Morcha, Nandurbar, Maharashtra	Forest Right Act 2005: forest land acquisition act and rehabilitation of tribal villages
4	Vayam Chalval, Thane, Maharashtra	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Programmes and Policies. <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Sub Plan

### 3. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SOCIAL ACTION

#### 3.1 *Getting out of the vicious cycle and breaking stereotype,*

Preparing students for summer placement training is a challenging task; social work educator should be patient and have faith in the students. As we get students from various fields and streams of knowledge, and often students have strong beliefs based on their experiences and understandings. According to Menachery and Mohite (2001), for a large number of students social work education is their last option; often when students fail to gain entry into their course of first or second choice they will take social work education. Therefore, some students do not consider social work as a career option, even after joining a social work course. There are also a few students who decide to join social work after some temporary fieldwork involvement and experience. However, when social work teachers are committed to social work education, change can be made and long-lasting interest and behaviour modification can be achieved. However, students remained more interested in their marks and degree-oriented and teachers are happy with their 6<sup>th</sup> pay commission. To break this vicious cycle and its stereotypes a multidimensional approach is needed. Teacher should be able and willing to organize student central work and programmes. The author of this paper proposes that by giving freedom to students to prepare their own action plan (e.g. what and how they want to study in the year) assigning students reading and writing tasks, appreciating students' efforts and work, students and teacher can become interested in social action and experience and understand social work education in a positive light. Students have to be given time, they need to be listened and heard. When students are given a voice and adults (social work educators in this case), listen to them when they raise or speak up, many positive outcomes can be achieved. For example, students-social work teacher relationship improves and mutual understanding, respect and trust can also be reached.

An important barrier to overcome is the students' lack of conceptual clarity of social work, social action and working with tribal community. When they were asked about their difficulties or fears prior to going to Summer Placement training, the most common answers were:

- "My parents will not allow me to go that far"*
- "I cannot go; I have no economic means to travel?"*
- "I am a girl; how can I be expected to go and live in tribal area during the placement?"*
- "How are we going to get there, it is so far"*
- "Will we adjust to the tribal community?"*
- "Are Tribal people aggressive?"*
- "Where will we live?"*
- "What will we eat?"*

Therefore, the social action training starts at the students' home. First, convincing parents is a tough task for the students; especially for female students. For many students, particularly girls, the summer placement would be first time in their lives that they actually leave Solapur district; and for a most of them it would be their first time going out of majority out of Maharashtra state.

Many students face economic difficulties that might prevent them from going to Summer Placement Training (SPT); thus, the alumni of Urban and Rural Community Development Specialization sponsor the travel of these students and in return the sponsored students (after completion of their education and obtaining a job) are required to sponsor or help to find funds for a student to go to Summer Placement Training. A way to give back to the community; in this way the economic difficulties are easily solved and students get motivated and a sense of responsibility to do well in SPT as it is indirectly monitored by their alumni friends.

### 3.2 Involving students in Reading

Nowadays youth are lethargic and non-interested in reading they want everything to be ‘ready-made’ and at no time. Students are more conscious about examinations and grades and less interested in learning. Preparing students for summer placement training is another challenge, in my case I planned and distribute ahead the reading list and emphasised to the students the importance of reading on the issues and problem that social action addresses, and also encouraged them to read about what to expect and what is needed to embark in social action activities. After placing students into the different groups of social action, students are required to read about the particular social action group they have been assigned to, and to present on the current status of that social action group of the social action. The reading tasks would help the students to catch up with the speed of the social action and they can easily incorporate themselves into the group. Table 2 summarises the reading tasks assigned for each of the social action groups that students were placed in.

Table 2: Reading tasks for Summer Placement Training

<i>Sr. no</i>	<i>Social Action</i>	<i>Readings</i>
1	Narmada Bacho Andholan, Badvani, Madhya Pradesh	1. Andholan Sasvat Vikasasathi, Journal 2. Forest Right Act 2005
2	Majdoor Kishan Sakthi Sanghatan, Rajasthan	1. RTI Act, detail and the process 2. MNAREGA
3	Loksnagarsh Morcha, Nandurbar Maharashtra	1. Forest Right Act 2005, 2. Jansunvai Process (Public Hearing)
4	Vayam Chalval, Thane	1. Tribal Programmes and Policies 2. Tribal Sub Plan

Students were advised to gather information in a particular social action; and in their chosen dates they have to present and share the information with the rest of the students each and explain the present situation of the social action. This activity helped students to understand the situation of all four social actions groups. Personally as social work educator, I strongly believe that reading enhance confidence and create interest in students to work in social action. Reading and sharing knowledge also generates thinking ability and curiosity in the students. I have seen how after reading students start to think critically and formulate questions. The following are some of the interesting questions my student's have asked after they ‘discovered’ the social issues and problems and completed their readings:

- “Why most of the social actions are related to tribal areas?”
- “... Why some are exploited in the name of development or progress?”
- “Can we have development [as nation] and progress while our people are being exploited?”
- “What is development then?”
- “Why we don't stand with tribal groups for their rights?”
- “Is economic estimation and cost analysis everything in rehabilitation of tribal groups?”

It became extremely important to me to answer their question, and to provide them with the tools to address their critical thoughts and ventilate their feelings, but how can we do this? Let them write about what they feel after reading.

### 3.3 Engaging students in Writing

During my years of teaching I have experienced that writing helps students to develop confidence and teach them how to put forward their ideas and views clearly and in a systematic manner. It is important to mention my student for the past 2 years have written more than 150 articles in different local newspapers. As result of their gained interest in reading, their involvement in social action during the summer placement training, my students became more active in getting knowledge by reading and discussing on what they read, and by writing they develop a clear thinking process. In time, students developed ability to write analytically, became more inquisitive and interested in work in

social action. And of course, they get more motivated as their friends and family appreciate their newspaper articles. Parents themselves become more understanding and start having faith in their sons and daughters when they see their kids are writing for newspapers. Finally, after sensitizing students with reading on the social action and writing about it, it became easier to prepare them for the real work in the social action.

### *3.4 Role of students in social action*

Another crucial step in preparing students for social action is the do and don'ts of summer placement training and social action. After reading and writing about a particular social action, students get a lot of energy to work with these social action groups/issues. So, it is necessary to make them understand that we are going to be a part of social action for a few days, and we have to be prepared to return back to our daily routines. Therefore, students are requested to follow their social action instructor and to refrain from taking any decision on their own without consultation. We have such discussions/advising sessions in class normally one week prior to going to social action. These sessions help students to understand their roles and responsibilities as trainees in social action work.

After their Summer Placement Training, our students have worked for many committees in social action (e.g. 'Zaa Commission') and took part in mobilizing huge masses for social action; we started receiving many appreciating letters from social activists such as Medhatai Patkar, Ulkatai Mahajan, Pratibhatai Shinde, Aruna Roy. Students have walked 20 to 30 km in tribal areas and have tested their abilities in mobilizing rallies. This activity has given them the chance to believe in their own abilities.

The journey of social action did not stop after students came back from summer placement training; now they advocate and inform their communities about the situations in social action and what problems tribal people are facing in their day to day life.

### *3.5 Advocating Social Action*

When students return back from summer placement training they wrote about their experiences and about the situation of tribal people in the country; their articles got published in the local newspapers. Writing in different newspapers has become a medium to present and share the work done by the students in social action and also has served to raise awareness among local people about the social action. Students have used both paper and electronic media for advocating the problems and issues of tribal people in India. Students wrote in different newspaper articles, they wrote about what they experienced in SPT; about the ground realities of tribal community; how a particular social action is helping a tribal community to resolve the problems.

The SPT experiences of my students and their work in social action has also been broadcasted all throughout Solapur district by a local radio station. Radio is a good medium to reach the unreached masses especially in rural areas. Writing in different local newspapers and broadcasting on radio helped to reach people and share the experiences and reveal the crushed realities of the tribal community. However, exposure in mass media communication has also enriched these student experience and learning process.

Speaking on radio was an activity that enhanced student's communication skills. When the students decided to share their experience with their community and arranged to participate in a radio programme; we arranged training sessions on how to speak and these were delivered by Akashwani Solapur. This training programme taught students how to speak effectively and how to avoid the common mistake we make when speaking in public. This was a wonderful experience for these students, recording their voice in radio station and listening to the foretaste on radio set was indeed an amazing experience for the students. Also it was a proud moment for their parents and communities too, they gather together to hear their kids on regional radio station talking about learning and social action advocacy. On that day I received calls from my student's parents thanking me for providing such opportunity for their sons and daughters. This activity definitely strengthens the bond between



students and their parents, but also contributed towards student's engagement and involvement with their communities.

### 3.6 Writing a book

This year, a new innovation was added to summer placement training, students of urban and rural community development specialization, wrote and published a book where they present and share the experiences and views. This innovative practice was entirely the result of the students' initiative; creating a book on SPT experience in social action is indeed, a historical step in social work profession. Everything from the cover page and sketches in the book to the writing are the students work. It took them more than one year to complete and publish their book. Their effort was noticed by Social Activist Medhatai Patkar who as token of her appreciation for these students work wrote the preamble (preface) for the book.

The way students ask questions and articulate in group discussions in the classroom show that the students have developed and enhanced their abilities and capacities. Their participation and the way they carried themselves during the radio interview reflected the changes that have taken place in my students. Their engagement and involvement continues. Table 3 summarises the situation of MSW students before going to SPT training and students empowerment after training.

Table 3: Before and after empowering students through youth engagement

Sr.No	Indicators	Before training	After training
1	Writing	Students never wrote anything in newspaper	On an average every students have written five articles in four different news paper
2	Public speaking	Students never participated in public speaking or thought about participating in radio or television interviews	Students participated in four programmes of thirty minutes; specially conducted by Indian Radio Station. All students were given chance to share the experience.
3	Reading	Students never read issues of social action	Students discussed upon twenty books one by one.
4	Physical ability	Students never walked continuously more than 5 km	Students walked about 25 km a day in social action
5	Relationship with their	Students were having fear to speak with parents	Students started sharing their experiences with their parents
6	Classroom attendance	Only forty to sixty percentage of the students were present in classroom	Attendance raised above seventy five percentage and more
7	Participation	Were hesitant to participate in classroom discussion	Now raise interesting issues and debate systematically
8	Interest in profession	Not interested	Dedicated and dedicated their area of interest to work on after completion of course.
9	Moving out of hometown	Many students never went out of the state even district	Students travelled more than two states in SPT

## 4. LEARNING FROM ENDEAVOUR, A CONCLUSION:

I like to quote Mahatma Gandhi (1962), he said: "Interdependence is and ought to be as much and ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being", In other words, if we want to become self-reliance, we should believe in interdependence, we are all interdependent on each other. Students, teachers, parents, institution and society at large, we are all interdependent. Learning is a two way process, where the one that teaches also learn in return. Collectively we can enjoy the teaching-learning process. Teaching-learning process becomes more enjoyable because collectively we motivate each other to study and learn new things and share our knowledge. Humans have a capacity to change; thus, students' attitudes and behaviour can be changed and/or strengthened using different pedagogy of social work practice. youths can be empowered by systematically involving them into enjoyable learning environment. Once you have faith youth the journey of their empowerment

initiates. Empowering youths through engaging them in social action is definitely an amazing endeavour.

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# **THE CONTRIBUTION OF A YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME TO SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL SUPPORT: EVIDENCE FROM AN IRISH MIXED METHODS EVALUATION**

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## **Abstract**

The Foróige leadership for life programme has been run in Ireland since 2009. Through this programme, young people aged between 15-18 years gain the opportunity to learn how to be leaders in their community by developing key skills necessary to take active leadership roles in areas of their personal passion. This presentation draws on a recent mixed methods evaluation of the programme to demonstrate how young people's skills can be enhanced by their involvement in the programme. The study was a quasi-experimental design involving 267 young people who received the Foróige Leadership for Life programme and a comparison group of 164 respondents who did not receive any leadership intervention over an 18 month period. Quantitative findings indicate that youth leadership participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements over time when compared to the comparison group in goal setting, empathy, critical thinking, communication skills, team work, problem solving, life skills, leadership skills, resilience, sibling support, total social support, emotional support, esteem support and community involvement. Additionally, a subset of youth categorised as high risk for internalising disorders also demonstrated significant improvements over time, indicating that the programme may have benefits for youth experiencing adversity. Qualitative evidence indicates additional improvements in social skills, sense of achievement, self-control, confidence, public speaking, assertiveness and ability to access more leadership opportunities. The findings suggest that the leadership for life programme is capable of enhancing participant's leadership skills, capacity for resilience and ability to access social supports. Drawing on the findings of this study, it can be argued that youth leadership programmes should be made widely available to enhance skill sets that employers deem necessary in the workplace. Additionally, these programmes should also be made available to young people not traditionally considered leaders as youth experiencing adversity demonstrate significant gains when exposed to the programme.

**Key words:** *Youth leadership, Resilience, Social Support, Skills, Community Involvement*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Seeing young people as having the potential to contribute meaningfully to their community can be considered at polar opposites of how society sometimes sees teenagers as a source of stress, misguided and as trouble makers. Indeed either perspective may be true, however if society offers young people the potential to contribute instead of consume, then it paves the way for the idealism of adolescence to be harnessed to its most brilliant potential. That is for the greater good of those in their family and surrounding environment. In seeing youth as important civic actors in their community not alone bestows much needed independence but also responsibility and the opportunity for altruism which Brendtro (2009) sees as vitally important to the positive development of young people. In

recent years youth leadership has received growing attention both nationally and internationally as a way of preparing young people to contribute meaningfully to society (Anderson et al., 2007; Libby et al., 2006; Detzler et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2008; Klau, 2006; Shelton, 2009; Kahn et al., 2009; Nelson, 2010).

Historically, young people would have had substantial responsibilities in the family and community spending much of their time working to secure food and materials (SRDC, 1996). In more recent times the role of the adolescent has changed and it seems the focus is more on what they fail to do rather than what they are capable of doing (SRDC, 1996). The media may be largely responsible for the negative stereotype of adolescents in today's global society, often portraying young people as a menace for loitering on street corners, engaging in public order offences, and drugs and alcohol consumption (Devlin, 2006). Counter to this negative stereotype there can be seen a rising desire to portray youth in a positive light through youth leadership and civic engagement (Kahn, et al., 2009; Nelson, 2010; Best & Dustan, 2008). Some of the emphasis of youth leadership programmes has been on the intent to make leaders for the future, possibly denying them the right to contribute today to their community and wider society (Kahn et al., 2009; Connor & Strobel, 2007; Nelson, 2010). This focus on young people as leaders of tomorrow may be considered a failing by some youth organisations, schools, and community groups to see young people as valuable assets in the present. The emphasis on youth participation in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) and the amendment to the Irish constitution are welcome changes in societies contemplating the civil rights of young people. As Article 12 highlights young people's voices should be heard in decisions that affect them, this paves the way for youth to get increasingly involved in their communities. By seeing youth as having an important contribution to make to their society, this encourages them to use their skills, time and energy to harness the will of their peers to find unique solutions to issues they see as relevant. This in turn can have a positive impact on themselves, their peers and their communities.

When considering youth leadership it is important to have in mind a definition as to what it is and what it is not. Work by Zeldin and Camino (1999) highlight a caution that there is the potential to weaken youth leadership by describing everything as youth leadership when it is not defined properly. Indeed ensuring that everything youth development is not encompassed under youth leadership enables the concept of youth leadership become stronger. Wheeler and Edlebeck (2006, p.89) eloquently describe youth leadership as 'learning, listening, dreaming and working together to unleash the potential of people's time, talent and treasure for the common good'. While Kahn et al., (2009, p.6) defined the development of youth leadership 'as young people empowered to inspire and mobilise themselves and others towards a common purpose, in response to personal and/or social issues and challenges, to effect positive change'. A common theme here is the responsibility of young people leading others to do wonderful things.

When considering leadership further, it is also necessary to consider what skills young people would need to be effective leaders. Skills and competency development are fundamental to the belief that leaders can be made (van Linden & Fertman, 1998; Northouse, 2004). Research indicates that social and emotional intelligence are critical to successful leaders (Hernez-Broome, 2004; Goleman et al., 2002). This includes self-awareness, empathy, self-management, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman, 2001). Another important aspect to leadership is the ability to collaborate with others (Kouzes & Posner, 1995). To this end the leader requires skills in conflict resolution, team building, problem solving and decision making (Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; Boyd, 2001; Mumford, 2000). Covey (1989) highlights the importance of teamwork in finding solutions to problems by bringing people together which can produce better results than each person could individually. All of these skills help the team to work cohesively together towards their common goal. The ability to articulate well ones perspective, both orally and written, is also seen as an important component of leadership (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Research also indicates that a leader needs to have knowledge and insight into the particular area (Shriberg et al., 2005). Ethics would also be included in this area as leadership requires a level of moral judgement which can only come from the insight into the consequences of decisions (Northouse, 2004, p.302).

Authentic opportunities are highlighted as critically important at enabling young people to apply their skills so that they gain genuine opportunities to embed the learning (Kahn et al., 2009). Furthermore, the ability to motivate others and master the skills developed are core skills in leadership (Shriberg, 2005; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Brendtro, 2009; Coyle, 2009).

Similarly concepts of resilience and social support have gained increasing interest as mechanisms of enabling youth cope with adversity and deal with challenges of everyday life (Masten, 2001; Ungar 2004; Cutrona, 2000; Pinkerton & Dolan, 2007). For youth to be resilient this involves a process that enables them to adapt to situations of adversity while maintaining their health and well-being (Ungar, 2004; Benard, 2006). Cobb (1976, p.300) illustrated the essence of social support, 'being information leading the subject to believe that one is cared for and loved, esteemed, and a member of a network of mutual obligations'. Social support theory illustrates that there are different sources of support, types of support, contexts for support and how the quality of support may vary depending on the individual's ability to access it and their perception of its availability (Cutrona, 2000). For young people, sources of support include: parents, friends, siblings and other adults (Pinkerton & Dolan, 2007). Social support can also be broken down by type, which includes: concrete support, emotional support, advice support, and esteem support (Cutrona, 2000; Dolan & Brady, 2012). Cutrona (2000) highlights that, for a young person, support is best provided within relationships which include at least one reliable person who provides all forms of support, is dependable, close and offers the opportunity for reciprocity. Social support theory implies that either received or perceived social support can enhance a person's overall health, as it acts as a buffer against the effects of stress (Uchino, 2009). Having good social support has been shown to improve well-being, health, reduce anxiety, depression, improve self-esteem, enhance the locus of control and yield a greater ability to persist at tasks that are not easily solved (Sarason et al., 1983, p.137).

Resilience is defined by Ungar (2004, p.23) as 'the result of negotiations between individuals and their environment to maintain a self-definition as healthy'. It is often considered the ability to 'bounce back' and successfully overcome the challenges life presents. Resilience theory highlights the risk factors that young people can be exposed to that can lead to the development of emotional or behavioural disorders. These risk factors can stem from a variety of areas, such as from the individual, the family or their environment (Rutter, 1979; Smith & Carlson, 1997). It also appears that the accumulation of risk factors produces more negative outcomes (Smith & Thornberry, 1995; Ungar et al., 2007). Counter to this are protective factors which also stem from the individual, family or their environment. Having more protective factors or assets conveys a buffer to the development of negative outcomes which can play a role in how a young person copes, perceives themselves and their competencies (Hjemdal et al., 2006; Clarke & Clarke, 2003; Benson 1997). This may also impact their ability to contribute to their family and wider community.

Indeed if leadership is defined as a process through which a set of learned skills and competencies facilitate this process, the position outlined by van Linden and Fertman (1998) that every person is capable of becoming a leader, highlights the potential of programmes to teach these skills. As such these programmes can then be researched and evaluated to determine their impact. Exploring how various initiatives can contribute to positive outcomes has become a key focus of much of the work carried out with young people in the past decade. The desire for accountability and to ensure that limited resources are spent wisely have increased the need for larger scale evaluations of programmes to ensure that the professional time spent by the youth worker or volunteer is in fact achieving the desired outcomes. Furthermore, as countries consider their legacy to young people, in light of a global economic downturn, it is important for governments to consider their contribution to effectively enabling youth to deal with the challenges they face today and in the future. There is the need to invest in the development of young leaders as change makers so that they can contribute meaningfully to the challenges their communities face. This study sets out to explore whether a youth leadership programme confers benefits to its participants when compared to a comparison group who do not receive the programme in the domains of leadership skills, resilience and social support.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The rationale for this study is two-fold; one to satisfy the need to explore the ability of the programme to demonstrate that it can achieve its stated outcomes and two to add to the evidence-base in relation to the development of youth leadership programmes. Unlike adult leadership which has been well documented, youth leadership has surprisingly few examples of robust research which illustrate the outcomes of involvement. Evaluated youth leadership programmes are in the main qualitative and those which involve quantitative approaches fail to look at the longitudinal influence these programmes have (Conner & Strobel, 2007; Lee et al., 2008; Anderson et al., 2007). The potential of youth leadership to have a profound and lasting impact on a young person, their skills, their sense of self and their capacity to contribute meaningfully to their community is an area of untapped exploration, particularly in Ireland.

## **3. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study was to explore the outcomes of a youth leadership programme amongst a cohort of young people engaged in the Foróige youth leadership programme and compare them to a comparison group of young people not engaged in the youth leadership programme, over the course of the programme and at six months follow-up. This study will also explore whether the leadership programme accrues any additional benefit in terms of contribution to youth resilience and social support.

## **4. RESEARCH APPROACH**

The research approach used for this study was a mixed methods approach, triangulation, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Cohen et al., (2008, p.141) describes triangulation as 'the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour'. This approach he continues 'attempts to map out the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint'. The use of triangulation strengthens both paradigms and counterbalances any weaknesses from one particular approach (Robson, 2011).

## **5. SAMPLING**

Under the quantitative strand of the research, a total of 431 young people were recruited to the study, of whom 267 took part in the leadership programme (Leadership Group) and 164 formed a comparison group (Comparison Group). Sampling for the leadership participants was by census for one academic year of the programme. All participants in the leadership programme were invited to complete questionnaires at three time points over an 18 month period. The comparison group was selected based on being a similar age, gender and geographical location to the leadership group. This sampling approach is known as block stratification and helps with ensuring equivalence between the intervention and comparison groups as well as reduces variability between the groups (Robson, 2011). The questionnaires were composed of a selection of standardised measures, including Life skills (Perkins, 2001), Leadership skills (Redmond et al., 2010), Resilience (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2009), Social Support (Dolan, 2006), Adolescent Well-being (Birlleson, 1980), Self-awareness and Empathy (Constantine & Benard, 2001). All young people completed surveys at time 1, with 184 leadership youth and 99 comparison youth participating at time 2 (67.7% response rate), and 140 leadership youth and 45 comparison youth participating at time 3 (68.9% response rate T2-T3 and 46.6% response rate T1-T3). The sample for the qualitative strand of the study was drawn from the quantitative sample and involved interviews at three time points including 22 participants.

## **6. CONTEXT**

Foróige (*Irish for Youth Development*) is the organisation with which the Leadership for Life programme was developed and is run. Foróige began in 1952 and today serves 60,000 young people

annually in a range of youth work services from local youth clubs to more specific youth projects. Foróige also works with young people experiencing adversity whether through poverty, social exclusion, early school-leaving, substance use, youth crime, minority groups, poor school attainment etc., Foróige’s purpose is ‘to enable young people to involve themselves consciously and actively in their own development and in the development of society’.

The Leadership for Life programme was developed by Foróige’s Best Practice Unit in 2009. The opportunity to develop the programme was the result of funding from The Atlantic Philanthropies. The programme has been developed as a way of exploring vision and passion, and to enable young people to develop key skills such as planning, decision making, critical thinking, goal setting and problem solving that are core to leadership. The programme being researched is a three module, 80 hour youth leadership programme that is offered to young people aged 16-18 years which consists of facilitated youth leadership content, individual reflection, self-directed learning, team research and a community action project. The entire three modules lead to a qualification of Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership and Community Action from the National University of Ireland, Galway. The programme is delivered by trained Foróige staff and volunteers who receive two days training to run the programme. The programme is delivered in three settings; the Foróige club led by volunteers, Foróige projects led by staff and volunteers and schools led by Foróige staff and volunteers.

## 7. RESULTS

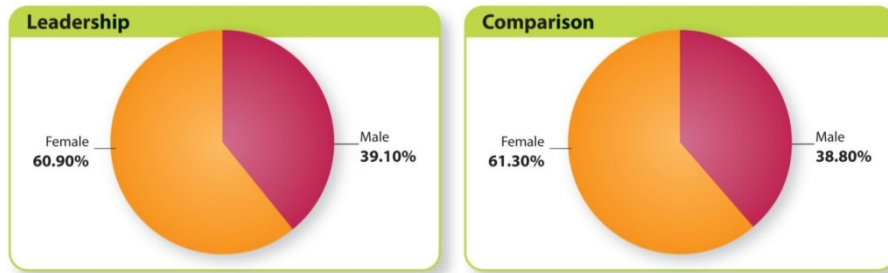
The research revealed similarities between the leadership and comparison groups. In terms of mean age both groups were very similar, the leadership group had an average age of 16.9 years while the comparison group had a mean age of 17 years see table 1. Gender was also very similar with no statistically significant difference between the groups see figure 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics		Leadership T1	Comparison T1	Chi Square
Mean Age		16.9	17	
Age				
	16	34.2%	30.0%	–
	17	45.5%	43.8%	
	18	20.3%	26.3%	
County				
	Carlow	.4%	.0%	–
	Donegal	15.7%	11.6%	
	Dublin	26.2%	25.6%	
	Galway	30%	37.2%	
	Kilkenny	2.6%	1.8%	
	Leitrim	3.0%	.6%	
	Limerick	2.6%	3.7%	
	Longford	3.7%	.0%	
	Mayo	3.7%	5.5%	
	Sligo	7.5%	9.1%	
	Tipperary	4.5%	4.3%	
	Waterford	0%	.6%	

\*Significant at .05, \*\*Significant at .01, \*\*\*Significant at .001

Figure 1



School level and grade was also found to be similar between the two groups with no statistically significant difference between the groups see table 2.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics		Leadership Group T1	Comparison Group T1	Chi Square
Level				–
	Honours	76.4%	73.4%	
	Ordinary	22.1%	24.7%	
	Foundation	1.5%	1.9%	
Average Grades				–
	A	9.5%	7.5%	
	B	57.6%	46.0%	
	C	29.4%	42.2%	
	D	3.1%	3.1%	
	E	.4%	.6%	
	F	.0%	.6%	

\*Significant at .05, \*\*Significant at .01, \*\*\*Significant at .001

A Chi-square test indicated that there was no significant difference between the leadership and comparison groups in terms of leadership self-perception at time one, see table 3. At time two and time three there were statistically significantly more young people who believed themselves to be leaders in the leadership group than in the comparison group,  $X^2(1, n=283)=13.025, p<.000, \phi=.223$  and  $X^2(1, n=185)=11.483, p=.001, \phi=.264$ , respectively.

Table 3

Characteristics	Leader Gp T1	Comp Gp T1	Chi Sq	Leader Gp T2	Comp Gp T2	Chi Square	Leader Gp T3	Comp Gp T3	Chi Sq
Self-perception as a Leader			-			F=14.038***			F=12.911***
Yes	43.5%	39.2%		78.4%	57.1%		83.6%	57.8%	
No	55.4%	59.8%		21.6%	42.9%		16.4%	42.2%	

\*Significant at .05, \*\*Significant at .01, \*\*\*Significant at .001

One-way ANOVA's were used to determine the difference between the leadership and comparison groups, see table 4. Comparing time one data for the leadership versus comparison groups indicates a statistically significant difference for *advice support* with the comparison group scoring significantly higher than the leadership group at time one,  $F(1, 281)=4.208, p=.041, \eta^2=.01$ .

One way ANOVA for leadership versus comparison at time two indicates statistically significant improvement in the leadership group on the following variables; *goal setting*  $F(1, 281)=3.926,$



p=.041, eta squared=.013, *leadership skills*  $F(1, 281)=7.608$ ,  $p=.006$ , eta squared=.027, *sibling support*  $F(1, 285)=8.803$ ,  $p=.003$ , eta squared=.032, *total social support*  $F(1, 280)=5.577$ ,  $p=.019$ , eta squared=.019, *esteem support*  $F(1, 279)=5.703$ ,  $p=.018$ , eta squared=.019 and *community involvement*  $F(1, 281)=12.917$ ,  $p<.000$ , eta squared=.045.

One-way ANOVA for leadership versus comparison at time three indicates statistically significant improvement in the leadership group on the following variables; *resilience 1*  $F(1, 182)=4.487$ ,  $p=0.36$ , eta squared=0.02 *resilience 2*  $F(1, 182)=12.553$ ,  $p=.001$ , eta squared=.06, *empathy*  $F(1, 182)=9.276$ ,  $p=.03$ , eta squared=.05 *critical thinking*  $F(1, 183)=10.157$ ,  $p=.002$ , eta squared=.055, *communication skills*  $F(1, 183)=7.526$ ,  $p=.007$ , eta squared=.04, *goal setting*  $F(1, 183)=11.546$ ,  $p=.001$ , eta squared=.06, *team work*  $F(1, 183)=5.506$ ,  $p=.020$ , eta squared=.029, *problem solving*  $F(1, 183)=13.683$ ,  $p<.000$ , eta squared=.07, *emotional support*  $F(1, 182)=5.391$ ,  $p=.021$ , eta squared=.021, *community involvement*  $F(1, 183)=13.285$ ,  $p<.000$ , eta squared=.07, and *Resilience Total*  $F(1, 182)=10.482$ ,  $p=.001$ , eta squared=.057.

Table 4

Quantitative Measures	L-Ship Gp T1	Comp Gp T1	Sig	L-ship Gp T2	Comp G T2	Sig	L-Ship Gp T3	Comp Gp T3	Sig
Adolescent Well-being	8.61	8.67		8.19	9.05		8.41	9.09	
Resilience1	35.10	35.76		34.98	34.74		36.06	34.57	*
Understand Self	11.69	11.94		11.98	11.76		11.87	11.45	+
Resilience2	38.02	38.39		38.80	38.06		38.86	35.68	***
Empathy	12.35	11.90		12.40	12.09		12.92	11.95	**
Decision Making	14.98	14.85		15.50	14.97		15.89	14.78	+
Critical Thinking	18.19	17.92		18.76	18.12		19.34	17.64	**
Communication Skills	22.96	22.70		23.25	22.53	+	23.74	22.04	**
Goal Setting	14.58	14.57		14.80	14.06	*	15.34	13.60	***
Team Work	11.90	11.73		11.74	11.60	+	12.12	11.33	*
Problem Solving	18.88	18.79		19.07	18.15	+	19.63	17.64	***
Life Skills ^	101.23	100.20		103.14	99.45	*	106.06	97.04	+
Leadership Skills	41.24	41.19		42.10	40.01	**	43.73	39.82	+
Friend Support	11.04	11.11		11.13	10.65	+	11.09	10.89	
Parental Support	10.62	10.22		10.78	9.90	+	10.67	9.68	+
Sibling Support	9.16	9.44		9.51	8.52	**	9.56	9.13	
Adult Support	9.67	9.98		9.94	9.75		9.96	9.75	
Total Social support^^	39.8	40.57		40.57	38.58	*	40.65	38.61	
Concrete	10.10	10.32		10.33	10.00		10.29	9.89	
Emotional	10.14	10.11		10.30	9.77	+	10.29	9.61	*
Esteem	9.69	9.77		9.79	9.21	*	9.97	9.25	+
Advice	9.94	10.36	*	10.13	9.88		10.10	9.86	
Community	10.86	10.47		11.20	10.19	***	11.36	9.93	***
Resilience Total	72.92	74.16		73.79	72.45		74.92	70.25	***

^Life skills calculated based on total decision making, critical thinking, communication skills, goal setting, team work, problem solving.

^^ Total social support calculated on total friend, parental, sibling and adult support.

+Levene's test for homogeneity  $p < .05$  null hypothesis rejected

\*Significant at .05, \*\*Significant at .01, \*\*\*Significant at .001

## 7.1 Qualitative Evidence

Interviews with young people identified the following benefits resulting from involvement in the Youth Leadership programme:

In terms of skills development the young people highlighted that they had improved in leadership skills, communication skills, team work, conflict resolution and problem solving, social skills, sense of achievement and self-belief, empathy, self-awareness, self-control, confidence, public speaking and assertiveness. *'Oh definitely made me less self-conscious and you know? Better with people than I used to be, and yeah, more confident'*. [Theresa]. Young people involved in the programme felt they had more opportunities to engage as a leader and felt that they could see opportunities in their communities to use their skills. *'If you get knocked down once and don't get up again then you're not really a leader, you have to take the falls'*. [Diane]. Persistence and motivating were also qualities that the young people felt they had developed over the course of the programme.

Resilience was also reported to have been improved particularly notable through descriptions of how the participants dealt with challenges that emerged in their lives. Qualitative descriptions of the young people's experiences illustrated the difficult situations they had been through and how they coped with them. Strategies that were employed to cope with challenges included; talking to other people, getting a different perspective, listening to music, reading a book, drawing, drama, science, going for walks and watching films. *I just sit in my room, probably have a little cry, listen to music and just think about it and then I'd go talk to someone and get their opinion, then just try sort it out like*. [Sile].

From the qualitative aspect of this research, there was a strong emphasis on social support being core to the young people's ability to deal with challenges and also their self-belief. Parents and friends were seen as strong sources of support. *Mum encourages me every time I play football – embarrassing sometimes, she pushes me the extra bit, makes you push forward and encourages you to do better*. [Michael]. Similar to the quantitative findings, siblings did not feature as frequently as other sources of support. However, where they did feature, for some they were perceived as a very valuable asset and for others as the programme progressed they felt that the dynamic with their siblings had improved. *Myself and my sister we used to fight, now I just kind of step back and don't just say things on the spur of the moment any more*. [Alison]

Focus groups with facilitators found that the leadership programme contributed to: improvements in communication skills, presentation skills, reflective skills, research skills, team work, confidence and self-awareness for the young people involved. Enhanced support networks including additional friends and ability to access other supports as well as opportunities for facilitators to build relationships with the young people. Participants reported enhanced opportunities for community involvement, including positive recognition and appreciation from the young people's involvement and contribution.

## **8. DISCUSSION**

Young people today can play a pivotal role in their communities, providing much needed social capital, energy and innovation which help contribute to solving the problems of communities they live in (SRDC, 1996). Hernez-Broome and Hughes (2004) highlight that opportunities for youth leadership must be framed not only to develop skills and knowledge, but in the application of these skills in authentic ways. Young people can contribute to their communities in a positive way or unfortunately be considered part of the problem.

When comparing the leadership group directly to the comparison group, the findings from the one-way ANOVA analysis in this study indicate that both groups were very similar at time one, when adjusted for lost cases. One exception was that the comparison group were statistically significantly higher on advice support than the leadership group at time one. At time two the leadership group demonstrated statistically significant improvements over the comparison group for goal setting, life skills, leadership skills, sibling support, esteem support, total social support and community involvement. In addition, at time three the leadership group demonstrated further statistically significant improvements over the comparison group in resilience, empathy, critical thinking,

communication skills, team work, problem solving and emotional support. The difference between the groups does suggest that the increases observed in the leadership group may be attributed, in part, to the youth leadership programme as the groups were similarly matched in terms of age, gender and geographical location. Furthermore, the benefits accrued were maintained and enhanced as the young people continued to garner benefits beyond the life of the programme. This reveals that the youth leadership programme may confer positive benefits for the participants.

In the quantitative study carried out by Anderson et al., (2007) they found that their leadership group started off at a higher point than the comparison group on a number of the measures. However, in this study both groups had a stronger degree of similarity at the starting point. A point to consider is that young people involved in youth leadership programmes may do better than those not involved, due to self-selection.

Another interesting finding is that seeing yourself as a leader appears to be linked with better outcomes. This suggests that self-belief plays an important role in youth leadership development which concurs with Bandura's (1977, 1997) view that self-belief and self-efficacy are key attributes to being able to carry something through to action, which often determines how well a person does in life. This finding is also comparable to research by Nelson (2010) who found that young people were beginning to see themselves as leaders.

In terms of qualitative data, participants reported being better able to communicate. For some this was a dramatic change going from being quite shy to being more assertive. The young people also reported that they had gained the ability to lead people, found it easier to work as a team and share the responsibility. They described having improved presentation skills, the ability to resolve conflicts and finding the solutions to problems. As well as this, they felt they were more active in their communities. Furthermore, social and emotional skills such as empathy, relating to others, self-awareness, confidence and self-control were believed to have improved over the course of the study. These findings echo those of Stiftung's qualitative study (2003) which found young people reported an improvement in confidence, maturity, communication, critical thinking and ability to create a persuasive argument. In the Foróige leadership programme participants perceived an improvement in their leadership skills, their ability to communicate, presentation skills, confidence and access to leadership opportunities. *I realised, I have to do things for myself, like school and college I could not let people do everything for me. I realise it is all for myself. I realised I have to take action, myself.* [Alison]

### *8.1 Youth leadership programme involvement appears to increase resilience*

Resilience is seen as the ability to overcome serious threats or challenges which enable the person to 'bounce back' and maintain their health and well-being (Ungar, 2004; Benard, 2006). A person's capacity for resilience can depend on their exposure to risk and protective factors. Exposure to a disproportionate number of risk factors can overwhelm a person and limit their capacity for resilience (Arthur et al., 2002). Conversely, having abundant protective factors can buffer against the stresses of everyday life and traumatic experiences (Arthur et al., 2002; Hjemdal et al., 2006). When considered in the context of youth leadership development, resilience can be seen as an important component for young leaders particularly as young leaders are likely to encounter many challenges (Broadwood & Fine, 2011; Goleman, 2002). If a young leader is resilient they should be better able to face challenges they encounter and overcome them. On the otherhand, if a young person is resilient they may also have a greater capacity to demonstrate leadership.

When considering how the leadership group compared directly to the comparison group, the findings from one-way ANOVA analysis revealed that the leadership group demonstrated statistically significant improvements over the comparison group on resilience 1, resilience 2 and resilience total between time one and time three. This indicates that the leadership programme when compared to no-intervention contributes towards positive benefits to its participants in terms of youth's capacity for resilience. These findings are similar to the increase in protective factors Shelton (2009) found, which led to an increase in resilience of youth who participated in a leadership programme. Broadwood &

Fine (2011) also found that by engaging young offenders in youth leadership which set out to contribute to their resilience also had the effect of reducing their offending. This suggests that youth leadership may have further benefits to society and indicates that involvement in the youth leadership programme may confer positive benefits in terms of youth's capacity for resilience and ability to deal with challenges that occur. Something which may also be connected to participants' perception of improvements in their critical thinking skills, problem solving and communication skills.

### *8.2 Youth leadership programme appears to improve social support*

Social support leads to the belief that one is cared for and loved, esteemed and valued, and belong to a network of communication and mutual obligations (Cobb, 1976, p.300). Steinberg (2001, p.7) highlights that adolescents' are remarkably adaptable and resilience in the face of normative challenges, particularly if they have the support of one or more caring adults'. Having a network of supports offers young people the sense that they belong and that they are loved, something that Maslow (1934) highlighted as central to positive development. Whether received or perceived, social support conveys a benefit to overall health as it acts as a positive buffer to the effects of everyday stress as well as times when there is no stress (Uchino, 2009).

When comparing the leadership group directly to the comparison group using one-way ANOVA analysis, findings indicate that the comparison group were significantly higher on advice support than the leadership group. At time two however, the leadership group demonstrated statistically significant improvements over the comparison group on sibling support, total social support and esteem support. At time three the leadership group maintained statistically significant improvements over the comparison group in emotional support. Dolan (2003) noted that siblings can be a serious cause of stress in young people's lives and found that young people perceive their siblings as a poor source of support. This lack of perceived support can be seen in the results of this study which found that the average score for sibling support was substantially lower than that of other sources such as friend, parent and other adult support at time one. The significant increase in sibling support may be linked to an improved ability to communicate, deal with conflict and solve problems. This may in turn have helped the participants cope with sibling challenges and see them more as a support than previously. Something which is particularly beneficial as sibling relationships can be some of the closest and most enduring relationships people have throughout their lives (Gilligan, 2009; Edwards et al., 2006).

Furthermore, the fact that the young people were completing a leadership course and graduating from NUI Galway may have also impacted the increase seen in esteem support as they may have received additional attention from family and friends. The quantitative study carried out by Anderson et al., study (2007) did reveal that participants perceived an improved sense of support from their local communities, something which was not directly assessed by this study. However, this may be considered similar in some ways to the improved sense of support participants in the Foróige leadership programme felt they could access.

As with the quantitative findings, the qualitative findings suggest that the leadership programme may confer some benefit in helping buffer young people against the stresses associated with siblings and help them to develop appropriate coping and even tap into siblings as being more of a support. Greater positive sibling support as Branje et al., (2004) finds leads to lower levels of internalising and externalising problems.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that participants in the Foróige Youth Leadership programme garner benefits from their involvement both personally and in their ability to contribute to their communities. In terms of quantitative measures, the participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements over time when compared to the comparison group in goal setting, empathy, critical thinking,

communication skills, team work, problem solving, life skills, leadership skills, resilience, sibling support, total social support, emotional support, esteem support and community involvement. In addition, qualitative results indicate that the participants feel they have gained many additional skills and attributes from involvement in the programme including social skills, a sense of achievement, self-control, confidence, public speaking, assertiveness and ability to access more leadership opportunities. The study indicates that the programme appears effective in realising its desired goals of enabling young people to develop the skills, inspiration, vision, confidence, and action plans to be effective leaders and to make a positive difference to their society through the practice of effective leadership.

## 11. RECOMMENDATIONS

This programme significantly increases human capital in a number of important ways. A young person who completes the youth leadership programme demonstrates an increase in empathy and thus be more attuned to the needs of others and as such can relate to people much better. As well as this, having skills in goal setting, communication, critical thinking, team work, problem solving and leadership skills, community engagement are very beneficial to employees, entrepreneurs and college students. For organisations who want to advance, having employees with skill sets such as these are pivotal to their success. Therefore, government departments and businesses should consider funding such leadership initiatives at the programme or organisation level and encourage the inclusion of youth leadership development parallel to the school curriculum.

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# **YOUTH AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL NIGERIA: AN IMPACT ANALYSIS OF LAPAI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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## **Abstract**

Youths are the most productive force in society and could make meaningful contributions to national development if effectively and efficiently mobilised. This will bring about significant transformation on their well-being. The paper examined the centrality of entrepreneurship development programmes in building the skills and vocational competences of youths in Lapai local government area to see how this could change the context of human capital development in the area. Its attempt is to examine the challenges with stimulating the mechanics of youth development through entrepreneurship development and proffer solutions to it. The paper argued that the lack of pragmatic policy on youth development has negative consequences on national security and the nation building project. The paper concluded that the failure of government to evolve a sustainable policy on youth development especially in the rural areas had resulted to the alienation of the youth and consequently frustration and aggression that has turned the nation into a theatre of guerrilla warfare by dissident youths and recommends the reform of the human side of youth enterprise if sustainable peace is to reign in Nigeria.

**Key Words:** *Youth, Entrepreneurship, Development, Nation building and Empowerment*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Any meaningful effort aimed at building a virile nation, promoting sustainable development and increasing the industrial capacity of a nation start with entrepreneurship development. It provides the basis for employment generation, wealth creation and good nutrition. One of the pillars of good governance is the harnessing the potentialities of the youths and putting it into productive use. The economic engineering of the human side of enterprise is central to addressing the problem of youth restiveness, youth unemployment, food and national insecurity, poor nutrition, illiteracy, inequality rate and the overdependence of a nation on external markets for development. Efforts have been made over the years by government to provide vocational training and skills for youths to make them useful in the productive enterprises of the nation. Institutions like the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), the National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NAPEP), the Bank of Industry and Small and Medium Scale Development Agency (SMEDAN) were established to harness, mobilize and convert the energy of Nigerian youths into economic fibre for national development. However, the impact of these programmes is less felt across the nation. The loss of inertia in the mobilization of local initiatives for vocational training, poor financing, the disconnection between policy objectives and the political will to implement policies and corruption accounts

for the limited coverage and poor result achieved with these laudable programmes. The result is high degree of rural poverty, illiteracy and unemployment across rural areas in Nigeria.

A large army of artisans, craftsmen and businessmen reside in the rural areas. This study seeks to find out the impact of government's intervention on entrepreneurship development in Lapai Local Government. Part of the findings of this research is generated from the focused group discussion I had with a cross section of artisans in Lapai Town. Majority of the youths in Lapai town are engaged in vocational trade like farming, blacksmith, mechanics, volcaniser, tailoring, metal works, carpentry, electrical works, panel beater and petty trading. What are the challenges encountered by these youths in their businesses? What is the level of government intervention in addressing these challenges? What is their profit-saving-investment ratio? These are the issues the paper seeks to investigate. The result of the analysis of these questions shall form the basis of my recommendation to government and policy makers.

## **2. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH**

The researcher adopted two methods of research investigation. He relied on secondary data to do a content analysis of the subject matter. In addition, the researcher had a focused group discussion with the artisans for convenience. However, the artisans were allowed to identify the problems peculiar to them in the course of the interaction. Their views are summarized in the research findings below.

The youths in Lapai town are engaged in many business activities but in this research I have limited myself to investigating the business prospects of artisans alone due to time constraint.

## **3. CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW**

On a general note, development involves the harnessing of the skills, capacities and creativity of individuals for the material well-being of the individual and nation (Otinche, 2011:98). This view was captured by Rodney (2005); the World Bank (2000) and Maduabum (2001). These scholars collectively laid emphasis on the human capacity development with emphasis on rehabilitating, strengthening and re-invigorating the technical knowledge, skills, attitude and aptitude of individuals for optimal performance. The gains would be reduction in rates of poverty, inequality, unemployment and illiteracy through entrepreneurship development.

Entrepreneurship development is an off-shoot of genealogical craftsmanship. Its growth has been in line with changes in the architecture of human civilization. Contemporary interest on entrepreneurship development is linked to the works of Richard Cantillon (17<sup>th</sup> century), Adam Smith (18<sup>th</sup> century), Joseph Schumpeter, Carl Menger, Ludwig Von Mises and Friedrich Hayek (20<sup>th</sup> Century). As human values change so changes have occurred in the fields of entrepreneurship. The term entrepreneurship has featured prominently on any discussion on good governance, democracy and sustainable human capital development. Many of the development policies initiated by government laid emphasis on youth empowerment, capacity building, wealth creation and job creation. These targets are better achieved with entrepreneurship development. An entrepreneur is the primary agent of development and the economic fabric of society.

This study classified entrepreneurs into two broad categories: micro and macro entrepreneurs. Micro entrepreneurs are those engaged in small and medium scale production of essential goods and services and whose income is of marginal proportion to that generated by macro

entrepreneurs. Macro entrepreneurs engage in large scale production of goods and services and for larger markets. They engage in the economic activities that are less attractive to macro entrepreneurs. As Schumpeter in Olawale (2010) acknowledges, an entrepreneur engages in creative destruction by building innovations that renders old ideas and technologies obsolete. He develops new product, modify old ones, design new production processes and identify new markets. In the same vein, Drucker (1969) argued that an entrepreneur searches for change, respond to change, exploit the change, and is proactive, unassuming and seeks for opportunities that yields favourable production-profit related ends. An entrepreneur undertakes business risk and ensures that he succeed in the end. This economic behaviour makes entrepreneurship development an art and a process. Anyadike, Emeh and Ukah (2012) argued that it is the process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resource and create value by identifying unmet needs and opportunities for change. An entrepreneur uses his innovations, initiatives and finance to transform raw materials into economic goods for domestic consumer and for export. He identifies economic opportunities, exploits the opportunities, invests in it and creates economic values from such opportunities. This economic relation is dependent on the financial capacity of the entrepreneur, his business foresight and risk bearing attitude. A good entrepreneur must be ready and willing to take business risk or share the risk with co-investors, provide good leadership and innovative direction.

The challenge with entrepreneurship development in Nigeria today is the inability of government to encourage its growth and development and or dilute investment risk. Many inventions have been made in Nigeria by young men and women but such inventions have been lost to political inertia. Such inventions if harnessed would have created economic monopoly for Nigeria, at least in the interim. Economic monopoly arises from manipulations in the production-supply chain. Binks and Vale (1990) argued that entrepreneurial skill creates an unrehearsed combination of economic resources instigated by uncertainty in the prospect of enjoying monopoly profit. Herein, Kanothi (2009) argued that an entrepreneur is the instigator of entrepreneurial events for so long as they occur. On this note Tijani-Alawiye (2004) argued that entrepreneurship entails increasingly the supply of entrepreneur or adding to the stock of existing small, medium and big enterprises available to a country by creating and promoting many capable entrepreneurs, who can successfully run innovative enterprises, nurture them to grow and sustain them with a view to achieving broad socio-economic developmental goals. The central focus of entrepreneurship is the ability to harness the vision, initiatives and talents of the youths and integrate them into the existing development value chain hence, Shepherd and Douglas (1997) agreed that entrepreneurship development is the manifestation of creative strategies, innovative tactics, uncanny perception of trends and market mood changes and courageous leadership that leads to enterprise creation and the development of new skills and expenses. Schnurr and Newing (1997) laid emphasis on the psychological dimension of entrepreneurship development where the resourcefulness, initiative, drive, imagination, enthusiasm, zeal, dash ambition, energy, boldness, audacity and courage of youths are seen as national resources. National development agents like government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) must tap these psychological resources and inject them into the national development gridline and build social bridges between government and civil society.

#### 4. YOUTH GOVERNANCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Efforts to bring about good governance has snowball into youth development. Beside the cardinal issues of the rule of law, constitutionalism and political rights is the concern to extend the frontiers of economic justice to the youths. Section 17 Subsections 2 and 3 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is emphatic about economic justice and youth empowerment:

All citizens without discrimination on any basis whatsoever have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunities to secure suitable employment; conditions of work are just and humane and there are adequate facilities for leisure and for social, religious and cultural life; the health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safeguarded and not endangered or abused; and there is equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex or any other ground whatsoever (Constitution, 1999; Uvieshara, 2001; and Otinche, 2013).

In the Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), the Nigerian government seeks to build a strong, self-reliant and democratic society whose citizens are united on the basis of social and economic justice (Anyanwu, Oaikhenan, Oyefusi and Dimowo 1997). Technical colleges, vocational schools and Federal Universities of Technologies and Polytechnics were built to provide vocational skills in automobiles engineers, electrical and electronic engineers, carpenters, plumbers and metal and wood works among others to Nigerian youths. However, the abolition of technical colleges, the ideological deception by the World Bank which favoured the 6-3-3-4 system of education embedded in the Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) introduced by the Babangida administration set the pace of entrepreneurship development in Nigeria 100 years backward. This has made the cardinal objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the National Directorate of Employment, National Open Apprenticeship Scheme, (NOAS) Youth Empowerment/Skill Acquisition Scheme under NAPEP, and the Small and Medium Scale Enterprise Development policy more prone to political interest than social interest. The negative impact of the Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) is high rate of poverty, unemployment, inequality, illiteracy and youth migration from the rural to urban centre in search of white collar jobs. Ironically, many of the youths that migrated to urban centres are employable. The social consequences are the resurgence of urban and white collar crimes. The 1991 census in Nigeria puts the total number of youths in Nigeria at 30 million: 14 million (47%) were male and 16 million (53%) were female. About 17 million (61%) youths lived in the rural and 11 million (39%) lived in the urban areas. The record from the National Bureau of Statistics shows that over 67 million youths in Nigeria are unemployed (Nigerian Tribune, 2012 online) and 33.6% of them are between age 10 -24. The statistics provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (FRN 2009; 2010) shows that youth unemployment between 2002 and 2009 was 31.1% (2000); 13.6% (2001), 12.6% (2002); 14.8% (2003); 13.4% (2004), 11.9% (2005); 13.7% (2006); 13.7% (2006). Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) reported that 64 million and 1.6 million out the total youth population of 80 million are unemployed and underemployed respectively. The high rate of unemployment in Nigeria undermined the national security implication of youth development. The idling of the potentialities of youths is inimical to national security. The situation where young persons of between ages 18-35 are unemployed challenges the moral

and political integrity of our leaders who had moved away from state welfarism to propertied capitalism.

The move from state welfarism to propertied capitalism is an ideological eclipse that have made statutory provisions to the Ministry of Youth Development through its youth employment programme (YEP) unable to initiate short-term, quick impact plan that would harness the skills, provide entrepreneur trainings, job placements, business development and concessionary credit facilities to youths on a sustainable basis. The sum of one billion two hundred million (N1.2 billion) naira budgeted for in the 2012 budget for youth development (36,000 youths), the sum of USD 18 million budgeted for the 2013 budget, the sum of two million (N200 million) naira donated by the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) office to the Ministry of Youth Development, the assistance offered by the United Nations Junior Professional Officers Programme (UNJPO-P) for 100 Nigerians (FRN, 2012) and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment introduced in 1998 has been subjected to bureaucratic and political rhetoric fanned by ember of corruption. The productive initiatives, skills and talents of many youths are allowed to waste. Many artisans are contending with the challenges of securing the financial back-ups to kick start or expand the scope of businesses. This is against the philosophy the National Youth Development Policy (NYDP) and the statutory provisions in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria: social justice; equality of opportunity; transparency and accountability; self reliance and selflessness; hard work and entrepreneurship; unity and co-operation, respect for human rights; and democracy and good governance (FRN: 2001). The achievement of these objectives revolves around the commitment of leaders and youths and the political will to implement the policy.

## **5. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Generally, majority of the youths in Lapai Local Government Area are confronted with the problem of unemployment and under employment; poor education and absence of programmes for youth empowerment. This problem emanates from the structural relationship between the state and the civil society. Government has shown no concern in financing entrepreneurship development programmes in rural areas like Lapai Local Government Area. The findings of the investigations carried out by the researcher shows that variety of goods items are manufactured by artisans in Lapai Local Government. The blacksmiths produced ornamental items like hoe, axe, digger and metallic objects of various types. These monumental objects could be produce in large quantities and exported to other countries given the necessary financial assistance. They work with crude tools fabricated by themselves and those they inherited from their ancestors. This has implication on the quality of items produce and the market for it. It is more or less a family business handed down by parents to male children interested in the trade with an induction period of not less than three (3) years. Most of the artisans and apprentices combined the trade with schooling. However, they lack the financial resources to procure modern work implements like wood/tree cutting machine, metal cutting machines, motorise iron smelting oven/wheeler, welding machine, regular power supply and vehicle as well as the building of new factory site to replace the old and dilapidated one. What comes in as income each day is used to service domestic needs of the artisan family. As a result many youths are becoming less interested in the metal work. It is also revealed that the income-saving-investment ratio of the artisans is low and this has created a vicious circle of poverty exists among many inhabitants.

Findings from the focused group discussion with those engaged in metallic works revealed that on estimation a graduate apprentice requires about two hundred thousand (N200, 000. 00) naira to set up his workshop. The cost of grinding/filer machine, welding machine, power generating set, electrons, hammer, chisel, pliers, saw, vice, protective glasses and bending machines are high and not within the reach of average graduate apprentice who needs about sixty thousand (N60, 000. 00) naira to finance the feasting for his freedom from the master. An apprenticeship fee of one thousand five hundred (N1, 500. 00) is paid for the internship. Those engaged in the metallic works produce iron doors, iron windows, iron gates and electric poles and spindles of various shapes and sizes. Overall, the income of the artisan depends on patronage which varies with the seasons. For automobile engineering, the story is not too different either. It requires as little as thirty thousand (N30, 000. 00) to set a mechanic workshop. This amount would enable the graduate mechanic to buy the basic tools like spanners, crane and spring. The prospect of their businesses also hang on the balance due to financial constrain. The daily income is low and many of the apprentices that graduate from the trade have no money to establish the trade. Many of them depend on freelance services to the public or the master until he is able to raise enough to procure his freedom. The challenges faced by artisans engaged in panel beating business are as much as those experienced by other artisans. Beside the health risk, the amount required (a minimum of one hundred and twenty thousand (N120, 000. 00) naira to buy nozzle, gauge, gas and cabal cylinders, sledge hammer, chain, file armour, body jack and cramp is out of the reach of many graduate apprentices. A graduate apprentice needs about fifty thousand (N50, 000. 00) naira to secure his freedom from his master.

Many issues have been established from this research. First, the enrolment of a child for the apprenticeship scheme to learn any vocation of his choice shows the willingness of the youths to enrich their human personality and potentialities. There is early socialization of the youth into craftsmanship. A child is enrolled as an apprentice at an infant age of 6 years, combined this with conventional education and stays on learning the trade till he attains maturity age and acquire great dexterity in trade. The apprentice goes to school in the morning and returns to work in the afternoon. Second, there is no government in Lapai local government in terms of entrepreneurship development. Of all the respondents only one mechanic had his training as artisan under the national apprenticeship scheme coordinated by the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) during the General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (rtd) administration. Thereafter, no government intervention has been extended to youths in the area in spite of the huge budgetary provision for entrepreneurship development. Third, the cost of establishing a workshop is too high for most families that many skilled youths are forced out of business. This is inconsistent with the philosophy of the National Youth Development Programme (NYDP) that seeks to:

Ensure that all youths are given equal opportunities and guided to reach their full potentials; recognize the rights of youths to choose, to make decision and accept the consequence of their action; foster appropriate values and positive attitudes among youths; inculcate leadership and fellowship values in youths; Provide opportunities for youths whether in or out of school for vocational training geared towards self-employment and self-reliance; inculcate in the youth the spirit of adventure, resourcefulness and inventiveness; promote the development of individual talents and infuse the youth with keen sense of inquiry and agreement; organize and harness the energies of the youth in the service of their neighborhood and communities (FRN, 2001:14-15).

Many of the tradesmen cannot afford to rent a shop but operate an open air workshop that exposed them to health and environmental hazards especially during rainy season. The periods of internship is associated with hardship as the master takes home all income. There is low income, low saving and little capital to expand the scope of business and this has introduced a vicious circle of poverty. The little income generated is spent on frivolities.

## 6. CONCLUSIVE REMARK

Contemporary discussion on good governance has given primary attention to youth empowerment and youth development through entrepreneurship development. However, the many attempts made by government to identify, mobilise, harness, empower and engage the youths productively in the task of nation building has yield marginal result. The task of nation building would be truncated if the window period of the transition of an individual from adolescence to (youth) adulthood is not bridged with capacity building, skill acquisition, economic empowerment and job and wealth creation. The talents, skills, energy, initiatives and potentialities of youths are the nucleus of development. Pragmatic steps should therefore be taken to mobilize, educate, re-orientate, train and engage the youths in productive ventures for the well-being of the youths and the nation at large. Government should extend a hand of friendship to youths engaged in productive ventures to enhance their productive capacity. The master tradesmen involved in training youths in various vocational skills should be paid by government while the apprentice should be given monthly stipends to cushion the effect of the hardship experience during internship. The school-to-apprenticeship programme in practice in Lapa should be modified and sponsored by government as a form of incentive to youth empowerment. Government should designate and build an industrial site equip with the basic facilities for youth entrepreneurs. The artisans should be encouraged to adopt the saving-investment culture as alternative strategy for poverty alleviation.

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# ROLES OF YOUTH TOWARDS AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

Nowadays, agriculture becomes a very important field in our country. It is expected that the income generated by agricultural industry will increase year by year. In order to achieve this, extension agents especially young generation plays important roles in educating farmers by encouraging them to learn, adopt new technologies and spread them to other farmers. To ensure the success of extension program, the agents should recognize their roles as change agents (as a catalyst, solution giver, process helper, and resource linker) and have ability to acquire competencies to accomplish these roles. Thus, this study aims to explore the level of roles among youth as extension agents. This study uses a quantitative survey methodology and self-administered questionnaires. A total of 92 young extension agents had participated. Farmers, policy makers, researchers, academics and people working in agriculture can learn a great deal about what individuals and institutions need to do to develop farmers, personally and professionally.

**Keywords:** *Roles, change agents, Youth as Extension Agents*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Youth is the pillar of economic development. Various programs designed specifically for youth development have been carried out as they would become future leaders, professionals, technocrats and skilled workforce. Participation of youth, especially in the agriculture sector as a career option, not only helps boost the agricultural sector, but also shows that their outlook forwards in agriculture is changing. Youth today are ready to face the challenges in the business world, particularly in the agribusiness sector.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify the roles of youth as extension agents towards advancement of agricultural practice in Malaysia. The effectiveness of their roles would facilitate transfer of technical knowledge and technology to farmers in order to improve output and bring about desired behavioural change in farmers (Anaeto et al., 2012).

## 2. BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

### *2.1 Agriculture in Malaysia*

Agriculture has played a key role in the development of Malaysia, resulting in the country becoming the world's leading palm oil producer and the third largest producer of natural rubber. Agriculture continues to make a significant contribution to the national economy. In 2003, the agriculture sector registered a growth of 5.5%, following in order of importance the

manufacturing and the service sectors. In 2004, the government of Malaysia announced that the agriculture sector be the third engine of growth. The government's policy towards agriculture focuses on increasing production, in order to achieve food self-sufficiency and develop exports. In 2005 contribution of the agricultural sector was 9% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP); 4% of export tax; 6% of export earnings and employed 13% of labour force (Ninth Malaysian Plan, 2005-2005; Ten Malaysian Plan, 2011-2015).

## *2.2 Agricultural Extension*

Agricultural extension can be defined as an ongoing process of getting useful information to farmers and assisting them to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to use effectively the information and technology to increase productivity (Rahim, 2008; 2010). The effectiveness of extension services is also highly dependent on the ability of extension agents who must be qualified, know their roles and are competent as the whole extension process of transferring information is dependent on them. Extension services world-wide are organized on different principles. In some countries extension programs serve to transmit national directives to rural areas. Rural areas are perceived to be highly traditional, resistant to change, and unaware of technological advances (FAO, 1990). Many extension approaches and strategies rely on technology transfer with top-down development without having a framework for feedback from farmers (Axinn, 1988 cited in FAO, 1990). The extension officers, as well as agricultural extension agents, must have increased technical competencies in more than one program area such as competencies across the entire organization, within job families and program areas (Stone, 1997).

The best help that an extension agent and technical assistance agency can give to rural people in an economy such as the one described here is to help them recognize their potential and resources and achieve results using these resources, relying mostly on their own effort, supplemented with advice, improved varieties of plants and livestock, facilities for loans and assistance in the marketing of farm products (Obibuaka, 1977).

## *2.3 Role of Extension Officer*

What is the role? According to McLagan, 1989, role is a major area of functioning which encompasses any number of competencies and outputs that a person can perform. At most times, most people can perform more than one role in their daily lives. Armstrong (2003) describes a role as part played by people in reaching their objectives by working competently and flexibly within the context of the organization's objectives, structure and processes. The definition given by Armstrong concerned about what people do and how they do it. A role can be defined as a set of norms, values and interaction patterns associated with a given category of individuals (Anaeto et al., 2012). The role of extension officers in the development of agriculture throughout the world is undoubted. It has remained one of the prime movers in the development of agriculture sector. Change agent refers to someone who deliberately tries to bring about a change or innovation (Havelock, 1973). By knowing his roles, one can better understand what encompasses total performance. In addition, role theory states that if a role is emphasized as important within a given context (such as work), then the role is more likely to be enacted. (Theresa et. al, 1998).

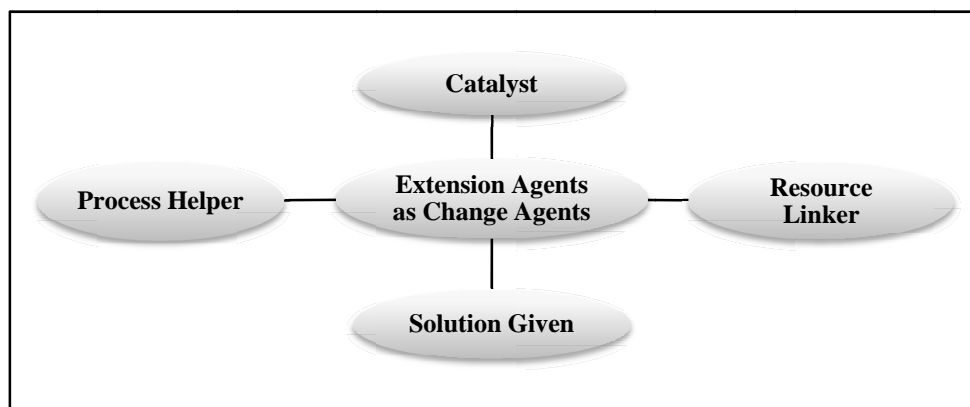
The whole extension process is dependent upon the extension agent, who is the critical element in all extension activities. If the extension agents are not able to respond to a given situation and function effectively, it does not matter how imaginative the extension approach is or how impressive the supply of inputs and resource for extension work. Indeed, the effectiveness of the extension agent can often determine the success or failure of an extension program (Oakley &Garforth, 1985).

There are various views on the extension agent's role:

- i) Role as a problem solver to arouse people to recognize and take an interest in their problems, to overcome these problems, to teach them how to do so, to persuade them to act on his/her teaching.
- ii) Role to transform of attitudes, behaviour and social organization.
- iii) Role as a multi-purpose linker between government or other organization and people.
- iv) Role as a catalyst for change.
- v) Role as a solution giver to help people form their own organizations in order to be able to tackle their problems.
- vi) Role in influencing the innovation/ decision- making process in a direction deemed desirable by the change agency (Oakley &Garforth, 1985).

The success of extension services depends on the role of extension agents to transfer technology and technical competence in developing farmers to increase their productivity (Rahim, 2008:2010). So far, agricultural extension service in Malaysia can be considered as wanting of more effective means to take agriculture to greater heights. Apparently extension activities focus more on technology transfer and very little on the development of human resources. One of the main problems is limited competency of personnel to deliver (Rahim, 2008). Based on the discussion above, the focus of this study is to determine the level of roles among youth as extension agents as well as change agents. The roles as change agents are categorized into four - role as catalyst, resource linker, solution giver, and process helper.

Figure 1: Roles of extension agents as change agents



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

92 extension officers from various positions in Malaysia participated in the study. The study was carried out using a quantitative survey methodology and self-administered questionnaires to measure the roles of extension agents as change agents towards enhancement of agricultural practice in Malaysia. The questionnaire was distributed using drop and pick method to the extension agents.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### *4.1 Level of roles among youth as extension agents*

The roles of agricultural extension agents are to help farmers form by giving the logical opinions and to make sound decisions. Extension agents should have good communication skill by communicating with farmers and providing them with the information they need (Van den Ban, 1996). In developing countries, the majority of rural people have depended on extension agents for advice and technical information on agricultural and rural development.

Table 1 depicts the level of roles among youth as extension agents towards agriculture practice in Malaysia. The data in the Table 1 show that slightly more than one-half of the respondents (85.9%) indicate the level of role as change agents as high. A similar trend of findings was shown with the other elements of roles as a change agent namely, catalyst (84.8%), process helper (71.7%), resource linker (81.5%) and solution giver (58.7%). From this study, it was shown that extension agents are aware of their roles but still require some continuous improvement to ensure successful technology transfer process and empower farmers to increase their crop productivity.

Extension agent is the middle person between research and farmer innovation (Rivera, 2008). Based on previous studies it was found that this skill should be an attribute of professional extension agents, so that they are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively (Davis, 1963; Gonzalez, 1982; Keregero, 1981; Tea, 1980). Moyo and Hagmann (2000) found that the role of extension agents is to facilitate learning designed.

Moose, Brown and Warning (2006) states the role of extension agents is to improve work practices in the field, at home, in the community and society. Based on studies conducted in Iran by Karbasioun, Biemas and Mulder (2007) added that agriculture extension services have helped extension agents reach a certain level in the field of animal husbandry and veterinary, agricultural inputs and increased fertility and farm size.

Hence, future support that needs greater competency encompasses socialization, emotional aspects and to make farming more rewarding careers to extension agents. Due to rapid global change in the environment, the role of extension agents has also become more complex and interrelated. For extension agents to work effectively they need a different mindset (Roya and Maimunah, 2012) to make a difference and make a change in the expansion. These changes can be done with a high level of understanding about the role of change agents among development officers.

For young people to be fully vested in society, they must be empowered with appropriate resources to enhance productivity. The role of youth as extension agents undoubtedly brings about changes to farmers. Thus, it is necessary to stimulate their interest and encourage their participation in agriculture to ensure sustainability of agriculture and ultimately realize the goal of food and nutrition security in Malaysia. Youth have the ability to become more involved in agriculture if they are targeted with programs and opportunities that could expand their potentials. Early exposure will provide youth with valuable agricultural skills to help them acquire in-group processes and other vital life and society-building skills (Webster et. al., 2013). Developing these capabilities will enable youth to easy transition into adult leadership roles and be better contributors to sustainable agricultural and rural development (World Bank, 2006, 2007 cited in Webster et. al., 2013).

New technologies require new knowledge bases. The increasing automation and sophistication within the industry have also required new sets of skills. However, these skills are not merely technical: farmers now need to make decisions about very complex issues and to rely on consultants, managers, or other knowledgeable professionals to help them. Hence, extension agents should play their roles as change agents and be knowledgeable to consult with farmers issues. Interpersonal and communication skills are now much more critical and important for extension agents. Knowledge is a valuable asset. Extension agents should equip themselves with informational resources as it is highly valued by any organization related to agriculture. The roles that extension agents perform would ensure sustainable agriculture, which itself rest on the principle of meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to also meet their needs.

Table 1: Level of roles among extension agents

<b>Role</b>	<b>Freq/(%)</b>	<b>Mean/(SD)</b>
Catalyst		3.60 (.378)
Moderate	14 (15.2%)	
High	78 (84.8%)	
Process Helper		3.47 (.411)
Moderate	26 (28.3%)	
High	66 (71.7%)	
Resource Linker		3.49 (.388)
Moderate	17 (18.5%)	
High	75 (81.5%)	
Solution Giver		3.33 (.445)
Moderate	38 (41.3%)	
High	54 (58.7%)	
Overall Roles of extension agents		3.47 (.340)
Moderate	13 (14.1%)	
High	79 (85.9%)	

## 5. CONCLUSION

The roles of youth as extension agents in Malaysia are undoubtedly important since it is one of the crucial determinants of success in the agriculture industry. Roles as change agent are

designed around the skills of individuals and groups that need to be effective for making human resource decisions. To be a competent extension agent, youth should have the necessary knowledge, technical skills and personal characteristics that are inevitable to excel in performance. Apparently the formal education and training that extension agents had received contributed only partly to their preparation for developing their competencies and professionalism in extension work. The everyday work contexts play a more important role in developing extension agents' professionalism. The exposure to a variety of social interactions, events and experiences expands the opportunities to advance in one's extension career.

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# **FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING OF RICE FARMERS TOWARDS PRODUCTIVITY AMONG INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS (IADA) IN MALAYSIA**

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## **Abstract**

The Malaysian rice industry is carefully monitored by several relevant agencies as it is a major priority in relation to the nation's food security agenda. Against this backdrop, the current study focused on factors governing Malaysian rice farmers' decision-making that contributes to their readiness to employ appropriate crop husbandry practices, which are critical for increasing productivity. Structured questionnaires were administered to 320 respondents from six (6) Integrated Agricultural Development Areas (IADA) in Malaysia. Demographically, a majority of the respondents were aging farmers and were more interested in participating in hands-on extension clinics, rather than attending structured training sessions. The results further revealed the need for the younger generation to get involved in this area, to replace the aging farmers and to revitalize the sector toward becoming more successful in the years to come. Moreover, regression analysis also demonstrated four additional factors promoting higher paddy productivity: farming knowledge, motivational values, farming experience and trust in extension agents' capabilities. From this combination of five factors, the current study has shed light on how Malaysian paddy farmers make decisions, which can be used to improve productivity within the IADAs. The study forwards potential approaches to making rice farming more attractive to the youth as a critical ingredient for the future health of the paddy industry.

**Keywords:** *Agricultural Extension, Rice farmers, Farm productivity, Decision-making*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Rice, is a major commodity in world trade, has become the second most important cereal in the world after wheat in term of production, owing to a recent decline in maize production (Jones, 1995). It is widely cultivated throughout the tropics. In Asian country, particularly in Malaysia, rice becomes the main commodity and major staple food that serves for the nation. In fact, rice industry is carefully monitored by several relevant agencies as it is a major priority in relation to the national food security agenda.

Hence, in concerns with this precedence, extension activities of rice farmers have been geared aggressively towards improving the productivity achievement. Farmers are to be assisted by the extension workers as well as related agencies to equip them with current knowledge of improved cultural practices, used advanced agricultural technology, enhance sources of information and have a variety access to all inputs needed for more effective production.

Various interactions of factors could be probably relevant to enhance the productivity of rice farmers. Some of the most important factors, including a technological and organizational changes, industry restructuring and resource reallocation are maybe involve indirectly into this situation. Towards certain extend, other factors such as research and development (R&D) and innovative effort, the development of human capital through education, and incentives from the stronger agencies also will promote the ability to improve productivity. Human capital directly influences agricultural productivity by affecting the way

in which inputs are used and combined by farmers. Improvements in human capital affect acquisition, assimilation and implementation of information and technology. Human capitals also affect one's ability to adapt technology to a particular situation or to changing needs (Zepeda, 2001). However, agricultural productivity will remain low if the capacity of farmers and others who related to the agriculture sector keep on retaining, which prevents them from innovating (Kwadwo Asanso-Okeyere, 2009).

Pio Lopez (2007) stated that rice production in Malaysia is going to the end due to the continued decline in cultivated area, negligible gains in productivity, continued increases in the cost of production and keep decreasing in profitability. However, it can be overcome if there have a concerted effort from various agencies towards increasing yield potential. The potential of rice production to achieve 10mt/ha (as a government target towards 2020) can be accomplished through technology such as improved crop and soil management, control of pest and diseases, as well as performance of high yielding variety. Jayawardane (1996) mentioned that labor, farm power, fertilizer, and agrochemical demand about 90 percent of the total paddy yield, where the share of labor component alone is about 45 percent. Although there is much effort that had been undertaken, the real issue is on the farm itself and human contributing factor should not be overlooked. Instead, the problem was not on the lacking of technology but rather arming farmers with knowledge and support network to modernize the way they do business (Joseph Sipalan, 2012). In order to achieve a productive farmer, first there is a need to capture their mind setting to focus on the right decision making, because once they make a right decision it will manifest through realistic and accurate prediction of behavior (Gillmor, 1986).

Decision making is an essential part of getting confident about the potential to increase yield. Farmers who are wise and smart in making a right decision may reflect on the yield achievement, and probably will have a better understanding on how to manage their farm systematically and become a successful farmer. Theoretically, decision making is a part of mental (cognitive) processes which resulted in a selection in a choice of action. Decision theories had represented several concepts and models, which are significantly influenced in almost all of the biological, cognitive and social sciences fields (Doyle & Thomason, 1999). Moreover, there were a lot of authors that had claimed that beliefs, values, and behavior were the important sources that had influenced the decision-making processes (Geva, & Mintz, 1997; Hastie & Dawes, 2000; Higgins & Seel, 2001). Basically, the decision making processes is initiated by setting the goal first, then continued with problem recognition, problem formulation (identifying the causes of the problems), pre-selection of alternative actions or uncertainty reduction and lastly taking the actual action (Timko & Loyns, 1989; Ohlmer, 1992). Thus, a good decision maker should consider the entire positive and negative consequences of each decision and the success of the decisions are very much depends on emotions, beliefs, values, attitudes, and people that are related. Farmers need to think systematically about their information needed and briefly weigh the consequences before and after making a decision (Kadlec, 1985). Malaysian rice farmers' must have to be excellent in making a right decision, hence it will contribute to their readiness to employ appropriate crop husbandry practices, which are critical for increasing productivity. This study aimed at determining the factors of decision making of rice farmers that may help them and contribute towards successful and productive farmers.

## **2. FARMERS' MENTAL MODEL**

There are two important concepts of cognitive psychology in decision making theory that are much related with mental model, namely; mental representation and cognitive maps (Chermack, 2003; Johnson, 1995). Mental representation refers to the way human build reality in their minds (Chermack, 2003). This concept of representation can be best introduced by considering the mind and the brain, which are involved in coordinating the individual's behavior in its environment (Betchel, 1998). According to Johnson-Laird (1983), the primary source of mental representation is a perception. On the other hand, the cognitive map refers to the way in which the mind creates a map or a situation that it uses as a reference point, which increases the likelihood of an individual being able to adapt with unfamiliar environment or situation (Chermack, 2003). However, the risks that always happen with cognitive map are when an individual gets their facts wrong, their cognitive map will be wrong and they will do the wrong thing

(Chermack, 2003). One way to overcome this problem is through second order learning, by updating a personal conceptual model (Kolkman, *et. al.*, 2005).

In discussing about the cognitive map, Eckert and Bell (2005) had proposed a mental model of farming as the way in which farmers' make decisions, and that includes the individual's values and beliefs about the actual farming. It also represents the role and importance of knowledge and skills, as well as a ways of processing information to learn and solve the problems. Farmers' mental model also determines the data and perspectives that people always look through a real world, based on an underlying frame that contain in their mind based on the knowledge, assumption, interests, values and beliefs (Kolkman, 2005).

An adoption of Eckert and Bell (2005) and Krauss (2009) was used as the basis to support the theoretical framework in this study. For the mental model of farmers in Malaysia, the definition does not deviate from the original mental model definitions, which explain the thought processes that incorporate with one's beliefs, values, experiences, knowledge and perceptions that lead to decision making. Both models can form the basis for the development of the farmers' mental map, and become the fundamental guidance in their decision-making process.

Knowledge is a prominent mental model development that can reflect on factual information. Knowledge can be defined as a belief that obtained from the available information by reasoning about the signals either it received or not (Bonnano, 2002). Farmers' knowledge on how to take the right decision about farming makes them determine and maintain the best farming methods. Farmers may gain the knowledge from many sources such as on-farm personnel and family involvement, representatives of corporations and government, social or sports club members, veterinarians, sales representatives, and also farm advisors (Sligo, Massey, & Lewis, 2005). Mundlak and Coeymens (1992) had emphasizes that more productive farmers will manage and operate the available resources more effectively based on the family operation. Farmers also acted in accordance with mental models based on values that were important to them. The decision to pursue one goal or another is influenced by values, which also can be known as a part of motivation. Values also can be referred as motivational construct where it refers to the desirable goals that people strive to attain (Schwartz, 1992). Farmers' will be motivated to strive for the maximum profit, and a better understanding of motivation would lead to explain on farmers' economic behavior (Ilbery, 1982). Hence, motivational values are important qualities or principles that may guide on what farmers think and redirected it through their actions. Besides, prior experience also is normally associated with people's mental models and their involvement in the learning process (Baynes, *et. al.*, 2011). Experience plays an important role in constructing mental models that influence users' attitudes and behaviors (Eckert & Bell, 2005). For instance, people who have vast experience in using traditional methods of farming rice have less involvement in the formal learning process with regard to the use of advanced methods on their traditional farms. One of the aspects that are related to prior experience is age. Age is a common factor associated with advanced or traditional ways of doing things. Despite this, age can be taken into account where it is also involved in naturalistic perspectives and focus on subjects' experience, which are more normally acquired with age.

Towards a certain extent, without eliminating the existing mental model, farmers will build up and strengthened their existing mental model through discovery learning and problem solving (Eckert & Bell, 2006). The attributes of the mental model include two types of discovery learning, that are self-guided and other guided where it involves development activities such as exploratory learning and problem solving (Seel, 2001). Farmers need to have self-directed learning as their self-guided discovery learning. Self-directed learning (SDL) is any increase in knowledge, skill, accomplishment or personal development that an individual selects and brings about their own effort, using any method in any circumstances at any time (Gibbons, 2002). In addition, farmers also need other guidance to reinforce their mental model. Other guidance can be provided by any agencies, government, or even non-governmental organizations that can assist farmers in improving their production. Here, since extension agents are the front-liner helpers, they play a major role in assisting and supporting farmers in seeking

information and technology. Hence, trust towards the credibility of extension agents must be strong enough so that all of the technologies and information can be channeled in the appropriate way.

Subsequently, farmers will use their mental models to guide them in seeking information as well as sharing information with others. They will decide whether to accept, reject or adapt the feedback and advice and make the right decision (Eckert & Bell, 2005). In the current situation, where information is disseminated through presentations, it is not really explained how farmers interact with the existing mental model (Eckert & Bell 2006). In addition to that, past researchers had suggested that the importance of the level of expertise in the study of mental models in decision-making can be relevantly studied in the mental model of farmers. The expertise can be referred to the expertise of farmers that know how to manage their farm and have the skills and ability to succeed. Individual farmers who are experts are much more disciplined in their behavior.

Hence, the Farmers' Mental Model by Eckert and Bell (2005) were chosen as the ground theory, since it is capable of explaining the factors of decision-making. In current study, all of the ten elements of decision-making that mentioned above were investigated to find out their relationship with farmers' productivity, and which factors could contribute the most in order to improve farmers' productivity.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

Structured questionnaires were administrated to 320 respondents from six (6) Integrated Agricultural Development Areas (IADA's) in Malaysia. Eventually, the population was focused on Malay male farmers only, who particularly work as a full time farmer in the rice cultivation growers. The six IADA that involved in this study were; (1) Kemasin Semerak IADA in Kelantan, (2) Northwest IADA (PBLs) in Selangor, (3) Seberang Perai IADA in Pulau Pinang, (4) Kerian Sungai Manik IADA in Perak, (5) Seberang Perak IADA in Perak, and (6) KETARA in Terengganu. Pilot test had been done with farmers from KADA and MADA, in order to examine the reliability of the questionnaire. The less reliable questions were removed or modified in order to make sure that the value of *Cronbach alpha* for every measurement tool had reached the acceptable level. The measurement of productivity level was examined by the average yield that they had perceived, by metrics tonnes per hectare (mt/ha) in a season. Multiple Linear Regression (Enter Method) was used to identify the main decision making factors that contribute towards farmers' productivity.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Data that had been provided shows some of the personal background of respondents, status of farmers productivity that measured by the average yield and which factors of the decision making that contribute the most.

#### *4.1 Respondents' Personal Background*

Most of the farmers were from northern and east coast regions of Peninsular Malaysia (which from Perak and Terengganu) and these two districts are far from the central region, probably located in rural areas. The mean age of the respondents is 52.63, which indicate that majority of farmers in IADA are aging farmers. Therefore, from the observation during collecting data, majority of their children is migrating from rural to the cities for seeking a job and that's probably the reason why majority of the respondent are aging farmers. There are similar results that had been done from other researchers that revealed the average age of farmers in Malaysia is exceeding 46 years old and only less than 26 percent of farmers were among 18 to 40 years old (Zaleha, 2007; & Md Salleh & Hayrol, 2009). These indicator bring us an alarm rate that Malaysia need a backup in term of agriculture communities and some initiatives need to be done to attract young farmers to participate in agriculture sectors. Furthermore, the results also shown that in term of years involve in rice cultivation, they have much knowledge about paddy cultivation since most of them had end up with 20 years' experience and above. The results also reveal that the IADA paddy

farmers were more interested in attending non-formal training such as extension clinic rather than formal training (paddy cultivation training).

#### 4.2 Productivity Level of Rice Farmers

The productivity level of rice farmers in this study is measure by getting their average yield that they had perceived, in metrics tonnes per hectare (mt/ha) per season in a year. Of the farmers, nearly half of the respondents (46.6 percent) obtained 4.1 to 7.0 mt/ha, followed by 36.3 percent had achieved yield lower than 4.0 mt/ha (Table 1). Thus, based on the category that was given by Department of Selangor Agriculture in 2011, the productivity of IADA farmers was at the moderate level, since majority of the respondents achieved 5.35 mt/ha, and only 17.2 percent had achieved higher productivity. There is a dire need to assist the farmers to increase their productivity level, and in the same time being able to supply rice for the nation and reduce the wage of import rice in the country.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of average in paddy yield (n=320)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Average paddy yield (mt/ha/season)			5.35	2.381
≤ 4 (Lower Productivity)	116	36.3		
4.1 – 7.0 (Moderate)	149	46.6		
≥ 7.1 (Higher Productivity)	55	17.2		

\*SD: Standard Deviation

#### 4.3 Determinants of Productivity Level Achieved by Rice Farmers

Among the ten factors that had been examined, five factors had given a significant contribution towards farmers' productivity. Table 2 displayed the results of the multiple linear regression by using the Enter Method. The age becomes the strongest contribution factors that influence farmers' productivity with significant factor ( $\beta = -0.285$ ), followed by farming experience ( $\beta = 0.228$ ), farming knowledge ( $\beta = 0.222$ ) and motivational value ( $\beta = 0.148$ ) respectively. The beta value of trust in the extension agent's expertise was slightly lower ( $\beta = -0.132$ ), indicating that it made a less contribution against farmers' productivity. It further shows that out of the five (independent) variables regressed on the productivity level of respondents in rice production (dependent); it gave a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.112, showing that the variation in the productivity level of the rice farmers is explained to be about 6.0 percent as a result of the variation in the identified variables. As a result, this model which includes age, farming experience, farming knowledge, motivational value and trust in the extension agent's expertise, were explained 11.2 percent of the variance in farmers' productivity.

Table 2: Results of Multiple Regression (Enter Method) (n=230)

Variables	<i>b</i>	Std. Error	Beta	t	<i>p</i>
Constant	3.833	1.635		2.344	0.020
Age	- 0.056	0.014	- 0.285**	- 3.937	0.000
Farming Experience	0.037	0.012	0.228**	3.146	0.002
Farming Knowledge	0.874	0.273	0.222**	3.202	0.002
Motivational value	0.553	0.201	0.148**	2.746	0.006
Trust in Extension Agent's Expertise	- 0.596	0.310	- 0.132*	- 1.923	0.055
Family Involvement	- 0.229	0.195	- 0.073	- 1.173	0.242
Information Seeking Behaviour	0.404	0.529	0.064	0.765	0.445
Information Sharing	- 0.407	0.526	- 0.065	- 0.773	0.440
Self-directed Learning	0.287	0.683	0.033	0.421	0.674
Farming discipline	- 0.030	0.319	- 0.007	- 0.094	0.925

(\* $p < 0.05$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$  )

Hence, this study discovered a model including age, farming experience, farming knowledge, motivational value and trust in the extension agent's expertise, which explained 11.2 percent of the total variance in farmers' productivity. The result from multiple regression analysis confirmed that age was the strongest predictor of farmers' decision making among the other factors, indicating that when age increases, productivity level decreases. It further reveals that there is a need for the younger generation to get involved in this particular area (rice farming activities) in order to revitalize the agriculture sector to become more flourish.

Similarly with other researchers indicating that the age of farmers is one of the most influential factors in decision-making due to cognitive abilities, whereas the role of experience was negligible (Zwahr *et. al.*, 1999). In Malaysia, the involvement of youth in all stages of national development programs is the indicators that the government is really keen and looking forward into the intervention of young people in the national policies, actions as well as into the society bonding. Young people are always welcome to venture into this sector in order to ensure that there is always a successful path of career in the agriculture sector. For instances, government had implemented the 9<sup>th</sup> Malaysian Plan which stressed on empowering youth to be more participative in nation building, whereby various of the youth agriculture programs had been implemented to carry out the commercial of agro-based activities. Indeed, agriculture also can be as a catalyst that can overcome the unemployment problem. The early research that had been done by Norsida (2007) had stated that youth have a negative acceptance towards agriculture sectors. However, further study with the same author in 2008 revealed that even though there are negative acceptance but they still believed that agriculture is a profitable industry if it complemented by relentless and continuous effort such as offering higher income, providing capital support as well as a conducive environment to support them in a time being. Moreover, young people also not only become the mediator who transmitted the practice of agriculture to the future, in fact they can be seen as a change agent of agriculture practices in communities. Education will become the most valuable sources that can equip young people with knowledge and information. Hence, multiple efforts are needed to ensure that the effectiveness of agriculture education program will be beneficial and give a significant contribution to the young farmers (Norsida, 2012).

On the other hand, the young people also need to be shown that the agricultural sectors have great opportunities for those who are really interested into it. By recognizing the preferences from young people, the government and related agencies have come out with various ideas and creative programs that purposely intended to change the negative mindset about agriculture sectors. Recently, the agriculture national key economic area (NKEA) under the Economic Transformation Program (ETP) had launched several models based on the market requirements, economies of scale and the integration in value chain in order to aim and nurture a new breed of "agripreneurs" and bring the younger generation into the fold of an industry (Pemandu, 2013).

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Interestingly, from the point of view of the respondent which consist of older or senior farmers, the results discovered that this situation as a symbol that they needs younger generations to replace them or even to take this opportunity to revitalize this sector to become more successful in years to come. Hence, the younger generation is needed to participate and involve actively in paddy industry. With the existing energy, strengths and experience from the younger generation, it may contribute directly towards higher productivity of paddy, and apparently consuming rice production in the country. In addition, other factors including knowledge, trust towards extension agents' as well as motivational values perhaps may bring one new dimension on a good decision-maker and make them a productive farmer. We need the agriculture for our food security and easy supply for our staple food in which we are still not self-sufficient. In spite of this, the great challenge is to see and how to get the young people to involve into agriculture sectors.

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# **YOUTH'S SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES: INITIAL FINDINGS FROM EMBEDDED DATA**

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## **Abstract**

Sustainable Livelihood is an emergent concept that has gained currency in the continuum of approaches in community development and poverty eradication. Universally, there exists a common “Pentagon Model” in conceptualising the various types of capital available to the individual and groups in a community. This study proposes additional domains that may be relevant to the socio-cultural and indigenous context of Malaysia. Current literature and available records and reports are examined as the first primary sources of data and then combined with selected field observations and the conduct of Focussed Group Discussions. Important issues and challenges have emerged from the study that impinge upon the importance of youth as a social force in Malaysian society, a depiction of youth’s livelihood episodes from childhood through adolescent to young workers, the fragility of sustainable livelihood strategies, and, the evident need for more practical and realistic pathways for the youth successful transformation into useful and productive workforce.

*Keywords: Youth, sustainable livelihood, youth development*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This paper explores the the current phenomenon about sustainable livelihood amongst youth. Although there is much international work on empowering the youth to become economically and socially viable, there remains a dearth of research and documentation about how successful the youth development programs have been, especially in Malaysia and similar countries within the region. This paper briefly explores the various examples found around the globe and also shares an initial finding of a study being implemented in Malaysia that examines the sustainable livelihood concept and the possible development pathways undertaken by and for the rural youth.

Youth nowadays particularly from the countries emerging from conflicts are facing challenges in achieving a higher education and get employed. Admitting this scenario, international agencies have been consistently supporting programs that focus on education and training which able to provide access for the youth towards the workforce and higher education. Programs are based on the assumption that the private sector is developing and able to offer jobs for qualified applicants. However, what happens if the employment opportunities are lacking and investors refuse to invest as a response to a low literacy rate in an area? Any workforce development programs will be useless when there are no jobs? And if workforce development can profit only the minority due to dire economic realities, what can be done to improve the well-being of the rest and give them hope?

USAID and other agencies have reacted towards this problem by establishing workforce development strategies known as “livelihood development,” particularly for young people aged 15–24 from marginalized backgrounds. Donor agencies recognize that young people nowadays particularly from informal sectors are given little opportunity to develop and facing problems to be in line with the demanding cost of living. Admitting this scenario, agencies keen on developing successful strategies that can assist youth where they are until they can break into the formal economy while at the same time improving the short-term well-being of youth and their households.

Concern parties (e.g. donor agencies, NGOs, government) have recognized the roles of youth in developing and transforming their country. Youth is an asset in any community and must be appropriately engaged and involved in any community development strategy. In this sense, the government and communities have to place their focus on the roles of youth as neglecting this will result in youth as a profoundly de-stabilizing force. Lacking of access towards livelihood development for youth will negatively impinge the nation development due to increased crime, violence, poor health, disease, extremism, and both social and political instability. Thus, by having livelihood development (to complement workforce development) is vital for national development, particularly when delivered in careful coordination with traditional investments in health, education, democracy and governance, and economic growth activities.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The Sustainable livelihood concept has long been discussed by scholars across the globe while a number of local and international bodies are investing their money in investigating the factors that might impinging the sustainable livelihood of the community. Via the studies and investments made, various models and theories have been constructed and among the established one is the Pentagon. The Pentagon was initiated by the Department for International Development and it aims to develop information related to people's assets to be presented visually, thereby bringing to life important inter-relationships between the various assets. The Pentagon consists of five capitals namely:

### *2.1 Human capital*

Can be understood as the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health which can assist the community to fulfill and accomplish their livelihood strategies. Within the household level, human capital refers to the quantity and quality of labor available and it varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential, health status, etc. Education and health status are always associated with a stronger human capital and by having a this, it will help them to overcome poverty which has been the primary livelihood objective by a majority of the community.

### *2.2 Social capital*

Within the scope of Pentagon, social capital can be understood as the social resources that people depend on to fulfill their livelihood objectives. The social capital can be constructed through Vertical networks (patron/client) or horizontal networks (among individuals with similar interests) which construct people's reliability and strength to cooperate and enhance the opportunity for them to involve in various institutions, such as political or civic bodies. Then, social capital can be constructed via membership of more formalized group that typically involves loyalty to commonly accepted rules, norms and sanctions. Social capital also can be constructed through relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that embolden co-operation which can minimize the transaction costs and may offer the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor.

### *2.3 Natural capital*

Refers to the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services (e.g. nutrient cycling, erosion protection) needed for livelihoods can be gained. There is various resources that make up the natural capital, from intangible public goods such as the atmosphere and biodiversity to divisible assets used directly for production (trees, land, etc.). Moreover, natural capital acts as the basis of human economic activity. Current climate has placed a formidable challenges on the natural capital. Some of the obstacles on the livelihoods of the poor are the changing natural processes that destroy natural capital (e.g. fires that destroy forests, floods and earthquakes that destroy agricultural land).

### *2.4 Physical capital*

Refers to the basic infrastructure and producer goods required to support livelihoods. Infrastructure include the changes to the physical environment which aid people to fulfill their basic needs and to become productive. Producer refers to the tools and equipment that helps people to produce more.

There are various important infrastructure and producers goods, however, yet, there are common basic infrastructure and producers goods that are vital in sustainable livelihood namely affordable transport, secure shelter and buildings, adequate water supply and sanitation, clean, affordable energy; and access to information (communications).

### 2.5 Financial capital

Refers to financial capacity people have in order to assist them in fulfilling their livelihood objectives. Financial capital consists of two main sources namely available stocks and regular inflows of money. Savings are the most common type of available stock and are the preferred type of financial capital as they are not producing liabilities and commonly do not entail reliance on others. Savings can be in form of cash, bank deposits or liquid assets such as livestock and jewellery. Furthermore, financial resources also can be gained via financial agencies that offers credits. The second source - regular inflows of money refers to pensions, or other transfers from the state, and remittances.

### 2.6 Cultural capital

Though Pentagon has only five capitals, however, yet, to include the cultural capital in a sustainable livelihood study is vital. Cultural capital can be understood as the non-financial social assets that accentuate on social mobility that exclude the economic means. It also can be referred as the forms of knowledge, both tangible and intangible, which create value in a given society in relation to status and power. Education, intellect, style of speech, dress, and even physical appearance are parts of cultural capital. An inclusion of cultural capital has resulted in a new model adapted from the Pentagon (Figure 1).

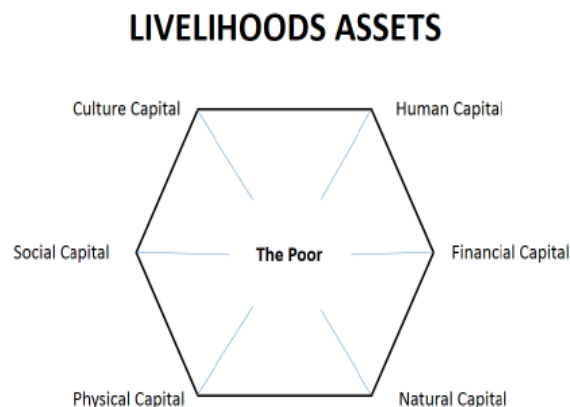


Figure 1: The model used in the current study

## 3. FIELD OBSERVATION- THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Some preliminary results have been analyzed from the pre-test results. The pre-test was conducted among 30 respondents among youth at Kuala Besut, Terengganu. For the respondents demographic data, a huge majority of the respondents were male (86.7%) and the average age for the respondents was 26.4 years. It can be seen that a majority of the respondents possess a low level of education as only 2 of them were receiving a tertiary level of education. A total of 70% of the respondents were self-employed with the average of their monthly income was RM1,135.40 (roughly equal to USD340) far exceeded the poverty level set by the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) which is RM720 (roughly equal to USD240). The respondents can be considered as the 'senior' villagers as the mean score for the average for the duration for staying in the village was 21.2 years. On average, respondents have a

total of six household members. Regarding the capitals studied, the mean score gained was categorized into three levels based on the calculation of 5 (maximum mean score)/3 (number of levels). The calculation has resulted in three levels namely low (mean score between 1.00-2.33), moderate (mean score between 2.34 to 3.67) and high (mean score between 3.68 to 5.00). Out of six capitals, the human capital recorded the highest mean score (M = 4.35), followed by social capital (M = 3.74) and physical capital (M = 3.74). Further analysis employed has confirmed that financial capital has recorded the lowest mean score (M = 2.87) (Table 1).

Table 1: The capitals studied

Capitals	Mean score	Standard deviation
Human capital	4.35	.53
Social capital	3.74	.33
Natural capital	3.19	.66
Physical capital	3.74	.61
Financial capital	2.87	.61
Cultural capital	3.57	.62

#### 4. DISCUSSION

From the analyzed data, it can be seen that the human capital has emerged as the strongest capital possessed by the rural youth which depicts its potential strength to significantly contribute towards rural youth sustainable livelihood. Rural youth within this context are seen as those who have the knowledge and skills in certain tasks particularly on fisheries related industry (e.g. fishing and entrepreneurship). However, yet, this strength is not fully manipulated by the rural youth, particularly in money generating activities as the financial capital only recorded the lowest mean score. Supposedly, with the strength they have in human capital, it can assist them in constructing a better financial capital.

Another capital that recorded a high level of mean score is the social capital. Doubtlessly, the strength of this capital can be supported by a positive social relationship that occurs between the rural youth and the community surrounding them. To have such finding is not surprising particularly in rural setting as findings on local studies by Yassin et al. (2011), Ramli et al. (2013) and Shaffril et al. (2011) have demonstrated a similar finding. Shaffril et al. (2013) in their study have clarified such strong social relationship exist as a result of active involvement of the rural community on social activities such as *gotong-royong* (mutual cooperation), local organizations, *merewang* and religious activities.

Physical capital is another capital that recorded a high level of mean score. In the current setting, development of rural areas have been the focus of the government and has resulted in their demand of basic infrastructure are fulfilled. The infrastructure and basic facilities such as electricity, clean water, telecommunication, police station, ICT centres, government agencies, post office, in current study area are satisfactory and Yassin et al. (2011) have explained that most of the rural community are satisfy with the physical capital provided as such capital are adequate in number, provide satisfactory services and near to their home.

Cultural capital recorded a moderate level of mean score and this is not surprising as within the rural areas, 'the old ways' of doing things are still practiced by the youth. In Malaysia, the rural community are highly attached to the local customs and foods. In Kuala Besut for example, local language is widely spoken by the locals, traditional food such as satar and keropok lekor are highly demanded by both –local people and tourists while traditional games such as Wau is still played.

Natural capital is another capital that recorded a moderate level of mean score. Majority of rural areas in Malaysia are still 'green' and a large portion of agriculture activities in Malaysia are conducted in the rural areas. Within the scope of this study, though Kuala Besut is equipped with adequate infrastructure and facilities, they are still surrounded by the 'green' environment and this is resulted by the well-planned strategy on the rural development placed on this area. Furthermore, as Kuala Besut is located near to the shore, the rural youth are provided access to the natural resources such as fish, shrimp and crabs. Unfortunately, compared to the beaches in neighbouring areas such as Kuala Terengganu, not too many beaches in Kuala Besut can be made as a tourist attraction due to its geographical conditions.

Several observations can be made from the initial pre-test study in Malaysia. The analyses were run on 30 rural youths and this has become the major limitation as the results might portray a different view if a bigger sample size involved. Obviously, a total of 30 respondents is far too small to claim universal validity and not fit to be considered as generally valid. However, yet, even with this small numbers at least, it provides an earlier prediction on where actually the rural youth stand in term of their livelihood sustainability. Toward this end, the research team is currently collecting a bigger sample size (300 respondents) in sixteen selected villages in rural areas across the countries. Future data gained from the bigger sample size would be more representatives and provide a clearer picture on the rural youth sustainable livelihood. Furthermore, to extend to research findings, the research team will apply the photovoice method. The evolution of research methods has added some alternatives to data collection method which currently is not limited to the verbal and textual world only. Photovoice enables the visual cues to stimulate participant responses in research interviews. By including visual information in research practices researchers can stimulate the evolution of older processes of understanding in their effort to get a greater data on human consciousness (Harper, 2002). The photovoice will represents the qualitative part of the study and will be conducted at a selected rural areas in Malaysia. It is a hope that data from the bigger study will extend the available knowledge and understandings on rural youth sustainable livelihood which able to construct new disciplines, cultures, and theories.

## **5. INSTITUTING POSSIBLE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD PATHWAYS**

The second part of this paper shall attempt to draw upon the various experience around the world in developing strategic pathways for the youth in empowering them to develop successful livelihoods. Many lessons can be gained from these experiences that could be discussed and serve as guidance for Malaysia and other similar countries.

Youth livelihoods is the work and related activities conducted by youth as they are entering adulthood stage – this is important as it will strengthen their transformation process from being dependent to independent. Successful livelihood programs is vital in this stage. Essentially, such program will help youth in facing the realities and fulfilling their livelihood goals and objectives. Although poor youth are always associated with the problems of idle and economically inactive, studies done by USAID (2005), USAID (2006) and EQUIP3 (2005) have confirmed that such group still can contribute significantly towards household income through informal sectors in household-based enterprises, or in family-based farming, fishing and petty trading activities. Involvement in informal sectors is manipulated by the youth as it strengthen their financial in achieving a higher education and widening their connection with informal peer networks linked to accessing start-up capital or introductions to employers (ILO 2004, ILO 2005, Population Council 2004, World Bank 2007, USAID 2005, USAID 2006, UNESCO 2001).

Poor people is commonly associated with their inability to coach their children to make rational economic decisions. However, studies by EQUIP3 (2005), EQUIP3 (2007), USAID (2005), USAID (2006), SC (2006) and UNESCO (2001) have demonstrated contrast findings whereby it was found that youth from marginalized backgrounds and their families can comprehend trade-offs and opportunity costs related to their involvement in various interventions (EQUIP3 2005, EQUIP3 2007,

USAID 2005, USAID 2006, SC 2006, UNESCO 2001). Furthermore, it can be concluded that households have placed their efforts in assisting youth to produce a systematic strategy regarding their future education and finance planning. Like others, they deserve the consideration of those who design and implement the livelihoods development programs.

Findings from other researches have confirmed that poor families do learn to save and build assets, and that effective livelihood interventions reflect marketplace opportunities, constraints, and barriers (Population Council 2004, Akkord 2006, ADB 2004, ILO 2005). Perhaps, the most effective intervention is one related to the “learning while earning” concepts which represent a balance between short and long terms sustainable livelihood capital and capabilities. Most youth and their families prefer to have a blend on continuing education with short-term income generation and ongoing livelihood development demands.

Evidence have demonstrated the strength of livelihood development in generating positive youth outcomes in other areas, such as health, education, public safety, and democracy and governance (Population Council 2004, IRIN 2007, UN-DESA 2005, UNESCO 2001). The strength however, must be strategized with specific sector outcomes in mind, along with systematic plan and consistent monitoring and evaluation.

## **6. DESIGNING EFFECTIVE YOUTH LIVELIHOOD PATHWAYS**

Livelihood development should include the ideas and insights of a wide range of stakeholders. It should generate ways to gain human, social, financial, and physical capital, to integrate youth livelihood development with programs in other sectors, and to build the capacity of local service providers.

## **7. BUILDING HUMAN CAPITAL**

This is best achieved by a combination of skills training (usually nonformal or vocational education), mentoring, and guidance, combined with helping credit-ready young entrepreneurs gain access to financial capital. Skills training programs should:

- Help youth to be expert in core literacy and numeracy skills, basic employability and life skills, and vocational skills.
- Produce educational gains or earn achievement certifications in manageable blocks, offering flexibility (e.g., in pacing classes and allowing students to easily enter and leave programs) to youth and their families who have commitment to fulfill their day-to-day survival needs.
- Have schedules and locations that fit the participants’ livelihood and family demands and security concerns.
- Involve everyone including the marginalized illiterate or semi-literate groups
- Recover some costs, if feasible, via user fees, that motivate their staff to consistently monitor and strengthen program quality, while reminding participants and their households that they should be only invest on program that offer benefits to them.

## **8. BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Young people are found to place their need on social capital above the financial and physical capitals. For example, youth persistently place mentoring and constructive advice as important compared to starting, improving, and growing a small business or informal service sector activity. Context is vital to construct the social capital via peer networks. To have a stronger social networks, youth must be motivated to be a part of groups with members of diverse background as it is more effective compared to their involvement in a group with a similar background.

Among the main key for social capital development is service learning, whereby youth integrate community service work with a form of human capital development (literacy, life, or work skills

development). Service learning engages and retains youth not by focusing on their deficits, but encouraging them to provide something significant to their communities. The positive relation between youth and sport can be manipulated in so many ways and sports have been effective in improving youth health, education and livelihood preparation. Having sports-for-development programming is good in a sense that it has the power to attract private-sector funding.

## **9. BUILDING FINANCIAL CAPITAL**

Young people aged 18–24 are constituting 15–20 percent of the existing client base for microfinance. Efforts to expand youth involvement have resulted in mixed results and demonstrated important findings. An important thing to consider in managing microfinance product is technical capacity experience. Furthermore, better results occur when youth development providers build alliances with community microfinance providers. Such alliances require each group to play their roles, and both respect the essential technical skills of the other.

Another lesson is to substantially invest in market research and development. Best practices in adult microfinance do not necessarily work with youth. Findings from research have accentuated that youth should possess a high level of discipline in using loans wisely and in repaying them. Within the microfinance context, loan are less appropriate for youth compared to savings products as savings is a precursor to a loan, and educate youth on financial management without becoming indebted. Savings is vital in business, and more importantly for school or consumption of youth. Savings (from family members or friends) are often utilized for start-up businesses more so than grants or loans. Finally, research confirmed that youth livelihood programs should not expect youth to become fully independent breadwinners. In fact, even small changes in income can gear youth to strengthen ties to their extended families, thus narrowing the opportunity to have their own households.

## **10. BUILDING PHYSICAL CAPITAL**

Outright grants is important to sustain youth livelihood activities. USAID and other donor agencies for example, have consistently offer their help to youth in remote areas or in fishing communities to recover from armed conflict or natural disaster. It is important to have a balanced physical capital distribution between male and female though physical capital are typically related to the needs of male. Physical capital can also be a good reward for youth who demonstrate good behavior. It can motivate them to be more productive. For example, vocational training schools sometimes reward new graduates with a set of tools or special work clothing or providing farming or sewing cooperatives with laptops and access to the Internet after they achieve a certain level of group savings.

## **11. BUILDING CULTURAL CAPITAL**

As we all are aware cultural capital shall ver much depend upon the local flair for maintaining and retaining the culture of a locality. One of the first steps is to determine the indogenous wisdom, skill and tacit knowledge that is embedded in the community that the youth can continue to learn about and institute ways to preserve such cultural resources. Examples of these include the community's flair for traditional dances and local handicrafts which when well preserved, practised and well promoted will go a long way in providing added value to the livelihood of the community.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

This paper has attempted to discuss two important aspects of a vital phenomenon in youth sustainable livelihood. The first is in attempting to understand the various capitals/assets tthat come into play in such an effort. This has been exemplified by the study that has been initiated in Malaysia. It has looked at the five common capitals and included a new capital into the established Pentagon Model. One significant contribution of the study is in testing out this Cultural Capital as one additional asset that can be useful in formulating successful sustainable livelihood pathways. Another aspect of the



paper dwells upon the possible strategies or pathways themselves. Although many examples abound, but they remain to be tested out in Malaysia and other countries as well. It remains to be seen whether the efficacy and prudence of such pathways do have similar traits in Malaysia and remains unanswered.

In short, it can be concluded that youth livelihood programs must engage and support youth, most of whom are already economically active and focused on the immediate needs of their households and community, and who desire more sustainable and socially constructive livelihood pathways. The challenge is to determine how to encourage these youth and help them acquire the relevant competencies and resources necessary to enhance their livelihoods, and ultimately for themselves to realize and appreciate the viable sustainable livelihood pathways for them and others within their communities.

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# TOWARDS DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK ON THE ROLES OF DISPOSITIONAL FACTORS ON WORK ABILITY AMONG EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

Maintaining employee well-being in a proactive condition is one of the most concerns of today's organizations. Accordingly work ability concept attracts considerable attention among organizational studies. Although many studies have conducted on various dimensions of work ability, just a few researchers paid particular attention to the role that individual attitude plays on the work ability concept. This study put forth to explain the predicted roles of individual dispositional factors on work ability of employees with disabilities in Malaysia.

**Key words:** *work ability, individual attitude, individual disposition, job satisfaction, people with disability*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Availability of qualified and skilled labor force as well as maintaining them in a productive condition is the most concern of today's organizations across the world. According to the human resource development strategies, organizations invest considerable amount of currency in developing their human resource capital and expect to maintain them in a proactive condition for a long time (Kwon & Rupp, 2013). Thus, continuous decline in labor supply due to turnover would definitely create worries about premature retirement as well as reduction in proactivity of employees. Thus, highlights need to be on how to enhance the wellbeing and work engagement at the workplace. These worries call into a critical question: -how a continued proactive labor force can be maintained in the future? Hence, not surprisingly, here and now many enterprises have paid high attention to work ability concept. Maintaining and supporting the work ability is a crucial social goal in many developed and developing countries all around the world (Gould, Ilmarinen, Järvisalo, Koskinens, & Koskinen, 2008).

Nowadays, the working issues and challenges of people with disabilities have attracted scholars in many countries. Many governments have taken to ensure the equal right for people with disabilities. There is a global committee to pay high attention to their problems and issues, and occupation is one of the most

important issues for people with disabilities. According to the WHO's latest report, more than one billion persons, all around the world live with some form of disability. It is about 15% of the world population and could be translated to more than 3 million people with disabilities in Malaysia (World Report on Disability 2011). Another report by WHO (the World Health Survey, 2011) depicts that just 2.2% of people face with disabilities has very significant difficulties in functioning. A majority of them still can join in employment. Therefore it seems that there is a high need to pay more attention to work and work-related aspects of people with disability.

Very few studies have been conducted on the occupation of People with Disabilities in Malaysia. Earlier, an integration of the sponsored mobility model of career success and person-environment perspective has been used to explain a study of career success of employees with disabilities in Malaysia (Nor Wahiza, 2011). The studies on work ability of employees with disabilities in the country are rarely studied. Thus, there is a crucial need to enhance the awareness in maintaining and prolonging employees with disabilities' work ability and work life quality. Furthermore, most studies on work ability have been conducted by western countries in the context of western culture. Thus, it is high time to test the relevance and applicability of the multidimensional model of work ability in the Malaysian context, particularly with respect to Malaysian employees with disabilities. This conceptual paper shall elaborate on the multidimensional model of work ability as the foundation to a study which intends to investigate the roles of dispositional factors on work ability of employees with disabilities in Malaysia.

Most previous studies have focused on individual capacity to work, their competence and also work-related factors as main predictors of work ability (Ilmarinen & Costa, 2000; Ilmarinen, 2001; Ilmarinen, 2001; Naquin & Holton, 2002; Van den Berg, Elders, Zwart, & Burdorf, 2009; Van den Berg, Robroek, Plat, Koopmanschap, & Burdorf, 2011). Although it was proved that individual attitude plays an important role as a predictor of workability, very few researches have referred to individual attitude and value as influential factors of work ability (Ilmarinen, Tuomi, & Seitsamo, 2005). There is a lack of attention to the roles of individual dispositions. This future study seeks to develop the multidimensional model of work ability by suggesting the possible contribution of individual dispositional factors.

In addition to that, most of the previous studies on work ability have been conducted involving the elders, sick and injured employees. Hence, majority of the studies depicted the importance of health as a risk factor to work ability (Berg, 2010; Daws & Sa, 2011; Feldt, Hyvönen, Mäkikangas, Kinnunen, & Kokko, 2009; Gould et al., 2008). The older, sick and injured employees all face some kind of health impairment and consequently deal with the risk factors that reduce their work ability. Similarly, employees with disabilities encounter the same conditions. Therefore there is a growing concern over decline in their work ability.

## **2. WORK ABILITY**

Work ability is a set of individual and work-related factors that empower employees to cope with their working demands successfully in a particular environment (Gould et al., 2008; Hasselhorn, 2008; J Ilmarinen & Tempel, 2002; J Ilmarinen & Tuomi, 2004; J Ilmarinen, 2006).

Work ability can also be defined as a dynamic procedure of employees well being at work which resulted from communication between work requirement, individual factors and society (Gould et al., 2008; Ilmarinen & Costa, 2000; Juhani Ilmarinen et al., 1991).

Work ability initially was developed as a concept by Finnish researchers at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) in the early 1980s. They aimed to prolong the working life of older workers and prevent the premature retirement in the Finnish enterprises. The primary definition of work ability took two factors into consideration as certain dimensions of work ability, work demands and individual physical and mental capacity: "How good is the worker at present, in the near future, and how able is he or she to do his or her work with respect to the work demands, health and mental resources" (Ilmarinen, 2004, page 1).

Over the time, forms and content of the work has been changed. Physically demanding work has shifted more toward mentally demanding work. Likewise, on the individual functional capacity, expertise and attitude of employees have also changed. Accompanying such changes in individual resources and work related factors, the work ability concept has also changed. The solely medical point of view of the balance between individual qualification and work demands have developed to multidimensional approach work ability.

Traditional model of work ability focuses on balance between the medical aspect of individual functional capacity and health and work demand. This model is so called the balance model of work ability and is based on a stress-strain model developed by Rohmert and Rutenfranz in 1983. The model depicts that individual strain is created by occupational stress in the workplace. Individual resources adjust the level and quality of the strain. So it could determine to what extent individual resources fit to work demands by investigating the degree of strain. Balance model represents a continuous examines for balance between individuals and their work life. The balance can be based on the preservation of the individual's health, coping at work and work ability. Whereas the multidimensional model of work ability has taken into account a variety of individuals and work-related factors together with the environment outside the workplace as the various dimensions of work ability (Gould et al., 2008).

The new concept of work ability, as can be seen in Figure 1 is clarified by the work ability house (J Ilmarinen & Tuomi, 2004). The individual resources are located on the first three floors in the structure of the work ability house. The first floor which depicts the medical aspect of work ability includes individual health and their functional capacity. Health is comprised of ability along with well-being.

A person is considered healthy when he or she has both basic ability and health related well-being. The basic ability refers to general kind of ability that a person obtained just by living and growing up over time. Basic ability includes four dimensions. First is an intentional ability such as talking and walking. Second is automatic abilities like seeing and hearing. Third is disposition ability such as feeling and intrinsic emotions. And fourthly is mental state's ability, such as self-confidence and the ability to perceive reality correctly and fairly. Meanwhile executive ability or functional capacity includes physical, mental and social functioning (Tengland, 2007). Based on this model, it is proposed that employees with good health and functional capacity would have a higher level of work ability.

Numerous researches have emphasized on the important role of health and functional capacity in the work ability concept (Berg, 2010; Daws & Sa, 2011; Gould et al., 2008; Hasselhorn, 2008; Ilmarinen & Tuomi, 2004; Juhani Ilmarinen et al., 1997; Nordenfelt, 1995, 2008; Tengland, 2007; Tuomi et al., 2001).

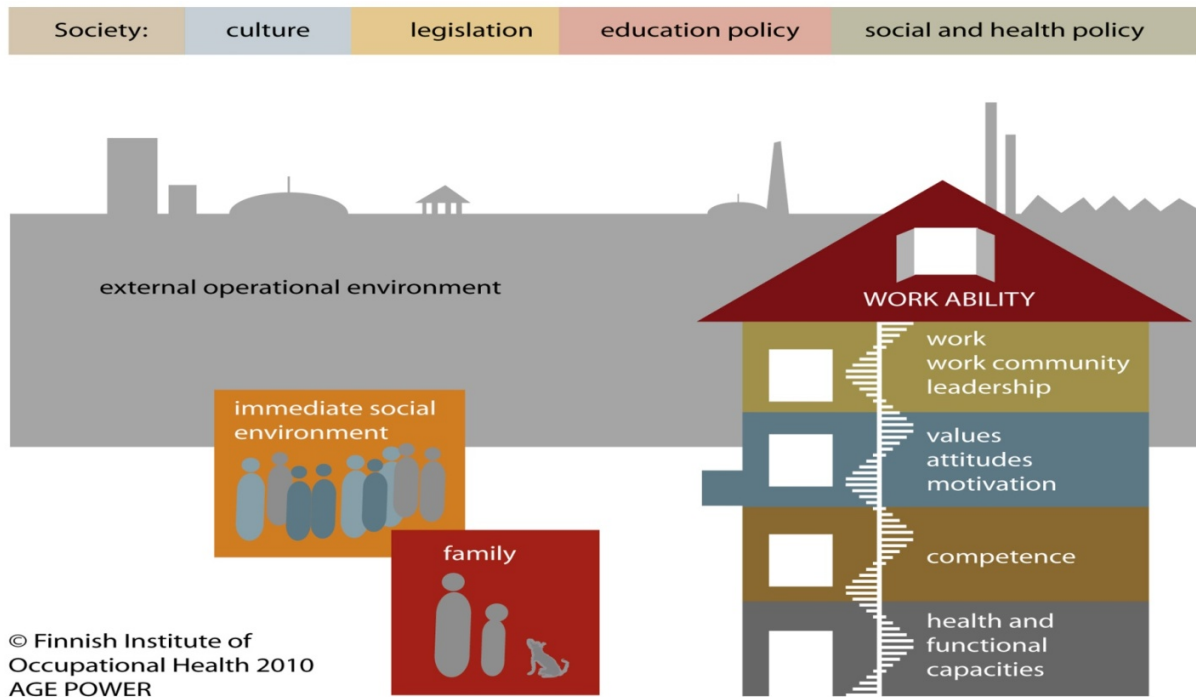
Nevertheless, the health - related ability of individuals need to be supported with professional competence as well (Nordenfelt, 2008; Tengland, 2011).

The second floors of the work ability house consist individual competence. According to Ilmarinen's longitudinal study (Ilmarinen et al., 2005) competence plays an important role in an employee's workability. It explains 13% of variance in employees' work ability among 30-64 years old. This dimension of work ability construction comprises skill, training and education. Individual competence is classified into four categories, which are (a) Basic standard competence that includes all abilities that an individual attains as long the individual grows older. It covers abilities like what children learn in school and some other theoretical or practical knowledge which requires special training such as how to play computer games; (b) basic generic competence which refers to abilities for planning, gathering and using the information and problem solving; (c) occupational competence that individuals acquire from particular studying or training for a specific job. The occupational competence includes both job-related knowledge and skills. Examples are physical, intellectual and social competence. Occupational competence (work-related competence) is the most important competence in work ability construction. But still, it is not sufficient for an acceptable degree of work ability among employees, which led to formation of the third floor in the model.

The third floor in work ability house indicates values, attitudes and motivation of the individual. Ilmarinen (2005) reported that employees' inner values explained about 14% of variance in their work ability. A longitudinal study depicted the positive relationship between job satisfaction and job motivation and work ability. According to the construction of the work ability house individual attitudes and values (towards work) form a mediating cooperation between floors of the house. Work experience, work community and work organization significantly influence employees values, attitudes, functional capacity and expertise (Gould et al., 2008). From another point of view, Tengland (2011) argued that a reasonable combination of some individual character traits and virtues like reliability, responsibility, honesty, diligence and so forth are required by all kinds of work. He calls these set of essential character traits and virtues basic occupational virtues and points out that without a reasonable degree of such set of aforementioned traits employees will not obtain acceptable work ability in their work place.

The fourth floor is related to work. It consists all dimensions of the work include work demands, work content, work community and the work organization as well as it includes management and supervisory. The fourth floor actually place the criteria for the other dimensions of work ability. Human resources in all three dimensions (capacity, competence and attitude) should be in balance with work dimension in order to work ability remain good (Gould et al., 2008). The work dimension in the work ability construction explains around 33% of variance in the work ability and is the second most important indicator after health and functional capacity (Ilmarinen et al., 2005). The work ability house is surrounded and supported by various aspects of society. It includes supportive organizations like occupational health care centers, family and immediate community as well as the macro aspect of society like the work, health and education policies which play important role in improving work ability (Gould et al., 2008; Hasselhorn, 2008).

**Figure 1: The House of Work Ability**



### 3. JOB ATTITUDE

According to the holistic multidimensional model of workability as illustrated in work ability house, work ability can be influenced by individual attitude.

Nevertheless Just a little research has paid particular attention to this important dimension of work ability. Ilmarinen and his colleague (2008, 2005) pointed out that individual attitudes toward work, particularly, job satisfaction play an important role in construct of work ability. The results of previous studies obviously depict that promoting of job satisfaction can lead to the good work ability and help employees to remain longer in work life (Gould et al., 2008).

Job attitudes are one of the most established, oldest and most dominant fields of investigations in all organizational psychology.

According to the literatures of studies the most agreed definition of attitude can be considered as "A psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour" (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

In today's word, people's identities strongly link to their work. Job attitude is important as well as work are important entities. Job attitude is important because job is important-to people's identification, to people's health and to their appraisal of their lives (Hulin, 2002). Furthermore, job attitudes are related to other aspects of a people's life like their life satisfaction (T. A. Judge & Watanabe, 1993).

Job attitudes have been defined by several researchers as:

Assessment of one's job that declares one's perception toward, opinion about, and attachment to one's job. They encompass two separate aspects, cognition that refers to an individual's belief and effect in which apply to individual's feeling, therefore job attitude can be influenced by both situational and dispositional factors (T. A. Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

#### **4. JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction can be defined as "a positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one's job or job situation" (Weiss, 2002). Job satisfaction is a well-known variable in studies related to organizational behaviour as well as occupational psychology. It is associated with different kinds of organizational variables and usually serve as a predictor to employee's well-being in the workplace (Keller & Semmer, 2013). Many studies have been conducted on job satisfaction from various aspects. These include subjective assessments of work condition like job characteristics (Schjoedt, 2009) its correlation to organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment (Rutherford, Boles, Hamwi, Madupalli, & Rutherford, 2009) or the tendency to quit the job (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004). Some researches took job satisfaction into account as well as an overall attitude associated with life satisfaction (Ilies, Wilson, & Wagner, 2009). Several studies have also investigated the role of job satisfaction as a predictor of employee's work ability (Gould et al., 2008; J Ilmarinen et al., 2005). The significant contribution of job satisfaction was reported by all aforementioned studies.

#### **5. INDIVIDUAL DISPOSITION**

During the last decade considerable body of researches have been conducted to investigate the particular role that individual dispositions play on two influential indicators of intrinsic career success which is career satisfaction (Boudreau, Boswell, & Judge, 2001; Bowling, Beehr, & Lepisto, 2006; Kim, Hon, & Crant, 2009) and individual job satisfaction (Heller, Ferris, Brown, & Watson, 2009; Ishitani, 2010; T. A. Judge, Heller, & Klinger, 2008; Sutin, Costa, Miech, & Eaton, 2009).

Job satisfaction is related to employee's current work whereas career satisfaction implied to the sum of individuals' experiences in his or her occupation (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005).

The assumption that employee's personality causes their satisfaction is not a new hypothesis in organizational researches. Some researchers in 1930s, pointed out the possibility of a relationship between emotional adjustment and individual satisfaction (Fisher & Hanna, 1931; Hoppock, 1935). The new dispositional approach roots in some researcher's findings that have pointed out stability in employee's attitudes over time and across situations (Dormann & Zapf, 2001; Judge, Heller, & Mount, 2002; Staw & Ross, 1985). Accordingly stable employees' differences are likely to influence job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998).

From the dispositional approach, several taxonomic structure models have been conducted to predict employees' job satisfaction. Comparing the three main taxonomic structure (five-factor model, PA/NA and Core Self-Evaluation CSE) by a recent meta analysis study illustrate that job satisfaction is predicted by CSE better than the other aforementioned predictors (T. A. Judge et al., 2008).

The core self-evaluation theory was developed as a taxonomic structure of personality in the field of job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). Core self-evaluation concept afford an integrated theory which influences enormous researches in the similar field of personality and satisfaction (Judge & Hurst,



2008; Srivastava, Locke, Judge, & Adams, 2010; Stumpp, Hülshager, Muck, & Maier, 2009). Judge et al clarified CSE as the fundamental evaluation that people make about themselves. Four certain traits which met the mentioned criteria were identified as self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control and finally emotional stability (Judge, Erez, & Bono, 1998; T. A. Judge, Locke, et al., 1998; T. A. Judge et al., 1997). Self-esteem is the most fundamental traits. It refers to the overall value that people appoint for themselves (Locke, McClear, & Knight, 1996). Generalize self-efficacy is the next trait of CSE. It represents to what extent a person believes he or she could overcome life challenges (Smith, 1989). The third trait is a high internal locus of control. It depicts the people's belief that their own behaviour causes the desired effects, not fate and powerful others (Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, & Tan, 2011; Rotter, 1966). Finally is emotional stability (low neuroticism). It describes stable people, who feel calm and secure and are free of negative emotions such as anxiety (Eysenck, 1991). Validity of CSE concept has been supported by considerable empirical research (Judge, Erez, et al., 1998; Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2002; Judge, Locke, et al., 1998).

## **6. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

### **IMPACT OF INDIVIDUAL DISPOSITION ON WORK ABILITY**

#### *6.1 The link between job satisfaction and work ability*

The multidimensional holistic theory of work ability has identified individual's values, attitude and motivation as one of the main dimensions of work ability. There were empirical evidence that employee's job satisfaction associated significantly with their work ability.

Ilmarinen et al (2005) reported in their study that individual overall values explain 14% of variance in work ability ( $R^2=0.14$ ) whereas joy of work explains 11% of variance in work ability ( $R^2=0.11$ ). The results of another study illustrate that prevalence of employees with limited work ability among those who are dissatisfied with their job is 3.2 times higher than in compare with satisfied employees (Gould et al., 2008). However there is scholarly evidence that supports a positive relationship between employee job satisfaction and their perceived work ability.

#### *6.2 The link between individual disposition and job satisfaction*

Although very limited studies have been conducted to investigate the direct contribution of individual disposition into work ability there is strong scholar evidence that demonstrated a strong link between individual disposition and job satisfaction (Heller et al., 2009; Ishitani, 2010; Judge et al., 2008; Sutin et al., 2009). The studies that have investigated the relationship between individual disposition and job satisfaction through different research designs, methodology, measurement scale, and statistical analysis method, have coalesced around three theoretical frameworks: core self-evaluation (CSE), positive affectivity (PA) \negative affectivity (NA), and the five factor model of personality (FFM) taxonomy. The predictive validity of all three taxonomy framework has been supported by meta-analytic data

A comprehensive conducted meta-analysis found that positive affectivity (PA), and negative affectivity (NA) had the similar (.34) absolute associate with job satisfaction (Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren, & De Chermont, 2003). Judge, Heller, and Mount (2002) also reported on their meta-analysis that the multiple correlation of the Big Five traits with job satisfaction was around (.41). Finally, in another meta-analysis, researchers found the average correlation of (.32) between job satisfaction and all four traits of core self-evaluation (Judge & Bono, 2001).

Accordingly, strong support has been provided by mentioned theoretical framework for the significant association between individual disposition and employee job satisfaction.

### 6.3 Core self-evaluation and job satisfaction

Judge, Hiller, and Klinger( 2008) conducted a meta-analysis to compare three taxonomic structures. They found that NA\PA, five-factor model, and core self-evaluation altogether, explain 36% of the variance in job satisfaction. However,after concurrent investigation of all three framework,they found that just core self-evaluation had significant relationship with job- satisfaction.

According to another meta-analysis which investigated 169 independent correlation between each trait of core self-evaluation (self esteem,self-efficacy,locus of control,emotional stability) and job satisfaction, it was found that overall core trait explains 37% of variance in job satisfaction ( Judge & Bono, 2001) . It obviously translates to a significant contribution of employee score self-evaluation on their job satisfaction.

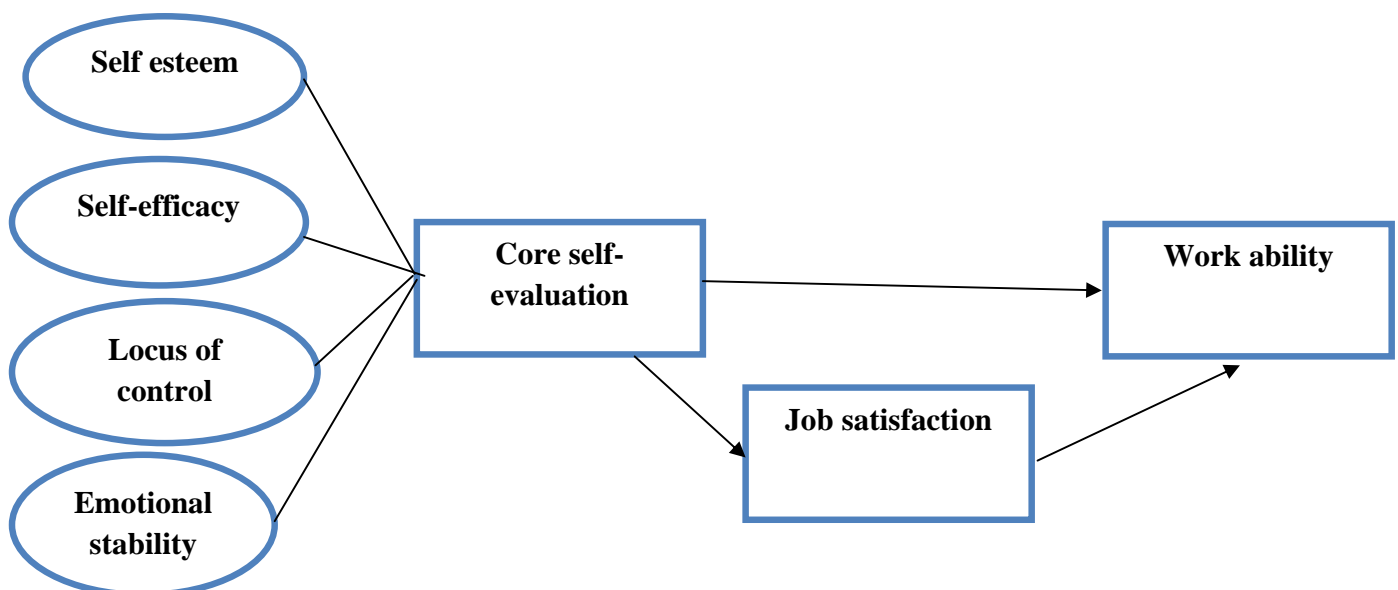
From a different approach,via evaluating the work environment,researchers found that core self-evaluation influenced significantly on employees jobsatisfaction. Best et al, (2005) pointed out that employees with high level of core self-evaluation are less probable to regard their job and work environment as exhausting,sheltering them from job depression and its destructive effects on job satisfaction.

More than 50 studies have been conducted and reported significant contribution of core self-evaluation into job satisfaction (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012).

Hence the current study puts forth to develop a conceptual framework which proposes the predictable role of individual disposition on work ability in the context of employees with disabilities in Malaysia.

As it can be seen in figure 5, the study aims to investigate the impactof core self-evaluation’s major traits include of self esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability as the most useful taxonomic structure and their influence on PWD’s work ability, as well as the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between dispositional factors and work ability of employees with disability.

**Figure 5:** Research Framework of The Study



## 7. CONCLUSION

Employees work ability has attracted high attention of many organizations as well as scholars in recent years. Regarding to the multidimensional model of work ability, researchers have conducted numerous studies to identify which factors could predict employees work ability.

There are many evidences that depict significant association between employees attitudes such as job satisfaction, and work ability. Although , it has been proved by a lot of studies that there isa strong relationship between individual disposition and job satisfaction, but there is a very few study that investigate direct impact of individual disposition on work ability.This study seeks to develop a conceptual framework with propose the predictive role of individual disposition on work ability in the context of employees with disability in Malaysia.

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# ENHANCEMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING OF THE YOUTH FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA

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## Abstract

Youth in any developing country is the largest and active portion of the population. In Kenya, youth are an important resource in community development. In most cases these youth are subjected to many psychological challenges within the family and community. The political class has misused this resource making them to engage in destructive activities leaving them with psychological scars. These youth need assistance to be psychologically stable so as to be productive in all aspects of community development. Youth need to be equipped with coping strategies to be able to deal with the psychological challenges. Youth who are psychologically stable are able to scale the heights of education and be harnessed to become developmental resource to transform their lives and that of the communities they live in. The Kenyan youth can be involved in self help groups, life skills and group counseling as a way of empowering them as individuals and in the community. This paper will address the key aspects of psychological wellbeing of the youth for development purposes, psychological challenges facing the youth in community development and suggest possible psychological interventions to mitigate these challenges.

**Key words:** *Youth, Empowerment, Community, Development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (1987) defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24. UNESCO (1995) has defined 'youth' as the period between ages of 15 and 24, a phase that has been commonly described as the period of adolescence. The influences of family, culture and society are all important in shaping their journey to adulthood. According to UNESCO young people are a heterogeneous group in constant evolution and that the experience of 'being young' varies enormously across regions and within countries. In Kenya today, for quite some time, many scholars and civil society organizations, youth organizations have blamed the old generation of leaders for ignoring the plight of the youth in all aspects like lifting them from endemic poverty, eradicating ethnicity and bad governance and this has yielded minimum results (Oloo, 2008). Community development is seen as a process by which youth's developmental needs are met, engagement in problem behaviours is prevented and youth are empowered to use their



developing competencies or skills for their community's betterment (Perkins et al. 1997). Young people who get moral and social support from their community tend to be more confident and productive in the society.

In Kenya, youth face various challenges today including lack of meaningful representation in key decision making; inadequate vocational and training opportunities and many of them lack the urge to be proud of their own country in other words, they lack patriotism (Oloo, 2008). If these challenges are addressed and youth are given the necessary support, they can in turn play a good role in the community both morally and economically. Perkins et al. (1997) observed that preparing young people to meet challenges requires provision of good foundation that enables them to make decisions that will promote their positive development. The youth require strong social support from caring and supportive adults who place high expectations on youth and reinforce achievement. The accomplishments need to be recognized and celebrated by significant others in the community. The role of the adult leader is to serve as a guide and facilitator (Kim et al., 1998). There is need to recognize youth contributions and celebrate their success. This positive support boosts self-esteem and encourages such youth to perform better in the future. With recognition, celebration and encouragement positive relationships with both peers and adults develop. In fact, many of the factors known to help protect young people from developing problems (such as alcohol and drug abuse, early sexual experiences, teenage pregnancies and violent behavior) are supports that could potentially be provided by families and community resources. Such resources would include empowerment by the society through psychological support through counseling activities and life skills training (Chakua, Adeli and Mbutitia, 2011).

Empowerment is a multi-level construct consisting of practical approaches and applications, social action processes, and individual and collective outcomes. In the broadest sense, empowerment refers to individuals, families, organizations, and communities gaining control and mastery, within the social, economic, and political contexts of their lives. The youth experience much difficulty defining their roles. Uncertainty regarding their roles creates ambiguity in their motivations which in turn leads to emotional instability. The basic nature of the society within which they find themselves causes many conflicts. What the youth learn from books and from adults about whatever is desirable and good and what should be accomplished is full of contradictions. Youth often find themselves surrounded by adults who often pay scant respect to what they profess and preach. Some of the adults' practices are complete opposite to what adult profess to be correct in the growth. When youth are exposed to such conflicting experiences, they become estranged and alienated from the society.

## **2. CHALLENGES FACING THE YOUTH IN KENYA**

Today's young generation experiences widening social gaps and faces manifold challenges. It is the young perhaps more so than any other social group because they encounter the uncertainties and risks generated by the process of economic and cultural globalization. Violence and suicide are growing problems in Kenyan communities as well as drug dependency among the young. Youth all over the world thus increasingly emerges as a specific social category which is laden with risk and uncertainty. Every country and this includes Kenya needs effective strategies able to help young people to make the right choices protect them from exploitation, neglect and ensure their participation in all spheres of society. Psychologically, the pressure comes from the need to break away from the norm and find a sense of belonging in the society, while at the same time trying to achieve a sense of personal identity. The message to the youth is to 'get their act together because they are the future of this nation'. With all this pressure coming at them, it is no wonder that their potential for engaging in activities leading to negative outcomes far outweigh those that will lead to positive ones.

The search for an identity involves the production of a meaningful self-concept in which past, present, and future is linked together. Given the social, political and cultural upheavals that our country has experienced over the past two decades, contemporary Kenya can be described as a society in which the past has lost the anchorage of family and community tradition, the present is characterized by social change, and the future is becoming less and less predictable

The following are some of the challenges that face the youth in Kenya;

*Empowerment and Participation;* One of the greatest challenges in Youth Empowerment and participation is how to ensure that young people are passionate about causing transformation in Kenya. Youth Empowerment and Participation is the quintessential force for causing such transformation. Young people need a youth branded platform from where they can speak powerfully, take appropriate action, and inspire belief that will have a catalytic impact all over the country through youth-led development initiatives. Youth empowerment and participation is a dynamic cycle. Overall, it is anticipated that the outcome of Youth Empowerment and participation is strong contribution to National prosperity, economic competition and reduced unemployment. When empowered, young people can contribute greatly towards good governance and democracy with a passionate desire to be catalyst for National Development.

*Social marginalization;* The Universal Declaration on Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) pointed out that cultural diversity is necessary for humankind since it is the root of development to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence. Since most of the youth have been marginalized by the elders, they tend to group themselves in terms of ethnic backgrounds and shut out the power of cultural diversity. The youth see themselves as victims of injustices and so they are emotionally unstable, they are not intellectually dissatisfied and behave in immoral manner. Although the community development ties together the concern for carrying capacity of natural systems with the social challenges facing humanity, there is need to check on these challenges since they will curtailed the progress of natural conservation.

*Economic inequalities;* Our current society is classified in two categories; the 'haves' and 'have not'. As the youth are growing up, they find themselves in either of the categories. Due this kind of disparities, the youth find themselves yielding into temptation of being lured to destructive activities. For us to achieve advanced and equitable community development we must embrace national integration and full participation in nation building rather destruction (Adams, 2006). Economic inequalities is manifested in the way the children of the rich and in particular the political leaders are doing well in terms of economic stability while the children of the poor who the majority are languishing in dire poverty. These youth need to be engaged in community development if a successful is to be achieved in this country.

*Crime and Drugs;* The early mid 1980's saw a rapid growth in crime, drug and substance abuse among the youth in Kenya. Alcohol, cigarettes, khat (miraa), and cannabis sativa have remained the most popular abused substances. There is a fast emerging trend of injecting drug use especially narcotic. Moreover, abuse of drugs is highly associated with the risks of contracting HIV/Aids and other sexually transmitted diseases especially among the youth. Violent criminal attacks, including rape, mugging, armed carjacking and home invasions are increasingly being associated with the youth these days

*Political exploitations;* Negative ethnicity has been perpetuated by political exploitation where the youths have been used by politicians during political campaigns and thereafter the empty promises are never fulfilled. This act leaves the youth with enormous self-guilt behavior after getting involved in destructive behavior.

*Lack of patriotism;* Kenyan youth are no longer proud to call themselves 'Kenyans' due to lack of patriotism. The current society has become too individualistic, people are selfish and they lack the sense of purpose (Will, 2007). The nationhood has been overtaken by ethnicity and kinship ties. The fight for nation building has become a word of the past since people no longer value the community.

*Lack of participations in National decision making;* the failure to include youth in national decision process is a pointer to redirecting their efforts and skills into the cocoons of ethnic cycles. They are never involved in how the developments of the nation are intended to and so when any opportunity of explosions of emotions emerges, they direct their efforts to destroying any infrastructure that come their way. This was evidently manifested in Kenya's 2007/2008 post election violence where the youth destroy buildings, railways, among others. This was due to lack of broad public participation in decision making which is the prerequisite for achieving community development (Hasna, 2007). The youth with their revolutionary energy and spontaneous outburst of emotions have fallen victims of destructions of development in our Neighborhood cohesion which used to bind the different tribes together in a region/Nation. They have no sense of community development due to lack of involvement in development decisions.

*Education and unemployment;* The 8-4-4 system of education was geared to imparting appropriate skills to enhance self-employment. However, due to the high costs, poverty and lack of facilities, there have been high school dropout rates. Most of the youth either drop out of school or graduate without necessary skills for self-employment. Many girls drop out of school due to pregnancy. The country's training institutions are also either inadequate or lack the essential facilities and technology to prepare students for the challenging market demands (Caspi, 1998). Recently, sub-standard training institutions have come up to take advantage of shortage of training opportunities to exploit desperate youth. In most cases, there is no linkage between the training institutions and either the formal or informal (jua kali) sector. The youth trained in these institutions cannot, therefore, be immediately absorbed into the job market. Besides this, society's attitude towards the Jua kali sector discourages many youth from venturing into it, as they do not want to be regarded as failures in life.

Majority of the youths in Kenya are not employed yet most of them have certificates. This sad phenomenon comes as a result of the so called 'tall' relatives who hold positions in all institutions. Those who are unlucky to have the 'tall' relatives will keep on moving from one office to the other. Due to this inherent factor of frustrations the youth will begin to coil themselves into the shelves of ethnic groups. Like the ferocious snakes which are ready to attack at any given time, the youths will react violently as a way of releasing their frustrations when an opportunity comes their way. The youth will use their ethnic groupings as a resource for interest groups for achieving certain goals like wealth, power or even status. This is seen as a way of being interconnected to all members of the same ethnic identities for socio-cultural and behavioral benefits. The detrimental impacts of this notion can cause stagnation in development which can make the national development never to be achieved as desired and this will affect the community development (World Health Organization, 2005).

### **3. EARLY INTERVENTION**

Early intervention will often be the most effective way of supporting the youth who are facing so many challenges. Intervening early can help divert youth from an anti-social pathway, before behaviour patterns become consolidated and resistant to change. Majority of youth however cannot be identified during childhood. For these offenders it is still important to have a range of age appropriate interventions. There is need to initiate new programmes for young people whereby a problem is defined, risk and protective factors are identified. Interventions should be improving social ties, improving parental monitoring and positive relationships with the young person, reducing anti-social peers, and school performance. The following are some of the early interventions that can be used to enhance psychological wellbeing of the youth in Kenya;

*Positive Parenting Program (Triple P):* This comprehensive intervention includes parenting programmes for the parents of children aged 1-14 years with conduct disorder/severe antisocial behaviour (Block, 2002). Triple P has five levels of intervention of increasing strength from instructional material to comprehensive parent training including home visits.

*Multi-systemic therapy (MST):* This individualized intervention targets the biggest risk factors in a young person's life (school, family, peers, neighborhood, and organizations the young person connects with). It is a short-term intensive, community-based intervention. Practitioners have low caseloads (three to six), are on call 24/7 and provide an intensive level of client contact (multiple contacts per week, in person or by phone), especially early in the intervention process. Service delivery can be out of hours to accommodate family needs (Block, 2002). MST has been evaluated in the New Zealand setting, and been found to be capable of significantly reducing offending and other family and peer-related risk factors. This intervention can be applied in Kenyan situation in order to help the youth to reduce unbecoming behaviour and help them to be more productive.

*Multi-dimensional treatment foster care (MTFC):* Community families are recruited, trained and paid to provide placements for young people as an alternative to group homes (Block, 2002). Foster parents are provided with weekly group supervision with other foster parents facilitated by a supervisor. They also receive daily telephone calls covering problems during the previous 24 hours. The young person receives weekly individual therapy focused on building skills in problem solving, social skills and nonaggressive means of expression. When it is planned for the young person to return to the care of the biological family, weekly parenting training is provided. The young person is closely monitored, especially to prevent contact with delinquent peers. Supervisors are on call 24/7, which reflects the level of support required for foster parents caring for such difficult to manage young people in therapeutically effective ways.

*Functional family therapy (FFT):* This is a short-term behavioural intervention that involves 12-24 hours of therapist contact with a family seeking to change the patterns of family interaction and communication in such a way that adolescent conduct disorder or severe antisocial behaviour is no longer functional (Block, 2002). FFT is designed to improve communication and reciprocity between family members and includes many of the evidence-based interventions that are part of parent training programmes like Incredible Years, adapted for adolescents. There are currently few practitioners trained in FFT in New Zealand.

*Self Assertive Skills:* workshops need to be organized countrywide in schools to make the students and teachers aware of the need and reinforce the role of youth in the culture of peace. Assertiveness concerns with being able to express feelings, wishes, wants and desires appropriately and is an important personal and interpersonal skill. In all interactions with other people, assertiveness can help the youth to express yourself in a clear, open and reasonable way, without undermining the rights of yourself or others. Assertiveness enables youth to act in their own best interests, to stand up for themselves without undue anxiety, to express honest feelings comfortably and to express personal rights without denying the rights others (<http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/assertiveness>). Being assertive involves taking into consideration own rights, wishes, wants, needs and desires, as well as those of the other person. Assertiveness means encouraging others (youth) to be open and honest about their views, wishes and feelings, so that both parties act appropriately (<http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/assertiveness>).

Assertive behaviour includes:

- Being open in expressing wishes, thoughts and feelings and encouraging others to do likewise.
- Listening to the views of others and responding appropriately, whether in agreement with those views or not.
- Accepting responsibilities and being able to delegate to others.
- Regularly expressing appreciation of others for what they have done or are doing.
- Being able to admit to mistakes and apologize.
- Maintaining self-control.
- Behaving as an equal to others.

*Life skill training:* Life skills is a general term used to describe a large group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills which can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop coping and self-management skills that may help them lead a healthy and productive life. While certain life skills programs focus on teaching the prevention of certain behaviors the Search Institute has found those programs can be relatively ineffective. Positive Youth Development, or PYD (LOGGA, 2013) as it's come to be known as, focuses on the strengths of an individual as opposed to the older methods which tend to focus on the "potential" weaknesses that have yet to be shown. The Family and Youth Services Bureau has found that individuals who developed life skills in a positive, rather than preventive, manner feel a greater sense of competence, usefulness, power, and belonging. The youth in Kenya need to be trained on life skills so as to gain more competences and avoid being manipulated by self-indulged individuals.

#### **4. WAY FORWARD**

The following are some of the general ways of helping the youth to have sense of belonging in the society;

*Youth should be Principled;* For so many decades, the politicians have taken great advantage in manipulating the youth for their political gains. This is due to the fact the youths are idle and vulnerable to political manipulations. Living in a complex society where each individual will have to practice the law of the jungle where each person must struggle for his/her own survival, the youths need to be very keen observers of situations. They need to be able to account for their environment by being reflectively observant to demeanors and people's reactions in issues pertaining to development. As future leaders, they need to ascertain and give people's emotional reactions accurately before indulging themselves into destructive behavior. It is the duty of the government to provide youth with the necessary opportunities for them to acquire a broad range of competencies and demonstrate a full complement of positive connections to self, others and the larger community (Pittman, 1992).

*Change of Attitude;* it is good to note that our attitude to change the situation is what can determine our success in the future but not the amount of money we spend in setting up projects which will never achieve their ultimate goals. Community development does not depend so much on our prestigious titles which we carry a long but they depend on our willingness to sacrifice much of our time and resources to realize them. So it is through transformation of our attitude from negative perspective into positive view our development that will make us realize the ultimate goal of community development.

*Youth empowerment;* Most of our youth irrespective of ethnic group they come from, are virtually unemployed. These youth need political, social and economic empowerment in order to help them concentrate most in nation building and community development. It is a high time that people stop pointing fingers on the failures of our forefathers and parents or leaders. What counts most is not where we have come from but where we are heading to. We need to cultivate a spirit of optimistic insights and not keep on nursing the pessimistic view of the past wounds of destructions. It is good to note that the

moment we start observing, reflecting and committing ourselves to giving our best, is then we can be able to realize our success in sustaining our developmental strategies.

*Involve the youth in political processes;*For a long time, youths have never been involved in political processes yet they get used during campaign periods. The youths get forgotten soon after elections. There is need for full youth participation in political processes in Kenya including vying for competitive positions like senator, Governor, Member of Parliament or even civic leadership. The youth need to be assisted to concentrate on positive politics, develop their leadership skills, engagement in self-development as well as community development.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The challenges facing the youth in Kenya are so many and they need careful redress from all the stakeholders. The youth's psychological wellbeing can be enhanced through early interventions that empower them to be resourceful in the society. Empowerment through self awareness will ensure they are aware of their strengths are cognizant of their weaknesses and are able to make sound judgments. This will ensure that they are stable emotionally and judgments will be based on personal convictions, not on coercion or external influence. Empowering the youth psychologically will help them to effectively manage conflicts at all levels and challenges that they face every day. The youth will open up their inner world to promote peace and harmony hence constructively engages them in development. Through groups and at individual level the young people will be equipped with sufficient skills necessary to make them useful resources for community development.

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# YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL ELECTRIFICATION IN BANGLADESH

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## Abstract

This review presents youth development in terms of their involvement in rural electrification in Bangladesh. This paper delineates (1) what are the needs of youth in rural electrification and (2) which factors are more influential for empowering youth that further making the difference in and between different countries? Several studies showed that youth are the principal agents for social change, economic development and technological innovation. Thus, the relationship between youth development and rural electrification is fundamental in understanding to create link between youth employment and sustainable rural development in general. Eco-jobs certainly and surely bring socio-economic benefits not only for the youth but also for the entire community. Discussions on youth empowerment and renewable energy technologies with recommendations will provide treasure trove of knowledge in many ways to achieve sustainable rural development goals in general and youth development goals in particular.

**Key words:** *Youth empowerment, rural electrification, economic development, and rural development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The young people development is a growing phenomenon of postmodern times, especially in development countries like Bangladesh. In the world today, eight-five percent of them live in developing countries where there are few opportunities for productive work (Pfitzer, 2013; United Nations, 2011). Young people generally have the energy, the vision and the belief to get involved with new and innovative projects. However, in the majority of developing countries, there is a lack of infrastructure to support youth employment projects, and youth are not provided the necessary coaching, trust and enabling environment to make viable contributions to the local economy and environment. For example, many studies show that young people are important asset in the rural electrification process in terms of development and employment (Nzinga H. et al. 2012; World Bank, 2012; Andreas J., 2013). However, there are many barriers with regard to youth employment in the area of rural electrification in particular. To address this, it is necessary to build knowledge resources and compile lessons learned in applying youth entrepreneurship and involvement for renewable energy enterprises and rural electrification (World Bank, 2012). Thus the aim of this present review is to analyze the relationship between youth development and rural electrification in Bangladesh, which will address by two research questions: (1) what are the needs of youth in rural electrification, and (2) which factors are more influential for developing youth that further making the difference in and between different countries?

In developing countries, for example, in Bangladesh, the poorest 40 percent of rural households accounted for just 7 percent of all electrified rural households, but this share increased to 17 percent by 2004 (see Ziauddin, 2011). Of course, it depends on different conditions in terms of its economic, social and cultural milieu but age. Although age of some countries, for example, Bangladesh and Malaysia, are almost same but the development speed of them are different. Malaysia is growing rapidly with its healthy economy (Mohamed, 2013). On the other hand, Bangladesh is running the wheel of economy in a slow motion. In practice, in Bangladesh as a case country, the large group of young people cannot be absorbed in urban and industrial employment, at least in the short run. As a result, high levels of youth unemployment contribute to



poverty, social unrest, conflict, and urban migration, all of which hinder economic growth and threaten political stability (Freedom C., 2010).

A term commonly used to signify employment that is environmentally friendly and ecologically sound is “eco-job”. Eco-jobs are provided comprehensive windows to youth-entrepreneurs setting up renewable energy enterprises. Productive work environment in terms of employment with organizations that deal with renewable energy is an equally significant option. Adding or developing, and or creating alternative sources of energy must form by considering the context of the region and of regional policies as it can bring employment to regions. These were not previously industrially developed by scientists and technical communities in general. More practically, unemployment is a global trend, but mostly it occurs in least developing countries, especially in the rural areas, with attendant social, economic, political, and psychological consequences (Nwokwu, 2013). Available, affordable, accessible eco-jobs in rural areas would prevent the rural-urban youth migration. According to ILO (2007) report, rural youth only migrate to urban areas to find means of their better life. If migrated youth did not find their expected, and or hopping jobs then they become frustrated, disenfranchised, threatening political and economic stability. More specifically, considerable rural youth unemployment in any country is an indication for grave developmental problems. Creating small and medium sized enterprises, the renewable energy in terms of rural electrification is recognized as a major source of new employment opportunities (Therese F. & Thierry U. 2013)). Thus rural electrification projects offer significant results and should be adopted on a global level. In this regard we need to create context based renewable energy enterprises to promote youth employment in general. May studies showed that the development of renewable energy can bring positive and tangible effects on employment because this energy is local in nature and can usually be made available without the existence of heavy infrastructure (Rio and Burguillo, 2008). However, it is not economical to try to connect these rural pockets to the grid. At the same time, these communities do need access to electricity. Renewable energy provides the solution to this (Aedan, 2011).

With this in view, the present review intends to provide guidelines that would enable the youth policy makers to consider youth involvement in rural electrification to achieve sustainable rural development goals in general and youth development goals in particular. Published and unpublished materials were collected through literature searches of anthropological, energy sciences, sociological and social work abstracts. Meta-synthesis of qualitative approach was used for this article. A total of 18 literatures were reviewed to find treasure trove of knowledge about relationship between youth development and rural electrification that is fundamental in understanding to create link between youth employment and sustainable rural development in general. Practically speaking, finally, this review examines structural sociological significance concerning the process of youth involvement in rural electrification that has different impacts on society (Shahidur R. et al, 2012).

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TOPIC**

The proposed study emphasizes the “soft path” concepts into rural electrification process by the involvement of youth (see Whetten and Cameron, 2010). Lovins defined a “soft path” as utilizing energy technologies that are of a smaller scale which capitalize on indigenously available, renewable energy sources. Reduced scale delivers three significant advantages. First, the electricity grid becomes more resilient because the failure of one generation unit has far less impact on the overall supply of electricity (Sovacool, 2008). When the BHP becomes operational, for instance, any major break downs will leave its industrial consumers stranded without electricity. Second, soft path systems are more responsive to growth in electricity demand. Generation capacity can be added in a modular fashion as demand escalates (Sovacool and Valentine 2011).

The soft path also advocates technologies that are relatively easy to understand and maintain. This enables members of an indigenous community, for example, to maintain systems themselves and thereby delivers the bifurcate benefits of reduced downtime and enhanced employment. This soft path of energy system development conflates well with economic development theory for developing nations. In his widely acclaimed *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, economist Schumacher (1973) developed the term “intermediate technology”—later called “appropriate technology”—to denote technologies that: (a) support local economic growth within a given community; (b) create independence from outside sources of knowledge and capital; (c) use local materials that minimize harm to the social and natural environment; and

(d) employ the simplest production methods available. The “soft path” supports the technologies and policies that enhance new opportunities for young people in the process of rural electrification (Acosta, et al. 2005, 25-33). The current proposed review conceptualizes youth involvement and rural electrification process in terms of Bangladeshi context.

### **3. YOUTH INVOLVEMENT V.S RURAL ELECTRIFICATION: SOME EXAMPLES**

Many developing countries, particularly less developed countries, are notoriously energy poor, especially in terms of electricity. There is considerable disparity in electrical consumption between countries with a low versus high human development index, as demonstrated by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) statistics. Available studies suggested that this gap between poor and affluent countries is not about to be filled. According to international energy agency (2012), sadly, 1.6 billion persons currently still have no access to electricity. In 1980, the amount of electrical energy used by a resident of Switzerland in four days was the same as the amount by a resident of moderately advanced country in a year (Rio and Burguillo, 2008). The situation is even more disastrous in isolated rural areas, which are open neglected by electrification projects due to high costs and technical difficulties. Yet for broad segments of these populations, electricity is a high priority need that would help improve their living conditions and bring their standard of living closer to those urban areas (ILO, 2008).

In Bangladesh, a remote area under *Banderban* district, a project was taken with the financial assistance of UNDP producing electricity in hilly sharp water flowing canal areas and producing electricity was distributed into the villagers called *Alokito* (lighted) villages that gave jobs rather than eco-jobs of some villagers-only adult, and they were financially stronger than any other tribal peoples by working more times. This review showed UNDP handled electricity producing programme does not necessarily address the issues of youth involvement in rural electrification.

It is important to mention here that in Bangladesh youth employment means incorporate the youth as service by means of salary. It is agriculture based economic growth country and the rural people are engaged with different types of farming and farming related unproductive jobs. Additionally, in Bangladesh, rural development means development of rural areas and it indicates the improvement of the 80% inhabitants of the sixty eight thousand villages of the country by increasing the uses of electricity involving the youth (male and female) with the social development activities for mitigating the unemployment problem as well as the development of the rural society (Ahammed and Taufiq, 2008).

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2000), national access to power is about 31% , considered to be small and insufficient even by standard of low income countries 3% in rural and 46% in urban areas electricity connection. People who have access to electricity receive poor, unreliable services with regular power outages and low voltages. Studies about rural electrification showed that efficient power supply is essential for the manufacturing and service industry, particularly in the micro and small industries including the goods of cottage industries, particularly involvement of poor youth (Dwumah, 2010).

Considering aforesaid circumstances, the government of Bangladesh has taken small scale projects in rural areas to produce Biogas as fuel to run the electricity generating engine. Several studies showed that the rural youth employer may be incorporated to this job for effective cost savings and then the opportunities of the youth may be increased by widening the scope of rural electrification (Vincent, 2012). For example, in china electricity is produced from poultry litter and the residue is used as good manure/fertilizer in the agricultural farms. It is a spontaneous process to employ huge youth at this sector. This may be a role model for the rural development in terms of youth involvement in rural electrification in Bangladesh. According to professional youth researcher, Rashid (2012), in Bangladesh 44 million (15 to 29 year are youth and 80 percent of them live rural areas. They youth can be trained up to bring them at the main stream of civil society by affordable jobs for a meaningful earning. Rashid suggested that to expedite the involvement of youth for the rural development with rural electrification and uses of electricity to the cottage industry is necessary (Rashid, 2012).

In Malaysia, Villages are town like and furnished with modern architecture, it's equipped with traditional phenomena and updated artistic touched cottage industrially made house hold and electric goods. All are

been possible for rural development through rural electrification, youth are engaged in different types of electronics, chemicals and small scale cottage industries, and a remarkable number of youth are also acting in tourism sectors (see, Ngah, 2009). Malaysian government has extended a helping hand for their economic development, consequently, it may also be the role model of our rural development, as if Bangladesh can remove its poverty like Malaysia by following them with the blessing of rural electrification development (see, Ashely, et al. 2007).

In Morocco, rural population (45% of the total population) still have very limited access to electricity and gas, wood is the main energy source used for cooking and heating, representing 90% of a rural household's energy consumption (sources: Cooperation between the EFL and its Moroccan partners, the Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and veterinary science, and Targa-Aid, Research action approach). In Bangladesh, India and adjacent developing countries near about 85% people live in rural areas and they use wood, cow dung, charcoal mixed sawdust as fuel energy for cooking and heating. Nearby rural *bazaars* (daily markets) or towns for cooking and heating, stoves consume large amounts of combustible fuels and emit significant quantities of CO<sub>2</sub> and noxious smoke. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have severe consequences for the climate, and overuse of wood harms the environment by contributing to desertification in the northern parts of Bangladesh and the result of *thor* (Indian areas) desert Rajasthan, India (Report-2005). Many studies showed that these countries were not able to combine the goals of youth employment with the goals of youth employment and environmental protection, thereby combating sustainable development. Means that many developing countries like Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Morocco, Pakistan are facing to create eco-jobs through their existing rural electrification programme (sources, Education development centre Inc). Coming paragraphs will also provide us clearer picture about the relationship between youth involvement and rural electrification in particular.

Maldives has a population of only 340,000. Population growth, even at the present high rate of nearly 3% per year, is not likely to exert serious pressure on energy demand. That is way, Maldivian government had plans to use biomass to produce electricity but local people especially rural people were not comfortable to use biomass. To overcome this situation they took strategies to ensure youth participation in producing biomass in general (MSYB, 2004; REDDY, 2000). Moreover in developing countries like Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka have taken and drawn up long term plan for their socio-economic development in the twenty-first century, and have projected their energy requirements based on these long term policies as well as plans. Considering this, some countries have included strategies for obtaining the requisite quantity and quality of energy supplies, as this would be one of the major inputs and achieving their socio-economic goals in general (Twelfth SAARC Summit, 2004). Unfortunately, this review also showed that youth people interests are almost disregarded in all policies, programmes and strategies for ensuring clean energy and achieving countries socio-economic goals (Barua 2009,45).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Based on above discussions on different countries economic and social conditions and United Nations Protocols on rural electrification and youth development, we would argue that the involvement of young people in rural electrification has different impacts and necessity. The current review is ferreted out the linkage and difference of different countries socio-economic condition in terms of rural electrification by young people. However, the current global youth unemployment scenario warrants immediate and effective action. State policies and programmes require a co-ordination of activities to ensure a simultaneous approach to eco-jobs for the youth that cannot be overstated. In this regard we have to focus on the links between protecting the global environment while providing employment opportunities to the youth is critical in promoting sustainable development in the twenty-first century. The government of Bangladesh needs to ensure affordable and available green electricity for the rural community in general. Considering the context of Bangladesh, Biomass can be used to produce electricity in this regard. This helps rural youth to act as the driving force behind the transition from a developing economy to a developed one. More specifically, we have seen that youth are the principal agents for sustainable social development and technological innovation. Nevertheless, rural electrification is today one of the most significant options for combining the eco-jobs for the youth and sustainable social development. Finally, this review shows that youth involvement in rural electrification will provide rural communities with remarkable benefits, e.g. economic benefits. Thus

without youth involving in rural electrification the countries like Bangladesh would not be able to bring social change in an unequal society.

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# **FAMILY, COMMUNICATION, AND MENTAL WELL-BEING AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KANCHANABURI PROVINCE, THAILAND**

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## **Abstract**

The objective of this study is to examine the association between family factors, communication factors, and mental well-being among high school students aged 15–19 in Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand. This quantitative study was carried out using the probability sampling technique and a questionnaire was used for data collection from 1,074 students. Qualitative research methods were used, and 12 students were interviewed. Data were collected from high school students in three schools during the 2012 academic year. The analysis shows that family and communication factors significantly affect high school students' mental well-being. Based on regression analysis and qualitative content analysis, family relationships factors are more important than other factors in explaining the variations in students' mental well-being. Regarding the family relationships domains, those who reported a high level of compliance with the appropriate roles within the family and a high level of expression of love and caring for each other had good mental well-being. Addiction to the Internet is the one communication factor that is associated with students' mental well-being. Regarding Internet addiction factors, students with a high level of addiction had low mental well-being and a high level of depression. The results of this study support building positive (good) family relationships. In future studies, family relationship indicators should be developed in the context of activities and lifestyle of the family in each region.

**Keywords:** *Family, Communication, Mental Well-being, High School Students*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Unlike in the past, Family structure and family life may not follow the ideal pattern. Parents these days spend less time with their children because of their work commitments and their family financial burden. Statistical data collected by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) in 2010 showed that the number of mobile phone users and internet users in Thailand has grown continuously. Adolescents, particularly in the Central region of Thailand, were found using telephony, mobile phone, computer and internet more than other generations (NSO, 2010). One fourth of adolescent used the internet every day. They spend at least 2 hours and 20 minutes online and approximately 6-7 hours on mobile phone, internet, and Television all together. Therefore, it is clearly seen that young adults devote a majority of their time to communication. In terms of family pattern,

there are more and more children growing up in single-parent families. Similarly, a number of the separated and divorced families have become increasingly visible.

Data from Ramajitti Institute's Child Watch Project (2010) reported that, during 2007 to 2009, the average telecommunications service usage of students in Kanchanaburi was considerably high while the percentage of students who did not stay with parents and did not have family activities are above national average. Furthermore, the duration of time spent with their parents was rather low. Students were under high level of stress. This correlates with the latest survey conducted by the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health in 2010 that Kanchanaburi was one of the provinces that has low average score in mental health. It is interesting to see that, in the changed family patterns and relationships as well as the increasingly important role of telecommunications today, to what extent a family can take care, communicate, and support mental health of students in their adolescent years. Also, is there any correlation at all between these two variables? The outcome of this study will provide a clear understanding of the relationships between the changing in family structure, family relationships, and mental health of the teenagers in the context of high school students in Kanchanaburi Province. The objective of this study is to examine the association between family factors, telecommunication usage factors, and mental well-being among high school students in Kanchanaburi Province, Thailand.

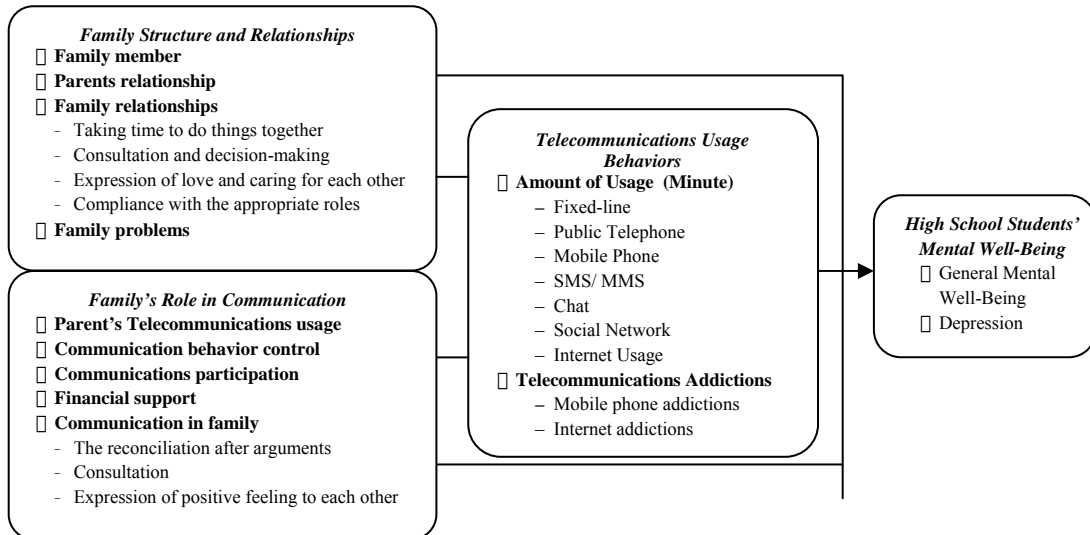
## **2. FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework of this study involves concepts and theories of Family Well-Being, Interpersonal Communication, Mental Well-Being, and Subjective Well-Being. After reviewing literatures, it is found that family factors directly correlate with telecommunications usage behaviors of adolescences. Child rearing practices of various family patterns also have direct influence on the internet usage behavior of Thai children and youths. Adolescences whose family members do not have time for each other and youths who do not have positive family relationship cause them to use telecoms services to seek for friends to listen to their problem and give them recommendations as well as help them to solve problems. On the other hand, it was found that online activities have impacted on time spent with family and communication within the family (Lee and Chae, 2007). Communication through mobile phones is another way to liberate behavior. Sometimes this helps to strengthen their family relationships. Also, parents could use mobile phone to control their behaviors or watch them closely (Ling and Donner, 2009).

It was revealed that family structure affects the well-being of adolescences, both their emotions and behaviors. Changes in family structure and patterns result in differences in emotions and behaviors of adolescences (Brown, 2006; Fomby and Cherlin, 2007). Families that do not have positive relationships, children and youths are likely to have negative conditions of physical and psychological well-being (Videon, 2002). Adolescences that live with both parents have the lowest risk to their mental well-being (Pattaravanich U, et al., 2010). Furthermore, it is evidently that when family members do lots of activities together such as having meal, watching television, and relaxing, their mental health improves noticeably and the risk of developing mental problems is lower (Chamratrithirong A, et al., 2010).

On the subject of Telecommunications, previous studies showed that communication technologies have impacts on various ways of life. Communicating through mediums, for example, mobile phone can create closeness, intimacy, and affinity. It reduces distance and helps to form connections between people. Also, it is another way to help relieving stress, releasing tensions, reducing anxiety, and relieving pain (Sukplum C, 2001). Mobile phone technology helps increasing a sense of security in family and reducing feeling of loneliness (Jin and Park, 2010). Internet usage benefits adolescences in terms of connecting them to society resulting in the increasing of their well-being because the internet helps them to express themselves as well as crease their self-esteem by letting others know and see them more (Valkenburg and Peter, 2009). Internet usage has more positive effects on adolescences. However, overuse of the internet could create physical and psychological problems (Suvannakood P, and Prasertsin A, 2009). Youths who overuse the internet have a tendency of being depressed, lonely, and isolated (Eijnden et al., 2008). Figure below displays the conceptual framework of this study.

## Framework



### 3. METHODS

This study combines the quantitative research and qualitative research. The details of the study are as follows.

#### 3.1 Design and Sample

This is a cross-sectional study. The study population included high school students attending three schools in the 2012 academic year. Schools were chosen with systematic sampling methods with respect to school size. The sampling design is based on a statistical probability sampling. The first stage is divided students into clusters according to the school. Then, cluster random sampling selected three schools out of 32 schools with a lottery. In each selected school divided students into three stratified by level of education (Matthayomsuksa 4, 5 and 6) and perform stratified sampling randomly selected students from four classrooms assorted the study programs. The study sample included 1,074 students, aged between 15-19 years, who were present in classes on the day when data were collected.

#### 3.2 Variables and Measurement

Quantitative research used the self-report questionnaire. The followings are details of the measurement used in this study.

□ *Family*: Questions are about the status of the relationship between father and mother, living with their parents, family relationships, problems within the family and the role of family on students' communication. Family relationships is measured from a 39-item scale developed by the ASEAN Institute for Health Development, Mahidol University based on the concept of "Thai Family Well-being" that assess the confidence of participants in engaging family relationships. The participants were asked to rate their level of confidence using 3-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 3 (always) in term of their ability to relate to their family. The



family relationships measurement composes of four questions about family activities which are 1) Taking time to do things together, 2) Consultation and decision-making, 3) Expression of love and care for each other, and 4) Compliance with the appropriate roles. The pre-test reliability (Cronbach's coefficient alphas of .75) for this scale was founded to be good.

□ *Communication*: Information about students' telecommunications usage included questions about students' usability, traffic and contact in seven services; fixed line, public phone, mobile phones, text messaging (SMS/MMS), chatting, social networking, access the internet, and symptoms of mobile phone and internet addiction.

□ *Mental Well-being*: The short version of the Development and Testing of Thai Mental Health Indicator Version 2007 (TMHI-15 Version 2007) from Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health was utilized to assess the mental health condition of the high school students engaged in this study. This is a 15-item scale with 4 domains (mental state, mental capacity, mental quality, supporting factors) and 15 sub-domains which asks participants to indicate their level of agreement on 4-point scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 4 (Always). Depression is measure from a 20-item scale of self-report; CES-D (Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale) Thailand version. Report reliability for the TMHI-15 Version 2007 and CES-D were high with Cronbach's coefficient alphas at .67 and .79.

□ *Students' characteristics*: Male is coded 1 for boys and 0 for girls. Levels of education are coded as ordinal scale variables. Academic performance are student-reported of the last semester Grade Point Average (GPA), ranging from the highest "4.00" to the lowest "0.00".

Qualitative research used in-depth questions. Most often there is a narrative of the events, the role of family experience in the telecommunications usage of students, the influence of family members on mental well-being, feelings, and opinions on current communication technologies.

### *3.3 Data Collection*

Data collection in quantitative research using self-administered questionnaire was conducted during August to September, 2012. The study sample included 1,074 students who filled in the questionnaires completely. When analyzing the data in quantitative research is done, the data collection in qualitative research was conducted during February to March, 2013. Group interviews were held two times with groups of six students. For a variety of samples in each group, there was mixed both boys and girls in all study programs and classes.

### *3.4 DataAnalyses*

Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences. Initially, univariate was performed to provide descriptive characteristics of the study. A multivariate analysis was carried out for all factors,  $\beta$  and p-value were calculated to determine the significance with statistical significant of each analysis against the p-value 0.05. To examine the relationship between family factors and students' communication factors, statistical analysis used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and Partial correlation coefficient. Multiple linear regressions, which were appropriate modeling technique for the levels of measurement, were used to evaluate the association between the family factors, students' communication factors, and the students' mental well-being. All covariates in these analyses were controlled. Qualitative research was analyzed using content analysis.

### *3.5 Ethical Considerations*

The study protocol was performed in accordance to the Committee for Research Ethics (Social Sciences) of Mahidol University (COA.No.2012/252/ 1008). Approval for data collection was obtained from the director of 3 schools. The students who were given information about the study and who accepted to participate in the study were included. All participants signed an informed consent document.

## **4. RESULTS**

The findings showed overall female students constituted 54.2 percent age between 15-19 years consistent with the current level of study. The average GPA is 3.03. A total of 94.7 percent of them receives allowances from their parents with the average of 2,209 baht a month. After the measurement of emotions and mental well-being in one month period at the day the survey was conducted, it was found that students have normal mental well-being in general and the majority of them don't show any sign of depression.

In terms of family pattern, the larger part of them stays with their parents and more than half of them have siblings. More than 71.5 percent of respondents have parents living together. Relationships measurement using 4 questions with reference to family activities displays that, the relationships in their families are good in general. The average score of the question regarding the compliance with the appropriate roles is the highest. About 61 percent of students have family problems, mainly involving differences in attitudes and opinions. Regarding telecommunications usage behaviors, students use a variety of telecommunications services considerably. More than 98 percent of respondents use mobile phone and 80 percent of them communicate using chat, social network, and Internet, with the average of three messages a day for chat and 2 hours a day on the internet and social network. They communicate mostly with friends, however, the addictive behavior is relatively little.

Concerning role of family in communication, parents of more than 98.5 percent of respondents use mobile phone while only 49.6 percent use Internet. Only half of students are under parental behavioral control. Respondents' parents control mainly over usage duration, expense, and contents of website that they browse. The majority of respondents' parents use internet at home with them. On the other hand, they will use internet with friends once they use outside home. On the subject of bill payment, 70 percent and 47 percent of respondents' parents paid for the internet bill and telephone bill respectively. It is also found that respondents communicate with families substantially, specially, face-to-face communication, adjust differences and come to understanding when in conflicts or disagreements, consultation when students facing problems, and express the feeling of love and care in any special season.

Partial correlation coefficient shows statically significant relationship between family structure, family relationships, family roles in communication, and various telecommunications usage. When family relationships in general are good, internet addiction in students tend to decrease, particularly, the use of mobile phone and internet. Parents' control over the use of mobile phone has obvious positive relationship with how much students use and how addictive they are to their mobile phone. The more students use mobile phones, the more their parents control their behaviors. This was supported by what is found in the content analysis of the qualitative research that family factors influence on type and to the

extent to which students use telecommunications services while their various telecommunications usage behaviors are found related to their family members. When problems occurred in their families, students may use the internet for communication or relaxation from family problems. However, the overuse of the communication devices might result in troubles ranging from parents' complaining to quarrelling with them.

The multiple regression analysis on general mental health and depression illustrates that gender, level of study, and GPA have statistically significant relationship with respondents' general mental health. Male students have better mental health than female. Female respondents also stand a higher chance to have depression than male. Students in Matthayomsuksa 6 have better general mental health than those in Matthayomsuksa 4 and 5. With respect to the GPA, the higher the GPA, the better the general mental health and the lower the depression. Contrariwise, negative mental health worsens their school results (GPA).

Pertaining to family factors, togetherness of family members has a statistically significant effect on students' mental health. On the whole, students who live with their mother have a good general mental health; but students who live with their father have a negative general mental health. This may result from the socio-cultural environment in Thailand that the father is the strong and the one who rules while mother is the gentle one and a caregiver to students. Respondents whose mother passed away have a tendency to have depression more than students whose parents live together.

With reference to status of their parents' relationship, there are no statistically significant effect on relationship between respondents' general mental health and their parents' status. However, one factor that contributes to the general mental health of the students found in both multiple regression analysis and qualitative research is the relationship in family variable. It was found that, unlike in the past, the majority of students value their relationship with other family member more than family pattern and family structure. The importance of the family factor can be seen in the role of family in communication variables. Communications with family members such as consulting with family members when problems arise or when family members express love and care for each other helps students to increase mental health.

For telecommunications usage behavior variables, similar to other research findings, students' addiction to the internet is vital to their general mental health and the tendency to depression. Students' who addict to internet would worsen their mental health and increase chances to have depression. On the contrary, students who have good mental health are likely to addict to the internet while the possibility that students who have depression are inclined to addict to the internet is high.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

Data from the quantitative analysis as well as content from qualitative research prove the hypothesis that family factors, telecommunication usage behaviors, and mental health are interrelated. Factors under the "family's role in communication" are closely related with students' telecommunication usage behavior on various devices. However, it is interesting to find that almost all students use internet in their everyday life. In contrast to their parents, only 50 percent of them know how to use internet and use it on daily basis. Although parents have control over the students' use of internet, the majority of them only takes part in usage and pays for the internet bill. That does not mean parents can easily access to their children's use of internet outside their home. Parents' control over the use of the internet and the help in bill payment has positive relationships with the students' addiction to telecommunications services

usage. If this can be explained that when students show sign of addiction, their parents would exercise more control over the use of internet and may reduce or not pay for internet bill. This is for the good of students. On the opposite, students under strictly parental control but parents help to pay the bill may increase the possibility of addiction. Therefore, parents ought to find a ways to protect and prevent undesirable usage behavior.

This study also found that various communication technologies do not influence the relationships and communication among family members. This is because face-to-face communication is chosen as a mean to communicate in family. Students use modern day communication devices to communicate among their peer. This is according to the interpersonal communication concept that frequency and behavior of communication depend on types of receivers. Furthermore, students and their peer groups would normally have similar understanding and ability to use communication devices more than their parents. Mobile phone and internet play an important role in students' daily lifenowadays as it can be seen from percentage of the service usage, type of usage, duration of usage, and addiction to the usage. Telecommunications today is interwoven into students' life because they need to communicate and search for information from the internet to help their study.

This study also points out that amount of usage does not have a vital role on students' mental health. It is worth notice that the "amount of usage" measuring by the usage frequency which is similar to previous studies does not relate to their mental health. Instead, "addiction to the use of Internet" shows effect by increasing depression and reducing mental health. That means the amount of usage measuring by usage frequency may not be a good indicator to measure the internet usage behavior. Measuring using emotions, feelings, and the need to use internet each day could be a better indicator for amount of internet usage.

In connection with family structure, it is interesting to see that mother has a positive relationship with students' mental health and has the highest potential to increase the mental health of students. Those who live with a mother had a good mental well-being. On the other hand, if a student's mother passed away, he/she is more likely to have depression.

In addition, this study displays that "family relationship" is more important than other factors including family structure, place of residence, and parents' relationship status. The key indicator in family relationship is the compliance with the appropriate roles and expression of love and care for each other. These help increasing students' mental health a lot. However, the "family doing activities together" indicator may not provide a good explanation for the changing in Thai family in every group of people or every area. The greater part of the concepts and indicators used to study family still stuck with the ideal family that a warm family must contain all elements- father, mother, and children –together and all family members must stay and doing activities together. This study also calls attention to the fact that family pattern, lack of some family members, or doing activities together do not really relate to the mental health of adolescences (students in high school level). Rather, family members should comply with their roles as well as show some love and care to each other since this is likely to impact more to a person's mental health.

## **6. LIMITATIONS**

Because of the cross-sectional nature of this study, it is not possible to define the direction of the causality of studied variables. All the factors analyzed in this study are measured at the single point in time. This analysis can only provide evidence of statistical association between variables. In practice, there may be a more complicated relationship that is associated with

other variables. There is a need to further prospective studies evaluating family factors in larger study populations.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

These findings highlight the need to construct a new indicator and measurement to suit the life style and daily activities of people in areas that conduct research study. Another point that should be taken into consideration is to develop the indicator to measure how strong family relationships are when a family faces problems or crisis.

The sociological aspects of telecommunications study have always been interesting, particularly, the social value, the feeling of isolation, the feeling of alienation, and depression resulting from communication technologies. These aspects also relate to students' patterns of communication.

Good family relationships, especially, the expression of love and care in family should be promoted as it will increase students' mental health. For family that there is no longer has "mother" in the family (passed away/separation/ divorces), it is absolute necessary for other family members to give more support and care of children's mental health. At the same time, parents should increase their level of participation in their children's use of telecommunication devices.

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# PARENTING STYLES OF BRUNEIAN YOUTHS' PARENTS

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## Abstract

Brunei, being a small developing country, recognizes that youths are an important asset for human resource development and nation-building. The parents are responsible for raising children so that they grow up intellectually, upholding national identity and patriotic to the country. They are expected to become responsible citizens of the future and be able to contribute to social and economic development of the nation. For this reason that the study was carried out to investigate parenting styles of Bruneian parents as perceived by Bruneian youths. The study involved 1023 youths of which 453 were males and 570 were females. In terms of race, 840 were Malays, 103 were Chinese, and 80 others. The parenting styles of parents were assessed by using a modified version of Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) developed by Buri (1991). The study found that Bruneian parents were mostly practicing authoritative parenting styles. However fathers exhibited higher levels of an authoritarian parenting style than did mothers. In addition, it was found that female youth perceived their fathers are more authoritative than mothers parenting styles and that Malay mothers were practicing an authoritarian parenting style than the Chinese mothers. Implications of the study were discussed in the paper.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the discovery of oil in 1929, Brunei Darussalam's economy has been driven by the oil and gas industry which brings prosperity and economic stability to the country. However, there is an increasing awareness in the country of depleting natural resources and an urgency to diversify its economy from over-reliance on oil and gas to non-oil sector (Abdul Amin, 2010). In response to such urgency, clusters of economic activities were identified as bases for diversification (Bhaskaran, 2010). These include financial services, business services, hospitality and tourism, transportation and logistics, education and knowledge creation, apparel, and agricultural products. To this end, plans for the future have been initiated which included the restructuring of labour force, reducing unemployment, strengthening banking and tourism sectors, and further widening the economic base beyond oil and gas. In order to implement these plans and ensure their sustainability, Brunei Darussalam needs to mobilise its citizens, particularly its youths and be involved in economic activities.

In response to these needs, various actions have been taken by several institutions in the country. At ministry level, realising the important link between education and national development by which youths are playing a critical role in sustaining dynamic economy and social harmony of Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Education introduced a new education reform in 2008 called *Sistem Pendidikan Negara* or SPN 21. It is envisaged that this new education system will help develop young people to be academically excellent, charismatic, disciplined, high-spirited, visionary, resilience and responsible citizens.

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports on one hand, introduced several development programmes. One of the earliest programmes for youth is an Industry Training programme which aimed for youths above 18 years of age to work in the Public Works Department (PWD). This is followed by the establishment of Youth Development Centre (YDC) in 1996. The centre is to provide skills training and self-development for unemployed youths who could not proceed with formal education. In the same year, a Self-Reliance Scheme was introduced. The scheme was a micro-financing scheme that

provided seed capital for youth to initiate or expand small-scale businesses. In 2011, the scheme was reviewed and recommended that youths to be given training in business management, entrepreneurship, self-development and skills training before the micro financing can be disbursed. The Youth Development Centre also provided counselling services to the community including, on parenting. The centre developed parenting skills courses for parents in the country (Brunei Times 2010). Recently, the National Service Programme has been introduced, which targeting on youths from the age of 16 to 20 years old. The aim of the programme was to instill in youths with a sense of selflessness, patriotism, and community consciousness so that they become responsible citizens and have leadership skills in nation building and national development. With these efforts, it is hoped that every youth would contribute to the nation building.

However, all of the above efforts would be more effective when children are cognitively ready and have the right attitudes. According to Itus (2006) for the children to have these characteristics, parents must provide them a warm and caring home environment. Therefore, it is utmost important that parents provide a good home environment so that their children become 'balanced' individuals who exhibit respectable spiritual life with high moral values and whose behaviour demonstrates qualities such as righteousness, honesty, humility and conscientiousness in everything they do. This entails parents must take active roles not only in providing food, protection and clothes but also in inculcating moral and societal values and develop physical, mental and spiritual well being of children. In this context, parenting is considered crucial for the overall development of the children.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The theoretical foundation of parenting is based on the work of Diane Baumrind in the 1960s (Baumrind 1972; 1991). She conceptualised parenting styles into three categories namely, authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive. Each of these parenting styles has distinctive characteristics which relate to parenting practices. Characteristics of authoritarian parents include highly controlling, demanding, directive and requiring children to be responsive to their demands but low in affection. They have absolute standards of conduct and family rules which they expect children to follow and obey without questions. Children's failure to conform to these standards and rules are regarded as disobedience and must be dealt with force and punitive discipline.

Like the authoritarian parents, authoritative parents are too highly demanding and directive, however, they are warm and very much involved with children. An authoritative parent tends to establish rules and guidelines, yet they tend to be more democratic and responsive to their children and willing to listen to questions. Furthermore they monitor and set clear standards for their children's behaviour. Thus, they are assertive, though not intrusive and restrictive. When children fail to conform to their expectations, their disciplinary actions are more supportive, rather than punitive. They set high, realistic goals for their children and provide support for them to achieve these goals.

In contrast to authoritarian or authoritative parents, permissive parents are less likely to establish rules for their children, hence less controlling and make few demands of their children. Moreover, they tend to be warm, nurturing and responsive of their children. Permissive parents often encourage their children to be independence and to make their own decisions in life. Often they tend to regard their children as friends.

Baumrind's conceptualisation of parenting styles leads to numerous research on parenting styles and their effects on children's outcomes, and factors affecting parenting styles. Research on parenting styles and its relationships with children outcomes revealed that parenting styles bring about different outcomes to children (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Brenner & Fox, 1999; Rudy & Grusec, 2006; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996; Wolfradta, Hempel & Milesc, 2003). Brenner and Fox (1999) reported that parenting styles can predict a child's well-being such as self-esteem, social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior. This was supported by a number of other studies on parenting. Studies on authoritative parenting showed that authoritative parenting is associated with both social competence and lower levels of problem



behavior in both boys and girls at all developmental stages (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Kaufmann et al. (2000) found that authoritative parenting is positively associated with healthy adjustment and reducing maladjustment than other styles of parenting. Similar results were found by Uji, Sakamoto, Adachi and Kitamura (2013) in which they reported that authoritative parenting brings beneficial psychological impact on children.

On the other hand, studies have shown authoritarian parenting seemed to have negative impacts on children's outcomes. Weiss and Schwarz, (1996) found that children and adolescents nurtured by authoritarian parents tend to perform moderately well in schools. Miller, Cowan, Cowan, Hetherington, and Clingempeel (1993) found that children and adolescents whose parents were authoritarian tend to have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression. Colpan et al. (2002) found that children of authoritarian mothers tend to have low self-esteem and lack spontaneity. Similarly, Heaven and Ciarrochi (2008) found that authoritarian parenting was related to declining self-esteem during adolescence.

While many of the studies highlighted the impact of authoritarian and authoritative parenting on children's outcomes, there were also studies on permissive parenting. For example, Cohen, and Rice (1997) reported the academic achievement was associated with low permissive parenting for children in grade 8-9. In contrast, Elias and Tan (2009) found that permissive parenting style did not correlate significantly with academic achievement. Diaz (2009) noted that permissive parents fail to develop a wide range of self-directing abilities that underlie academic success in children. Uji, Sakamoto, Adachi and Kitamura (2013) found that paternal permissive parenting associated with symptomatic problems such as depression and anxiety.

Hence, it is beyond doubt that parenting styles are important for the well being of children in the later part of their life and good parenting is often characterized by parental responsiveness, parental demandingness and recognition of children's autonomy. These characteristics are exhibited by authoritative parents. In view of its importance, this study investigated parenting style practices as perceived by youths in Brunei Darussalam.

### **3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective of the study is to investigate the nature of the parenting styles, as practiced by the parents of the youths in Brunei Darussalam. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the parenting styles of the youths' parents in Brunei Darussalam?
2. Are there differences between mothers' and fathers' parenting styles?
3. Do male and female youths differ in the perceptions of their parents' parenting styles?
4. Does ethnicity affect parents' parenting styles?

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

This was a collaborative research effort from a team of researchers from SHBIE, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. The study employed quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative data were collected by the use of surveys, academic records and questionnaires while the qualitative data were obtained from interviews based on the results of the quantitative data.

#### *4.1 Sample*

The sample of the study consisted of 1023 students of which 453 were males and 570 were females. In terms of race, 840 were Malays, 103 were Chinese, and 80 others. These students came from 23 institutions in Brunei Darussalam. The average age of the students was 19.55 years old. Table 1 shows the details of the sample.

Table 1. Population distribution of the study

	Six Form Centres	Technical/ Vocational schools	University/ Colleges	Private Institution	Pusat Pembangunan Belia	Total
No of schools	6	7	4	5	1	23
No of students	290	291	161	233	48	1023
Males	119	140	75	107	12	453
Females	171	151	86	126	36	570
Average age	17.1	20.0	20.8	21.0	20.3	
Malay	195	250	152	204	39	840
Chinese	66	17	6	12	2	103
Other	29	24	3	17	7	80

#### 4.2 Instrument

The instrument used in this project was adapted from the Parenting Style, developed by Buri (1991). The instrument was a questionnaire which aimed to identify parenting styles as perceived by their children in terms of authoritarian, authoritative and permissive dimensions. The questionnaire has 30 items and used 4-Likert scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" (1 point) to "strongly agree" (4 points) response format. The items in the questionnaire were modified and translated into Malay so that it is easy for Bruneian students to understand them. The questionnaires therefore had English as well as Malay translations.

#### 4.3 Analysis of Data

Quantitative data were analysed statistically using the SPSS package involving factor analysis, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Qualitative were analysed by categorising and using a thematic approach based on priori dimensions of parental practices. Thus, the qualitative data were meant to supplement the quantitative data so that interpretations of the results can be more meaningful. However, in this paper, only the quantitative data were presented and discussed.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1 Reliability

The internal consistency of the scales of the questionnaire on parenting practices was established by calculating their Cronbach's alpha coefficient values. Table 1 shows the values obtained for the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each of the three scales for mother and father. The values ranged from 0.75 to 0.81. These values indicate that the instrument was reliable for measuring parenting practices.

Table 2  
Cronbach alpha for the different parenting scales

Scales	Cronbach alpha	
	Mother	Father
Authoritarian	0.75	0.82
Authoritative	0.80	0.80
Permissive	0.78	0.80

(N = 1023 students)

### 5.2 Parents' parenting styles

Students' responses to the questionnaire were analysed by using descriptive statistics. Results were presented in Table 3. The results show that 58.3% of mothers were practicing authoritative, 24.3% were Authoritarian and 17.4% were permissive parenting styles. On one hand, 52.7% of fathers were practicing authoritative, 31.2% were Authoritarian and 16.1% were permissive parenting styles. The results indicate by and large mothers and fathers were practicing authoritative parenting styles.

Table 3  
Percentage of parenting styles for both mothers and fathers of Bruneian youths

Scales	Mother	Father
Authoritarian	24.3	31.2
Authoritative	58.3	52.7
Permissive	17.4	16.1

### 5.3 Differences between mothers and fathers' parenting styles?

The study explored whether mothers and fathers differ in their parenting practices towards their youths (children). A paired-t test was conducted on each the three scales of parenting practices. Table 4 shows the results of the analysis. It was found that only authoritarian scale

Table 4  
Paired sample t-test for the different parenting scales for both mothers and fathers of Bruneian youths

Scale		Mean	Standard deviation	t-value	p-value
Authoritarian	Mother	2.48	0.51	-7.30	0.00
	Father	2.59	0.56		
Authoritative	Mother	2.76	0.47	1.65	0.10
	Father	2.73	0.47		
Permissive	Mother	2.30	0.51	0.45	0.66
	Father	2.29	0.53		

is significant ( $p < 0.00$ ) which indicates that fathers practice higher level of authoritarian than mothers in their parenting styles. However, no significant differences for the authoritative and permissive scales were observed.

### 5.4 Male and female youth perceptions of parenting styles

The study also explored whether youth gender affects their perceptions of their parents' parenting styles. One-way ANOVAs were conducted to explore female and male youths' perceptions of their parents' parenting practices. Table 5 shows the results of the analyses. From the table, none of the

three scales show significant difference between female and male youths' perceptions of their mothers' parenting practices. On the other hand, for father parenting practices, authoritative scale shows a significant difference of their F-values( $p<0.00$ ) which shows that female youths perceived that their fathers were more authoritative than their did their mothers. However, male and female youths perceived similarly of their fathers' authoritarian and permissive parenting practices.

Table 5  
One way ANOVA results of the parenting practices as perceived by female and male youth for both mothers and fathers

Parent	Scale	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	F-value	p-value		
Mother	Authoritarian	Female	2.50	0.54	0.67	0.42		
		Male	2.47	0.48				
	Authoritative	Mother	2.78	0.49			1.21	0.27
		Father	2.75	0.46				
	Permissive	Female	2.28	0.52			2.87	0.09
Male		2.33	0.49					
Father	Authoritarian	Female	2.60	0.58	0.05	0.82		
		Male	2.59	0.54				
	Authoritative	Female	2.78	0.48			8.47	0.00
		Male	2.69	0.46				
	Permissive	Female	2.28	0.54			1.31	0.25
		Male	2.32	0.53				

### 5.5 Youth of different ethnics perceptions' of parenting styles

The study also investigated whether race affects youth perceptions of their parents' parenting styles. One-way ANOVA was conducted to explore youths' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles of different races. Table 6 presents male and female youth perceptions of their mothers' parenting styles. Table 6 shows that there was no significant difference in authoritative and permissive mothers parenting styles of different races. However, there was a significant difference between authoritarian mothers among the races. A post hoc analysis by using a Scheffe test showed that the means of authoritarian scale for Malay mothers was significantly higher than did the Chinese mother ( $p<0.00$ ). Similarly, the means authoritarian scale for the mother of other races was significantly higher than did the Chinese mothers. The results show that the Malays and other races were more authoritarian than the Chinese mothers.

Table 6  
One-way ANOVA for the different parenting practices of mothers of different races

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Authoritarian mother	Malay	836	2.52	0.49	12.47	0.00
	Chinese	102	2.25	0.58		
	Other	80	2.44	0.54		
Authoritative mother	Malay	836	2.77	0.46	2.07	0.13
	Chinese	102	2.69	0.55		
	Other	80	2.80	0.47		
Permissive mother	Malay	836	2.30	0.51	1.16	0.31
	Chinese	102	2.33	0.51		
	Other	80	2.22	0.43		

A similar analysis was conducted to explore youths' perceptions of their fathers' parenting styles by race . Table 7 shows the results of a one-way ANOVA for father parenting practices.

Table 7  
One-way ANOVA for the father parenting styles of different races

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F-value	p-value
Authoritarian father	Malay	820	2.63	0.56	7.069	0.001
	Chinese	100	2.41	0.57		
	Other	77	2.54	0.60		
Authoritative father	Malay	820	2.75	0.46	4.475	0.012
	Chinese	100	2.61	0.54		
	Other	77	2.79	0.50		
Permissive father	Malay	820	2.29	0.54	0.387	0.679
	Chinese	100	2.27	0.50		
	Other	77	2.34	0.55		

The results indicate that significant differences in authoritarian and authoritative scales of parenting styles among the fathers of different races ( $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore a Scheffe test was conducted for the authoritarian and authoritative parenting practices of different races. The results show that the means of authoritarian parenting practices is significantly higher for the Malay fathers than the Chinese fathers ( $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly the means of authoritative parenting practices are significantly higher for the Malay fathers than did the Chinese fathers ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, there were no significant difference in mean in permissive scale for father parenting style between the Malays and the other race as well as between the Chinese and the other race.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the parenting styles of Bruneian parents and the factors associated with their parenting styles. The findings showed that more than half of the Bruneian youths' mothers and fathers were authoritative whereas 24% and 31% of mothers and fathers were authoritarian respectively while about 17% of both mothers and fathers were permissive. These results suggest that the majority of the parents were authoritative. This indicates that Bruneian parents are assertive but less strict and harsh. Both the fathers and mothers provide clear and firm direction, often give rationales behind the rules set by them, controlling and demanding but are warm towards them. The results replicated previous studies in which majority of parents are authoritative followed by authoritarian and permissive respectively. These results are consistent with the results in studies conducted in Malaysia by Yahaya and Nordin (2006) which they found that majority of the parents as authoritative. Similar results obtained in another Malaysian study where more Chinese parents were practicing authoritative than authoritarian and permissive parenting styles (Hong, Baharudin & Hossain 2012)

When parenting styles were compared between mothers and fathers, the result suggested that fathers are more authoritarian than mothers. On one hand, this study found that both fathers and mothers displayed similar levels of authoritative and permissive parenting. These results are in contrast to a Malaysian study conducted by Elias and Tan (2009), which found that fathers and mothers were practicing similar levels of authoritarian parenting and that mothers were more authoritative than the fathers.

The study also explored whether youth's gender was a factor of their perceived parenting style. The results showed that only female youths seemed to perceive their fathers as being more authoritative than their male counterparts. Thus, according to female youths that their fathers were more demanding and controlling but responsive and giving them rationales behind for their strictness. This finding was similar to a study conducted in Malaysia where Malay fathers were more authoritative and less authoritarian toward their daughters than their sons (Talib, Mohamad & Mamat, 2011). However, in another study in Malaysia revealed that male youths perceived their fathers were more authoritarian than their females counterparts (Tam, Lee, Kumarasuriar & Har 2012).

In terms of ethnicity, it was found that Malay mothers and other races were more authoritarian than Chinese mothers. However, three races displayed similar levels of authoritative and permissive parenting. Similarly, Malay fathers and mothers were more authoritarian and authoritative than the Chinese mothers and fathers. The difference between Malays and Chinese parenting styles could be due to different cultural beliefs. Keshavarz and Baharudin (2009) noted that in Malaysian Malay culture, parents are often regarded as authority figures and are obeyed without question. Therefore, it is a normal practice for Malay parents to direct their children toward the 'right' behaviours and attitudes, that are compatible with the teachings of religion (Islamic) and culture (Malay). On the other hand the Chinese parents tend to be more lenient toward infants and young children because they are considered them as being too young to understand things. But, this perception will change and as their children grow older, and they tend to treat them in a harsh and strict manner, and expect them to control their emotions and impulses. Furthermore, the Chinese parents expect their children to be more disciplined, obtained higher academic scores and valued their Chinese cultural beliefs.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The present findings showed that majority of the youth perceived their fathers and mothers parenting style as authoritative. In addition, it was found that youth perceived their fathers and more authoritarian than mothers. Moreover, the study found that youth gender and ethnicity affect their perceptions of their parents' parenting styles. In spite of the results of the study, this study cannot be generalisable because methodical approach in this study which was a quantitative approach. Therefore, future research should consider a mixed approach in order to get a comprehensive view of parenting styles in Brunei Darussalam. However, in spite of its limitations, the findings can be served as a guideline for future research especially in order to have a better understanding of parenting practices in Brunei Darussalam.

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# THE MODERATING EFFECT OF PEER ATTACHMENT ON HEDONISTIC BEHAVIOR AMONG MALAYSIAN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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## Abstract

This article discusses the influence of peer attachment - comprised of communication, trust and alienation - on the relationship between religiosity and religious worldview, and hedonistic behavior among Malaysian undergraduate students. Using Bronfenbrenner's theory of human ecology and Armsden and Greenberg's attachment model as a backdrop, this study examines the direct and indirect influence of religiosity and religious worldview on the development of hedonistic behavior as moderated by peer attachment. Drawing on a quantitative survey of 394 Malaysian university students ( $M$  age = 21.0,  $SD$  = .40), structural equation modeling and path analysis revealed that peer attachment moderated the relationship between religiosity and religious worldview, and hedonistic behavior. The results further showed the unique moderating effect of communication, trust and alienation within peer attachment. Implications from the findings are also discussed.

**Keywords:** *peer attachment, hedonistic behavior, youth development, religiosity, worldview*

## 1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Youth as a phase of life has been defined differently across time and according to different cultures. In Malaysia, youth falls within the age group between 15 to 40 years. This group is the largest group of Malaysians compared with children and adults, which is more than 11.6 million people or 43.6 percent of the total population (Department of Statistics, 2010). Since Malaysia is undergoing a process of rapid development and modernization, the changes to the socio-demographic and cultural environment subsequently alter the social process, especially for youth. This has resulted in significant changes in social development for youth from different backgrounds causing them to adapt to a rapidly changing development environment.

The behavior of these young people is reflexively influenced by the surrounding environment. At the same time, youth are active agents in forming their own environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). In the context of Malaysia, a study on culture and youth subcultures (Azimi, Turiman & Ezhar, 2000) indicated the existence of new values and cultural patterns among young people. These include individualism and materialism, religious orientation, the orientation of foreign cultures, identity changes, communication behavior and media habits, leisure activity, health habits and career aspirations. The study concluded that these values have resulted in changes to the youth behavior.

In Malaysian universities in particular, students' adjustment plays an important role in determining their academic success. Research has revealed that the ability to adjust within campus settings is associated with certain psychosocial factors including social support from parents and peer attachment (Maria, Habibah, Rahil & Jegak, 2009). A majority of Malaysian university students live with peers throughout the year while attending their institutions of higher learning. The Ministry of Higher Education (2010) reported that only 10-20% out of 1.2 million university students in Malaysia stay with parents. Although parents have the most powerful influence on their children's behavioral development, other influences such as peers have been shown to have an important impact as well.

Based on the second level of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, much focus has been given to relationships with peers as socializing agents influencing the development of youth behavior. However, much of the research on the role of peers in the development of youth behavior is limited to Western samples. Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to determine the moderating effect of peer attachment on hedonistic behavior among Malaysian undergraduate students.

## **2. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

In the context of youth behavioral development, hedonistic behavior is influential in shaping contemporary lifestyles for young people (Thorpe, 2012; Andersson, 2011; Itafarida, 2008; Veenhoven, 2003). Marx (1906), Weber (1920) and Durkheim (1984) in Bradford (2012) initially proposed the terms of contemporary social change that influence the changes of custom and tradition from pre-modernity to a modern industrial world that affect societies' culture and behavioral development. There are two distinctive aspects in ideal modernity, the technical aspect relating to skills and techniques and a normative aspect associated with the values, beliefs and behavior. Studies show that hedonistic behavior is motivated by self-gratification in fulfilling biological and sociological needs. They indicate that behaviors and decisions are based on personal desires. Individuals leading hedonistic lifestyles usually prioritize self-indulgence gained through activities that elicit excessive gratification, which lead to negative behaviors and diminished moralities (Feldman, 2008; Veenhoven, 2003; Waterman, 1993).

In this study, hedonistic behavior is characterized by openness to pleasurable experiences and tending to indulge one's own desires. There are many concerns about hedonistic behavior. At the individual level, hedonistic behavior undermines health. Zimbardo and Boyd (1999) argued that hedonistic behavior reflects attitudes toward time and life, whereas Veenhoven (2003) argues that hedonistic behavior applies in particular to the pursuit of sensory pleasures such as drinking alcohol, abundant sex, and undertaking risky activities to maximize happiness. For societies, hedonistic behavior expressed as the pursuit of luxurious life-styles erodes social bonds when pleasure-seeking behavior makes people less sensitive to the needs of others thus leading to moral decay.

Youth practicing hedonistic lifestyles is not a new phenomenon in Malaysia. Hedonism was identified as one of the factors that have been linked to loafing and the rise of social problems among youngsters (Ahmad Azam, 2005). This situation is markedly apparent among teenagers and young adults, including students, employed workers and unemployed individuals. Most of these issues stem from immoral activities that lead to the practice of hedonistic ways of life (Sidek, 2009; Veenhoven, 2003).

## **3. RELIGIOSITY AND YOUTH BEHAVIOR**

Studies on the relationship between behavior and religiosity were empirically initiated in the West. Literature on the relationship between religiosity and worldview of young people in Malaysia is still scarcely limited. Despite the limitation, studies have shown that religiosity is significantly correlated with behavior. Past studies show that a stronger and more positive affectional bond with parents and peers is linked to and may facilitate socialization-based religiosity (Krauss, Ismi, Turiman, Azimi,

Siti Raba'ah, Dzuhaulmi, Nor Farahana & Fazilah, 2013). Religion provides youth with a set of beliefs and values that prohibit behaviors considered immoral and, many of which are also illegal and/or considered antisocial (Wallace & Williams, 1997).

The relationship between religious participation and the development of behavior has received growing attention by researchers. Several studies have linked religious attachment with positive behavior development including religiousness as a buffer against risk behavior and support for positive attitudes and actions among youth. Pargament and Park (1995) suggest that religious involvement acts as a source of support, encouragement, coping, values, meaning resiliency and behavioral prescriptives.

Local studies show that culture and religious norms, values, and expectations among Malays are influenced by the Islam, which also has effect on the respondents' moral judgment (Jaafar, 2004). Krauss, Hamzah, Suandi, Noah, Juhari and Manap (2006) argued that youth in Malaysia struggle to blend tradition and modernity with proponents of strict secularization and Islamic factions within the country. The Malaysian government has adopted the moderate form of Islam to balance between the traditional and modern manifestations of Islam. In the context of the Malaysian youth population, there are unique multicultural ethnic representations with Muslims as the majority (49%), Buddhists (32%), Hindus (8%) and others (11%), which include Christians, Sikhs and Ibans.

#### **4. WORLDVIEW DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH**

Religious worldview is believed to have an influence on the religiosity formation of youth. According to Deckard and Dewitt (2003) there are three important factors which influence youth worldview which are theology, science, and age. Theological aspects will encourage the formation of a belief system to appreciate nature and participate in the cycles of the ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Kearney (1984) mentioned that worldview is a culturally organized macro thought those dynamically inter-related basic assumptions of a people help to determine much of their behavior and decision making, as well as organizing much of their body of symbolic creations. The formation of a worldview is associated with cognition, learning, perception and behavior, and environment. The driving force behind the development of a worldview is the need to relate to the outside of the world. As aptly stated by Ross (1962) man's "experience is useless unless interpreted." Therefore, beginning from childhood, each person interacts with their physical and social environment, and through this myriad of environmental interactions, worldview presuppositions are unconsciously constructed. The process occurs over a long period of time, with the formative, young adult years being of most importance. Through the years of schooling, formal education contributes to worldview development; and in turn, a worldview provides a foundation upon which cognitive frameworks are built during the learning process.

#### **5. PEER ATTACHMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON YOUTH BEHAVIOR**

An important theoretical line of inquiry related to behavioral development and formation is that of peer attachment theory. According to Huang, Wang and Shi (2012) attachments and relationship with peers among youth have proven to be essential in influencing their behavior. A peer is considered the family's substitute outside the home, and is one of the transition mechanisms from childhood into the teenage years and adulthood. Friends provide support socially and academically for sharing experiences, and act as socializing agents and as a platform to expand their social circles. Peer influence also shapes youth personality and individuality (Jas Laile Suzana, 2008). Many studies show that teenagers with confidence and trust in their relationships with their peers will have strong resolution, good self-control and are able to manage themselves (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987).

Research also shows that close peer relationships have positive psychological influences as well as increasing happiness (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010; Piaget, 1965). Inadvertently, this also

contributes to the development of important values which generate happiness and self-confidence, and this in turn motivates youths to display positive attitudes and behavior. According to Armsden and Greenberg (1987), attachment with peers happens in three dimensions: trust, communication and alienation.

Peers often have significant influence on youth behavioral development. Kandel (1978) reports that youth attitudes and behavior mirror each other. A number of studies reveal the important roles peers play as agents of socialization and expanding social connections, as these roles have a major influence in shaping youth behavior. In other studies, the influence of peer relationships has had both positive and negative effects. Research shows peers elicit more negative and deviant behaviors as compared to positive ones (Zahrt & Lange, 2011; Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011). In this context, Tomé and Matos (2012) revealed that peers have a direct affect in encouraging violence and negative behaviors. Many studies also indicate that youth with friends involved in risky behaviors are more likely to be engaged in the same risky activities (Glaser, Shelton & Bree, 2010).

Lapsley, Rice and FitzGerald, (1990) examined the relationship between late adolescent attachment to peers and reported that females were less alienated from peers but had more trust and better communication and that attachment variables were significant predictors of personal and social identity. This finding was supported by Pace, Martini, Zavattini, and Sapienza (2011) who confirmed that females had higher attachment security, trust and communication with peers. Results indicate that students with lower quality attachment relationships are more likely to bully others and be the victims of bullying than their peers with higher quality attachment relationships (Walden & Beran, 2010).

## **6. PEER ATTACHMENT AS A MODERATING FACTOR**

Theory and research have suggested that attachment with peers can be the moderator in reflecting whether the relationship influence the development is positive or otherwise. Researchers have examined some of the factors were experience levels of emotional well-being, beliefs about the self, and values for prosocial forms of behavior and social interaction that are stronger and more adaptive than do youth without positive peer attachment (Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker, 2006. Liu (2011) reveals negative relationships exist between peers with youths involved in delinquency. The study also indicated that youths with depression and a negative outlook on life often have weak attachment with peers. Earlier research by Urberg, Luo, Pilgrim and Degirmencioglu (2003) also indicated that attachment with peers was found to be the moderating factor in determining youth involvement with delinquent behaviors and activities. Studies in Malaysia have reported significant relationships between peer attachment and hedonistic behavior (Siti Raba'ah, Turiman, Azimi and Ezhar, 2013).

Research illustrates that the more involved youth are with negative activities, the less likely they will have positive attachment with parents and peers. Lynam, Loeber and Stouthamer (2008) investigated the relationship between adolescents and parents, determining peer attachment as the moderator in affecting the development and shaping of youth behavior with relation to juvenile activities. Some of the contributing factors identified in building strong relationships with peers are peers skills in motivations, sharing of experience, communication and giving appropriate role model to youth. Research continues to demonstrate the negative implications arising from negative relationships between peers and youth, which lead to antisocial behaviors and a rise in social problems among youth (Albert & Steinberg, 2011).

## **7. THE CURRENT STUDY**

One of the main factors playing a role in shaping youth behavior is the influence of religiosity and worldview, which is reinforced by attachment with peers. However, past research on the development of hedonistic behavior among youth in higher education institutions specifically is still limited. Based on the

theory of human ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), this study aimed at determining the influence of religiosity and worldview on hedonistic behavior, with a particular interest in the moderating effect of peer attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). We, therefore, hypothesized that peer attachment (defined as communication, trust and alienation) would moderate the relationship between religiosity and worldview and hedonistic behavior among Malaysian undergraduate students.

## 8. METHOD

### 8.1 Participants and procedures

Undergraduate students of higher education institutions in Malaysia comprised the sample for this study. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure the representativeness of the chosen sample. A total of 394 respondents from public and private universities were selected. The sample consisted of 182 (46.1%) males and 212 (53.9%) females; with the majority 305 (77.5%) living in town/suburban areas, and 89 (22.5%) from urban areas. The mean age of the participants was 21 years ( $SD = .40$ ), with a range of 18 to 22 years. Data were collected using survey method. The researcher obtained cooperation from lecturers of each university. Questionnaires were given to the respondents and collected after 30 – 45 minutes. Data was analyzed using SPSS v. 20. Descriptive statistics were used to compare mean scores for the study variables. Structural equation modeling (SEM) and path analysis were employed to test the hypothesized relationships.

### 8.2 Measures

The study utilized a questionnaire that was divided into five parts: demographics, worldview and religiosity (Krauss, Azimi, and Fazilah, 2007), peer attachment (Armsden and Greenberg, 1987) and hedonistic behavior (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999),

The Universal Religiosity Personality Inventory (Krauss, Azimi, Fazilah, 2007), measures religiosity in the context of prosocial and ritual behaviors. Sample items on the prosocial behavior scale included: 'I immediately apologize if I wrong someone', 'I try to smile as much as possible', and 'I speak politely to my parents'. For the ritual behavior scale, sample items included: 'I make effort to deepen my understanding of law/rules/teaching/precepts of my religion', 'I invite others to obligatory prayer' and 'I perform my work duties enthusiastically because of my religion'. Although many studies conducted in the West have included the prosocial and ritual behaviors little attempt has been made to measure religiosity in the context of a multiracial community such as in Malaysia.

The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment by Armsden and Greenberg (1987) — IPPA is a 25-item self-report designed to measure the quality of adolescent attachment to peers. Each of the instruments consists of the Likert-type statements that assess how adolescents evaluate their relationship with their peers on the following subscales: mutual trust, quality of communication, and the extent of felt alienation. As far as the peer relationship instrument, examples of items for communication subscale are the following: "I like to get my friends' point of view on things I am concerned about" and "when we discuss things, my friends care about my point of view." Further, examples of items for trust subscale are the following: "My friends understand me" and "My friends accept me as I am." In addition, examples of items for alienation subscale are the following: "My friends don't understand what I am going through these days" and "I feel angry with my friends".

The worldview measures in this study was used and adapted from Deckard and Dewitt (2003). Sample item of theology scale included: "I believe there is only one God is the source of all creation", "I believe that man is the best creation of God", "I believe that God knows all the developments taking place in this world", "I believe that my future was determined", and for the science scale included: "I believe people

need to change for the better in the life”, “I believe every weakness there is good”, “I believe in time, space and opportunity always exist in life”, “I believe I can identify the good and the bad things in my life”, “I believe life has a specific purpose”, and “I always think about the moment of my death”.

Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) is a fundamental dimension in the construction of present hedonistic characterized an orientation toward present enjoyment, pleasure and excitement. It reflect a hedonic risk taking attitude toward time and life and includes such diverse items as “takings risks keeps my life from becoming boring”, I do things impulsive”, “I often follow my heart more than my head”, and “when listening to my favorite music”, “I often lose all track of time”, and it is important to put excitement in my life”. Evident from much research reported the combination of time perspective inventory and religiosity personality inventory remains a uniquely independent contribution to many factors which relate to the youth behavioral development (Kroger, 2000; Bosnia & Kunnen, 2003).

## 9. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to identify whether the configuration of relationships proposed in the conceptual model for the religiosity, worldview and peer attachment in the objective, multiple group analysis in SEM was performed. Results of the SEM test of the model fit in Figure 1.0 for the direct model between the religiosity and worldview towards hedonistic show that the model fits the data. Following general guidelines for fit indices, *Goodness-of-fit statistic (GFI)*, *Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA)* for Absolute Fit Measure, *Normed Fit Index (NFI)*, *Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)* and *Comparative Fit Index (CFI)* for Incremental Fit Measure, *Normed Chi Square ( $\chi^2/df$ )* for *Parsimonious Fit Measure* (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, 2010; Byrne, 2010; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Browne & Cudeck, 1993).

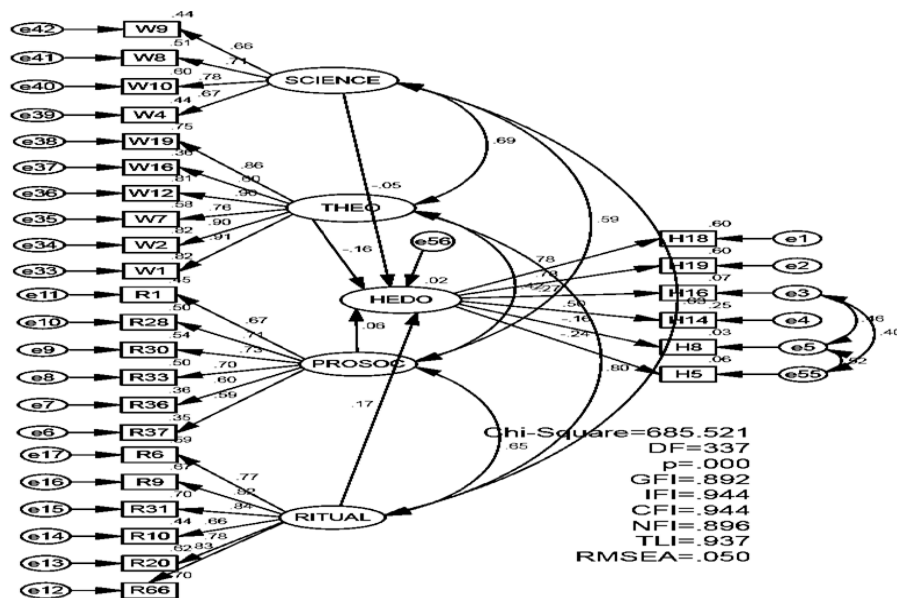


Figure 1.0: Measurement model

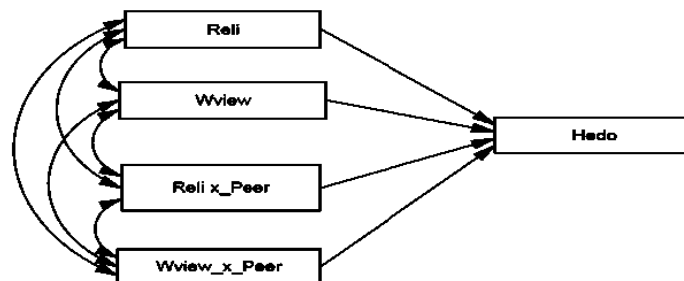
(Note: science, theo - theology, hedo – hedonistic behavior, prosoc – prosocial behavior, ritual – ritual behavior)

As shown in Table 1.0, the results indicated a good fit of the model: the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom and CFI are all in acceptable range ( $\chi^2 = 366.523$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.003$ , GFI = .921, CFI = .941, IFI = .941, TLI = .932, RMSEA = .050). The RMSEA's 90% confidence interval was .05 to .08. The CFI, IFI, TLI was above than .90 was indicating good fit for all variables.

Table 1.0: Test of the model fit indices for all variables

Indeks GOF	$\chi^2/df/$ CMIN	GFI	CFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
Value	2.003	.921	.941	.941	.932	.050

In examining the hypotheses, H1 demonstrate a significant relationship between worldview on hedonistic behavior. Hypothesis 1 was therefore supported. Path analysis between religiosity on hedonistic behavior did not demonstrate any significant relationship. Hypothesis 2 was therefore not supported. The test results concerning the moderating effects of peer attachment are described subsequently. To test the moderating effect of peer attachment; communication, trust and alienation on the development of hedonistic behavior, an overall structural model was tested. The hypothesized model in this study was developed grounded on the literature outlined in previous section. The conceptual model was stipulated by taking into account the worldview and religiosity influence the formation of hedonistic behavior and moderate by peer attachment. The path diagram delineating the conceptual model is shown in Figure 2.0.



**Figure 2.0: A model for studying worldview, religiosity and peer attachment on hedonistic behavior**  
(Note: reli – religiosity, wview – worldview, peer – peer attachment, hedo – hedonistic behavior)

The sample was split into two groups according to the mean score of the peer attachment. The data above the mean were defined as high peer attachment, and the data below the mean as low peer attachment. A two group AMOS model was used subsequently so that it could be determined whether or not there was any significant difference in structural parameters between the high peer attachment group and the low peer attachment group. First analysis, the parameter from worldview and religiosity to hedonistic behavior was constraint to be equal. Second, the parameter was kept free (not constraint). Differences in the chi square values between the two models determine whether the peer attachment had a moderating effect on the relationship between worldview and religiosity on hedonistic behavior.

A direct comparison of the fit indices was conducted for the two opposing models. We hypothesized that the relationship between religiosity and worldview towards peer attachment has an indirect effect on hedonistic behavior. Table 2.0 outlines the chi-square goodness-of-fit statistics and baseline comparison fit indices. The baseline comparison fit indices of IFI, TLI and CFI for both models are above 0.90 even though the chi-square tests for the models recorded poor fit. The RMSEA values for group variant and group invariant path models are 0.044 and 0.051 respectively, suggestive of adequate fit. The Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) which has a bearing on model parsimony and model fit was then used to compare the model fit for the two models. A simple and well-fitted model is indicated with low scores. The AIC value for the group variant model (847.591) is lower than the group invariant model (941.388), implying that the group variant model outweighs the other one with a more parsimonious model fit. As a result, the two models are differing significantly in their goodness-of-fit. Hence, peer attachment moderated the causal relationships in the model because a more parsimonious and better fitting found in the group variant model between the group of higher attachment level and lower attachment level to peers. The findings show that peer attachment moderated the relationships between religiosity, worldview and hedonistic behavior.

Table 2.0: Results of moderation test of peer attachment on hedonistic behavior

Model	Chi-Square	df	p	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	AIC	Chi-Square	Test of moderating
Measurement residuals	845.388	414	.000	2.042	.051	941.388		
Unconstrained model	655.591	366	.000	1.791	.044	847.591	189.797	Significant and moderate effects

Results of the multi group testing for moderation effects are shown in Table 3.0. The hypothesis testing the moderating effect on peer attachment to the relationship between religiosity and worldview on the development of hedonistic behavior was supported. The result also shows that peer communication for group 1, which shows a higher level of attachment, is not significant ( $\beta = .555$ , Sig=.519), while group 2, which shows low level of attachment with peers, is significant ( $\beta = .244$ , Sig=.000). The results also revealed that the dimension of trust for group 1 (higher level of attachment) is not significant ( $\beta = .005$ , Sig=.984), and group 2 (lower level of attachment) is significant ( $\beta = .176$ , Sig=.000), and the alienation dimension for group 1 (higher level of attachment) is not significant ( $\beta = -.678$ , Sig=.465), and for group 2 (lower level of attachment) is significant ( $\beta = .202$ , Sig=.000). According to Hair et al. (2010), if one of the groups tested is significant, and one is not significant, then there are moderation effects. Therefore, the results show that peer attachment (communication, trust and alienation) moderates religiosity and worldview on the development of hedonistic behavior among the youth sampled in the study.

Table 3.0: Results of moderation test of peers' communication, trust and alienation attachment on hedonistic behavior between religiosity and worldview

Construct	Estimates	B	C.R.	p	Result
Peer communication					
Peer (high)	1.226	.555	.644	.519	Significant
Peer (low)	.244	-.356	6.241	.000	moderator



<b>Peer trust</b>						
Peer (high)	.005	.005	.020	.984	Significant	-
Peer (low)	.363	.176	4.826	.000	moderator	
<b>Peer alienation</b>						
Peer (high)	-1.871	-.678	-.731	.465	Significant	-
Peer (low)	.202	.386	5.708	.000	moderator	

## 9. DISCUSSION

This study shows that attachment with peers is one of the moderating factors in determining youth hedonistic behaviors. The results support several previous studies in the West, reporting a correlation between attachment with peers and deviant behaviors (Myrug & Windle, 2009; Kiesner, Poulin & Dishion, 2010), as well as social and emotional support. The results here also confirm past research by Salzinger et al. (2011) that attachment with peers is a moderating factor in developing youth attitudes by exposing them to contemporary lifestyles, which force them to accept changes in social behavior. Furthermore, this study corroborates past investigations which suggest that attachment to peers is a moderating factor that can lead youth toward involvement in negative social behaviors (Tajima, Herrenkohl, Moylan & Derr, 2011). Results reveal that there are three aspects of attachment with peers, as suggested by Armsden and Greenberg (1987) that include communication, trust and alienation. Trust is vital among youth in establishing connection, primarily with socializing agents in their environment. The isolation factor in attachment with peers is also an essential aspect and this is because the maturing process happens simultaneously with changes in emotion, temperament and decision making (Hooper & Newman, 2011).

Past research suggested that the concept of attachment with peers highlights the positive (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010; Piaget, 1965) and negative (Tomé & Matos, 2012; Zahrt & Lange, 2011; Albert & Steinberg, 2011; Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011; Glaser, Shelton & Bree, 2010) aspects of the relationship. However, the result of this study contributes to Armsden and Greenberg's (1987) theory by proposing that the attachment relationship is an important moderating factor in the development and shaping of hedonistic behaviors among youth. The outcome of this research also points to psychosocial development, that is, religiosity and worldview, which can be improved internally by youth. This is made possible by the moderating factors that are inherent in human ecological systems that can act as a vital contributing factor to the positive development of behaviors starting from childhood.

## 10. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although peer attachment is indirectly assessed in the measurement, the inclusion of these factors as separate indicators may have strengthened the model. Armsden and Greenberg (1987) found that the relationship between peers will improve psychological well-being in adolescence. The findings of this study contribute to better understanding of how peer attachment influences the development of hedonistic behaviour among selected youth in Malaysia. Findings of this study can provide a basis for parents and other actors in young people's social ecologies as suggested by Bronfenbrenner (1989) to recognize peers as one of the main factors contributing to the formation of youth behavior and personality development. The authors recommend future research that incorporates a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to get more contextual information about the nature of Malaysian youth peer attachment.

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# THE ROLE OF THE MALAYSIA PRISONS DEPARTMENT TOWARDS PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AMONGST YOUNG OFFENDERS THROUGH LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES

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## Abstract

The paper attempts to examine the role of the Malaysia Prisons Department in disseminating knowledge and/or skills amongst young offenders during the imprisonment term. The data from interviews with the officials of the Malaysia Prisons Department regarding their thoughts in relation to the implementation of lifelong learning programmes within the prison institutions is discussed. The issue raised in the paper is whether the attitudes of the officials of the Malaysian Prison establishments towards understanding the importance of the lifelong learning programmes influences the dissemination of knowledge amongst young offenders who are being imprisoned. It would appear that the Malaysia Prisons Department has been on a long run promoting the knowledge dissemination process amongst young offenders behind bars through various educational and/or vocational training programmes by applying the lifelong learning plan to fulfil part of the department's duties towards rehabilitating inmates during incarceration. In conclusion, this paper will propose prison officials had never thought of that the education process of offenders ceases due to imprisonment. Instead, the officials believe the continued learning process of prisoners during the imprisonment term would help them progress forward and turn into citizens who can positively contribute to the national development once released later.

**Keywords:** *lifelong learning, offenders/prisoners, prison, education, rehabilitation*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Prisons Department in Malaysia, being a correctional entity, through its vision and mission is responsible to provide a safe detention and rehabilitation institution.<sup>1</sup> Besides controlling over the residents by treating them humanely upon implementing the detention order by the court, one of the functions of the Malaysia Prisons Department is to implement the rehabilitation programme for the residents through various approaches.<sup>2</sup>

The Offender Management division is the responsible unit that formulates, designs and implements various rehabilitation programmes for offenders. All the rehabilitation programmes are designed based on the principles of "Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Intelligence and Humanity" (KASIH) which "KASIH" has been declared to be the motto of the division. The division believes every offender has potentials to be

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<sup>1</sup> Prisons Department of Malaysia, (accessed 2009, October 27). *Vision, Mission and Objectives*. Retrieved from [http://www.prison.gov.my/bi/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=288&Itemid=64](http://www.prison.gov.my/bi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=288&Itemid=64)

<sup>2</sup> See website of the Prisons Department of Malaysia, (accessed 2011, August 3). *Vision, Mission, Objectives and Functions*. Retrieved from <http://www.prison.gov.my/portal/page/portal/hijau/visi>

rehabilitated and so its main objective is to shape the attitudes among the offenders to be responsible and socially productive towards their return into the society.<sup>3</sup>

This paper presents some of the data from a recent study, adopting a qualitative methodology, exploring the views of the Malaysian prison officials<sup>4</sup> regarding the implementation of lifelong learning programmes amongst young people who are being detained within the prison institutions.

In this paper, the author outlines the discussion into 2 sections; namely:

1. How do the prison officials in Malaysia perceive regarding the importance of lifelong learning programmes implemented for young people within the prison institutions? and
2. How do the prison officials in Malaysia observe the relationship between the implementation of lifelong learning programmes and the development of young people during incarceration?

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to discuss whether the attitudes of the Malaysian prison officials towards understanding the concept of lifelong learning programmes would promote knowledge dissemination process amongst young offenders who are being detained within the institutions?

## **2. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES PROVIDED FOR PRISONERS WITHIN THE PRISON INSTITUTIONS IN MALAYSIA**

As at 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008, it was reported that there were 36, 672 prisoners who are being detained within the Malaysian penal institutions in which the Malaysia Prisons Department still consider these prisoners as valuable human resources of the nations. In this context, the Authority considers these prisoners have the potentials to be developed towards participating in the national development in parallel to the mission of the department, which is to rehabilitate them to become useful citizens.<sup>5</sup>

As such, the data from documents further presents that the Prisons Authority anticipates that in order to achieve the department's aims, among others, to produce prisoners who may be more realized of their past wrongdoings, to decrease the recidivism rates as well as to ensure the safety and security aspects of the detention centres; the implementation of lifelong learning plan amongst prisoners within the penal institutions will be a suitable medium assisting them fulfilling the planned department's aspirations.

Furthermore, according to the documentary data too, it would appear that the application of lifelong learning programme amongst prisoners within the Malaysian penal institutions can be seen as one significant method undertaken by the Prisons Authority that would offer a better solution in dealing with offenders' problems and/or matters in which the institutions regard "prisoners" as group of people who possess certain common weaknesses particularly in relations to the human capital issues, among others; lack of knowledge, low social skills, lack of self management skills, less patriotism and school dropouts.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Further details, refer "PengurusanBanduan" ("Offender Management" division), retrieved at <http://www.prison.gov.my>; accessed 12 August 2010

<sup>4</sup> The data covers the interviews with 5 respondents who were selected based on the *purposive sampling*: the Director General of the Prisons Department, Malaysia (at the time of the interview was the Deputy Director General of the Prisons Department, Malaysia), secondly; the Director of the Offender Management division of the Prisons Department, Malaysia, thirdly; the Education Section Officer of the Prisons Department, Malaysia, fourthly; the Chief Inspector of the Prisons Department, Malaysia, who represented the Director of the Kajang Prison and fifthly; the Director of the Henry Gurney School, Malacca. The data interview from each respondent was transcribed verbatim and subsequently analyzed thematically according to a set of established themes in order to perform a continuous flow of discussion.

<sup>5</sup> "PembelajaranSepanjang Hayat" ("Lifelong Learning"), the Malaysia Prisons Department

<sup>6</sup> Read further "PembelajaranSepanjang Hayat" ("Lifelong Learning"), the Malaysia Prisons Department at page 1



## 2.1 The Implementation of Lifelong Learning Programmes for Young People within the Prison Institutions in Malaysia

At present, the implementation of lifelong learning programmes provided for young people who are being detained in the closed institutions in Malaysia are basically based on the rehabilitation programme known as the “Putra Module” that adopts the ‘school programme approach’. The implementation of the “Putra Module” stresses on the academic educational approach allowing young offenders to continue and/or repeating their half way schooling activities resulting from their admission to the institutions.<sup>7</sup>

Under this module, young offenders are equipped with various programmes including academic, vocational, spiritual,<sup>8</sup> sports and co-curriculum activities. The academic programmes provided for the young people are basically focusing on the academic-oriented similar to the education system that is applied in the mainstream schools.

This Putra Module is one of the rehabilitation models that are developed by the Offender Management division of the Malaysia Prisons Department based on the “Human Development Plan” (“HDP”<sup>9</sup>) or the *Pelan Pembangunan Insan* (“PPI”<sup>10</sup>). Since its launch in 2004, the HDP operates as the blue print of the Malaysia Prisons Department in developing the rehabilitation programmes, modules and activities for the pre-sentence offenders, during sentence offenders and after sentence offenders.

The “Putra Module” is a specific rehabilitation programme that designs to develop the young people in the Henry Gurney Schools and the prison institutions. The underlying principles beneath the programme emphasize the holistic rehabilitation programme that stresses on the physical, clinical and psychological aspects of the young people. In general, the Putra Module acts as a guideline<sup>11</sup> for the prison institutions to provide rehabilitation programmes that will help the young people to realize their past criminal wrongdoing and to encourage them to be better persons before reintegration into the society upon release. To some extent, the module aims to help the young people revealing their real potentials and capabilities as to concentrate in academic programmes and/or skills and/or sports or other fields. Hence, through a range of educational programmes, these young people are educated and trained to positively progress towards becoming better persons.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> “Sistem Pemulihan Penghuni Jabatan Penjara Malaysia – Pelan Pembangunan Insan (Human Spiritual Development Plan)”, page 10, Bahagian Pemuliharaan dan Rawatan, refer details at website [www.prison.gov.my](http://www.prison.gov.my)

<sup>8</sup> Based on the National Curriculum Education in Malaysia, “spiritual” subjects refer to Religious Knowledge subject (taught to Muslim students) and/or Moral subjects (taught to non Muslim students). The teachings of spiritual subjects to Malaysian children are to fulfil the intention as embedded in the National Educational Philosophy, “Education in Malaysia is on-going efforts towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the society and the nation at large”. Further details; refer the website of Ministry of Education, Malaysia at <http://www.moe.gov.my>

<sup>9</sup> Malaysia Prisons Department, (undated), “*Pelan Pembangunan Insan*”, Malaysia Prisons Department, Selangor, Malaysia.

<sup>10</sup> Under the “*Pelan Pembangunan Insan*” of “*Human Development Plan*”, all the rehabilitation programs are designed based on the principles of “Knowledge, Attitudes, Skills, Intelligence and Humanity” (KASIH) which “KASIH” is also has been declared to be the motto of the division. For further details, refer website of the Malaysia Prisons Department.

<sup>11</sup> Basically, the module consists 4 phases, namely “Disciplinary Building Programs” (Phase 1), “Moral/Attitudes Reinforcement Programmes” (Phase 2), “Skills Programmes” (Phase 3) and “Humanity Programmes” (Phase 4)

<sup>12</sup> “Pembelajaran Sepanjang Hayat” (“Lifelong Learning”), the Malaysia Prisons Department at page 19 – 21

### 3. ATTITUDES OF THE PRISON OFFICIALS REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN THE PRISON INSTITUTIONS IN MALAYSIA

The data reveals the prison officials opine the definition of 'lifelong learning programmes' for young offenders include any formal and/or informal learning activities allowing the youths to obtain educational opportunities during the detention period. The prison officials believe young offenders still need a proper education even though the youths are being confined behind bars. The Director General explained, "*This opportunity, they need to grab it because it is a bridge to lifelong learning (programmes), which means that learning does not stop here!... We restrict their movements but we will not control their minds. That means they can continue to get education.*"

As a matter of fact, the prison officials do agree that imprisonment is no hindrance for young inmates to develop themselves through various educational opportunities available within the institutions. The Prisons Department is aware that young offenders presume they had already lost hope to continue studies due to the imprisonment. Therefore, the Prisons Department implements measures using the lifelong learning programmes that will allow young offenders pursue knowledge and/or education and/or skills in accordance with their interests and potential.<sup>13</sup> As the Director General further elucidated, "*We are planning the strategy to build the necessary path for the students to embark on. This is because we believe that being imprisoned is not a hindrance for the offenders to acquire education. That's one clear thing. That's what we want!*"

The Director of the Henry Gurney School, Malacca further commented, "*We give the opportunity for the young people to further their studies...then give them a chance to study in institutions of higher learning without any constraints...we also provide the chance for the reformed offenders who are in prisons or in Henry Gurney Schools to get assistance in any particular aspect...like education funds, skill-training funds, after they have been rehabilitated.*" Another respondent, the Director of the Offender Management division added, "*We decided on it as such...anyone who comes to Henry Gurney Schools, to the Integrity Schools...they have an opportunity to study, and they will be confident of their future, just like the youths outside the prison system.*"

From the above excerpts, we may construe the prison officials understand lifelong learning programmes are one suitable approach that could encourage the continuous process of knowledge dissemination amongst young offenders during the imprisonment. The programmes provide useful opportunities for young offenders to gain as much knowledge as possible aiming to guide them planning for their good future. Indirectly, the facility makes the young people to positively believe they do still have opportunities to improve themselves even though they are currently confined behind bars.

In actual fact, though these young people are being imprisoned, this does not necessarily mean that their freedom is fully restricted; as they could be considered as receiving certain 'privileges' particularly to further studies with consent from the authorities. As one respondent, the Director of the Offender Management division revealed the prisons management realized they had failed to achieve the rehabilitation objectives set by the department prior to the formal implementation of the lifelong learning programmes within the prisons institutions. He mentioned, "*[T]hat was the previous situation (before the formal implementation of the lifelong learning programmes). They could not go to school, could not attend school...they had to remain in their blocks, they did not know how to read, they were not accepted by the society, because of their lack of knowledge...and this led them to return to their old ways...so we need to provide them with knowledge...*" And the Director of Henry Gurney School, Malacca further

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<sup>13</sup> Refer "Pembelajaran Sepanjang Hayat" ("Lifelong Learning"), the Malaysia Prisons Department

inserted when expressing about the educational ‘privileges’ received by young people within the prisons institutions, *“In my opinion, the school we have here is some sort of ‘closed hostels’ without total freedom.”*

Here, we may understand the prison officials believe the implementation of lifelong learning programmes within the prison institutions are beneficial in promoting the dissemination of adequate knowledge to the young offenders without major restrictions. In this context, the prisons management considers the nature of lifelong learning programmes which are flexible and accessible to everyone would enhance young offenders gaining skills, knowledge and qualifications during the imprisonment<sup>14</sup>. As stressed by the Director General, *“As I have mentioned, we must realize that the most important thing for us is to provide the knowledge, the lifelong learning must continue from childhood to old age, so we should believe in the concept as it is a requirement for them to acquire knowledge, it has been stated in the Islam religion... that’s why the Malaysia Prisons Department is focusing on that, although the offenders are in prisons, we cannot stop giving them education...because human beings need the knowledge...”*The Director of Henry Gurney School, Malacca inserted, *“Our Director himself stated that...”giving a chance to these (young) offenders mean that we are giving them a chance to further their studies!”*

In this regard, the prison officials view the implementation of lifelong learning programmes for young offenders within the prison institutions is vital as it provides a second chance for them to continue and/or repeat their half way schooling (or academic) activities due to their admission into the institutions. The Director of the Offender Management division stressed, *“[T]hey have a chance to study the academic subjects as well as the vocational subjects in a formal manner. They also have a chance to take part in other fields available. So after this, they would have a future just like their friends outside (the prisons)”*. Another respondent, the Director General explained, *“[W]e can still provide them with lifelong learning... give them a second chance so that there will not be any gaps caused by lack of education in their lives...due to their detention period.”*

As such, we may imply the Malaysia Prisons Department is committed towards providing adequate accessibility to educational rights for the institutionalized youths whilst their incarceration. Through and/or by implementing the lifelong learning programmes within the prison institutions, it shows the Malaysia Prisons Department intends to bridge possible educational gaps between institutionalized young persons and the youths outside the institutions.

#### **4. ATTITUDES OF THE MALAYSIAN PRISON OFFICIALS REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE DURING INCARCERATION**

The findings illustrate the Malaysian prison officials view there is a close relationship between the implementation of lifelong learning programmes for young offenders who are being detained within the prison institutions and the development of the young people during the imprisonment term.

From the interview data, we may perceive the Malaysian prison officials regard the lifelong learning programmes provided by the government for young people in prisons as providing a second chance to the youths. By “second chance”, they mean these young people should be given another opportunity to be educated even though they are now being institutionalized for their past criminal wrongdoings.

As the Education Officer explained:

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<sup>14</sup> Refer details “Pembelajaran Sepanjang Hayat” (“Lifelong Learning”), the Malaysia Prisons Department

*“[S]o let's give them a chance. What I mean is that the facilities, their skills, abilities to get the chance to better themselves. Because maybe before this they had no opportunities, they were not aware and that sort of thing. But now since they are in the prison, they have nothing else to do except to study, they could not work before because maybe they were not given the encouragement, they had family problems and such, they had to stop schooling, they had to resort to any other jobs, so in the end they had to turn to crime. Now that they are in prison (silent)... they only need to focus on reforming themselves.”*

To re-quote the Director General everexpressed,

*“[T]his is because we believe that being imprisoned is not a hindrance for the offenders to acquire education. That's one clear thing. That's what we want. The youngsters are the country's assets... the next generation of leaders...so we need to look at it specifically although the offenders have done something wrong... let's give them another chance.”*

The Director of Henry Gurney School, Malacca further commented,

*“[W]e give them this chance. And we hope that one day; they will become good citizens who can help the nation in aspects of development... I am hoping that human beings can still change. They can change”.*

From the above excerpts, we may observe the officials have positive mindsets towards developing young people to be better persons and they are inspired to do because of their belief that every young person deserves another chance to be reformed. Furthermore, although young people were sent to the penal closed institutions as punishment for offending, this fact alone should not be seen as a barrier to receiving assistance from the relevant authorities to ‘make good’.

The data also would show the officials believe these young people should deserve another opportunity to be developed regardless whatever mistakes they must have made in the past because these young people are still members of the society who should not be left behind. As the Education Officer mentioned, *“I feel that the youths who are in the closed institutions, they have not been forgotten and they also have a role to play... so I think this is why the Education Ministry<sup>15</sup> has tried their best to help the Prisons Department... to provide... a formal education programme.”* The Chief Inspector put in words, *“I think these opportunities would be beneficial for them to develop their human capital...”*

Further the Director of Henry Gurney School, Malacca commented,

*“[W]e give them this chance... the offenders that we have [penal institutions], we believe that they have the potential to change their lives, to create a positive future for their race and nation. Maybe, if they have been caught committing crimes... I believe that it is not totally their doing... there are other factors to consider like circumstantial factors...”*

Notwithstanding the reality that these young people have been convicted of certain criminal wrongdoings in the past and by virtue of appreciating them as human capitals of the nations, the officials do have faith that these young people still in need of certain assistance towards becoming more useful persons in life. By respecting the young people as would still be capable of becoming useful persons, the lifelong learning programmes available in the closed penal institutions can be considered as giving these youths a second chance in life.

Nonetheless, as they are still at the young age and due to the lack of making proper decisions in the past that led them to be involved in the criminal wrongdoings, these young people should be now and then

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<sup>15</sup> He referred to the current collaboration between the Prisons Department and the Ministry of Education towards the establishment of Integrity Schools which were launched in June 2008.

continually exposed to receive all sorts of aids and assistance that can enlighten them to positively direct their own future.

From the above quotations too, we may comprehend that by allowing young people to receive more educational opportunities *via* lifelong learning programmes whilst incarceration, the Prisons Department is trying to fulfil the educational rights of the young detainees as these youths supposedly get if they were not being admitted into the institutions. The “next opportunity” to provide education for the young people by the Prisons Department *via* the lifelong learning programmes can be considered as another means by the government towards “putting” these youths into the right track in correcting their bad social behaviour into the positive attitudes of gaining knowledge during young age as they are supposed to do.

It was noted too that the respondents were in the opinion they should motivate young detainees towards improving their social behaviour and that education could develop their potentials. The respondents believe these youths should still be in “schools” like their other peer-group members – gain necessary knowledge and/or education towards developing themselves.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The responses from the data would suggest the prison officials in Malaysia opine lifelong learning programmes play a great role in promoting the knowledge dissemination process amongst young offenders during incarceration. Among other things, the findings would indicate:

First, the Malaysian prison officials understand the nature of lifelong learning plan that is flexible and accessible to all people of all ages and backgrounds identified to be the most appropriate method to better enable the youths to get useful and necessary knowledge and/or skills and/or qualifications in accordance with their own interests while imprisoned for their future better later.

Next, the officials also predict the implementation of lifelong learning programmes in Malaysian penal institutions will help young offenders develop their true potential fully as if they were not institutionalized in terms of character and attitude towards being better citizens in the future.

In addition, the findings also suggest prison officials consider lifelong learning plan as the backbone of each rehabilitation module that provides the most appropriate method of better accommodating young offenders get and/or continue education and/or knowledge and/or skills during incarceration. The documents and the interview data from the prison officials indicate this longstanding ‘plan’ has underpinned all education programmes implemented in the penal institutions and is very important towards better facilitating the development process of young offenders.

Finally, the data also demonstrate the prison officials have a strong belief that imprisonment should not be a hindrance for young people to develop themselves during incarceration and thus, the implementation of lifelong learning programmes are identified to be the most appropriate mechanism that will encourage the youths to gain useful knowledge and/or education and/or skills in the process of developing themselves behind bars.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The present study sought to analyze whether the attitudes of the Malaysian prison officials towards understanding the importance of the lifelong learning programmes influences the dissemination of knowledge amongst young offenders who are being imprisoned.

The author discovers the perceptions of the prison officials towards understanding the significance of lifelong learning programmes signify their thinking that every young offender has potential to be better persons once they are released from the institutions.

Furthermore, the paper would like to conclude that the Malaysian prison officials have never thought the dissemination of knowledge amongst young people who are being detained within the prison institutions automatically ceases due to imprisonment. In fact, the officials were in the opinion that the Prisons Authority can still provide certain educational facilities towards enhancing the development of young offenders during the imprisonment term through lifelong learning programmes.

Finally, the author would like to suggest that more empirical studies should be carried out in the future to find out how effective the implementation of lifelong learning programmes within the prisons institutions in Malaysia as at today?

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# THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE PROMOTION OF PEACE THROUGH COMMUNITY POLICING

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## Abstract

The role of youth for the promotion of peaceful coexistence and crime controls cannot be de-emphasized in all human societies; youth represent a building block for the future of human race and thus must be actively engaged in all efforts towards peace making, peace promotion and peace development as sidelining them could likely spell doom for the immediate and future harmony. As a strategy for crime control and peace development, community policing must carry along all segments of people to succeed most especially the youth. Using existing literature, this paper posits that aggressive engagement of the youth through community policing will go a long way in guaranteeing the survival on a long term bases of community policing as a strategy as well as overall societal peace development, it is only when there is peace that the society can develop. Recognizing that this central role of attaining peace through youth engagement in community policing is inevitable, the paper conclude that failure to do this have the potential of undermining developmental efforts and poses a threat to the survival of community policing. In effect therefore, the paper is pushing for a “Youth-Focused” community policing.

*Key words: Youth, Peace, Community Policing, Engagement.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The world is changing rapidly so also the role of youth is becoming increasingly pronounced, these days the youth vehemently demand more from their society and recent events have shown how youths led change in the Middle East and Africa. The youth of today happen to be more sophisticated and enlightened than at any time in history and thus engagement and collaboration with them becomes inevitably. The youth of today happen to be more sophisticated and enlightened than at any time in history and thus engagement and collaboration with them becomes inevitably especially when designing a path for societal advancement, peace promotion and over all development process.

Experts are of the opinion that failure to engage the youth energy towards productive roles and development process will adversely impact negatively on the present and future prospects of sustainability, peace and progress. The growing interdependence that characterized modern time calls for a generation of individuals who can engage in effective global problem solving and participate simultaneously in local, national and international civil life (Mansilla and Jackson, 2011).

As community policing grows and expands, there is the great need for the program to be dynamic and prompt in recognizing the complex requirement of different segments of the society, in particular the youth in this case. Forman (2004) rightly noted this by observing that community policing is yet to reach it maximum peak and that the new policy paradigm shift exhibits a fundamental flaw by not



involving the youth actively. Furthermore, the youth remain a target group of policing rather than assets that could contribute to the policing venture, failure to engage the youth in the community policing model has huge consequences as what the youth do and what is done to them tremendously impact on public safety and peacefulness (Forman, 2004).

It is on this ground that this paper is promoting the drive towards a youth-focused community policing with a view to greater collaboration and engagement for the purpose of promoting peace and development. Simply put, police should make peace with the youth thereby enhancing peacefulness.

## **2. PLAUSIBILITY OF COMMUNITY POLICING**

### *2.1 Background to community policing*

The untenable relationship that characterize police/community relations in the United States in 1970's and 1980's necessitate the growth of community policing (Anderson, 1999), which came about from many sources (Livingston, 1997). This scenario appears to cut across national boundaries and have become a source of concern for police agencies and crime researchers. The resultant deterioration of the relationship between the police and communities they serve led to lack of cooperation by citizens towards the police and vice versa. Previous studies conducted highlighted this deteriorating relationship, for example Skogan and Roth (2004) in a study he conducted revealed that 73% of officers are of the opinion that the public are "against them" or "hate them" while 13% believed that some people "support" them and some are "against" them. Only 12% believe that the people they serve like them. Skogan and Hartnett (1997) corroborated Skogan and Roth(2004) study when they found out that less than 27% of Chicago police officers were of the opinion that police-citizen relationship is good, about half of the officers believe that the people do not respect the police while more than 70% of officers studied indicate that the citizens do not appreciate the challenges faced by the police while discharging their duties. With Available data from the 1960's on the opinions held by big city officers indicate that they see the citizens at worst hostile and at best uncooperative (Wilson, 1983).

Findings from criminological studies exposed the weaknesses of traditional strategies of policing (Skolnick and Bayley, 1986). Studies from the 1970's specifically challenged the notion of putting more police on the street for patrolling and cast doubt on the efficacy of reactive policing. This serves as a prelude towards reforming the policing strategy particularly as results came in showing that most crimes are not solved by investigation but rather because of information shared such as name, addresses, or license plate numbers. This seriously undermines many of the core believes of the police. (Skogan and Roth, 2004)

### *2.2 Defining community policing*

Till date, there appears to be no consensus on what community policing means specifically, the term has come to represent many strategies and tactics by police and community members (Bayley, 1988); which to a large extent has to do with engagement, collaboration and information sharing for the purpose of crime control. Prominent researchers of community policing such as Tracey Meares and Dan Khan posit that community policing could represent many things like prayer vigil, officers playing basketball with kids and smiling at babies (Massing, 1998).

Within this understanding, we could refer to any attempt by police officers to bridge the gap between themselves and the community the serve as community policing, and this paper is advocating for a

more youth focused community policing especially in Malaysia where the program is showing bright prospects.

### **3. YOUTH-FOCUSED COMMUNITY POLICING**

#### *3.1 Background*

According to the Youth Focused Community Policing Final Report 2001, the program began in March 1996 as a joint effort of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and Community Relations Service (CRS). YFCP was designed as an enhanced model of community policing that focused on the traditional problems of crime and disorder; recognized the unique problems, needs, and characteristics of local government and the juvenile justice system; and created a heightened local awareness of and need for addressing the problems of children, youth, and families as a community priority. The goals of YFCP were to:

3.1.1. Promote community information sharing strategies that support comprehensive, proactive partnerships between police, youth and the community;

3.1.2. Establish a locally based interagency working group to identify and address juvenile crime, victimization, community public safety, and quality of life issues;

3.1.3. Develop and implement strategies, activities, and services that are consistent with the principles of community policing and that address locally defined problems relating to juvenile crime, victimization and quality of life issues; and

3.1.4. Develop a YFCP implementation plan that reinforces positive ongoing relationships between youth, law enforcement, and community organizations.

The focus of YFCP was to help communities assess their own particular youth-related issues and needs and design comprehensive, community-based strategies to address them. The goals were to:

3.1.5 Promote community information sharing strategies that support comprehensive, Proactive partnerships between police, youth and the community;

3.1.6 Establish a locally based interagency working group to identify and address juvenile Crime, victimization, community public safety, and quality of life issues;

3.1.7 Develop and implement strategies, activities, and services that are consistent with the principles of community policing and that address locally defined problems relating to juvenile crime, victimization and quality of life issues; and

3.1.8 Develop a YFCP implementation plan that reinforces positive ongoing relationships between youth, law enforcement, and community organizations.

#### *3.2 Policing the Youth*

Despite the strides achieved in community policing implementation, the youth today are still policed through the traditional means. This ideological stagnation in handling youth related issues to crime is rendering community policing handicap and thus limiting the program ability to address sources of crime. As a community based program, community policing must be based on width and depth to be

effective, the youth represent a challenge to public order and seen as threat to peace even without any provocation. Forman (2004) noted that age has turned out to be a constant factor among many indicators of possibility of hostile relationship between the police and citizens. Mastrofski, et al. (2002) observed that youth happen to be in a situation of being most likely disrespected by police when stopped on the road, or searched illegally (Gould and Mastrofski, 2004). In another similar study, Terrill and Mastrofski (2002) found that the use of force by the police is higher among young, poor and none while.

It is also glaring that researchers have been caught up in the web of tagging youth as criminals. A good example can be found in the work of Wilson and Kellings (1982) who are two prominent scholars in the study of community policing. In their discussion of fear within neighborhood argued that “law abiding citizens who are afraid to go on to the street filled graffiti, winos and loitering youths yield control of these street to people who are not frightened by these sights of urban decay”. This statement indicate that by default, Wilson and Kellings perceived youth as not law abiding and being present on the street simply make the society to be seen as decaying. No any justification was given to condemn these youths as threat than just their presence.

### *3.3 Youth Participation in Community Policing*

Who participate in community policing? is an important question worthy of pondering upon; earlier initiatives in community policing studies showed disproportion in participation. Skogan (1990), in his review of Houston’s early program revealed dominant races and established interest groups participate more in community policing than African Americans and Hispanics. Similar results were also substantiated by Skogan in the 1980’s where white, high income earners and single families were more likely than others to get involved. The same result was arrived at by Skolnick and Bayley (1986) in California.

In all cases, young people are still less likely to attend community policing meetings or sit on district advisory committees, only middle aged and older people participate (Skolnick and Hertnett, 1997).

The none participation of young people has seriously undermine the efficacy of community policing implementation especially at local level. A good example was the non-participation of youth in an anti-drug match in Chicago. Residents admitted that the absence of youth involvement among other contribute to the collapse of the program. This shows that the active participation of the youth is missing regarding community policing and this created a great source of concern.

## **4. YOUTH FOCUSED COMMUNITY POLICING PROGRAM**

Community policing program targeted at youth especially related to gang violence problems have recorded some level of success. Examples of such program are:

4.1 The Norfolk police assisted community enforcement program; Cronin described this program as focusing in low income housing areas.

4.2 The Reno, NV program (Weston, 1995). This happens by the establishment of a community action team (CAT). The Reno police department involves representatives from minority neighborhoods, officials from community service agencies, and political leaders in a community solution to the city’s serious youth gang problem (Weston, 1995). The CAT program has two strategies: (1) creation of a highly specialized team of officers to target the top 5 percent of violent

gang members in a repeat offender program and (2) a prevention and early intervention program that targets an estimated 80 percent of Reno's gang members who are not considered to be hardcore. Neighborhood advisory groups provide feedback from community residents, and an interagency group coordinates prevention and intervention resources. Although the program has not been independently evaluated, local officials are convinced it is effective and continue to support its operations (Weston, 1995).

4.3 A third community policing model, in the Redlands, CA, Police Department, incorporates a new scientific approach: "risk-focused policing" (Rich, 1999). The model is based on the extensive research literature on risk and protective factors. Data related to these factors, adolescent problem behaviors, and existing programs are entered into a database. Mapping software displays the results by census block. To prevent delinquency and gang involvement more effectively, the police department focuses its resources on areas that most need risk reduction and protection enhancement.

## **5. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

### *5.1 ACTION BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MODEL (ABCD)*

Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a methodology that seeks to uncover and use the strengths within communities as a means for sustainable development, Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), were influential in developing this community development philosophy. The model essentially seeks people to look inward and explore their rich potential.

The model shows the ABCD model provides the opportunity for local residents to look to one another for solutions, while the local governmental acts as an infrastructure to help provide for solutions that are outside the scope of local individuals or community groups. The model does not ignore the limitations of the community, nor does it seek to absolve local government of its social responsibility to the community (Payne, 2006). One principle of asset-based community development is the belief that individuals represent one of the greatest assets of any community (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993). Each individual possesses capacities, gifts, and abilities that can be used to benefit the community.

Using the topic under discussion while applying the ABCD, the youth represents one of the most fundamental assets in the community and as assets to the community their engagement and involvement in the strategy of community policing is necessary as they possess the potentials and energy, if untapped could divert these youth energies assets towards violence and crime. The ABCD model anticipates that through harnessing the potential of every segment of the society, development and by extension peace can be achieved.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This paper has discussed the fundamental need to utilize the resources possessed in any society which in this case was the youth towards greater participation in the implementation of community policing to achieve the maximum potential of the program. Countries like Malaysia who are in the early stages of implementing community policing should seize the opportunity at hand to engage the youth so that they could feel to have a stake in the process of controlling crime for the purpose of development and prosperity.

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# **SOBAT BUMI COMMUNITY AS A YOUTH-VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY TO SOLVE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS**

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## **Abstract**

Garbage has been a classic problem for some countries as it relates to the environmental conditions of a country. This is also becoming a case in Indonesia. Although the Indonesian's government has a program to reduce the amount of rubbish in some particular areas, environmental issues and "the waste" in Indonesia still exist. Environmental crisis aren't just government's responsibility, but also youth's for sure. Youth, as a pioneer, is also responsible to help solving this dilemma. One activity that youth can do is making a community that respects for the environmental crisis. One of them is "SOBAT BUMI". This community was formed by 160 youths who were the awardees of Pertamina Foundation Scholarship. This community gathered youth from around Indonesia with different province, different major and also different university but they have similar interest and desire to serve and respect their local environment. This community has a routinely-simultaneous activities that held in some universities throughout Indonesia that have been joined "SOBAT BUMI". Some of their activities is cleaning up university's environment, sorting organic waste, doing goes-to-campus campaign by using bicycle and also educating people to be more concerned with their environment around.

**Keywords:** *Sobat Bumi, Pertamina Foundation Scholars, environmental crisis, youth volunteering, empowerment*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Nowadays, environmental problems are quite complex and making such a dilemma. The successful development and economic growth is carried out with using more natural resources that leaves negative impact on the environment. From an environmental perspective, the success of development is not only measured by the amount of economic growth and the achievement of equality but also the sustainability of the environment where the development took place. If the environment damaged the resources, it will be increasingly depleted and rare. If so, our place to live is no more comfortable. Thus the environmental damage would threaten not only the sustainability of the development but would also threaten human existence.

With those existing problems as it now happened, then it should not only governments that got to try to deal with this environmental problem. It is also the power of the youth that definitely must be more aware of their environment. Increasing the awareness can be done by performing a voluntary activity to resolve the issue. Volunteering activity is related to the voluntary activity. Volunteers are a group of people engaged in various activities. Young and old, men and women, professionals and amateurs, people of all faiths and colors, disabled and able-bodied, poor, rich, and everything in between,

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countless volunteers do contribute to facilitating social change and promoting development as well. Overall, volunteering can be seen as an activity that are driven by passion and by a commitment to a particular cause. Volunteering can be categorized in four ways; mutual aid or self-help; philanthropy or service to others; community participation; and advocacy or campaign namely by Anheier, et al. (2001)<sup>(1)</sup>

## 2.RESULTS

### 2.1.Sobat Bumi Community

As one of the example of volunteering activity in the environmental issues is Sobat Bumi Community. Sobat Bumi Community is built up by some great ideas from Sobat Bumi Scholars around Indonesia. This community is officially made at February 17th 2013 which consists of all the awardees of Sobat Bumi Scholars. This community realised that there is still lack of awareness in preserving the environment. The other aim of this community is also to be a forum for young people who want to be part of the solution to climate changes so that they can help together to perform actions for making a sustainable environment of Indonesia. To join into the observer, it clearly requires commitment and consistency. Moreover, only few young people are aware and are willing to dedicate themselves to this affair. Circumstances become a challenge for Sobat Bumi Community in transmitting environment-awareness message. Their effort to promote a love of nature, especially among young people, is now coming to an achievement.

Sobat Bumi Community is a community that performs a series of environmental activities such as campaigns and spontaneous actions that invite public participation. This community is not just exclusively for the grantee or scholars, but some people in the surroundings may also be a part of this community, as known as the volunteer. Sobat Bumi Community is divided into several regions such as Sobat Bumi Aceh, Sobat Bumi Medan, Sobat Bumi Palembang, Sobat Bumi Bandung, Sobat Bumi Bogor, Sobat Bumi Jakarta, Sobat Bumi Jogjakarta, Sobat Bumi Semarang, Sobat Bumi Surabaya, Sobat Bumi Malang, Sobat Bumi Bali, Sobat Bumi Mataram, Sobat Bumi Kalimantan Barat, and last but not least is Sobat Bumi Makassar. The region is divided with some reason. One of the reason is based on the university where the scholars come from. The other reason is because each area in Indonesia has a different problem according to the characteristics of each region. For instance, Kalimantan. The problem that often occurs in Kalimantan is illegal logging and exploitation by mining companies conducted by haphazard. So that it surely needs activity that focus and suitable to solve that problem, where it is absolutely different with Jakarta's environmental problem. Different problem is likely to be encountered by Sobat Bumi in other regions. That is why every Sobat Bumi region has an autonomy to conduct activities in each region.

There are so many kinds of activity the Sobat Bumi Community do in order to save and preserve the environment. Their campaigns are through online and offline. For online activities, Sobat Bumi Community creates media social account such as twitter and website that is full with campaign material to the public. They also write essays about the environment that is published to educate people. Whereas for offline ones, the activity is carried out directly in the form of real action. Those activities that will be implemented include: *Tanam Bumi* (tree-planting around), *Sedekah Bumi* (Alms for Earth), and *Program Pengelolaan Sampah* (waste management program).

### 2.2.Tanam Bumi (Tree-planting)

*Tanam Bumi* (tree-planting) is an action to plant trees in order to green each region as well as encourage local people to participate together. The purpose of this event is related to green movement, reboisations and even boost the economy in accordance with the concept of green economy. The *Tanam Bumi* program can also help and support Saving 1,000,000 Trees Movement Program by Pertamina Foundation. This tree-planting program is managed by a group of scholars who are in the region of East Java, including Sobat Bumi Surabaya which consists of scholars who were studied in Airlangga University and Institute of Technology 10 November Surabaya. The tree

seedlings for planting this morning were obtained voluntarily and at no cost because Sobat Bumi does cooperate with the Department of Plantation and Investment in related areas. Planting activities have been carried out every week by Sobat Bumi Community in Surabaya. Tree-planting held before at the Orphanage around Surabaya was initiated that activity. *Tanam Bumi* (tree-planting) hopefully can be the answer and solution for people to help government making our environment more green and produce abundant fresh air to absorb the pollutions.

Figure 1 Members of Sobat Bumi Surabaya



This tree-planting activity is not only done by Sobat Bumi Community in Surabaya but also from Sobat Bumi Jakarta as effort to educate people about green living movement. Sobat Bumi Jakarta do some activities to educate the approach to the environmental education of children who surrounded campus area. This activity is carried out by members of the Sobat Bumi Jakarta such as scholars from University of Indonesia, together with volunteers from the surrounding community. Youth Action for A Better Green Living is the theme as their effort to invite the community to participate intelligently in preserving a clean and green environment. This activity working closely with the activities of the Student Executive Board of University of Indonesia 2013 performances, which brought hundreds of children, with activities in more detail, where the targets are children in kindergarten through elementary school age range 4 to 13 years. Why select that age? It is because Sobat Bumi Jakarta believe that children as the future generation can fix the future existence of the earth. Therefore, planting trees and being go green in their early age becomes such an important thing for children that can not be ignored. Through their mindset, it will form a behavior which will bring the kids to have an environmentally-friendly habit or lifestyle.

Our target area is Jakarta-Depok based on school where children take the participation. Although name of this community is Sobat Bumi Jakarta that brings regional Jakarta, but we also necessarily care and show both the existence of other surrounded cities like Depok for example. Because to solve environment problem, Jakarta cannot solve the problem by on itself, but becomes important to participate with another city surround Jakarta for the good of the environment together.

Located in a booth called gardening booth which is opened from 9 am to 3 pm, students who attend are invited to learn through videos and stories, as well as invited to do the simulation about tree planting and waste segregation. Students are divided into a few waves, and divided again in a focus group discussion (FGD) for each of the group will be guided by a tutor from Sobat Bumi Jakarta. At first, they were treated to a video about the Earth and knowledge about environment. Moreover, tutors then explain to students the content of the video. In the simulation, they are invited to understand the categorization of organic and non-organic waste separation.



Figure 2 Students plant the seed



Figure 3 Students participate in tree-planting



After that, students turn to planting guava trees in medium pot. Students are also given a small quiz concerned such questions which previously explained by tutors. They were lucky to get a souvenir from Pertamina Foundation, and any children who attend the simulation allowed to take home one of each tree seedlings to be planted in their own house. Giving guava seedlings is intended to be useful for a family because trees planted are not just for greening but can also be utilized as a ready-to-eat fruit.

In addition to the booth, the simulation was also performed on stage for 30 minutes with dozens of spectators from kindergarten, elementary, and public. It is done on stage, not much different from the booth in the field of environmental education, waste sorting simulation, and planting trees that holding 8 audience as volunteers. 8 volunteers are also entitled to bring home the pot along with tree seedlings. Activity in stage 2 is guided by people from Sobat Bumi Jakarta and in its practice, there is a quiz that give 5 books as prizes. Not only the activities carried out by Sobat Bumi Jakarta, but friends like Sobat Bumi Surabaya also has a patronage school. School Patronage Program is an environmental education program that is done in schools to further enhance self-awareness and innovation in the field of environmental education, in hope that it will be implemented through awareness and practice in several activities such as; waste sorting, making recycled-craft, practicing seed conservation, and also increasing cooperation with Sobat Bumi Community.

### 2.3. *Sedekah Bumi (Charity for the Earth)*

Other event held by Sobat Bumi Community is *Sedekah Bumi (Charity for the Earth)*, by promoting spontaneous action that can also be implemented in each region. Why this activity named Charity for the Earth? It's because although this activity is only small action, it becomes a sustainable activity to the earth. This action aims to preserve the environment that is expected to make people aware that hygiene and sustainability is all people's responsibility. Charity for the Earth is done by each university with many forms activity such as waste management program. In this program, the members collect the garbage and encourage people to be more aware with the garbage in their surrounding environment.

Figure 4 Volunteers collecting the garbage



Figure 5 Volunteers clean up Code river



Similar activities are carried out by some of Sobat Bumi in Bandung, Bogor, Aceh, Medan, Malang and Yogyakarta. There are some kinds of events that perform clean-up activities in the campus area, sorting garbage in the main square of the city area, and even activities clean up garbage on the banks of river. Sobat Bumi Jogjakarta chose to clean up Code River around Jogja to represent their charity for the earth. Charity for the earth that held by Sobat Bumi Jogjakarta are also supported by another Environmental Community. This activity called Code Clean. They clean up along in the banks of Code River from garbage. This activity also utilizes an innovative use of technology in collecting the waste. The technology we use is a waste basket paper named Takakura and an engine management.

Figure 6 Participation of public to join this campaign



#### *2.4. Program Pengelolaan Sampah (Waste Management Program)*

Surprisingly, Sobat Bumi Semarang implement the action Charity for the Earth with the theme "Let's Move Together With Komposter and Biopori". Biopori is space or pores in the soil that is formed naturally by the activity of living things in the soil such as plant roots, worms, termites and other microorganisms. Benefit of making Biopori Hole Infiltration (LBR) is expected to be able to maximize the water that seeped into the soil thereby increasing soil water, natural composting of organic waste rather than burned, reducing the pool of water that cause disease, reducing water thrown away to the sea, reducing the risk of floods in the rainy season, maximizing the role and activity of soil flora and fauna and preventing soil erosion and landslides.

Figure 7 Volunteer making a biopori hole



This is one step to reduce or minimize waste and household waste that could be recycled in a way that is easy and can turn to be some economical product. Sobat Bumi Semarang is not only consist of scholars from the Diponegoro University but also work with another campus students surround Semarang such as POLINES, POLTEKES, UNPAND. Sobat Bumi Semarang is also helped by another volunteer of environmentalists (e.g: Kemangtir Semarang) and young people concerned about the environment, woman organization (PKK) and the participation of all citizens of RW3 Tembalang village, Semarang.

Figure 8 Members of Sobat Bumi Semarang



In addition, Sobat Bumi Semarang also made Biopori holes to add water infiltration in the soil. Compost and biopori hole concept is performed in the District Tembalang, inhabited by thousands of students from Diponegoro University students, POLINES, POLTEKES, UNPAND. Biopori holes produce a litter every day, whether organic or inorganic waste. Since the number of students increasing, food places popping up every day produces a lot of waste. If the waste is not managed properly, Tembalang area will be filled with the junk pile.

Those piled-up garbage is certainly going to disrupt the surrounding population. Besides the unpleasant smell, garbage will invite flies frequently. And it can also bring diseases like dengue fever. The activity of making this compost helps in minimizing the buildup of waste and the recycled-waste will be beneficial environmentally and economically if developed. In addition to making a compost, easy thing we can do for the environment is by making biopori holes to add power to the water infiltration in the soil.

### 3.CONCLUSION

Activities explained previously are some activities that has been done by Sobat Bumi Community. This activity is not only spontaneous but is expected to remain sustainable on campus or university who have participated in the Sobat Bumi Community. In order to keep the program remains sustainable,Sobat Bumi Community is recruiting people as volunteer. Sobat Bumi Community also socialises this activity with the use of social networking media. One of the implementation is website named [www.sobatbumi.com](http://www.sobatbumi.com). In this website, there are links about how to sign up as a volunteer of Sobat Bumi Community that will be involved in the next activities This website has opened a few months ago and got a pretty positive responses from the local community. Among them until this data has been retrieved, about 102 volunteers joined this activity.

Figure 9 The view of Sobat Bumi official website



Participate in voluntary activities like Sobat Bumi Community have done before, can help others as a first step to solve the problem. Youths also become more aware of how the community works. Active in various social activities is an important strategy to develop community participation in social change and human development. This is one of the key findings of the research conducted by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) program in the year 2007/8.

Volunteers and social activists is sometimes regarded as a separate field of activity, but in fact there is a dynamic relationship between them. Both of them contribute to the involvement of people in the achievement of development commitments, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Furthermore, volunteering activities encourage participation from youth with diverse backgrounds. Volunteers can help youth take their first step to a long-term involvement in the development. Social activities, on the other hand, plays an important role in providing youth the leadership skill and spirit of complementarity. Social activities help to promote social inclusion by providing opportunities for youth to engage in participatory development process. Volunteer then becomes such a reservoir of knowledge for the development program.

By participating, one can be empowered with the confidence, skills and knowledge required to make change for the world. The purpose of deepening and maintaining participation depends on creating new opportunities, diverse and varied involvement. Government, civil society, the private sector and even international agencies surely have an important role in creating a conducive environment for community participation, particularly for youth. Besides, achieving the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 depends heavily on individual participation in development. This paper shows that youth as the volunteers and social activists have a considerable potential to help driving the level of community participation and diversity necessary to face the tensions and challenges of development.

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# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG MALAYSIAN ADOLESCENTS

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## Abstract

As we all know the benefits of physical activity (PA) on physical and mental health are well established. However, inactivity among adolescents in Malaysia is still prevalent. This study examined whether emotional intelligence (EI) was one of the underlying psychological mechanisms that may associated with the current low levels of PA adherence. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine whether EI plays a role as the potential underlying mechanism of PA behavior among Malaysian adolescents in secondary schools. A total of 270 sixteen year old students were recruited from a few Malaysian secondary schools. It was found that students with higher physical activity (among those who are school athletes) in a week had better total EI scores and composite subscale scores. The findings of this study provide further support claims that there is a positive relationship between increased levels of EI and physical activity. Thus, the importance of higher emotional intelligence skills is seen to be one of the utmost important agenda that should be looked at in public schools to help on promoting exercise and physical activity participation. It is highly recommended that the programs should be targeted at the maximum level towards individual who were sedentary and low active.

**Keywords:** *emotional intelligence; physical activity; adolescents*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Physical activity is one of the best way to improve general health and keeping obesity at bay (Roxana Dev et al., 2012). Studies haveshown that adolescents that are activeat a young age, will persist throughout their lives (Huntsinger&Luecke, 2004; Brewer et al., 2006). Therefore, a healthier generation can be mold where risk of stroke and coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes mellitus as well as colon cancer can be minimized. Besides that problems involving psychological, emotional and social development, such as lack of self-esteem and discrimination can also be at the minimum(Money et al., 2010).

Even though physical activity as a whole for Malaysian adults has increased from 56.3% to 64.8% (NHMS, 2011), other studies that involves Malaysian adolescents are quite alarming. According to the study by Dan, Mohd Nasir &Zalilah (2011), about one third ( 34%) and 61.5% of their adolescent respondents were in the low physical activity and moderate level category with the mean of physical activity of  $2.06 \pm 0.45$  (low physical activity category) (Farah, Mohd Nasir &Hazizi, 2011). Furthermore, the obesity level among children and adolescent has slightly increased from 10.8% to 12% (NHMS, 2011).

This is probably due to the rapid change of lifestyle among the Malaysian adolescents that is less labour activity patterns such as going to school by car or school bus rather than walking, more indoor activities such as video games rather than playing football on the field and increase sedentary habits due to the wide use of technology. In fact, a study by Andres (2006) revealed that there is lack of interest in exercise and sport activities participation among youth and adolescent. If this trend continues, it will have a tremendous detrimental effect as the health of the next generation would be affected in the long run. Reily, Methven, & McDowell (2004) showed that obesity and morbidity incidences in children and adolescents are associated with both short-term and long-term consequences, although the latter may be of a greater health concern. Short-term consequences of physical inactivity can increase the risk of obesity and will promote low self-esteem, adverse social interactions, behavioural problems, clinical conditions such as asthma, and systemic inflammation (Zalilah et al., 2006). While long-term consequences of obesity (due to sedentary lifestyle) may include type -1 diabetes mellitus, increased cardiovascular risks, and premature mortality in adulthood (Zalilah et al., 2006).

According to Li, Lu & Wang (2009), PA also plays an important role in enhancing the emotional health as well. According to them, emotions are an integral and significant aspect of human nature and the motivation for behaviour (Li et al., 2009). In other words, physical activity can be motivated with a strong emotional adapt qualities. The ability of being able to tell differences in capabilities to recognize/perceived, understand, manage and use emotions in both intrapersonal and interpersonal contexts is known as emotional intelligence (EI) (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Emotional intelligence (EI) is a relatively new construct (Zeidner et al., 2004) that has gathered momentum due to proposals that measures of EI are related to a number of desirable outcomes, including health behaviors such as exercise and physical activities.

Thus, this study aims to examine whether EI plays a role as the potential underlying mechanism of PA behavior among Malaysian adolescents or more specific Malaysian secondary students.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section looks at the various variables of the study which are the adolescents, physical activity, framework for categorizing the emotional intelligence and as well as prior researches on emotional intelligence and other health behaviors.

### *2.1 Critical period during adolescents and physical activity*

Adolescence is a period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. It represents one of the critical transitions in the life span and is characterized by a tremendous pace in growth and change that is second only to that of infancy (WHO, 2000). The biological process that happens during this period of time drives many aspects of growth and development, with the onset of puberty marking the passage from childhood to adolescence. The biological determinants of adolescence are fairly universal; however, the duration and defining characteristics of this period may vary across time, cultures, and socioeconomic situations. This period has seen many changes over the past century namely the earlier onset of puberty, keeping trends of urbanization, wide use of global communication and social networking, daring sexual attitudes and risky health behaviors (Hugo, 2005).

Many studies have shown the dramatic declines of physical activity during the adolescent period (Dan, Mohd Nasir & Zalilah, 2011; Pahkala et al., 2006). A study by Lim (2005) also showed similar result where 44 % of adolescents studied were in the sedentary category. If this trend is not taken seriously by policy makers and health educationers, the younger generation will be bombarded with many chronic diseases. Therefore, it is utmost important to determine or identify factor/s that could promote physical activity such as emotional intelligence (EI).

## *2.2 Framework for emotional intelligence*

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has become the spotlight in many fields and important to a variety set of people, including individual, family and the corporate world (Goleman, 2006). Although it is a branch of knowledge in the field of psychology, but it has attracted the interest of many researchers from various fields including management and administration, education, health and even sports (Zizie, 2003). It was first introduced by Thorndike in 1920's. He refers it to as social intelligence that reflects a person's ability to understand and manage others and act sensibly when interacting with them (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

According to Mayer et al. (2000), EI has four hierarchical skill levels that range in complexity in terms of how individuals identify/perceived, understand, manage and use emotions. Appraisal and recognized sometimes referred to perception of emotion is the lowest skill level. The next level involves evaluating and usage of emotional experiences, for example weighing emotions against one another and against other sensations and thoughts. The third level involves understanding and reasoning about emotions. Each emotion follows its own specific rules. Each emotion changes according to its own characteristics' rules; includes the ability to identify emotions, know how they change, and reason about emotions accordingly. Last but not least, the fourth and the highest skill level includes the management and regulation of emotions, such as knowing how to calm down after being really nervous or angry.

Meanwhile, the concept of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence presented by Gardner (1983) is the concept of emotional intelligence to know their own emotions and the emotions of others. While emotional intelligence according to Bar-On (2000), refers to one's ability to understand their own feelings and to foster good relations with others. He discusses emotional intelligence in terms of five components, namely, 1) interpersonal skills, social skills and communication with others, 2) intrapersonal skills of higher consciousness to expand ourselves to high standards, 3) the ability to adapt, 4) ability to handle stress, 5) remain optimistic. refers to one's ability to understand their own feelings and to foster good relations with others. According to him, people with high emotional intelligence is more optimistic, have a high level of customization, realistic, problem-solving skills and the ability to deal with stress and emotional self-control.

Individuals with high emotional intelligence are able to enhance their intrinsic motivation to the fullest and respect other individuals around him. This will indirectly improve performance in terms of productivity and focus in general (Salami, 2010). Furthermore, students who have a high level of emotional intelligence was found to have a higher grade achievement compared with children who have a low level of emotional intelligence (Parker et al., 2007). In addition, students with higher emotional intelligence can also develop communication skills, and problem solving skills better (Brackett, Mayer & Warner, 2004)



There are a variety of comprehensive models of emotional intelligence used to describe emotional intelligence. These models do not contradict each other but there are differences in the perception of emotional intelligence. However, almost all models do include three main categories, namely to interpret emotions, controlling emotions, and use of emotions in problem solving.

The study of emotional intelligence on adolescents who are in the transition from childhood to adulthood can provide insight into the formation and development of emotional intelligence elements in the school programs. Since emotional intelligence plays a key role in quality interaction with others and the success of everyday life (Goleman, 2006), studying emotional intelligence on adolescent can help promote better health behaviors including physical activity.

### *2.3 Emotional intelligence on health behaviours*

From previous studies, positive correlations were found with EI and positive health behaviors such as better stress management (Tsaousis& Nikolaou, 2005), better eating behavior (Wong, 2011), while there were negative correlations with EI and alcohol consumption and smoking (Austin et al, 2005; Trinidad & Johnson, 2002; Tsaousis& Nikolaou, 2005). In terms of physical activity, high EI has been shown to be associated with young adults and adults who engage in regular physical exercise (Li et al., 2009; Roxana, Ismi, Maria, Mohd. Sofian&Soh, 2012). In a previous study, using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998), Davidson (2004) found that adults that exercise regularly had significantly higher EI than the non exercisers (M-123.55 and 117.97, respectively,  $t(337)=-2.15, p<0.05$ ).

Presently, even though there are studies done on the correlation between PA and EI, but none was done on adolescents. Therefore, it is high time to investigate if EI plays a role as the potential underlying mechanism of PA behavior among adolescent.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### *3.1 Participants*

Participants were recruited from two schools in Melaka, Malaysia. 142 male and 128 female form four students, 16 years of age participated by using random sampling. All subjects were asked to sign an informed consent form before filling the General Demographic Questionnaire, Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS; Shutte et al., 1998) and International Physical Activity Questionnaire (PAQ-A; Kowalski, Crocker & Kowalski, 1997).

### *3.2 Instruments*

There were two main instruments used in the study. The EIS is a 33-item measurement scale of emotional intelligence by Schutte et al., (1998). Items for this test were initially constructed on the basis of the theoretical work of Salovey and Mayer (1990), and represent three inter-related dimensions: (a) appraisal and expression of emotion, (b) regulation of emotion, and (c) utilization of emotion. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). A series of studies by Schutte et al., (1998) revealed adequate internal reliability estimates for the scale at .87 and above, and two week test-retest reliability of.78. For this study the EIS was conceptualized as a 5-subscale of 19 items model of emotional intelligence was used and suggested by Lane et al. (2009) (Table 1). The six subscales are: utilization of emotions appraisal of other's emotions, optimism, appraisal of one own

emotions, emotional regulation and social emotional intelligence (Refer to table 1). The modified EIS was used to compensate the aim of the study to have a brief instrument meant for adolescents who commented that there were too many questions with the pilot study using with the original 33-items. The alpha coefficient in the present study was 0.87, which indicates an internally reliable scale. Range of scores possible for the test is 19 to 95.

Physical activity was assessed using the official Malay language version translated from the *Physical Activity Questionnaire for Adolescents* (PAQ-A; Kowalski, Crocker Kowalski, 1997). The questionnaire was developed to measure level of physical activities among adolescents age 14 to 19 years for the past week. There were nine items altogether with first eight items based on 5 scale *Likert* while the ninth item was an open ended question. Range of score was between 14 to 70. The alpha Cronbach value for the PAQ-A instrument is 0.85. For the purpose of the study, physical activity levels were also classified into three categories: low, moderately active and highly active according to their scoring. Those who scored lower than 27 were in the sedentary or low active category (LAc), 28 to 51 were in the moderate category (MAc) and 52 and above were the highly active participants (HAc).

Table 1. Five revised subscale of the 33-item Emotional Intelligence Scale to 19 items (Lane et al., 2009)

<b>Items</b>
<b>Appraisal of others emotions</b>
By looking at their facial expression, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing
When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself
I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them
It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do
I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice
<b>Appraisal of own emotions</b>
I am aware of my emotions as I experience them
I know why my emotions change
I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them
<b>Regulation</b>
I have control over my emotions
I seek out activities that make me happy
<b>Social skills</b>
I like to share my emotions with others
I arrange events others enjoy
I help other people feel better when they are down
<b>Utilization of emotions</b>
When my mood changes, I see new possibilities
When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last
When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me
When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas
When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas
I use good moods to help myself keep trying in face of obstacles

Adapted from: Schutte et al. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.

### 3.3 Procedure and analysis

The data was collected in a period of two weeks at two selected schools in Melaka. Permission for the study was granted by the District Office of Education at Melaka. Questionnaires were completed anonymously and the additional data (demographical) requested were gender, race, religion, family income and years in sport.

SPSS version 20 (SPSS Inc., Chocago, IL, USA) was used to analyze data. The three different levels of physical activity (PA) groups (HAc, MAc, LAc) were the independent variables while EI was the dependent variable.

A factorial analysis of variance for independent groups was computed to determine the differences in EI scores among secondary students (male/female) participating in different levels of PA. Two (acquired for male and female) one-way ANOVA and post hoc analyses were also performed for multiple comparisons of the three different levels of PA groups on the six EQ subscales. The level of significance was set at 0.05 for all statistical analyses.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 270 subjects, 19.6% were categorized into HAc PA group, 42.9.7% as the MAcgroup, and 37.4 % into the LAc group. The descriptive data of the subjects are presented in **Table 2**.

**Table 2** Subjects divided to three levels of physical activity (PA) groups (n=248).

Group	High Active PA (HAc)		Moderate active PA (MAc)		Low active PA (LAc)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
N	40	13	74	42	47	54
Years in sports	5.3±2.5	4.7±2.3	3.9±1.3	3.5±2.3	2.8±1.7	1.9±1.8

### 4.1 Group differences in physical activity

Based on the data given from Table 2, there were more males [114 boys (45.9%)] that was in the high and moderate physical activity group compared to the female students (20.4%). Moreover, more adolescent girls were in the low active groups compared to males. Significant F of 0.824 >0.05 from the Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variance showed the data meet the assumption of equality of variance (homogeneity test). There was a significant main effects for gender on EI scores,  $F(1, 266) = 29.6$ ,  $p = 0.00$ , meaning there is a significant differences between EI and gender (males and females). Besides that, there was a significant main effects for physical activity groups on EI scores,  $F(2, 266) = 28.7$ ,  $p = 0.00$ , meaning there is a significant differences between EI and the physical activity groups (HAc, MAc, LAc). However, there was no significant interaction effects between gender and physical activity groups,  $F(2,266) = 4.9$ ,  $p = 0.1$ (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Factorial ANOVA on gender, level of PA group and EI

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Gender	639.7	1	639.7	29.6	0.00
Physical activity group	1238.5	2	619.3	28.7	0.00
Interaction	213.2	2	106.6	4.9	0.10
Error	5750.6	266	21.6		
Total	7842				

The univariate F ratios (one-way ANOVA) comparing the three PA group regard to total EQ and the six EQ subscale measures are presented in **Table 4**. As for males, there was a significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the three PA groups for the subscales of regulation, appraisal of one's own emotion and utilization of emotions; but no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) was found for the appraisal of others emotion and social skills subscale. The post hoc tests of the three PA groups were used to determine which pairs of means were significantly different. The mean subscale scores for the utilization of emotions of the HAc PA group was significantly higher than that of the MAc and the LAc groups. The mean subscale scores for the regulation of emotion, appraisal of one own emotion and appraisal of others emotion of MAc PA group was higher than the LAc group. Furthermore, the total EI scores of the HAc and MAc PA groups were both significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) than that of the LAc group.

For females however, there was a significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the three PA groups for the subscales of social skills, regulation and utilization of emotions and; but no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) was found for the appraisal of own emotion subscale. The post hoc tests of the three PA groups were used to determine which pairs of means were significantly different. The mean subscale scores for appraisal of others emotion of the HAc and MAc group was significantly higher than that of the LAc groups. Furthermore, the total EI scores of the HAc and MAc PA groups were both significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) than that of the LAc group.

**Table 4** Univariate F ratios comparing emotional intelligence (EI) of the three levels of physical activity groups between genders.

EI subscales	Mean $\pm$ SD		F		P		Post hoc
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Total EI							
HAc	87.8 $\pm$ 4.7	83.6 $\pm$ 3.6	13.45	16.69	0.004*	0.001*	HAc>MAc>LAc (male & female)
MAc	73.7 $\pm$ 14.3	76.7 $\pm$ 11.6					
LAc	66.0 $\pm$ 11.4	64.2 $\pm$ 13.4					
Appraisal of others emotions			1.66	3.73	0.08	0.03*	HAc=MAc=LAc (Male)
HAc	21.8 $\pm$ 5.4	23.9 $\pm$ 1.5					HAc=MAc>LAc (Female)
MAc	20.8 $\pm$ 3.7	20.3 $\pm$ 3.9					
LAc	18.2 $\pm$ 3.9	17.8 $\pm$ 3.6					
Appraisal of own			5.36	3.38	0.04*	0.06	HAc=MAc>LAc (Male)

emotions							
HAc	13.2±2.7	13.8±1.1					HAc=MAc=LAc (Female)
MAc	11.6±2.3	12.3±1.7					
LAc	10.2±3.9	12.2±2.1					
Regulation of emotions			8.91	9.69	0.005*	0.003*	HAc=MAc>LAc (Male)
HAc							
MAc	9.6±0.4	9.3±0.4					HAc>MAc>LAc (Female)
LAc	7.4±1.3	7.9±2.0					
	6.3±1.6	5.9±3.7					
Social Skills			1.94	3.94	0.06	0.03*	HAc=MAc=LAc (Male)
HAc	7.6±2.4	12.6±2.8					
MAc	6.7±2.7	10.4±2.3					HAc>MAc>LAc (Female)
LAc	6.5±2.9	9.3±2.6					
Utilization of emotions			4.74	5.76	0.02*	0.01*	HAc>MAc>LAc (Male)
HAc							
MAc	23.8±3.4	24.2±3.2					HAc>MAc>LAc (Female)
LAc	20.6±2.2	20.2±2.8					
	18.6±2.8	17.2±1.7					

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings of the current study provide further support on the claims that there is a positive relationship between increased levels of EI and physical activity. The current findings are in line with those of Li et al. (2009), Roxana et al. (2012), and Sklofske et al. (2007). It was found that the secondary students that had higher physical activity in a week had better total EI score and composite subscale scores. This study found that the higher the level of PA, the higher the scores for the appraisal of one own emotion and regulation of emotions which are consistent with the finding from previous studies that PA has benefit on an individual's sense of self worth and self perception (Asci, 2003). With that note, students with high levels of PA and obviously EI will benefit the most when they are able to demonstrate effective working with others in their assignments or group work, and their direct contact with lecturers. Apart from that, positive associations were also found between PA and appraisal of others emotion and PA with utilizations of emotion which are line with the studies by Biddle (2000) and Smith (2000). This means students with high self control and positive thinking, in other words, those with high control of emotions will not resort to unhealthy solutions when facing with difficulties, but on the contrary, they will proactively seek for techniques to cope with distressed situation. Several plausible mechanisms for PA effects on emotion have been identified (Carron et al, 2003; Biddle & Mutrie, 2001), include increased endorphin production following exercise (Leith, 2002), increased activity of central serotonergic system from exercise and increase of norepinephrine through exercise (Dishman, 1997).

Gender differences were also identified in this study regarding the total EI scores and composite subscale scores. In general, females scored significantly to more subscale scores than males. Moreover, females scored significantly higher than males, similarly to the findings from other studies (Ciarrochi et al., 2000; Jasovee&Jasovee, 2005) and Roxana et al. (2012). Pugh (2002) claims that 'male-female differences in

expressiveness are well established' with female demonstrate better ability to perceive and express emotions successfully. Furthermore, females seem to score higher in appraisal of others emotions, regulation of emotions and social skills. This is probably because men and women have different styles of coping especially with stressors. Men are believed to be more likely to confront a problem head-on and also are assumed to be more likely to deny a problem exist (Tamres et al., 2002). Women on the other hand are believed to exhibit a more emotional response to problems and are expected to spend more time discussing problems with friend and families (Tamres et al., 2002). Studies also show that women are more likely than men to cope with emotion-oriented behaviours and to seek social support (Stone & Neale, 1984). These stereotypes are seen through this study and maybe so it is seen true in almost all parts of the world where emotional expressiveness is the core of differences between the genders. Femininity and female roles are associated with the ability to experience, express, and communicate emotions to others, and to empathize with other' s feelings, whereas masculinity and male roles are defined as the ability to suppress and control one's emotions.

However, this study did not see any significant differences among of different physical activity levels among the females for appraisal of one's own emotion as discovered by previous study by Roxana et al. (2012). This is probably due to the instability of one's emotions among the adolescents who is still searching on their self identity. Similar to the study done by Li et al., (2009) and Roxana et al., (2012) although we found positive relationships between PA and EI, however, this does not mean that EI causes high PA. It is equally possible that good PA is the effect of good EI as the students with high EI may simply be more active and exercise driven. Hence, more research must be done to clarify this issue.

In conclusion, secondary students who were more physically active were more likely to have better EI compared to their sedentary counterparts. In relation to that, students whom had better EI were also relevantly more active than the sedentary counterparts. Thus, the importance in increasing physical activity especially in systematic routine exercise among students should be reinforced and implemented. An example that can be followed are by our Eastern counterpart inChina that carries out morning exercise everyday in schools, and the consequences for them are remarkable. Also, another way of looking at it is to implement effective emotional intelligence programs in public schools so that good exercise attitude can be fostered in their everyday lives. However, longitudinal research designs are necessary in order to explore the long-term effects of physical activity on EI and vice versa.

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# THE INVOLVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GANG AND GANGSTERISM

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## Abstract

Gang membership among juveniles has become a major issue over the past few years in the country. Hence, the aim of this study is to identify the factors that encourage youth to be involved into gangs and gangsterism. A qualitative approach using observation, open-ended interview, focus group, semi structured interview and narratives were carried out to obtain the data. The findings revealed a number of pull factors that contribute to youth involvement into gangs and gangsterism. It is recommended that a holistic approach involving parents, school and the public are important in curbing gangsterism among youth.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Gang culture and gangsterism in Malaysia is not only among the adults but it also become popular among juveniles or school students. Police records and cases that reported in media show that the involvement of youth, especially school students in gangsterism is getting worse. Criminal activities by young people are already at the alarming level and there is rising concern about personal safety. Schools are likely to be the recruiting centres for those secret societies and triads. Adolescent gang membership can be seen from the pushing and pulling factors that are viewed by individuals as rational choices.

## 2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Gang membership among juveniles has become a major issue over the past few years in the country. Gang culture is growing in the Malaysia, with increasingly young people joining gangs, often carrying imitation or real firearms and knives, both for protection and as part of their image. These youngsters mostly involve in street fights, burglary, snatching and vandalism. School students become the target group of gangs to help them in their activities such as selling drugs and assist them during their activities.

Youngsters gathering in front of the school gate during school dismiss hours is a very common scene that we could see every day. The present of these youngsters is not only to provide transport to their friends but also to assist their friends to settle some unfinished business with fellow school mates. Heat arguments and fights do occur sometime. Fight among friends is very normal at the young age but the involvement of outsiders to settle the problem is actually creating another social problem. When we try to find about the outsiders, most of them are school dropouts in. They are jobless or doing odd jobs. Most of these outsiders are seem to be members of secret societies in their area. Recruiting students is one of their activities. School students are becoming their target group. Some recent crime activities have proved the involvement of young students. A report in NST on 1 April 2009 says there is 1.5 criminal to every 1,000 students that. School students are used as dispatchers or 'runners' by secret societies. Recently a 14 years old student was arrested with two men for heroin and syabu (Source: <http://tinyurl.com/nl3ag7o> / NST Online 24 August, 2013 ). Another case was reported in very recent that a 17 years old youth killed a police man while trying to escape. (The Star, 24 September 2013)

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study is mainly focus the factors that encourage the students or youths to get involve into gangs and gangsterism. Researcher also will focus on the awareness in students about the risk being a gang member. The study was done using qualitative research method. Few techniques used in this project is that observation, open – ended interview, focus group, semi structured interview and narratives.

This study is generally discussing more about the involvement of the students in gangsterism. It's a phenomenological research. Gangsterism is a picture or a phenomena where need to have direct observation and open-ended interviews. Therefore researcher needs to obtain in depth look at particular individual, situation or set of materials. To gain some insight into these concerns, researcher might try to document or portray the experience of the youth.

A small group of samples were used. Researcher had a focus group as sample of this research. Focus group will give more data and create interesting environment to discuss ( Dr Marguerite M. Stevens, 2006). In this study, researcher used 15 samples from different background based on education, residential area, family and economy status. Samples were the students from a school in Klang district. Samples were selected based on the school discipline record, observation on physical appearances and the level of the academic achievement. In keeping with academic study ethics, researcher has provided all the respondents with pseudonyms. From this point the respondents will be addressed as A, R, V, S, J, B, N, L, M, P, C and K.

### 4. FINDINGS

The study was relied on questions that may help to explore in depth about the involvement of students or youths in gangs and gangsterism. The study was based on open questions such as:

- i. What you understand about gangs?
- ii. How did you join the gang?
- iii. What are the reasons that prompt you into joining the gang?
- iv. What you gain from the gang?
- v. What is your role in the gang?
- vi. What is the level of your involvement in gang?

#### 4.1 *The understanding about gang and gangsterism*

The understanding of gang and gangsterism is the main facts that could have encourage one to join it. The finding shows that almost every respondent knew that gang is an organization formed to take care of each other's welfare and help among them. According to respondents, they do know that the gang members go around and carry out unlawful activities to get money. The respondents also know that gangsterism is unlawful activities that the gang members carry out such as fights and robbery or familiar word in Malay *samun*. Out of 15 respondents 9 don't know further about gangsterism. They only know that they are given full protection and care. Only 6 respondents knew the impact and the risk of being a gang member. These four respondents believe that they won't go to that level. Every respondent believe that the gang won't harm them in anyway but taking care of them. They do believe that the gang is there to save them in any situation. If one becomes as a gang member, he is given full care and protection. This is the main reason for them to feel proud to join as gang member. As they do believe that the amount of money they pay as member is very little but the benefits that they get is more than what they are supposed to get.

During the focus group discussion researcher noticed that six of the respondents are very genuine and only four of them involved in gang seriously but among them only one respondent is involved in high level. Youth who are delinquent take a step higher to commit crime. But not all the youth or students who join gang have the intension to be a gangster. Instead they just want to have fun and enjoy themselves with the group of friends. Previous study prove that the ratio of students' involvement in gangsterism is 1.5 : 1000. That means only its less than 1% students are seriously moving with gangs.

## 4.2 Factors that contribute

Previous researches have shown that various factors have played an important part for the youth to divert his life path and moreover join secret societies. Family conflicts, peer group pressure, environment, social economy status, norm and culture are among the factors (Datuk Christopher Wan Soo Kee, 2005). In addition, the personality trait of an individual is also becoming a main factor that causes them to join a gang.

The finding of this study shows that the main factor for a student to join a gang is his friends. The students are introduced to a gang recruiting team by their good friends. Most of their friends are not from school but the drop outs or peer group that living in same residential area. All 15 respondents gave friends as their prime factor that encouraged them joining gang.

“N” admitted that he joined the gang because of his friends. According to him, he didn’t feel wrong. “I’m not really feel bad madam, we enjoy only. They didn’t ask us to help them in fighting. So I don’t have to feel scared. I also can’t go out most of the time. I just took opportunity when my parents are away. So it’s ok... as far as I am safe.”

Other than friends, family members such as uncles, cousins and even father became role model to encourage them join gangs.

### ❖ Family

When we talk about family, it covers various aspects such as economy status, family conflicts, size of the family, culture and norms, parenting pattern or skill and background of the family.

### ❖ Family conflict

Family conflict and domestic violence can deeply influence the development of teenagers in their attitudes towards school, relationships and even themselves. Studies have shown that adolescents from homes marked with physical abuse, verbal abuse, parental divorce, or high levels of conflict face a lack of motivation in school, lower self-esteem and run a higher risk of engaging in delinquency at an early age. Often times divorce or separation between parents can cause a teen to grow up faster, skipping their adolescence and forcing them to take on larger responsibilities (American Bar Association, 2007).

Investigation into the cause of juvenile delinquency shows that there is an association between family structure and the criminal behaviour of these minors, even when socioeconomic status is controlled. Among the 15 respondents, 3 of them are from broken family where the parents are separated. The rest are living with parents but 6 are in the family that lost harmony.

“B” is from a very poor family. His father is an alcoholic. He doesn’t show any responsibility towards family and children. “B” is the eldest child of 8 siblings. He is the sole bread winner to the family. He studied as well as doing part time job in a firm. His mother is very busy taking care of the children. He doesn’t have much time to spend for his education and socialization. When he got to know friends from gangs, he was really happy and enjoying himself with them. The irresponsible attitude of his father drove “B” to look for money illegally.

### ❖ Parenting Skill

Child psychologist Dr. Chiam Heng Keng said, children who are nurtured well are less likely to cause problems, as they would be able to manage their emotions. Parents are the main two pillars that become the strength of a family. They are the role models for their children. Parents who fail to draw the right guideline to their children also fail to produce good citizen to the nation.

The findings from the focus group discussion indicates that 6 of them have parents who are likely understand their needs and 5 respondents expressed their dissatisfactory feeling towards their parents restriction and 4 more students feel that their parents not really bother about their activities with

friends and gave them all the freedom to move around. The parenting skill also can cause a negative impact towards children's behaviour.

"V" is a child from strict family. His parents are very much taking care about him until don't allow him to mix around with anyone unnecessarily. "V" as an adolescent, he wishes to enjoy himself being with friends.

"V" noticed his neighbour who is a youth too, always going out with his friends and rides motorbike. This has created interest in him to join the neighbour. When he approached the neighbour, he was welcomed. "V" started going out with the neighbour when his parents are away. Slowly "V" was influenced and joining the gang and had many friends.

Since his parents are strict, he can't find more time to go out with the gang members. So he truant the classes and join the friends. According to Jolin and Gibbons; Hagan et al. (1993), children from better family background too can get involve in gang if they are approached by friends and they feel loneliness.

#### ❖ **Status of Social Economy**

All my respondents are from the rural area. Most of their parents are working in factories as lorry drivers. Some are doing own transportation business in small skill. Form the 15 respondents only 6 from good income family, 5 from average group of income and 3 from single parent family with low income and 1 from extreme poor family. During the discussion many of them didn't agree finance is their main reason to join the gang. But only one respondent "B" admitted that he joined gang to enjoy good food and get money.

#### ❖ **Size of family**

The size of family is also became one of the reasons why youngsters join gangs. The main intention is not to carry out crime activities but it's only to get attention. "The size of the families of delinquent boys as judged from the number of children in their families has generally been considered by social workers as a factor meriting consideration from the point of view of delinquency causation" (John Slawson, 1925). 3 of the respondents are from big family with siblings more than 6. And mainly they live in a 2 room flats. According to the respondents those are from big family, they don't feel comfortable to stay with family so they seek for friends and spend more hours at night with them. This situation gave more chances for these boys to get involved in gangs.

#### ❖ **Poor Family Tie, Norms and Value**

Family culture, norms and values are playing important role in nurturing a child. When a family fail to teach the child about the culture, norms and value, the chances for a child to get spoil and divert the path is very bright. From the discussion, it was a big shock to know that 6 of the respondents not aware about their family values and norms. 9 respondents are quite clear about their family culture and norms. These respondents are lack of religious knowledge too. They are no such a thing of being in family, attend religious function and so on.

#### ❖ **Environment**

Environment is define as the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates. For children, their immediate environment is living area where they reside and school, an organization where they learn socialization beside gaining knowledge. These 2 environments play important role in nurturing the youths. One's personal development is closely associates with the environment. Yet, these two factors are the most important elements in the life of a youth after family.

#### ❖ **Residential Area**

Finding shows that 9 of the respondents are living in flats with two rooms and 6 of them are living in single storey terrace houses. If look into their living area, it's surrounded by residents with low income and middle income. Most of the parents who live here are earning by doing double job and earning from long hours hard work.

Parents who live in poor housing or have none, who are worried about their next meal, and who feel lack of control over their lives are likely to be anxious, depressed, and irritable. Their distress leads them to be less affectionate with, and less supportive of, their children. They discipline inconsistently and arbitrarily, with physical punishment and authoritarian commands rather than explaining, reasoning, and negotiating. They only pay attention to misbehaviour and not the good behaviour of their children. Their children in turn have social, emotional and behaviour problems (Diane E. Papalia, Sally Wendkos Olds, 1998).

#### ❖ **School**

School is the second home for every student. School is the basic foundation of knowledge being imparted to a child. It gives a chance to children to acquire knowledge on various fields of education. By obtaining knowledge, a person is in a better position to help other people.

Yet not every child is doing well in academic. Those children need special attention and guidance from the teachers and fellow friends. But this is the area where educators and school admin face problem.

The school plays an important role in helping children learn to interact positively with their peers and teachers. They learn about healthy relationship skills and develop them further through interactions, both in the classroom and on the playground. According to Shere, "The emotional and social maturity of a child provides the important underpinnings for child development in all other areas. When teachers and the school as whole ignore children's emotional and social development, this can often lead to adults who are very academically gifted but who struggle in their daily lives due to lack of self-esteem and / or social skills.

In some cases the school students' are ignored. In the formal education, teachers are responsible to educate their students', but they also need face students who can't, don't, or won't even try to learn, cooperate, follow procedures, or behave. The frustration and irritating feeling towards these types of students, some time causes more teachers fail to do their duty. Therefore, the teacher also must competences to deal with their students' misbehaviour. Most research studied students' misbehaviour state that relationship between teacher beliefs and competence with students' behaviour (Ulerick & Tobin 1989; Brophy, 1988; Doyle, 1986 as cited in Weinstein, 1996). Furthermore, a recent survey found that "disruptive student behaviour to be a major learning inhibitor (Seidman, 2005).

Respondents during focus group discussion expressed their feeling about the way they are treated in classrooms. The respondents are poor in academic achievement. Therefore they are not popular among the teachers but they are popular in notorious behaviour and truancy. So some teachers (not all) are not interested to waste their time with these kids in the classroom.

Every respondent agree that they are labelled as lazy and good for nothing. Even some teachers go a level higher and labelled the students as gangster. The teachers are more interested in asking them either sleep in the class. In fact there are some teachers who just ask the particular students to leave the classroom before they start the lesson. So mostly, respondents start to truant the class during the particular teacher or school as overall. Truancy is another major factor that leads students to join the wrong people.

Even though there are many intervention programmes organized by schools yet these students are not interested to take part even in the sport event. Sometime teachers' hatred towards the attitude of these students makes them not even take part in sports too. But most of the teachers who really understand them, will give them chance to maximum level. Yet the sport alone is not enough to get the children to the right tracks.

### ❖ **Peer group**

The feeling of belonging and social acceptance is very strong at this stage of development. This is why peer influence plays a huge part in steering the experiences and interest of teenagers. Peer pressure has both positive and negative connotations. Peer pressure can generate good, as well as bad habits.

As we already discuss earlier, the finding shows the most important factor for a student to join gang is their peer group and close friends too. To be a member of a peer group is the primary goal of most teenagers during adolescence. Therefore students are influenced by friends those are involved with gangsters in and outside school. In certain cases, the peer pressure forced the students to go along the recruitment by members of secret societies.

### ❖ **Protection**

Respondents “A”, “S”, “J” and “R” s’ cases, it’s different from “V” and “N”. Researcher generalized their experience causes it’s almost same. These respondents share their experience during the first year in secondary school. When they were new to the school, they were always bullied by senior students. They also seem to be very small size then. The physical appearance had encouraged senior students to take advantage on them. For future delinquents, this first experience pushes them further down the spiral toward delinquency and crime (James D. Roff, 1998).

These respondents were very fear and sought for help from other seniors who were in good term with them. Among the seniors, some had recruited these boys to join their gang. These poor boys, who are actually seeking for protection, immediately accepted the offer without realizing the risk. This happened when they were in Form 1 or in Remove class. Slowly when they grew and realized about the risk of being in gangsterism, they decided to keep distance.

### ❖ **Personality Trait (self)**

Instead of external factors that contribute to the delinquency and misbehaviour of an adolescent, the personality trait itself plays important roles. During the focus group discussion, researcher able to notice lack of self- confidence and low self - esteem in everyone. They feel, they are good for nothing. According to respondent “L”, what can we do madam...teachers don’t like us. Anything that we do becomes wrong from their point of view. So it’s better not to try..”.

In another conversation, researcher can notice that the students are very weak and poor in managing themselves. Their attire, hair style, shoe and the way they carry themselves also gave very low impression to others. Moreover they are not performing well in academic, made them low profile among the others. This situation allows some naughty kids to take advantage on them. This situation gave room for the secret societies grab the opportunity to recruit them into their gang.

### ❖ **Poor Internal Locus of Control**

Locus of control in social psychology refers to the extent to which individuals believe that they can control events that affect them. Individuals with an internal locus of control view events as resulting from their own actions. Persons with an external locus of control view events as being under the control of external factors such as luck (Marsh & Weary, 1995).

The development of locus of control is associated with family style and resources, cultural stability and experiences with effort leading to reward. Poor locus of control becomes the major serious personality when a student fails to control himself from getting influence by his environment. Schultz and Schultz (2005), also claim that children in families where parents have been supportive and consistent in discipline develop internal locus of control.

In this study, the respondents reflect poor internal locus of control. They were unable to avoid the wrong but just accept it and blame that it was from the external fact. Respondents fail to realize that they are the actual reason and fact for their attitude and misbehaviour.

### ❖ **Macho Values**

According to "J", he wishes to be a hero. So he feels if he joins the gang, the chances are there to show his heroism. When researcher confronted him whether he wished to fight and take *parang*, "J" said that he won't go to that level but just like to ride a bike and show his heroism to the folks in his area.

Some boys especially are in the middle of seeking identification of their macho values. They wish others to look at them and say "wow..." so joining a gang and roaming around with a bike may create such a situation which can make them feel very proud of themselves.

"K" is well known in school for fighting. He always will be the first person to be at the scene where a fight starts. It's not a matter whether it's his problem or others' problem but he makes sure to be there.

During the focus group discussion he revealed that he feels that he is great enough to handle the cases on his own. He doesn't need any help or favour from any one. He is willing to help those who need his assistance. When researcher questioned him, "you are so interested in fighting, are there any chances for you to go further to a higher level in a gang?" he answered, "it's more risky. So I may not go to a higher level of gangsterism. He feels all that is not needed. Don't want to lose life just like that. He only wishes to be popular among his female friends.

### ❖ **Poor anger management**

Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy, human emotion. If it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to many problems. Charles Spielberger, PhD, a psychologist who specializes in the study of anger, defined anger as "an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage." Anger can be caused by both external and internal events. People who are easily angered come from families that are disruptive, chaotic, and not skilled at emotional communications.

Almost every respondent agrees with researcher that they can't control their anger when someone confronts them. It's very difficult to say sorry and keep quiet. They take drastic decisions to attack the person who causes the problem.

There is more than one factor that contributed to cause a student or a youth to choose a wrong path in his life. In some cases youths have more than one factor to involve and insist on carrying out crime activities.

#### *4.3 The pulling factors*

The focus group also discussed the pulling factors from the gang or secret societies which really attract them to be a member. According to the respondents, the members in the gang are very nice and attentive. They take immediate action to solve their problem with the others especially school mates who create problems for the students.

The relationship within the gang members is also very close. They are very helpful too. They have money most of the time. Any financial problem, the members are there to help the students. When researcher asked about the role of the students in the gang, the answer is none of the crime activity. The young members are not given any difficult or dangerous task in the gang. They are always invited for free food treats. They just pay their monthly subscription and can join gang social occasions and enjoy themselves. The youths like the companion of the senior gang member because they are given good care.

Adolescents who are not happy with the family always look for a space to relieve their depression, and the secret societies knew the fact and take care of the youths very well. They do offer financial support to those boys. Since there is no any dangerous task to complete and enjoyment is just around the corner, they make the youths choose to be members in gangs. The gang members who recruit them will give many promises and take care of their welfare. The differences within the family and the gangs make the children stay in gangs as passive members.



Yet there are some youths who really need more than what they can gain from the gang, willing to get involve into dangerous activities such as break in, car hijacks, snatching, street fighting and robberies. The statistics revealed in 2008 shows that the ratio of the adolescents involve seriously in unlawful activities is 1.5:1000. The study also proved that. Out of 15 respondents, 9 of them are just an ordinary member who doesn't involve in any of the unlawful activities but only pay monthly subscription and enjoy the companion. 5 of them just give moral support during any fight in school or in their residential area. Only 1 respondent admitted that he had involved seriously in gangsterism activities.

According to him, his family need protection, his family needs financial support therefore he chose to be a gang member so the others will scare of him. He also don't mind go to prison as far his family live happily.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Adolescents that commit delinquent act usually do with the company of friends. However children do not easily fall with the influence of peer group. They seek out their friends when rejection takes place. The rejection can be from their friends, neighbours or the family itself. They accept overtures of others which can be wrong group that can lead to wrong path.

Adolescence is an exciting time for everyone yet it is also full of risk. Adolescents are in the confusion stage. They are in the mid of seeking identity of themselves. The search for identity comes into focus during the teenage. According to Erik Erikson (1950), adolescents form their identity not by modelling themselves after other people but by modifying and synthesizing earlier identifications into a new psychological structure, greater than the sum of its parts (Kroger, 1993,p.3). It's family and schools' responsibility to make the child understand and realize the truth.

During a childhood, a child learns good behaviour from his role model as his parent, teacher or close people. As he grows, he will upgrade himself by modifying the character that he already had earlier. The teenage years are also known as time of adolescent rebellion, involving emotional turmoil, conflict within the family, alienation from adult society, and hostility towards adults' values.

Antisocial behaviour at adolescent is closely related to parents' inability to keep track on their children's activity. During the focus group discussion, none of the respondent expressed good comment or feeling about their parents. Everyone has something uncomfortable feeling about their parent. 3 respondents blame their parent for being very strict, 6 complained about the irresponsibility of their parent. Another 6 expressed dissatisfaction about the family as whole. Lack of love, and care are the main reason that the respondents gave about their family especially parent. This situation leads an adolescent to feel that his friends are the best in their life. Friends will do anything for them. Friends are the best partner to share and guide them.

To build a good character in an adolescent, family and school need to play very important role. Good guidance and exposure assists a child to keep in mind. As the child grows to adolescent age, the role of parent has to change from parenthood to a mentor who can guide and help him to realize himself. A parent's love is also vital for building a child's healthy self-esteem. Coopersmith (1967) found that high self-esteem children have an easier time making friends and are also better able to stand by their own judgments. Love builds a bond between a parent and child. We are most influenced by those persons we are emotionally connected to. Values are best transmitted, in the home as in the classroom, through a warm and caring relationship (Tom Lickona, 1998).

Family is the first organization in one's life to produce a good individual. The role of family is very important. A child spends most his time and with the family. A good role model should come from family. Parents are the first teacher to every child. So a good relationship between parents and children helps a lot to produce a good behaviour individual.

Children at genetic risk, whose biological parents antisocial or alcoholic or both are more likely to become chronic delinquents if exposed to family conflict at the early age (Diane E. Papalia, Sally Wendkos Olds, 1998).

This is confirmed by respondent B. Unlike the other boys, respondent “B” is quiet and more serious in the discussion but he didn’t talk much. Researcher observed this and decided to have an interview with him to know in depth about his experience. “B” is a very honest and he was truth full to researcher. During the interview he told about his family and how he was involved in gangsterism. He also admitted the level of his involvement in the gang activities.

When “B” was bullied by some seniors and people in his working place, he decided to seek for help. He wishes to protect his siblings. So he joined the gang. Since he needs more money to feed his siblings, he took the offers to carry out more criminal activities such as burglary, car theft, snatch and so on. He is happy with his activities. When confronted by researcher about the risk and the dangerous to the family, he feels its ok because the gang members will take care of the family. That’s one of the promises they have made.

Perhaps what “B” is doing is wrong generally but as a responsible child and a brother researcher feels he is doing this for some good reason. In morale value it’s very difficult for us to justify him. His case is something like “Heinz Dilemma” stated in Lawrence Kohlberg’s social learning theory (Moral Development Stages).

In “B” s case, family plays important role for him to be a gangster at the very young age. And he also agreed that he may not come out from the gang because he feels that his family is fully secured now. “B” is just coming to school to complete his basic education. Most of the time, he will skip the classes and also school.

The school is playing very important role in developing an individual’s personality and behaviour. In some condition, teachers themselves are the factor for the students’ misbehaviour. Many teachers enter this profession as the last choice and they don’t have pure interest in teaching (K.Shoba a/p C. Karuppaya, 2007:39-40). Whether their students well behave or not, that is not important for them. Moreover, there are some teachers that don’t prevent the misbehaviour because they want be popular among the student. Besides, Kyriacou, 1997, (as cited in Mulholland, 2003: 880) claim that it is difficult for beginning teacher not only to apply theory into practice but also to develop new perspective. A teacher must be able to determine the appropriate method or strategy in handle different students with different abilities. According to Mackler (2005: 2) “a false assumption that there is theory-pure, untainted and rationally perfect-and there is life-messy, unpredictable, and in need of repair.” However, that false assumption has to overturn. Teachers have to use their creativeness to shape the wonderful theory into practice.

Teachers in the classrooms are very keen to complete the syllabus and get students prepare for the exam. The exam result and the grade the school obtain become most important. Even though Moral Education and Islamic religious classes are going on yet children and teachers are looking into that both subjects as exam subjects that need to be scored in major examination.

Teachers are under the pressure to produce better result. The pressure is transferred to children’s shoulder. There is no social interaction between teachers and students which may allow children to be close with teachers.

Teachers and school administration has higher responsibility to produce children with good behaviour and minimise the level of children with problematic attitude. Teachers need to develop personal approaches in the classrooms with good listening skill and emphatic value.

Building good teacher-student relationship will assist teacher to cope with students’ misbehaviour. The study has proved that wrong assumption of teachers on students and lack of empathic value are the reasons for students to skip the classes. Students with misbehaviour problems need help seeing

themselves in new and different ways, and with renewed hope and possibilities. School counsellors are there to help yet the role of teachers also need to be there.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

There are several approaches and ways can be followed to prevent the adolescents' especially secondary school students from joining the gang.

### **❖ Parent / family**

Parent as the leaders of the family, should understand their children and their needs. They should avoid family conflict or handle the conflict in the right manner so that children don't get messed up in the situation. Conflict in a family can drop the hope of a child from the family. Parent should recall and evaluate themselves and change their parenting skill by understanding the children. Parenting skill as autocratic where parents give freedom to children in certain situation and carry out their duty as parent in the situation where it is needed. They apply restriction in certain place. Children also need to know the parents' pattern to nurture them. Family values and norm need to be stated very clear to the children and make sure parent also follow apply them in their life. Pay more attention to child's welfare and needs. Parents and other family members need to be good observant towards children's socialization.

### **❖ Environment (school)**

School as second home to adolescents, need to play its role to prevent the students from getting influence by the peer group and join gangs and other unlawful activities. Teachers need to understand the children and their background before they start teaching them. This should be done in very early of the academic year. Once the class is given to a teacher, he or she must gather all the information and data of the children in the class. Getting knows the family background and understanding a child's situation is the root to shape him. The early detection can be a good foundation to gain the trust of the child towards school and teachers.

Teachers as whole must apply tolerance and acceptance skills during teaching process. Labelling is not the right to address a student. Teachers also need apply Apply emphatic and listening skill during teaching and learning. Individual attention to needed students will change the environment totally. Children especially adolescents need recognition for what they have done. The school as organization need to address the problematic students and give a task to prove their ability. According to Dr. Howard Gardner, every child has more than one talent. Teachers need to take early step to identify and encourage the child to upgrade his ability. Recognition in the form of certificate, rewards, or praise are very important component to nurture adolescents.

## **7. PREVENTION – COLLABORATIVE ACTION**

- ❖ Students, school authorities, parents and member of the public need to play an important role to protect students from being recruited by secret societies.
- ❖ Members of public must cooperate and provide information on students who are involved in unhealthy activities such as gangsterism or other undesirable activities.
- ❖ Parents and guardians must report to the school and police in the event their family members are known to be involve in undesirable activities such as gangsterism.
- ❖ Victims of gangstersim must be encouraged to come forward and report their experience with the gangsters to the school authority and police.
- ❖ Parents and guardian to provide undivided support for all action taken by the school and police to eradicate gangsterism on which their families are involved.
- ❖ Students must restrain from associating with non- students whose character is questionable or with known criminal intention.
- ❖ Students must keep themselves occupied with activities benefiting themselves and society such as sports, social service during their free time.

As a whole, building a good character in an individual, especially a child does not only rely on parent or teacher but it is a collaborative method where everyone need to understand their role and play it properly with only one reason to help the child from being a criminal in future. Planning and programming provide the framework to prevent wrong behaviour and should take into consideration the skills of school staff members who must work with families and students to create a peaceful school community.

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# A STUDY ON REPRESENTATIONS OF SEXUALITY IN HONG KONG YOUTH CINEMA AND TAIWANESE YOUTH CINEMA

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## Abstract

This study offers an analysis of Hong Kong youngster's sexual morality depicted in HeiwardMak's *High Noon* (2008). The Hong Kong International Film Festival (2008) comments *High Noon* "represents the yearning for youthfulness in the cruel environment" (literally translated). The authors, in the analysis of *High Noon*, argues that moral value depicted in the film exactly reflects the risk of such value system, as the survey conducted by the authors shows a negative trend. The authors, in the comparison of *High Noon* and the Taiwanese youth film *Winds of September* (directed by Lin Shu-Yu in 2008), also argues that both of them feature a group of adolescents who struggle to overcome their own problems without their parents around as if they do not wish to be committed to any laws or rules that govern them. That both films treat the representations of sex and sexuality with a kind of relative openness and truthfulness, as well as some differences, are discussed in this study.

**Keywords:** *sexual ethics, youth cinema, representations of sexuality, Taiwanese film, Hong Kong film*

## 1. BACKGROUND

This part of the chapter compares and contrasts the Hong Kong youth film, *Lie Ri Dang Kong/High Noon* (directed by HeiwardMak in 2008), and the Taiwanese youth film, *Jiu Jiang Feng/Winds of September* (directed by Lin Shu-Yu in 2008), in terms of youth culture, sexual representations, and social changes, showing that the structure of the two Chinese communities may share similar phenomena under specific social conditions. The underlying argument is that although these two regions are governed by independent sovereignty, there are major changes that can unsettle both social systems in similar ways. The youths in the Hong Kong and Taiwanese youth films, living in different social system, can be seen as struggling generally against established norms, although what they attack in terms of specifics are not same. This part concludes by suggesting that these parallels and distinctions indicate that the Chinese youths depicted in Hong Kong and Taiwanese youth films, in different regions and different cultures, or even in parallel social situations, share broadly similar behaviour and attitudes to mainstream values.

Before looking at parallels and differences between the Hong Kong and Taiwanese youth films, some social and economic factors will be examined for understanding the climate in which these films are produced. Physical distance between Hong Kong and Taiwan is 808.82 kilometers, and the two societies survive under somewhat similar social and cultural trends.

First, Mainland China plays specific roles in the relations between Hong Kong and Taiwan. And significantly, the sense of national identity among Hong Kong and Taiwan citizens seem separate from the Chinese identity. Many scholars have discussed the history of Hong Kong from their perspectives. John M. Carroll (2005) considers that the studies of Hong Kong history stress the Chineseness of this former colony, especially since Hong Kong became a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China in 1997. The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, or simply Hong Kong Basic Law, states that 'Hong Kong would continue its previous capitalist system and' its 'way of life for a period of 50 years after 1997' (Loh, 2011). Hong Kong has been arguably the most important place in China for

more than 150 years; it has been such an important place because it was politically not part of China for most of those years (Carroll, 2005). However, according to a poll(2012), only 17% Hong Kong citizens consider themselves as citizens of the People's Republic of China. The authors interview some Hong Kong citizens in 2012. One (age 39) of the interviewees, living at North Point, Hong Kong Island, complains about the problems the Mainland China citizens bring to Hong Kong, such as the competition for jobs and the rise in prices.

Politically, Taiwan is not considered as a part of China. The Republic of China administration now governs the island of Taiwan; it is not the same administration as Mainland China. Gary Marvin Davison mentioned a few 'rules' in his *A Short History of Taiwan: The Case for Independence* (2003): Dutch Colonial Rule (1624-61), Zheng Family Rule (1661-83), Qing Dynasty Rule (1684-1895), Japanese Colonial Rule (1895-1945), Guomindang Rule (1945-2000) and Taiwanese rule in the year 2000 and beyond. He also points out that the political fate of Taiwan should indeed be a matter for the Taiwanese people to decide. He states that the Taiwanese people may ultimately agree to a formula for unification with a mainland government, but Taiwanese society has not been under the political control of any regime simultaneously exercising power over all of Mainland China since 1895. The survey revealed by *TVBS* (a television station in Taiwan) news programme in 2008 indicates that 18% of Taiwanese citizens consider themselves as 'Chinese' (ZhongGuoRen) if it is an either-or situation, and only 4% of Taiwanese consider themselves as 'Chinese' when given an option; where more than one answer is allowed, 45% of them choose both 'Taiwanese' (Taiwan Ren) and 'Chinese' (ZhongGuoRen) as their choices. The other survey conducted in 2011 shows that 4.1% of the Taiwanese consider themselves as 'Chinese' (ZhongGuoRen) (2012). Zhang ZhongYa, a professor of the National Chengchi University (Taiwan) considers that the principal cause of this phenomenon is education. The authors also interview some Taiwanese youngsters in Taipei in 2011. One (age 26) of the interviewees mentions the History of Taiwan, the History of China, and the World History are parallel in their courses, and he says 'Taiwanese is not Chinese'.

Second, Hong Kong and Taiwan societies experience an increase in economic relations with Mainland China. The corporations are involved in the making of films. On June 19, 2010, representatives of China and Taiwan signed an Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) in Chongqing, China (Rosen and Wang, 2011). The significance of the ECFA is more than economic. Rosen and Wang (2011) conclude that 'whatever policy initiative is begun to deepen cross-strait economic relations will not mark the resolution of the six decades of history that have defined China-Taiwan-US relations so much as it will mark the beginning of the most dramatic decade of that evolution'. Interestingly, the authors find the China-Taiwan cooperation films released in 2012 achieved box office success: *Lian Ai Tong Gao/Love in Disguise* (directed by Leehom Wang), *Jin ZaiZhi Chi/Close to You* (directed by Hsiao-tse Cheng), *Shi Xi Da Ming Xing/Rock on* (directed by Lawrence Lau Kwok-cheong) and *Jian Yu/Reign of Assassins* (directed by Chao Pin Su).

According to Richard Wong (2002), Hong Kong currently intermediates about 40 percent of China's external trade. As manufacturing moved across the border, Hong Kong gravitated toward intermediation, and its re-exports trade, almost all related to the Mainland of China, is now larger than its GDP at 110 percent. Also, the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) is a free trade agreement between Mainland China and Hong Kong that offers Hong Kong products, companies and residents preferential access to the Mainland market. The implementation of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) between the mainland and Hong Kong has ushered in an era of win-win cooperation between film and TV industries of Hong Kong and the mainland (2007).

In these social, cultural and institutional contexts, youth films surfaced in Hong Kong and Taiwanese societies. On the Hong Kong side, partly drawing on the idea of melodrama cinema (Wen Yi Pian) and partly following the trend within the Hong Kong film industry for 'resources reorganization (Dian Ying Zi Yuan Chong Zu), drawing support from the development of new media industry (Jie Zhu Xin Mei Ti Gong Ye De Fa Zhan), transformation from artist management to film production (Yan Yi Gong Si Xiang Dian Ying Gong Ye Zhuan Xing), interaction of film industry of the mainland (Yu Nei Di Dian Ying Gong Ye Hu Dong), and producing the blockbuster that

audiences around the world may follow (QuanQiu Hua Da Pian Lu Xian)' (Zhao, 2007), Zhao Wei Qiang concludes the models for film production and distribution in Hong Kong. Zhao has defined the years 1979 to 1993 as a boom period for Hong Kong film industry, due to the sense of nativeness strongly embodied within psychosocial factors depicted in the filmic texts. Some people use 'flourishing age' to delimit. Over the period between 1994 and 2010, some young filmmakers contribute significantly to the youth cinema with such products as *Qing Chun Meng Gong Chang/A.V.* (directed by Ho-Cheung Pang in 2005), *ZaoShu/2 Young* (directed by Tung-Shing Yee in 2005), *Ba NianJi/b420* (directed by Tang Hon-Keung in 2005) and *High Noon* (2008). Similarly, these films featuring youths living in the city swarmed into the Taiwanese youth cinema, over the past two decades.

## **2. THE SYNOPSIS: WINDS OF SEPTEMBER (DIRECTED BY LIN SHU-YU, 2008)**

*Winds of September* depicts the 1990s Taiwanese high school boys and their life. There are seven of them. Baseball is a favourite sport and these high school boys are supporting *Shi BaoYing* team (China Time Eagles Team). Most of the time the seven boys smoke together, climb up the school's roof to eat their lunch together; after school they meet up around the tree to chat; watch baseball matches; swimming nude in the school's swimming pool at midnight and secretly drinking the pool keeper's beer. These youngsters always have different ways to have fun. *Ah Yen* (played by Rhydian Vaghan) is the undeclared leader among the seven boys. He is very charismatic; however he is a person of few words. He wins love of many but does not know the proper way to love. Although *Xiao Yun* is his girlfriend, she is not happy at all and instead of *Ah Yen*, she often finds *Xiao Tang* for tuition. When *Xiao Yun* finally decides to break up with *Ah Yen*, she writes him a letter and hands it to him through *Xiao Tang* (played by Chang Chea) after the six boys watched another baseball match. *Ah Yen* asks *Xiao Tang* to keep the letter without reading. That night, after the match, the gang rides their motorcycles and speeds through the roads. *Ah Yen* asks *Xiao Tang* to turn left for going to a telephone stall by the road and during that split second he loses control, and unfortunately they crash into a car. *Ah Yen* falls onto the ground and is unconscious for a while. When he finally awakes, he makes the decision of not going to the hospital since all of them do not have license and choose to just go home and rest. Everyone follows his lead and goes to his house. Seeing no abnormal behaviour, they believe that he is fine and are as rowdy as usual, drinking and gaming. They agree upon waking *Ah Yen* up every thirty minutes because *Ah Han* once heard that one cannot sleep immediately after a concussion or they might never wake up again. However, by the time it reaches four o'clock in the morning, they are all asleep. *Ah Yen* never wakes up again.

The group of friends that fooled around together is suddenly forced to face up to the cruelty of life. The hidden unhappiness with each other starts to surface and reaches its highlight when the motorcycle incident occurred. *Bo Zhu* lends his stolen motorbike to *Ah Sheng* and the police catch him. *Bo Zhu* is scared of expulsion and unwilling to face up to his own mistakes. *Ah Xing* who is big on loyalty stands up for *Ah Sheng* and admitted to the crime. The two end up being expelled together. *Xiao Tang* keeps trying to resolve the conflicts between everyone. He wants to return to the past, when there is trust and laughter actually. He thinks that he can but his attempts only result in criticism. Some blame him for being nosy while some even dig up past issues since he is the last one scheduled to wake up *Ah Yen* but yet he falls asleep himself; their friendship becomes something of the past and even when they meet on the streets, they only greet each other with a thin smile; some even stop all interactions. On the day of graduation, all the past memories float in *Xiao Tang's* mind and wearing his uniform, he chooses not to attend graduation but takes the train down to Pin Dong alone, to find the baseball court where they once cheer together for the *Shi Bao Ying* Team that is now involved in a case of setting up games for gamblers.

## **3. THE SYNOPSIS: HIGH NOON (DIRECTED BY HEIWARD MAK 2008)**

The story of the film *High Noon* is set in Hong Kong in 2007 before the Beijing 2008 Olympics. It focuses on a group of teenage boys and girls who will have the Hong Kong Certificate of Education

Examination (HKCEE)<sup>1</sup>. There are nine of them. They are having the unique experience of transition from children to adults, but only the blank, resentful stare of incomprehension can be seen in their eyes. There are a number of absurd events filling up the frame: the boys shoot their fighting video with a mobile phone, but accidentally break the glass bulletin board at school; *Addie* (played by Shan Ka Ki) copies a sex video from *Smoothie* (played by Rex Wu)'s mobile phone to his own phone when *Smoothie* is unaware of it – it actually is *Smoothie*'s private video of having sex with a girl, *Lolita*, (played by Claudia); *Addie* shows the sex video to the other boys, but accidentally transfers the sex video to many others by wrongly clicking 'group MMS'. *Smoothie*'s other girlfriend also receives the video while they are having foreplay. He is kicked out of her home. The relationship among the teenagers is changed. Their friendship is challenged in ways none ever expected.

*Soy Sauce* (played by Jeremy Lin) always acts as the leader among the seven boys, but one day he is found to have an STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease) by the other boys when he pees in the toilet. *Soy Sauce* tails after his girlfriend (played by Venus Wong) in the street but he witnesses that she is doing 'Enjo-kōsai'<sup>2</sup> (Yuan Jiao) with a man. That is how he got the STD. *Lo Wing* (played by Lam Yin Sing) does not have a peaceful interconnection with his family, there is only fighting and arguing. His father marries a mainlander woman who brings a kid to this family. The way *Lo Wing* vents his resentment is to smash his wardrobe. *Addie* has a rich background, but his busy mother always leaves him home alone. He is addicted to drugs. *Sticky Dick* (played by Chan Yin Wing) is a fat boy. He always works by the seaside after school, and his job is to open oysters. *Nerd* (played by Huen Tin Yeung) is the only boy who wears spectacles. He has a lot of continuation classes to attend after school. Unfortunately, he is killed after a fight between their gang and a street gang during the Beijing 2008 Olympics opening ceremony countdown held at a square of Hong Kong. *Lo Wing*'s right eye is hurt in the fight. The next morning, *Lo Wing* reads the news in the newspaper that *Lolita* committed suicide because many people viewed her sex video.

After HKCEE, *Soy Sauce* works at a convenience store. One night, a street gang comes to his store. He recognizes that they are the ones who hit them and killed *Nerd*. He cannot control his anger until they leave the store. He takes off the uniform and takes ironware that he plans to use to hit them. But before he walks out, this street gang is seriously beaten by another group of people. A little boy's hand is cut off in front of *Soy Sauce*. The screaming of the little boy and *Soy Sauce*'s shaking is framed together. The film closes with the scene of *Lo Wing*'s job interview.

#### 4. YOUNG PEOPLE'S SEXUAL ETHICS EXEMPLIFIED IN HIGH NOON

The sex video depicted in *High Noon*, which ultimately 'kills' a schoolgirl, generally connects sexual pleasure and tragic vision, through the students' irresponsible, hypocritical behaviour depicted in this film; it also proclaims the status of moral values among the youths in reality, as a survey<sup>3</sup> (margin of error:  $1/\sqrt{200}=0.071$ ) shows that 62.30% of Hong Kong adolescents and young adults (below age 40) consider shooting/transferring sexual videos on their own mobile devices as satisfying their sexual pleasure, although only 24.59% of the total interviewees actually do so. In *High Noon*, the two characters in the sex video are both high school students — *Smoothie* and *Lolita*. The process of having sex is not seen in the film but the sound of making love is clearly presented. The sexual video scandal exposes the two youths' privacies, but those student viewers just watch and spread it to a huge audience in a short time and even treat it as a joke. In a sequence of the virtual space that symbolizes

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<sup>1</sup> The Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) was a public examination for students who had completed a full-time five-year secondary school course. With the introduction of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination, the HKCEE is discontinued from 2012.

<sup>2</sup> It is a practice which originated in Japan where older men give money and/or luxury gifts to attractive women for their companionship and, possibly, for sexual favors. The female participants range from primarily school-aged girls to housewives. A common misconception is that enjo-kōsai always involves some form of sexual activity. The practice is becoming more acceptable among Hong Kong teenage girls, who do not think enjo-kōsai is a kind of prostitution. Some believe it is different because it does not involve sexual intercourse and they can choose their clients, who range from teenage boys to married men. Some even think they are helping others.

<sup>3</sup> Conducted by the author Wang Changson, in the region of Hong Kong in 2012.



the wireless communication among the six boys, they discuss whose fault it is for this matter but conclude it is a fault of the video maker. The content of their conversations (see *Dialogue 1*) shows irresponsibility, such as “the source is the one who filmed it”.

## DIALOGUE 1

<i>Addie:</i>	It's Soy Sauce who initiated the forwarding.
<i>Chip:</i>	You are there too.
<i>Sticky Dick:</i>	I just sent to my friends. Lo Wing pressed the wrong button.
<i>Chip:</i>	Even if he did not press the wrong button, you guys would still have forwarded that out.
<i>Addie:</i>	But not to my mom.
<i>Chip:</i>	If you hadn't copied it to your mobile, we would not have had the chance to forward that out.
<i>Addie:</i>	If he hadn't shot the video, how could I have it? So the source is the one who filmed it.
<i>Nerd:</i>	Are you Kira?
<i>Sticky Dick:</i>	I am Misa.
<i>Addie:</i>	Then I'm L. In fact we cannot see his face in it. No one recognizes him.
<i>Chip:</i>	But the people who know him would recognize his voice.
<i>Addie:</i>	He loves to show off. Even if we hadn't forwarded the video, he would eventually take his cell phone to mend it.
<i>Chip:</i>	Maybe he just wanted to share with his friends. But not the net friends.
<i>Addie:</i>	What's the difference? You ask me, I ask the tree?
<i>Lo Wing:</i>	What the hell, tree?
<i>All of the five boys:</i>	Damn! It makes my head scratchy...
<i>Soy Sauce:</i>	He will be in the headlines for a few days. It'll be okay a few days later.
<i>Chip:</i>	But, should we let Smoothie knows first?
<i>Addie:</i>	He must already know it by now. Basically, I saved all my contacts in my phone.
<i>Nerd:</i>	... We should shoot a video to apologize for this.
<i>Addie:</i>	And ask all the press to delete everything. ... (Phone ringing, the frame is shaking and the boys disappear one by one)

The joke did not obscure the underlying seriousness of the event depicted in this film. On one hand, the tragic end of the girl-figure in the sex video makes the youths aware of the connection between sexual pleasure and intense humiliation. The film shows that the boys and other students take this sex video as their entertainment. At the end of the conversation above, one of the boys indiscreetly says to make a video to apologize for 'forwarding' the sexual video, and actually no 'apologies' can be seen. It is only a joke again. The sexual video's being made public causes *Lolita* to commit suicide, but those student viewers derive sexual pleasure from it. Laura Mulvey (1975) states that:

*The first, scopophilic, arises from pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight. The second, developed through narcissism and the constitution of the ego, comes from identification with the image seen.*

The girl's committing suicide and its impact on the boys and others, however, occupy limited footage: two medium shots of the girl, *Lolita*, three close-up shots of her feet, two close-up shots of her hands, three close-up shots of her head, and one long shot showing her lying in a puddle of blood. There is only a single shot to indicate the effects of suicide. The response of *Lo Wing* is presented through his body language after he reads of her death in the newspaper: by the railway, at evening, *Lo Wing* curls his body and screams loudly towards open air while a train passes by him.

So, on the other hand, the joke did not obscure the real attitudes towards shooting and transferring sex videos among the Hong Kong adolescents and young adults. The survey conducted by the authors in 2012 indicates that although 24.59% of the interviewees really shoot and transfer sex videos on their mobile devices, 62.30% of the total interviewees consider this behaviour to satisfy their sexual pleasure; on the contrary, 24.59% of them consider it is immoral and unethical. It is interesting to see that 11.48% of interviewees state that it is 'moral' if both sides consent or are willing. According to the data from the interviews, the authors divide the arguments into several pieces, some of them implied:

1. Hong Kong adolescents and young adults' attitudes/behaviours in terms of sex videos are not inevitable, but contingent (thus the idea or category of 'shooting/transferring sex videos by mobile devices' can be said to be 'socially constructed');
2. These people may modify their attitudes/behaviours, as they are young;
3. If they do not modify their attitudes/behaviours, they possibly harm themselves.

Thus a claim that shooting and transferring mobile-device sex videos anchored in Hong Kong is socially constructed probably means that it, as currently understood, is not an inevitable result of ideology, but highly contingent on social and historical processes, in respect that social reality so permeates our perception, understanding and knowledge of the world of desire and misperception that we cannot truly divorce it from our knowledge of natural reality. This is not to say that there is no such thing as natural reality, but rather that we cannot sweep away all of our socially constructed ways of seeing the world to the extent that we can actually see natural reality objectively because we to a certain extent simply *are* our social reality. Vivien Burr (2003) states that:

*The particular forms of knowledge that abound in any culture are therefore artifacts of it, and we should not assume that our ways of understanding are necessarily any better, in terms of being any nearer the truth, than other ways.*

The blaming of the group of boys is not overwhelming in this film but 'harm' is shown physically and psychologically, such as *Addie* suffering from the self-pity or the sense of loneliness, and *Lo Wing* considering himself living in an oppressive family structure. In real life, a good example is the series events of the 'Edison Chen Video Scandal' (Chen Guan Xi Yan Zhao Men Shi Jian), which happened in January 2008 in Hong Kong. It involved the illegal distribution over the Internet of intimate and private photographs and videos of Hong Kong actor Edison Chen with various women, including

some local actresses. Chen said he deleted pictures from his laptop computer of himself with eight female Hong Kong stars but that they were recovered by technicians at a repair shop. "When you're young, you do a lot of things you don't quite comprehend. You think it's fun. You do it. You don't really think about the outcome," Chen told CNN's *Talk Asia* in an interview (2009). Above all, the single example from the film *High Noon* and the real life example respectively reflect the true status of moral value among youths in Hong Kong.

At the same time, the authors also believe that the sexual ethics in modern Hong Kong is much different from the oriental. Confucius once stated that food and sex are basic human desires (Yin Shi Nan Nv, RenZhi Da Yu) (Wang and Wang, 2011). In traditional Chinese culture, sexual desire is either cryptic or considered dirty and abusive. Qing dynasty poet Wang Yongbin (2005) provides an insight into sex drive: of all evils, carnality is the foremost (Wan E Yin Wei Shou) (Wang, 2005). It actually embodies a broader concept of intemperance. Theoretically, Simon (2010) points out that 'sexual desire is considered the result of a complex balance between inhibitory and excitatory pathways in the brain. Then, increased sexual desire could be due to an increased level of excitatory activity, a reduced level of inhibitory activity. The term 'libido', which is popularized by Sigmund Freud, refers to the sex drive or desire for sexual activity. Sigmund Freud (1989) defines libido as the instinct energy or force, contained in what Freud called the id, the largely unconscious structure of the psyche. The traditional Chinese cultures hold that people should restrict conscious desires. Later Chronicles of the Han Dynasty (Fan 2006) says 'Qing Jing Gua Yu' (to purify the heart and diminish the desires) (Ye, 2006). Some of the Western scholars believe that: there is no measure of what is a healthy level for sex desire; some people want to have sex every day or more than once a day; others once a year or not at all.

In the modern society, will it be necessary to highlight again the traditional Chinese sexual ethics? The authors believe the answer should be affirmative. So does the film *High Noon*. While examining sources that can be used to shape the sexual ethic in modern Hong Kong society, some attention must be given to the actual cultural situation to which such an ethic is addressed. The authors argue it in the following three main points: (a) it is important to attend the context in which traditional ethical education can be received. According to HeZhibin (2007), the main concern of school education in Hong Kong is to encourage students to perform as the ideal citizens who know rights and responsibilities, but the schools ignore the connection between personal morals and social ethics. On 1 September 2012, protesters took part in rallying against a new Chinese national education course in Hong Kong. Although the course is titled with 'moral education' (De Yu) and 'national education' (not civil education) (Guo Min Jiao Yu Ke), 'which they claim could be used to brainwash youths' (2012), the issue in terms of moral education is not where the conflict really lies, and on the contrary the debate about the contents of the national education arises against the course. This event, in a sense, indicates the impossibilities of adopting traditional ethical education. (b) He also pays attention to the intellectual and cultural forces that have shaped contemporary attitudes towards sexuality. In Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Association of Sexuality Educators, Researchers & Therapists Limited (HKASERT) and Hong Kong Sex Education Association (HKSEA) share an interest in promoting understanding of human sexuality and healthy sexual behaviour. HKSEA organizes Hong Kong Sex Cultural Festival yearly. According to Stanislaus Lai, HKSEA President, 'Festival 2012 focused on examining the current social ideas, systems and sexual space and their relevancy to the contemporary patterns of marital and sexual relations and people's associated needs'. The members of HKASERT include sex therapists, sexuality educators, doctors, social workers, allied health professionals, marriage and family counselors, and therapists; students in relevant professional disciplines also contribute to this association. In an interview<sup>4</sup>, the authors are informed that HKASERT mainly concerns with the professional education and trainings for industrial peers. 'A study of the morality of teenagers and adolescents and moral education in Hong Kong' (Breakthrough, 2011) shows that 93.7% interviewees give their adhesion to the fact that schools teach morals and values, but only 40.3% of them indicate their teachers guide them in practice. (c) The arguments about sexual morality in Hong Kong society may not be new, but a certain historical perspective

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<sup>4</sup> Interviewed by the author Wang Chang Song, on 2 March 2012, in the Hong Kong Shue Yan University.

shows us not only complex confluence of current cultural ideas that shape a perception of sexuality, but also debates about ethics to which they have given rise among the teenagers, adolescents and young adults. The plots in terms of morality and ethics portrayed in *High Noon* also match the traditional Chinese sexual ethics. *Soy Sauce*'s girlfriend meets a man on the street. *Soy Sauce* is tailing her and *Lo Wing* follows *Soy Sauce*. Before *Soy Sauce*'s girlfriend and the man go to the hotel, *Soy Sauce* crosses the road and starts to beat the man, and he says: *she spreads the sex disease to you*. And then he argues with his girlfriend. Their words show she is doing enjo-kōsai (Yuan Jiao) through which she may earn some more pocket money. According to Zhao Decai (2011), some of the youths in Hong Kong have doubts about describing compensated dating as unethical. This single plot connects sex disease — the negative effects in Chinese culture with the unethical behaviour— enjo-kōsai. In other words, this film claims the negative effects resulted in the behaviour of enjo-kōsai.

Moreover, In *High Noon*, the number of smoking scenes takes a large amount of time throughout the whole film, although almost all of the smokers in this film are adolescents. Some scholars consider that films that feature smoking to attract a similar age classification to those that portray sex or violence. The study conducted by the UK Centre for Tobacco Control Studies (2011) shows that '5,000 adolescents found that 15-year-olds who saw the most films showing actors smoking were 73% more likely to have tried it than those who had seen the fewest' (Lucy, 2011). The authors believe that smoking scenes in *High Noon* exactly reflect the stress on social responsibilities in real society as Ashton and Stepney (1982) state that 'smoking can have beneficial short term psychological effects, maintaining levels of performance in the face of monotony and fatigue, increasing the selectivity of attention, and attenuating the effects of stress'. On the other hand, these scenes in this youth film indicate smoking is socially acceptable for many teenagers and adolescents in Hong Kong society. In fact, the local newspaper *Wenwei* (2011) reports that when in comparison to Mainland China, Taiwan and Singapore, Hong Kong does nothing on smoking behaviour intervention for the youngsters.

Interesting, the authors see all of the boys burnt with forty-one cigarettes in *High Noon*. A few scenes featuring smoking display that smoking is the way to have fun. One sequence starts from the narrator's confusion about 'normal' and 'abnormal': are we abnormal when we are different from the others? or is it normal if everyone does the same thing? The next clip shows the seven boys standing by the edge of a roof at school, and they are smoking a piece of tobacco cigarette that is passed from one person to another. The ashes are not flicked from this cigarette, but the one who smokes it and makes cigarette ash fall is the loser who will be requested to jump to a lower edge of the roof. This smoking scene does not portray sex or violence, but 'idleness' (as *Lo Wing* says: 'we cannot do anything about it except to resist idleness with idleness'). Another smoking scene: (*Soy Sauce* argues with his girlfriend for the matter of 'compensated dating', and after it,) *Lo Wing* and *Soy Sauce* walk on the white pipelines by the railway; after a while, *Soy Sauce* squats down and *Lo Wing* stops walking when he realizes *Soy Sauce* stops walking; *Soy Sauce* sits down on the pipeline and takes out his cigarette case but he can not find his lighter; *Lo Wing* starts to smoke and he notices that *Soy Sauce* is searching for the lighter in his pockets; *Lo Wing* throws his lighter to *Soy Sauce*; *Soy Sauce* lights his cigarette. This single scene fades out while a train drives into the frame. They do not have a dialogue or conversation. The silence and dark landscape lighting indicate the stress the characters suffer.

## 5. COMPARISON: HIGH NOON AND WINDS OF SEPTEMBER

The comparison between *High Noon* and *Winds of September* is to ascertain the specific characteristics of each film. In many respects, the two films have offered insights into teenagers and adolescents in their respective regions, particularly in terms of *mise-en-scene*, characterization and subject. These films do not lack a focus on social reality or human emotion; on the contrary, they exactly expose social environment — "the *mise-en-scene* in *Winds of September*, comparing to other Taiwanese youth films, creates a uniquely Taiwanese realism" (Liu and Wang, 2010). According to the film director Lin Shu-Yu (2010), it is on *mise-en-scene* that his idea sets, organising a universe covering the screen, and the story is set in his hometown. As mentioned earlier, the two films

designated in accordance with the “*Jiu Jiang Feng/Winds of September*” project by Eric Tsang. *High Noon* loosely adapted the storyline of this project, as Ryan (2008) comments that “Hong Kong has very different social and political environments from Taiwan, and it means that those innocent-teenager characters and the innocent relationships depicted in *Winds of September* are not inappropriate in Hong Kong version”, and he also points out that *mise-en-scene* in *High Noon* is very important to incorporate that realism.

In terms of characterization, both *High Noon* and *Winds of September* feature a group of adolescents who struggle to overcome their own problems without their parents around as if they do not wish to be committed to any laws or rules that govern them. These adolescents mingle, interact, and define themselves as ‘*Lap Sap*’ (rubbish) in *High Noon* and ‘*HuaiXue Sheng*’ (delinquents) in *Winds of September*. Adolescence is a stage where life is caught in between childhood and adulthood, in many cases ‘life at this stage is embarrassing, and as an adolescent they are trying to be adult and trying hard to adapt in the adult world but at the same time the teenage world seems too childish and no longer belongs to them’ (Eagle and Schwartz, 1994). ‘*Lap Sap*’, mentioned in *High Noon*, embraces that the adolescents abandon themselves to discouragement and despair. Not surprisingly, the central hero of the film, *Lo Wing*, is dissatisfied with a wide range of conventions from the ‘adult world’. *Lo Wing* presents the tense question using ‘*neideidaaiyan*’ (*your adult world*): “for what reason are we destined to play this game (he means studying for entering the next grade at school), a game designed by the adults”. At the time, he refuses to be concerned with any adult. His step-mother representing his ‘parent’ meets the teacher at school before the HKCEE, and she attempts to take this opportunity to be an intimate person in the family, but unfortunately, *Lo Wing*’s response shows he is unrestrained in behaviour and also embraces his angry attitude towards ‘adult’: “What do you understand? I don’t even know what you understand. You, the grown-ups, don’t pretend to know it all if you don’t.” In *Winds of September*, the school education is challenged by the youths. *Hsing* does not think the way the school educates students is right, so he challenges the drillmaster of the school: “(The) school’s decision? This is (your so-called) education? (You thought only of) expell(ing) the delinquent and (then) everything is ok.” In line with this, the young students in Taiwanese and Hong Kong youth cinemas stand out for their subversive consciousness and skeptical sentiments. These adolescents disregard the established conventions in school and disrespect for seniority. What they actually attack, or struggle for, in the films is far and wide, ranging from the education system to the boredom of student life, from rigidity of routine to moral orthodoxy. *Lo Wing* says “no matter how people look at us, we cannot do anything about it except to resist idleness with idleness”, and *Xiao Tang* says, “The weekly meeting is boring.”

Moreover, in terms of subject matter, the both films treat the representations of sex and sexuality with a kind of relative openness and truthfulness. Up until the late 1980s, Taiwanese youth cinema does not talk much about the topic of sex or sexuality, for example, a boy’s ‘spermatorrhea’ in *Tong Nian Wang Shi/The Time to Live and the Time to Die* (directed by Hsiao-hsien Hou in 1986) is linked to his diet: “after drinking milk, I won’t draw a map”, and interestingly, “*draw a map*” implicates that spermatorrhea occurs when he sleeps and his underwear gets wet from his sperm — the sperm print in the underwear looks like ‘a map’ shape. At the same time, his words indicate that ‘spermatorrhea’ should be avoided. In contrast to this, *Winds of September* is marked by a display of sexual and emotional frankness. For example, the sound of the boy *Xiao Tang*’s masturbation is clearly shown although the penis is not revealed on the screen. A most talked-about character of the film is *Ah Yen*, the leader among the seven boys. He follows a girl with whom he has long eye contacts and opens his right hand to request the girl to write down her contact number. In the MTV<sup>5</sup> (Movie TV), not for watching their film, *Ah Yen* kisses *Xiao Yun* and unfastens her buckles but *Xiao Yun* stops his hand and says his full name, “Cheng Xi Yen, you are perverted.” Such frankness in treating the sexual relationship exists in virtually every other character as well: *Xiao Tang*’s sexual fantasy is shown while he is masturbating in his bedroom. “Sex” was once a taboo word and topic in Taiwan cinema. The representation of sex and sexuality had been curtailed until the later 1980s.

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<sup>5</sup> MTV is a kind of popular entertainment for the public in 1980s in Taiwan, where the consumers may select their film copies and watch at individual boxes.

According to Robert (2011), Taiwan cinema explored this kind of forbidden area, or taboo, with openness owing to the lifting of martial law by president Chiang Ching-kuo in 1987, followed by the liberalization and democratization of Taiwan.

If *Winds of September* shows “life of youths in a big-time environment” (Liu and Wang, 2010), *High Noon* tells a cruel story of the youths. The plots and events in terms of “sexual video”, “pornography”, “enjo-kōsai”, “sexually transmitted disease (STD)”, and “sex satire”, along with violent behaviours, also indicate the openness to the representations of sex and sexuality in the film. This significantly influences spiritual growth in Hong Kong teens and youth. Since later 1990s, “*Goo Waak Chai*” series illustrate a group of youngster who gave up school and family to join criminal syndicate: *RenZai Jiang Hu/Young and Dangerous* (directed by Wai-keung Lau in 1996), *Meng Long Guo Jiang/Young and Dangerous 2* (1996), *ZhiShouZheTian/Young and Dangerous 3* (1996), *Zhan Wu Bu Sheng/Young and Dangerous 4* (1997), *Long Zheng Hu Dou/Young and Dangerous 5* (1998), *Shao NianJi Dou/Young and Dangerous: The Prequel* (1998), *Jue Zhan Xiang Gang/Young and Dangerous: The Battle of Hong Kong* (directed by Zhao Li and Quiyu Wang in 1999), *Sheng Zhe Wei Wang/Born To Be King* (directed by Wai-keung Lau in 2000), and *Jiu Long Bing Shi/Goodbye Mr. Cool* (directed by Jingle Ma in 2001). These films particularly portray young rebels in Hong Kong. These boy characters are particularly involved with some affairs with different female characters, such as a scene in *Young and Dangerous 2* showing the boy bathing together with a girl. The point being made here is simply to emphasize the fact that portraits of young rebels still exist in *High Noon*. The event involving a “sexual video” definitely starts with the young characters’ intimate behaviour, or else the sexual video won’t be recorded. In other words, these young people’s openness to sex allows recording a sexual video, and distributing the video easily without any consideration. The voice-over narration and some dialogues by *Lo Wing* represent the characteristic of irresponsibility: perhaps we get used to acting before we think, or we never think of what we have done.

Besides the subject of sex and sexuality, the brotherhood propulsively paced in *High Noon* and *Winds of September* reflects different visions of the society and culture, basically the disintegration of brotherhood bonds as depicted at the end of both of the films. We can see that the relationship exhibited in *High Noon* is pallid at the resolution. In contrast, the connections among the boys/brothers in *Winds of September* still can be seen. *Addie* in *High Noon* expresses his attitudes towards their brotherhood through a single dialogue while *Lo Wing* finds *Addie* taking drugs: “anyway, the seven of us will no longer be classmates a few months later”. He wants *Lo Wing* to be aware that *Lo Wing* does not need to invade his private life unnecessarily since their friendship will last for only a few months; *Soy Sauce* hits a member of the street gang over the head with a beer bottle when *Soy Sauce* and the other six boys are quarreling with the street gang, but *Soy Sauce* is the first person to escape from the place, and *Addie* runs away along with *Sticky Dick*. The young boys in this film are formed by temporary impulses, irresponsibility, and a sense of indifference to the friendship. According to Lau’s *Study of Teenagers’ Relationship Conflicts*, two-way harming between the sufferers and the ones who harm other students take place in Hong Kong, as this study shows that 76.5% of the study population used to be harmed and at the same time 60.3% of them used to commit harm. The brotherhood, or friendship depicted in *High Noon* is mostly shown through their casual, full filled activities, and in other words, the scenes which portray the seven boys mingling together probably involve their pointless behaviours such as watching pornography at a boy’s home, chitchatting by the railway, idling at a karaoke box, stealing a bottle of red wine and some snacks from a convenience store, and smoking cigarettes on a roof. Travis Hirschi (1969) states that:

*One of the most critical times in our lives is our adolescence. During this critical time we need strong positive social ties to represent society in the best way possible. On the other hand, if the ties we share in our lives are negative and criminal-like habits, it is most likely that negative results will occur.*

The negative result of the disintegration of brotherhood is not clearly presented at the end, but two sequences in the ending of this film in probability imply the boys’ friendship does not exist any more: (a) *Lo Wing* presents his drawings in a job interview but the interviewer laughs grimly at his drawings

and asks him the reason for wearing formal attire; (b) *Lo Wing* smokes at the seaside, he looks indifferent, and then the screen quickly dissolves back into the clip in which the seven boys wearing their uniforms play together by the sea. Mingling around with the six boys seems like a memory to *Lo Wing*.

*Winds of September* presents the brotherhood as solid from the start, a group of boys wearing their uniforms who are immersing themselves in the cheerful atmosphere of a baseball stadium. But, unlike the sport stadium atmosphere, *High Noon* presents the boys frolicking on the school playground, and they are not as united as the boys in *Winds of September*, as they have their fun separately. For example, *Addie* steals the lollipops at a small grocery store; *Smoothies* plays baseball; and *Soy Sauce* eats ice cream. The ‘united’ also can be seen at the scene of the group skinny dipping. As the swimming pool is not open at night, they help each other in climbing over the wall. One of them gives support to another by his hand, and the chubby boy climbs over with the help from three of them. By the swimming pool, six of them jump into the pool but *Bo-chu* hesitates, so the six boys climb out of the pool, cheerfully take off his clothes, and then they throw him into the swimming pool. In Taiwan society, the young people have close relationships with peers rather than family. According to Guo (2000), in Taiwan, 62.1% of young people learn their thinking and behaviour from their peers. Thus, it means mingling with peers and friends can bring them more access to enhance their ways of thinking and ways of being.

## DIALOGUE 2

<i>XiaoTang:</i>	Not gotta finish the game?
<i>Ah Yen:</i>	Lousy game today. (Ah Yen takes a baseball ball from his bag and passes to Xiao Tang.) Hey, I got something for you.
<i>XiaoTang:</i>	No way! Liao Ming-Hsing!
<i>Ah Yen:</i>	That’s right. I told you he was at my house.
<i>XiaoTang:</i>	I don’t believe that.
<i>Ah Yen:</i>	The ball is right in your face!
<i>XiaoTang:</i>	Ok! I’ll ask him myself.
<i>Ah Yen:</i>	Right. You think I don’t know you! You’ll never go by yourself.
<i>XiaoTang:</i>	Of course you are going with me, see if you’re bullshitting.
<i>Ah Yen:</i>	We’ll go together.
<i>XiaoTang:</i>	Ok. You said so.

In this film, there is a clear sign of the disintegration of brotherhood bonds: *Chao* loses his temper when *Xiao Tang* calls the five boys to visit *Ah Yen* at the hospital, and he says, “we don’t have to do everything together.” After this scene, there is never any scene of the seven boys together, but the ending shows that *Xiao Tang* brings a full box of baseballs from *Ah Yen*’s room to the Ping-Tung county baseball stadium to keep faith. The last conversation (see *Dialogue 2*) between *Xiao Tang* and *Ah Yen* embraces the trip to Ping-Tung together. The brotherhood connection between the two boys is definitely trusted.

Based on the discussion above, the authors can safely draw a conclusion that the Chinese youths depicted in Hong Kong and Taiwanese youth films, in different regions and different cultures, or even in parallel social situations, share broadly similar behaviour and attitudes to mainstream values. In terms of characterization, both *High Noon* and *Winds of September* feature a group of adolescents who struggle to overcome their own problems without their parents around as if they do not wish to be committed to any laws or rules that govern them. Hong Kong and Taiwanese youth films treat the representations of sex and sexuality with a kind of relative openness and truthfulness.

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# A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF IDENTITY STATUSES OF ADOLESCENT CHARACTERS IN GOSSIP GIRL SERIES

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## Abstract

The current survey aims to conduct a content analysis of adolescent characters in the American series “*Gossip Girl*” on the basis of their identity statuses. Corpus of the survey includes the “*Gossip Girl*” series. As per the target-based sampling method of the survey; firstly the whole series, produced in 6 seasons, was selected. Secondly, the series was divided into semantic units (episodes). Thereafter the main adolescent characters present in the series, were determined and finally the whole characters were studied in all semantic units of the series. The assessment tool of this survey is the categorizing system of content analysis that is based on scientific theories relevant to identity and its statuses. Subsequent to defining identity and studying its categories, each identity category was selected as one category of content analysis system; while some categories had their own subcategories.

The findings of the survey showed that all adolescent characters of this series fall into an identity diffused category in ideological identity domain (i.e. their orientation toward religion, occupation, politics and philosophical life-style). In the domain of interpersonal identity (i.e. friendship, recreation and leisure, the formation of sex roles and dating) all of the main characters are identity achievers in friendship, just in half of the series and they fall into identity diffused category in other domains.

**Keywords:** *Content Analysis, identity, identity statuses, mass media, Gossip Girl series.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

During the recent decades, the problem of adolescent identity crisis has attracted the attention of many psychologists. In other words, the period of adolescence, has somehow amalgamated with identity crisis. In fact, psychologists in modern societies worry that adolescents cannot succeed to obtain an identity and safely cross this crisis. Consequently they find it impossible to make meaningful and long-term commitments to each other, to their institutions, or to the more enduring aspects of their selfhood that may reside beneath the surface of everyday role-playing. Thus, there appears a lot of cultural, social and familial damages (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997, p.63). For example, if they don't have a decisive self perception (identity) to which they can refer, they would hardly establish romantic attachment in the early adulthood (Berman, Weems, Rodriguez & Zamora, 2006).

It can be said that firstly Erikson (1950, 1968) paid an especial attention to this problem. He was the first person who recognized the identity as an important achievement of adolescence, personality and an important step toward converting to an effective and satisfied individual. He named the mental

antagonism of adolescence as *identity versus confusion*. According to Erikson, adolescents in complex societies suffer from identity crisis: i.e. a temporary period of confusion and perturbation which they experience before coming to an agreement about values and objects. adolescents who contemplate and think deeply, finally reach to an experienced identity. They examine those attributes which they have defined for their childhood and combine them with new commitments. Thereafter when they play various roles in daily life, they form the above attributes as a united and firm internal nucleus which creates a consistency feeling for them (Berk, 2007, p.60).

On the other hand, the negative outcome of Erikson's fifth stage is identity confusion. Some adolescents seem to be superficial and have no orientation. The reason is whether their previous antagonisms have been resolved negatively or their choices has been restricted by the society to the ones which are not in harmony with their own abilities and tendencies. As a result, they are not well-prepared for the mental challenges of adulthood (Berk, 2007, p.60).

James Marcia (1966) is among those who comprehensively studied the formation of identity in adolescents. Drawing on two of the major dimensions described in Erikson's theory of identity formation, Marcia has conceptualized four types of identity formation. These two dimensions involve the presence or absence of a crisis period (or as more recently conceptualized by Matteson (1977), a continuum of *exploration behaviors*) and the presence or absence of a clearly defined and stable *commitment* to values, beliefs, and standards. This exploration or crisis period is expected of adolescents during their youth by society. Prior to entering a psychosocial moratorium, youth do not experience a motivating identity consciousness. He or she, therefore, may not experience a need to explore alternatives and may also fail to establish ideological commitments. These youth are referred to as *identity diffused*. A second category of youths report stable commitments but have not experienced a personalized crisis period. That is, these youths have adopted commitments from others (usually parents) and have not tested their stated commitments for individual fit. Such youths merely accept the commitments of others and own them, without shaping or modifying them. This process is thought to be similar to that of early childhood identifications. These youths are labeled *identity foreclosed*. The third category includes youths who are currently experiencing the identity consciousness of an identity crisis and are actively exploring, but have not yet arrived at their own self-defined commitments. These youths are categorized as being in *moratorium*. Finally, youths who have experienced a psychosocial moratorium and have made substantial exploration prior to identifying personal and unique ideological commitments are referred to as *identity achieved*. (Adams, 1998, p.10).

Regarding the proposed subjects, in today's modern world, the main challenge of youths periods and the early adulthood is the formation of an identity which is far away from parents' identity. Many youths spend a lot of time to explore and find their own especial position in the world. Although Padilla-Walker (2007) believes that during this period of transition, parents and peers remain as impressive persons, various factors such as personality, family, schools, communities, cultural context as well as historical section influence the crossing of this crisis and formation of a desired identity. There is a factor specifically belongs to the contemporary era and has drawn the trend of psychologists' research as an effective component in line with family and society during these recent decades. It is the conspicuous presence of mass media in children and youths' lives.

During adolescence, children spend less time with parents and an increasingly large amount of time by themselves, during which they often participate in unsupervised media, such as television, music, and video games. The typical American adolescent listens to music approximately 4 hours a day and watches television approximately 2 hours a day. In combination, these media consume approximately 8

hours of adolescents' time each day (Padilla\_Walker, 2007, p.2). Khezrian (2005) has revealed in her study that most of children and adolescents' activities in Iran, is watching TV programs round the clock.

Albert Bandura, a pioneer theorist in observational learning in children and adolescents, maintained that television offered a major source of modeling (Strickland, 2001, p.434). He suggests that adolescents engage in the process of observational learning with models presented through the media. Furthermore, the models in the media provide a source of information for *vicarious verification*, a process by which adolescents check the accuracy of their own beliefs through comparison with others. For example, if adolescents think that certain behaviors might be OK but aren't quite sure, they can be encouraged to believe that the behaviors are OK by checking their thoughts against the thoughts expressed by models on television (Rhodes, Brickman & Bushman, 2007, p.781).

Bandura's focus on vicarious modeling suggests the need to analyze how TV's portrayal of teens influences adolescents' *own* attitudes and behaviors and in deeper level on the formation of their identity (Strange, 2007, p.7). In many long years, various genres of TV programs (i.e. animation, drama, comedy, talk show, etc) have been produced in relation to the production of some programs with various forms and frameworks in order to attach a wide spectrum of viewers from different age groups, sex, education, etc. however new genres are described as well. As a significant percentage of TV audiences are children and adolescents, a new genre has been brought up named as *teen drama* which is newly established and its main aim is to attract teenaged audiences. A teen drama is a type of dramaseries with a major focus on teenage characters. The young characters must deal with the dramatic ups and downs of their friendships and romances while facing an array of issues thought to be typical of adolescence. *Gossip Girl* is one of the best examples of teen drama television series.

In today's digital world, media produced in one country can not be isolated to that location. However, According to the quantitative expansion of media and the elimination of spatial and temporal variables for watching TV, these series mostly produced by United States are not merely restricted to American teenagers but their target society includes Butin amuch broaderscale and at the international level, the teenagers from all over the world communicate with the stories and characters of these series. From another point of view, these series influence on all their viewers so our country is not an exception. Thus it is necessary to study non – Iranian series (concerning their great amount of audiences in Iran) besides the domestic media products. It should be noted how they influence as well.

In the past, some research has been done on television teen characters. Heintz-Knowles (2000), for instance, studied a content analysis of adolescents in prime-time entertainment programming. She revealed that these characters were shaping the adolescents' attitudes toward family, school and society. Also in Iran, Biabangard (2005) studied identity in teenaged programs of channels 1 and 2 of IRIB TV and found that 99 percent of these programs hadn't paid any attention to maturity and identity crisis which were Characteristics of adolescence periods.

Regarding the fore mentioned issues, this research is to find the answers to the following questions:

1. Generally speaking, what is the predominant identity category among the main adolescent characters of *Gossip girl*?
2. Is there any difference between the ideological and interpersonal identity of the characters in the series?

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The current research is exploratory and qualitative in nature and the data is analyzed on the basis of content analysis method.

### ***2.1 The corpus of the study***

The corpus of the study includes *Gossip Girl* series. *Gossip Girl* is an American teen drama television series based on the book series of the same name written by *Cecily von Ziegesar*. The series, created by *Josh Schwartz* and *Stephanie Savage*, originally ran on The CW for six seasons from September 19, 2007 to December 17, 2012. The series revolves around the lives of privileged young adults on Manhattan's Upper East Side in New York City. The show has received 32 award nominations such as favorite TV drama and the best actor and actress, winning 18 Teen Choice Awards.

### ***2.2 Sampling method or Selection of main units and semantic units***

Sampling method of this research is target-based. Main units of this research are the main adolescent characters present in the whole series (all the 6 seasons). They were determined based on their presence in the episodes in which they played a role. Referring to Box Office Mojo, the most valid online film magazine that reports on films and series status in the US, it was found that this series was produced in 121 episodes and 6 seasons. 7 characters played a role in all 121 episodes that were determined as the main characters. Among them 5 characters are adolescents (i.e. *Serena van der Woodsen* ‹*Blair Waldorf*› ‹*Dan Humphrey*› ‹*Nate Archibald*› ‹*Chuck Bass*›).

In this research the semantic unit is episode. There are 121 episodes in the series of the research corpus. The main characters were studied regarding the categorizing system of content analysis that is based on scientific theories relevant to the topics proposed in this research, in all semantic units of the series.

### ***2.3 Tool***

The assessment tool of this survey is the categorizing system of content analysis that is provided based on scientific theories relevant to identity and its statuses. The categorizing system for identity was constructed based on the expanded questionnaire of Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (OMEIS), provided by Adams and colleagues, considering Marcia's 4 types of identity formation. *Identity* is to determine "who you are, what you place a high value on, and what way you are going to follow in your life" (Berk, 2007, p.60). In line with this definition, the categorizing system consists of 8 categories which based on OMEIS, the first 4 categories are in ideological identity domain (religion, occupation, politics and philosophical life-style) and the second 4 categories are in interpersonal identity domain (i.e. friendship, recreation and leisure, the formation of sex roles and dating). All categories include 4 types of identity formation subcategories (diffusion, achievement, moratorium and foreclosure). Later, kappa coefficient was calculated to evaluate validity and consistency in the evaluators' views in terms of statistics.

### 3. FINDINGS

1. Generally speaking, what is the predominant identity category among the main adolescent characters of Gossip girl?

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of all characters' identity categories in Gossip Girl according to episode

<b>Identity categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Recreation (diffusion)	595	98.3
Politics (diffusion)	592	97.9
Religion (diffusion)	592	97.9
Sex roles (diffusion)	575	95
Philosophical lifestyle (diffusion)	556	91.9
Occupation (diffusion)	420	69.4
Dating (diffusion)	390	64.5
Friendship (achievement)	311	51.4
Friendship (diffusion)	270	44.6
Dating (achievement)	166	27.4
Occupation (achievement)	97	16
Occupation (moratorium)	78	12.9
Dating (moratorium)	37	6.1
Philosophical lifestyle (moratorium)	28	4.6
Friendship (moratorium)	14	2.3
Sex roles (moratorium)	13	2.1
Philosophical lifestyle (achievement)	11	1.8
Sex roles (achievement)	7	1.2
Religion (moratorium)	3	0.5
Dating (foreclosure)	2	0.3
Politics (foreclosure)	2	0.3
Politics (moratorium)	1	0.2
Politics (achievement)	0	0
Occupation (foreclosure)	0	0
Religion (achievement)	0	0
Philosophical lifestyle (foreclosure)	0	0
Friendship (foreclosure)	0	0

Recreation (achievement)	0	0
Recreation (moratorium)	0	0
Recreation (foreclosure)	0	0
Sex roles (foreclosure)	0	0
Religion (foreclosure)	0	0

According to table 1, all the 5 main characters are identity diffused almost in all identity categories (whether ideological or interpersonal) and are identity achieved just in friendship category in half of the episodes (in other words in half of the series).

2. Is there any difference between the ideological and interpersonal identity of the characters in the series?

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of ideological identity categories of all the characters in Gossip Girl according to episode

<b>Identity categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Religion (diffusion)	592	97.9
Politics (diffusion)	592	97.9
Philosophical lifestyle (diffusion)	556	91.9
Occupation (diffusion)	420	69.4
Occupation (achievement)	97	16
Occupation (moratorium)	78	12.9
Philosophical lifestyle (moratorium)	28	4.6
Philosophical lifestyle (achievement)	11	1.8
Religion (moratorium)	3	0.5
Politics (moratorium)	2	0.3
Politics (achievement)	1	0.2
Religion (achievement)	0	0
Religion (foreclosure)	0	0
Occupation (foreclosure)	0	0
Politics (foreclosure)	0	0
Philosophical lifestyle(foreclosure)	0	0

According to table 2, all the 5 main characters are identity diffused in all ideological identity categories (religion, occupation, politics and philosophical lifestyle).

Table 3: Frequency and percentage of interpersonal identity categories of all the characters in Gossip Girl according to episode

<b>Identity categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Recreation (diffusion)	595	98.3
Sex roles (diffusion)	575	95
Dating (diffusion)	390	64.5
Friendship (achievement)	311	51.4
Friendship (diffusion)	270	44.6
Dating (achievement)	166	27.4
Dating (moratorium)	37	6.1
Friendship (moratorium)	14	2.3
Sex roles (moratorium)	13	2.1
Sex roles (achievement)	7	1.2
Dating (foreclosure)	2	0.3
Friendship (foreclosure)	0	0
Recreation (achievement)	0	0
Recreation (moratorium)	0	0
Recreation (foreclosure)	0	0
Sex roles (foreclosure)	0	0

According to table 3, all the 5 main characters are identity diffused almost in all interpersonal identity categories (recreation, sex roles and dating) and are identity achieved just in friendship category in half of the series.

#### **4. THE FINDINGS**

The current survey was carried out to analyze the contents of adolescent characters in the American series “*Gossip Girl*” on the basis of their identity statuses. The research was to find out what identity category does the series introduce to the adolescent audiences as a model. This series processes the main adolescent characters of the story very well and it addresses specifically the adolescents. It should be noted that during 7 years which was televised from channels having the most viewers all over the world, the adolescents were accompanied by its characters in their most important stage of their identity formation and they certainly accept these characters as their own peer identity models. Therefore the characters’ impression is far from being a mere entertainment and is purposefully impressive in the formation of the adolescents’ identity framework in future.

The survey findings revealed all the adolescent characters in this series are identity diffused in ideological identity domain (their orientation toward religion, occupation, politics and philosophical life-style). In the domain of interpersonal identity (friendship, recreation and leisure, the formation of sex roles and dating) just the main female characters are identity achievers in friendship. The other characters are fairly identity



diffused in the rest of domains. This identity diffusion was clearly obvious in both domains, among female and male characters and there was no difference in these domains based on their gender. This lack of difference reveals the lack of cultural foundations in separating sex roles between females and males, and the lack of modeling in this regard. Today's modern society doesn't incline to provide and continue the traditional sex roles and it is clearly observed in characterization of adolescents in Gossip Girl series which can be studied in a sociological framework.

In other words, all the main characters of Gossip Girl are adolescents who don't value religious beliefs in the ideological identity domain, don't attach any importance to political issues, haven't determined their future occupation yet and they just enjoy the life and have no opinion about it.

On the other hand, in interpersonal identity domain, they don't think seriously about men's and women's roles and responsibilities, have no special preferences about dating, have no regular plans for their recreational activities, and it is only in friendship that they have close friends and are satisfied with them.

To conclude, it is still open to reflect on reaching a stable and achieved identity in adolescents, when we consider the influence of media on today's world and its several times impression on the adolescents, who are looking for an appropriate identity of themselves as well as observing and establishing an affective relation and assimilating the models whose individual and social identity hasn't shaped correctly and is diffused.

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# TAHAP PENGETAHUAN NILAI-NILAI MURNI BAGI MEMUPUK KEHARMONIAN DALAM KALANGAN BELIA PELBAGAI ETNIK DI SELANGOR

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## Abstract

Malaysia is a country of diverse races, religions, and customs where it is known as a society which concerned about moral values towards achieving unity of the nation. Younger generation are the nation assets and they should be inculcated with noble values in order to form a civilized society with ethics and moral values. Therefore, this study aims to identify the level of knowledge among multi-ethnic youth toward the inculcation of moral values. The research design for this study is quantitative research and survey method was employed by distributing questionnaires. The study was conducted in four districts (Gombak, Ulu Langat, Petaling and Klang) in Selangor. A total number of 400 youth were selected randomly for this study. Each district comprised 100 youth from different ethnic including Malay, Chinese and Indian and age category among respondent is from 15 to 25 years. Findings of this study shows that the respondents have a high level of knowledge of the noble values which was instilled in Malaysian society. Thus, these noble values need to be understood and practiced by all people regardless of ethnicity to create harmony and social cohesion between the various ethnic groups in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** *Values, youth, multi-ethnic*

## 1. PENGENALAN

Malaysia memiliki keistimewaan yang berkait rapat dengan ciri-ciri latar belakang masyarakatnya yang terdiri daripada pelbagai etnik. Kepelbagaian dari segi agama, sosial dan budaya menjadi kekuatan kepada hubungan antara kaum di Malaysia yang kaya dengan nilai-nilai murni seperti menghormati orang lain, berakhlak sopan, bermuafakat dan sebagainya. Ini kerana kesemua agama memberikan penekanan kepada aspek nilai, moral, akhlak dan kemanusiaan.

Belia merupakan aset yang penting bagi negara. Belia bertanggungjawab untuk mengekalkan nilai dan budaya yang akan membina *world view* generasi pelapis. Belia mewarisi nilai dan budaya masyarakat yang terdahulu dan berperanan untuk mewariskannya kepada generasi seterusnya. Menurut Turiman Suandi et. al (2008), dan Syed Othman Syed Omar (2005), belia perlu membangunkan konsep sendiri mereka dengan lebih mantap di samping menerapkan nilai-nilai murni secara berterusan. Ini kerana

cabaran dalaman dan luaran sentiasa memberikan cabaran kepada golongan muda yang sememangnya begitu rapuh jika tidak diberi bimbingan yang bersepadu.

Dalam era globalisasi masa kini, nilai-nilai murni yang diamalkan dalam masyarakat semakin luntur. Akhir-akhir ini, kebanyakan akhbar tempatan melaporkan pelbagai kejadian jenayah dalam negara yang boleh dikaitkan dengan kepincangan nilai-nilai murni seperti warga emas maut selepas koma dibelasah anak sendiri, penganggur mengugut untuk membunuh bapa kandung, kes samun, rogol, dan sebagainya ([www.utusan.com.my](http://www.utusan.com.my), [www.bharian.com.my](http://www.bharian.com.my)). Kejadian jenayah ini berlaku disebabkan oleh kurangnya didikan agama dan nilai dalam kekeluargaan, pengaruh persekitaran, hawa nafsu, tuntutan mengejar kebendaan, pangkat hingga menafikan nilai-nilai murni yang diajar oleh agama dan budaya tempatan.

Pengamalan terhadap nilai-nilai murni dalam kehidupan seharian yang menggambarkan keperibadian seseorang semakin tidak dititikberatkan khususnya dalam kalangan belia. Pengamalan terhadap nilai-nilai murni dalam kehidupan merupakan agenda penting bagi mengukuhkan perpaduan rakyat Malaysia yang terdiri daripada pelbagai etnik. Oleh itu, generasi ini perlu dilengkapi dengan penghayatan ilmu, akhlak serta dibekalkan dengan kefahaman terhadap peranan yang perlu dilaksanakan. Oleh yang demikian, kajian perlu dilakukan untuk mengkaji mengapakah nilai-nilai murni semakin kurang dihayati oleh generasi muda, khususnya belia. Justeru, kertas kerja ini memfokus kepada tahap pengetahuan belia khususnya di Selangor terhadap nilai-nilai murni yang diamalkan dalam masyarakat. Skop pengetahuan nilai murni yang dikaji meliputi nilai kesederhanaan, bertimbang rasa, berbudi bahasa dan hormat-menghormati. Dapatan kajian ini hanya sebahagian sahaja daripada kajian keseluruhan yang telah dijalankan.

## **2. KAJIAN LITERATUR**

Nilai ialah elemen terpenting dalam kehidupan manusia yang menentukan sikap, sifat, tingkah laku, pandangan dan perbuatan seseorang individu, dan komunitinya (Mohd Rashid Md Idris, 2011). Nilai-nilai murni merupakan sebahagian daripada keperluan manusia dalam setiap aspek kehidupan. Seseorang individu mestilah mempunyai sejumlah nilai-nilai yang diamalkan dalam dirinya bagi mencapai kehidupan sejahtera yang menjadi matlamat pembangunan negara. Ini kerana walaupun masyarakat berbeza dari segi budaya dan agama, tetap dapat disatukan oleh nilai, sikap dan tingkah laku (Shuhairimi Abdullah, 2009 dan Mohamad Khairi Othman et. al, 2012). Pengaruh nilai serta budaya yang dibawa oleh sesuatu bangsa merupakan sesuatu yang amat penting dalam pembentukan generasi seterusnya bagi masyarakat Malaysia.

Menurut Sarjit. S, Jayum. J, Lee Yok Fee, et al. (2008), sistem kepercayaan, nilai, sikap dan tingkah laku belia akan mempengaruhi dan memberi kesan yang berterusan kepada pembangunan negara pada masa hadapan. Pembangunan dari aspek kerohanian dan akhlak adalah penting untuk menjadi negara maju pada tahun 2020 (Lee Yok Fee dan Sarjit S., 2008 & Huw. T, 2012). Pembangunan yang hakiki harus berteraskan kepada ketinggian nilai, budaya, ilmu, adab dan kemajuan teknologi yang diseimbangkan secara saksama. Kesedaran serta pengamalan terhadap nilai-nilai murni perlu dipertingkatkan dalam setiap kelompok masyarakat supaya generasi belia yang diinginkan negara dapat dihasilkan.

Budi bahasa dan nilai-nilai murni peradaban bangsa kian terhakis walhal negara Malaysia sedang bergerak ke arah menjadi negara yang maju. Pembangunan kebudayaan sekarang bercorak hiburan dan penuh dengan unsur-unsur hedonisme. Akal budi masyarakat terutama generasi muda kian bercelaru dan keliru tanpa mahu menghidupkan budaya berbudi bahasa, bahkan kian kehilangan kesopanan dan kesusilaan. Antaranya seperti orang tua sudah tidak dihormati, guru dimusuhi, cedera mencedera sesama rakan, bunuh membunuh, ketagihan dadah, khianat, sikap terlalu mementingkan diri, tidak bertimbang rasa di jalan raya, perosak harta benda awam (vandalisme), pengacau jiran dan sebagainya (A. Aziz Deraman, 2002).

Belia yang dianggap sebagai harapan bangsa dan tiang negara juga ada antaranya melakukan jenayah. Laporan media terkini melaporkan kes yang dikaitkan dengan golongan belia iaitu isu Alvin dan Vivian yang mempersendakan umat Islam apabila memuat naik gambar makanan yang menyentuh sensitiviti umat Islam di akaun laman sosial milik mereka ([www.bharian.com.my](http://www.bharian.com.my)), kes penderaan terhadap kanak-kanak yang dikaitkan dengan golongan remaja turut meningkat menurut Jabatan Siasatan Jenayah Polis Diraja Malaysia ([www.bharian.com.my](http://www.bharian.com.my)), fenomena terbaru iaitu pembunuhan yang menggunakan senjata api semakin berleluasa ([www.hmetro.com.my](http://www.hmetro.com.my)). Jenayah ini tidak berunsur rompakan atau samun tetapi bermotif isu peribadi. Kepentingan nilai murni dalam kalangan belia adalah merupakan perkara utama dalam membentuk generasi yang berilmu dan berbudaya yang menyumbang kepada keharmonian hidup.

Nilai-nilai murni patut dikembalikan sebagai nilai-nilai positif yang menjadi landasan perpaduan negara dan integrasi nasional. Pengamalan nilai-nilai yang dapat diterima oleh semua rakyat adalah menjadi asas penting dalam usaha ke arah membentuk identiti dan perpaduan bagi masyarakat Malaysia yang terdiri daripada pelbagai kaum dan menjalani kehidupan yang berbeza. Tanpa nilai yang universal ini rakyat akan terdorong untuk menerima dan menyanjung nilai-nilai lain yang sangat asing bagi masyarakat Malaysia (Fatimi Hanafi & Mohd Zamani Ismail, 2006).

### 3. METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Reka bentuk penyelidikan yang dipilih dalam kajian ini adalah penyelidikan kuantitatif yang menggunakan kaedah tinjauan dengan menggunakan borang soal selidik. Kajian ini dijalankan di empat daerah di Selangor iaitu daerah Gombak, Ulu Langat, Petaling dan Klang. Keempat-empat daerah ini dipilih kerana lokasi ini merupakan pembangunan yang pesat dan stabil serta mempunyai penduduk yang ramai dan berbilang etnik berbanding daerah-daerah lain yang terdapat di negeri Selangor. Seramai 400 orang belia terlibat dalam kajian ini. Jumlah responden bagi setiap daerah seramai 100 orang belia yang terdiri daripada etnik Melayu, Cina dan India. Kategori umur responden adalah di antara 15 hingga 25 tahun. Data kajian yang telah diperolehi dianalisis menggunakan perisian komputer *SPSS* versi 21.0. Data kajian dihuraikan secara statistik deskriptif.

### 4. DAPATAN KAJIAN

#### 4.1 Latar Belakang Responden

Merujuk pada Jadual 1, responden kajian ini merupakan 400 orang belia yang diperolehi di empat daerah negeri Selangor iaitu Gombak, Klang, Petaling dan Ulu Langat.

Jadual 1: Latar Belakang Responden

	Faktor Demografi	Frekuensi	% (n=400)
Julat Umur	15	27	6.8
	16	43	10.8
	17	63	15.8
	18	69	17.3
	19	29	7.3
	20	54	13.5
	21	26	6.5
	22	19	4.8
	23	33	8.3
	24	15	3.8
	25	22	5.5

Jantina	Lelaki	204	51.0	
	Perempuan	196	49.0	
Etnik	Melayu	133	33.3	
	Cina	134	33.5	
	India	133	33.3	
Agama	Islam	141	35.3	
	Buddha	112	28.0	
	Kristian	38	9.5	
	Hindu	106	26.5	
	Lain-lain	3	.8	
Pendidikan Tertinggi	Sekolah Rendah	11	2.8	
	Sekolah (PMR/SPM/STPM)	Menengah	215	53.8
	Pengajian (Sijil/Diploma/Ijazah/Sarjana/PhD)	Tinggi	174	43.5

Dalam kajian ini, responden yang terlibat dalam lingkungan umur 15 hingga 25 tahun dengan majoriti responden dalam kalangan julat umur 18 hingga 20 tahun iaitu seramai 152 orang (38.1%). Seterusnya diikuti julat umur 15 hingga 17 tahun seramai 133 orang (33.4%), julat umur 21 hingga 23 seramai 78 orang (19.6%) dan julat umur 24 hingga 25 seramai 37 orang (9.3%). Justifikasi umur 15 hingga 25 tahun dipilih kerana dalam kategori umur belia sebegini berpotensi melakukan atau terjebak dalam sesuatu keadaan atau perilaku yang bertentangan dengan norma agama, adat resam, budaya dan sistem nilai dalam masyarakat. Kajian ini melibatkan responden lelaki sebanyak 204 (51.05%) orang manakala perempuan sebanyak 196 (49.0%) orang. Responden terdiri daripada etnik Melayu seramai 133 orang (33.3%), Cina seramai 134 orang (33.5%) dan India seramai 133 orang (33.3%). Responden kajian ini merangkumi pelbagai latar belakang agama iaitu responden yang beragama Islam adalah majoriti dengan peratusan sebanyak 35.3% iaitu seramai 141 orang, diikuti mereka yang beragama Buddha seramai 112 orang (28.0%), Hindu seramai 106 orang (26.5%), Kristian seramai 38 orang (9.5%) dan lain-lain seramai 3 orang (0.8%).

#### 4.2 Tahap pengetahuan belia terhadap nilai-nilai murni

Bahagian ini mengukur tahap pengetahuan belia berdasarkan kefahaman mereka terhadap nilai-nilai murni yang diamalkan dalam masyarakat. Tahap pengetahuan belia telah diukur dengan menggunakan instrumen yang dirangka oleh pengkaji. Skala bagi jawapan yang salah adalah 0 manakala 1 bagi jawapan yang betul. Taburan kekerapan dan min bagi setiap item dalam dimensi pengetahuan responden ditunjukkan dalam Jadual 2.

Jadual 2: Taburan kekerapan dan min pengetahuan belia terhadap nilai-nilai murni

Bil.	Perkara	Salah (0) n	Betul(1) n	Min
<b>Nilai Kesederhanaan</b>				
1.	'Bersikap tidak keterlaluan dalam membuat pertimbangan dan tindakan sama ada dalam pemikiran, pertuturan atau perlakuan tanpa mengabaikan kepentingan diri dan orang lain'. Pernyataan ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.	183	217	0.5425
2.	'Wong tetap menggunakan telefon yang sedia ada berbanding kawan-kawannya yang sering menukar telefon setiap kali ada keluaran terbaru'.	98	302	0.7550

	Situasi ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.			
3.	'Ehsan membahagikan masa secara seimbang kepada diri, keluarga dan kerja'. Pernyataan ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.	199	201	0.5025

<b>Nilai Bertimbang Rasa</b>				
4.	Sifat menunjukkan rasa kasih, belas kasihan dan simpati/ berlaku adil seperti mengambil kira keperluan dan perasaan orang lain apabila membuat sesuatu tindakan merujuk kepada nilai _____.	92	308	0.7700
5.	'Suresh membuat bising dengan menunggang motosikal yang diubahsuainya tanpa menghiraukan masyarakat sekitar'. Sikap Suresh merujuk kepada kekurangan nilai _____.	175	225	0.5625
6.	'Siti yang tinggal di kawasan flat mencampak keluar sampah ke bawah tanpa menghiraukan orang yang lalu lalang atau perasaan jirannya yang tinggal di tingkat bawah'. Sikap Siti merujuk kepada kekurangan nilai _____.	169	231	0.5775
<b>Nilai Berbudi Bahasa</b>				
7.	Mengamalkan tutur kata dan tingkah laku yang sopan dalam kehidupan seharian mencerminkan nilai _____.	55	345	0.8625
8.	'Suzy bercakap dengan nada yang lembut sewaktu memberi penerangan kepada pelanggan di sektor perkhidmatan'. Situasi ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.	66	334	0.8350
9.	'Mira mengucapkan terima kasih apabila menerima sesuatu di atas pemberian seseorang'. Sikap Mira merujuk kepada kepentingan nilai _____.	67	333	0.8325
<b>Nilai Hormat Menghormati</b>				
10.	Perbezaan budaya, adat resam dan agama etnik lain perlu dihormati kerana ia kunci kepada keharmonian sesebuah masyarakat yang terdiri daripada pelbagai etnik. Pernyataan ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.	78	322	0.8050
11.	'Ravi tidak membantah cakap ibu bapanya apabila diminta untuk membuat sesuatu'. Sikap Ravi merujuk kepada nilai _____.	68	332	0.8300
12.	'Janet memahami amalan budaya kaum lain dan turut meraikan pelbagai perayaan apabila di undang'. Pernyataan ini merujuk kepada nilai _____.	95	305	0.7625

Analisis kajian menunjukkan bahawa pengetahuan responden terhadap kesemua empat nilai murni iaitu kesederhanaan, bertimbang rasa, berbudi bahasa dan hormat-menghormati adalah di tahap yang baik dan tinggi. Sebagai contoh bagi dimensi nilai berbudi bahasa, item 7 ("Mengamalkan tutur kata dan tingkah laku yang sopan dalam kehidupan seharian mencerminkan nilai \_\_\_\_\_") menunjukkan seramai 345 orang

responden memberikan jawapan yang betul dengan min 0.8625. Begitu juga bagi nilai hormat-menghormati, item 11 (“Ravi tidak membantah cakap ibu bapanya apabila diminta untuk membuat sesuatu. Sikap Ravi merujuk kepada nilai \_\_\_\_\_”) menunjukkan seramai 332 responden memberikan kenyataan yang betul dengan min 0.8300. Analisis menunjukkan tahap pengetahuan responden terhadap kedua-dua nilai ini (berbudi bahasa dan hormat menghormati) berada pada tahap baik dan tinggi. Ini menunjukkan responden faham tentang kepentingan memupuk nilai-nilai murni dalam diri mereka. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan nilai berbudi bahasa merupakan nilai yang paling difahami oleh responden diikuti dengan nilai hormat-menghormati, bertimbang rasa dan kesederhanaan.

#### 4.3 Skor pengetahuan belia terhadap nilai-nilai murni

Tahap pengetahuan responden terhadap nilai-nilai murni secara keseluruhan boleh dilihat pada taburan skor merangkumi rendah, sederhana dan tinggi.

Jadual 3: Tahap pengetahuan nilai murni

Pemboleh Ubah	Frekuensi	%
Rendah	107	26.8
Sederhana	130	32.5
Tinggi	163	40.8

Dapatan dalam Jadual 3 menunjukkan seramai 163 orang (40.8%) responden mempunyai kefahaman yang tinggi terhadap nilai-nilai murni dalam masyarakat. Manakala skor responden yang mempunyai tahap pengetahuan yang rendah seramai 107 orang (26.8%) responden. Secara keseluruhannya, hasil kajian mendapati bahawa tahap pengetahuan belia terhadap nilai-nilai murni adalah tinggi dan menunjukkan mereka mempunyai asas kefahaman yang baik terhadap nilai murni yang diamalkan dalam masyarakat.

#### 4.4 Tahap pengetahuan belia berdasarkan etnik

Jadual 4 menunjukkan tahap pengetahuan belia berdasarkan etnik yang merangkumi etnik Melayu, Cina dan India.

Jadual 4: Tahap pengetahuan belia pelbagai etnik terhadap nilai murni

Etnik	Skor		
	Rendah	Sederhana	Tinggi
Melayu	27	58	48
Cina	27	37	70
India	53	35	45
JUMLAH	107	130	163

Jadual 4 menunjukkan tahap pengetahuan responden terhadap nilai-nilai murni adalah tinggi dengan majoriti seramai 163 orang responden mendapat skor yang tinggi. Seramai 130 orang mendapat skor sederhana dan 107 orang responden mendapat skor rendah. Etnik Cina mempunyai tahap pengetahuan yang tinggi terhadap nilai murni diikuti dengan etnik Melayu dan etnik India.

## 5.KESIMPULAN

Berdasarkan kajian yang dilakukan, tahap pengetahuan belia terhadap nilai-nilai murni yang diamalkan dalam masyarakat adalah pada tahap yang tinggi. Nilai-nilai murni memainkan peranan yang sangat

penting bagi menentukan tingkah laku dan membentuk serta memelihara peribadi mulia seseorang. Nilai-nilai murni patut dipelajari dan diajarkan kepada individu sebagai satu cara praktikal untuk membantu individu mengenal pasti kedudukannya dalam sesuatu isu sosial atau moral. Nilai bukan sahaja memberi tunjuk arah kepada seseorang tentang bagaimana dia patut berkelakuan terhadap orang lain, malah bagaimana untuk menilai tingkah laku sendiri serta orang lain. Pengetahuan nilai boleh diperoleh dengan melibatkan diri dengan keperluan kehidupan sebenar dalam komuniti setempat.

Generasi muda yang merupakan pewaris kepimpinan negara perlulah dididik dengan nilai-nilai murni agar terbentuk masyarakat yang bertamadun, beretika dan bermoral. Kepentingan nilai-nilai murni dalam kalangan belia adalah sejajar dengan Wawasan 2020. Cabaran ke empat daripada sembilan cabaran yang digariskan ada menyebutkan, cabaran untuk mewujudkan masyarakat yang sepenuhnya bermoral dan beretika dengan warganegaranya teguh dalam nilai agama dan kerohanian dan didokong oleh nilai etika yang tinggi. Ini dapat membantu perkembangan sahsiah diri belia yang lebih berdaya saing dalam semua aspek kehidupan tanpa mengetepikan akhlak, nilai-nilai moral dan adat ketimuran.

Nilai-nilai murni berperanan menyatupadukan pelbagai etnik dalam sesebuah masyarakat yang berlainan budaya, bahasa, agama dan keturunan. Nilai ini penting untuk masyarakat yang berdisiplin, pembangunan serta perpaduan negara.

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# ENGAGING YOUTH IN NATION BUILDING: ARTICLE 12 CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD IN A UK CONTEXT

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## Abstract

This paper focuses on the legal, and non-legal frameworks which facilitate the involvement of youth (aged 15-18 years) in aspects of nation building within the context of the UK. Taking Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as a starting point, an overview of youth contributions through school councils, local councils, youth parliaments and police organisations, alongside other avenues of participation such as activism and NGOs will provide the context of youth participation opportunities in the UK. Thereafter, current discussions in Scotland on the rights of those over 16 to vote in national parliamentary and local government elections as well as national referenda will be the central point of this paper in order to explore the ways in which young people are being empowered and to what end. As will be demonstrated, the Scottish example suggests that the UK is not only finally recognising the potential value of engaging young people in the process of formulating policies at various levels but also formulating policies and strategies to facilitate this. This is surely in keeping with the ethos underpinning Article 12 CRC.

*Key words: empowerment; electoral enfranchisement; Article 12 UNCRC; Scotland*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The work of the United Nations has been instrumental in shaping the legal framework supporting the involvement of children in the decision making process. The first international declaration involving the rights of children, the Declaration of Geneva, was adopted by the League of Nations in 1924 and began by decreeing that “mankind owes the Child the best that it has to give” (Preamble). The United Nations reiterated this sentiment in its Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959. Twenty years later, 1979 was declared the International Year of the Child. This provided further impetus for the international community to adopt a legally binding articulation of the rights of children. However, a further ten years elapsed before the text of the Convention was agreed.

Building on the belief that children are our future, the Convention accords a higher profile to children’s issues in recognition of their increasing role in society. Moreover, it promotes the premise that children should no longer be treated as chattels of their parents, but rather children should be independently recognised by the State and the international community. Hailed as the cornerstone of a new moral ethos for children, the Convention enshrined the four Ps: Provision, Prevention, Protection and Participation. As Hammarberg acknowledges, the Convention is weakest on the latter: participation (Hammarberg, 1990).

Participation might be viewed as having two fundamental dimensions: private and public. Within the (private) family unit, the Convention emphasises that the rights and responsibilities of parents should be consistent with the “evolving capacities of the child” (Article 5). Accordingly, the older and more mature the child (defined as up to 18 in the Convention), the greater the respect to be accorded to their views vis-à-vis his/her private life. However, the Convention extends this right to participation to all

matters affecting the child taking this right beyond the private sphere particularly in the rights set out in Article 12, again given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. It is clear therefore that not only should children should be consulted in decisions which have the potential to affect their status and rights, but also, taking into account Van Beuren's suggestion that "[i]f the hallmark of a democratic society is a plurality of expressed opinions and contributions by those living within it then participation of children ought to be valued." (Van Beuren, 1995: 131). This paper is concerned with this latter aspect of child participation, noting at the outset that historically the views of children have rarely been accessible to, or invited by, decision-makers largely because few States providing a central, or even local political or other forum for children's opinions to be freely expressed. Van Beuren suggests that the Convention aimed at reversing this, operating "as a catalyst to change the value which society places upon children's contributions" (Van Beuren, 1995: 145). Participation of children in decisions is one of the most controversial aspects of the Convention as it means as transfer of power from the adult parent or guardian.

As a corollary to freedom of expression (Article 13), children have the right to be heard (Article 12(2)). A right which the Innocenti Project has suggested is both a substantive and procedural right (Lansdown 2001). Accordingly, under the relevant international law, children should be seen *and* heard. The Convention also grants children the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly (Article 15). In conjunction with full realisation of freedom of expression, this would appear to promote children's fora, such as those employed by the United Nations, the European Parliament and, as we shall see, the Scottish Parliament. If children are allowed to regularly meet (even if in cyberspace) and discuss issues of relevance to them, any resulting consolidated opinion will be more representative of the views of children and should be accorded more weight by the decision making authorities.

Consequently the expectation seems to be that the views of children must be taken seriously by the relevant authorities and acted upon, where appropriate. As Sutherland suggests, this provision may have limited effect in practice as:

[t]o leave unfettered decision-making power with children would fly in the face of the responsibility of the adult members of any community, not only to protect children from other adults, but also to protect them from their own inexperience. (Sutherland, 1999: 81).

The dilemma is reflected in different approaches to children's rights and becomes increasingly acute as children move towards adulthood and both want and need to escape protective boundaries and policy constraints.

Upon consideration of the first report of the United Kingdom to the United Nations' Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee suggested that the State should accord greater priority to incorporating, inter alia, those provisions on the right of the child to have his/her views known and given due weight in legislative and administrative measures and policies aimed at implementing the rights of the child (i.e. Article 12). Furthermore, it was recommended that the State consider "the possibility of establishing further mechanisms to facilitate the participation of children in decisions affecting them, including within the family and the community." (U.N. Committee 1995: para 27). In Scotland, the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 was adopted in partial response to this report. It radically changed the laws of Scotland in relation to children and partially redressed the perceived deficiencies in the existing law. The progress in Scotland was recognised in the views of the Committee on the second periodic report submitted by the United Kingdom (UN Committee 2002: para 45), with the Scottish Parliament welcomed as an example of how participation and consultation with children could be increased, (UN Committee 2002: para 29). However, the Committee still considered that more could be done to realise the rights of children under Article 12 (UN Committee 2003: paras 30 and 46). As will be seen, the UK has made advances towards ensuring adequate participation of young people, though much remains to be done.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN UK

This paper concerns young people, particularly those aged sixteen and seventeen years. According to the last (2011) census figures, there are approximately 770,000 sixteen year olds and 790,000 seventeen years olds in the UK. As stated in Participation Works:

Children and young people under the age of 18 make up around one in five of the UK population. They are one of the largest user groups of public services – they go to school everyday, seek advice about their health, use public transport, take part in local sports and other activities, and are affected by crime. But most individuals and organisations, statutory and voluntary sector services, businesses and local government fail to ask them for their views – views and experiences that would improve service planning, design, and implementation; opinions that would save money by making sure what's on offer is what children and young people want. Nearly 20 years after the UK ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 'tipping point' for participation has been reached.

In this paper it is argued that the participatory right, as enshrined in the Convention, goes further than simply involving children in decisions which directly affect them. Rather, the right can be extended logically to the general involvement of children in decision making and policy formulation, and that involvement extends to the political arena as much as to any other area of activity. The challenge for national law lies in articulating the right to participation in a manner which reflects the spirit of the Convention, creating a real right for youth to be genuinely involved in the process. Central to this challenge is that existing concepts of citizenship need to be questioned in order to consider what citizenship could mean for children and society. Sutherland states that while participation is a child's right, decision-making is an adult responsibility (Sutherland, 1999: 81). However, as is becoming apparent from the evolving application of the U.N. Convention, the difference is becoming less distinct albeit slowly. With respect to the formal decision-making process, there is a growing recognition that children have a role to play and have the ability to contribute usefully to deliberations.

Analysing youth participation from a citizenship perspective provides some further insights into current developments aimed at facilitating effective youth participation. Citizenship, or in other words legal and political status, is of course a status which can be denied to, or qualified in respect of individual members of society. In the case of young people, particularly those who do not have the legal right to vote, it would appear that society views them primarily as 'citizens- in-waiting'. Traditionally, the language of children's rights has reinforced this image of the child as a 'future citizen'. The Convention on the Rights of the Child with its interconnected principles offers a blueprint for active citizenship. Such a redrawn vision of citizenship must recognise, and seek to promote, the valuable contribution young people can make to society, not just in the future, but also in the here and now. Indeed, if participation is to be meaningful it must go beyond simply taking part to include bringing about change through being heard (UNICEF UK).

In the UK, the last ten years have brought dramatic increases in the participation of young people in society. This development has, in part, been facilitated by the permeation of social media through almost every fibre of society. At an early stage of this evolution, pupils were afforded opportunities to be involved in school councils. These take a variety of forms: some perhaps involve pupils (usually nominated by their peers) having a small degree of budgetary control; others extend to them an advisory role on certain aspects of school life (eg uniform); and others may evolve control to pupils running controlled aspects of the school. Obviously the principal laws on education must be complied with but pupils can be offered degrees of autonomy in a number of areas. The advent of Children's Commissioners offered another avenue for the voices of young people to be heard. The UK has four commissioners – Scotland,<sup>1</sup> Wales<sup>2</sup> and Northern Ireland<sup>3</sup> have commissioners whose functions and

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<sup>1</sup> Established by The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003

powers are compatible with membership of the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children; England has a different model, one which was not purported to be ‘a traditional rights based Commissioner’.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, each Commissioner’s office makes clear efforts to engage with children and young people. A number of consultation exercises have ran over the years since establishment. Each Commissioner appears to see her or himself as a voice-piece through which the views of children and young people may reach a wider audience.

Alongside these developments, there has been a growth in opportunities for young people to directly contribute to the wider society and, indeed, the legislative process. Many laws and policies are preceded by consultation exercises. Today, responses to the consultation questions posed by the government, can be delivered electronically. Young people do take the opportunity of responding when the issues are of interest, and some schools even use such consultations in their citizenship classes. The Commissioners also act as a repository for views of children and young people, such views being fed (formally or informally) into the legislative process. Local Councils and the devolved regional powers also take steps to consult with young people, the voters of tomorrow and potentially influential. Of course, twitter, facebook, instagram and a variety of other social media outlets, most legally accessible to those over thirteen years, offer hitherto inconceivable opportunities for young people to publicise their views on any and everything.<sup>5</sup> It is even possible for the government of the day to be forced to consider a matter if the electronic petition submitted online has attracted sufficient interest.

The Scottish Youth Parliament is a prime example of a mechanism by which young people can develop citizenship skills and feed into the nation-building process within the UK. In June 2000, the inaugural meeting of the Scottish Youth Parliament took place. Hailed as “an integral part of the decision making process” (Wallace, 1999) this historic event promised a significant advancement in the articulation of children’s rights in Scotland. That such an initiative happened in Scotland is, at least in part, testament to the new political culture which is emerging following the recent constitutional settlement and the consequent establishment of the Scottish Parliament in 1999. Since 1999, Scotland has developed a number of initiatives designed to involve children and young people in the political decision-making process. Scotland is taking a lead in initiating novel and innovative ways of bringing young people into the mainstream of the political arena. This is continuing - in 2014, Scottish voters will have the opportunity to vote in a referendum which will determine whether Scotland remains part of the United Kingdom. Traditionally only those aged eighteen or over by the relevant date can vote in public elections. However, there is currently debate on whether the right to vote should be extended to sixteen and seventeen year olds. Clearly, the issue is politicised in that there are perceptions as to whether young people will vote for or against independence. However, this is a prominent example that the UK is finally recognising the potential value of engaging young people in policies at several levels. Surely this is in keeping with the ethos underpinning Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and a milestone in citizenship development. As the Scottish Youth Parliament website notes its belief that ‘one of the best ways of getting involved in making decisions is through the ballot box’.<sup>6</sup> Engaging youth through direct political participation in youth parliaments and councils, progressing to full enfranchisement clearly reflects evolving capacity of young people. Moreover, it most clearly facilitates direct participation of young people in decisions which affect them – as young people on the cusp of adulthood, all parliamentary decisions are likely to impact on them as they enter full adulthood at eighteen years, and lose the protection of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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<sup>2</sup> Established by The Children’s Commissioner for Wales Regulations 2001

<sup>3</sup> Established by The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

<sup>4</sup> Joint Committee for Human Rights , Nineteenth Report, Session 2003-2004, Children Bill HL Paper 161/HC 537 para reporting Baroness Ashton’s response on the part of the Government to Question 72 raised by the Joint Committee.

<sup>5</sup> An analysis of the challenges posed by this is beyond the present paper.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.syp.org.uk/votes-at-16>

### **3. ENFRANCHISEMENT OF 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS**

The age of candidacy for the UK Parliament was lowered from 21<sup>7</sup> to 18 years in 2006,<sup>8</sup> in line with the age of enfranchisement which remains 18 years. Only in the Isle of Man and the Channel Island of Jersey have the voting ages been lowered to sixteen. However, in furtherance of a more inclusive participatory form of politics, the Scottish Executive issued a Child Strategy Statement in 2000 in which they outlined their position in relation to young people and participation. In addition, a platform for enhancing youth participation was already present in the form of an active network of youth fora across Scotland. The launch of the Scottish Youth Parliament in 1999 was therefore grounded in a tradition of youth involvement in Scotland. Almost fifteen years later, the Scottish Parliament is the first body in the UK to extend entitlement to vote to young people aged sixteen and seventeen. The Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Act 2013<sup>9</sup> specifically permits young people to vote in the referendum which will determine whether Scotland will remain part of the UK. The Act is limited in its application- it entered into force in August 2013 and will cease to have effect in January 2015.<sup>10</sup>

The Scottish initiative has a specific political agenda but more broadly there has been a campaign nationally (UK) to lower the voting age to 16 years. The Liberal Democrat party (currently holding power in the UK in coalition with the Conservative party) announced support for votes at 16 in 2001, though did not realise this at the time.<sup>11</sup> Despite an Electoral Commission Report (2002) which indicated that young people (aged 18-24 who were eligible to vote) were some of the least likely to turn out at elections, a coalition of political parties launched the 'Votes at 16' campaign<sup>12</sup> in 2003. This campaign continues today. A private member's bill aimed at lowering the voting age to 16 failed in 2003; as have subsequent motions and bills.<sup>13</sup> Amongst the reasons supporting the lowering of the age is the UK's citizenship education programme (Power, 2006). This was introduced in schools, partly in response to the UN's call for human rights education. Voting age is a divisive issue in the UK. From a children's rights perspective, there is certainly an argument for enfranchising 16 and 17 year olds. It arguably reflects their evolving competency in citizenship issues and engages them in political participation. Moreover, for those who have been involved in the work of the Commissioners or in youth parliaments and councils, it is logical to develop this to full voting rights. After all, a young person of sixteen or seventeen can marry, have children, or even join the military forces of the UK. However, they remain unable to vote for the government which exercises royal prerogative powers to deploy military forces overseas.

### **4. TOWARDS REALISATION OF ARTICLE 12 CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

Enabling children and young people to participate in the political arena requires an understanding of the multiplicity of forms which political participation can take. The literature on participation identifies various models of taking part in the process of political decision-making. However, the legal exclusion of persons under the age of 18 years from the electoral process clearly limits the ways

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<sup>7</sup> Parliamentary Elections Act 1695

<sup>8</sup> Electoral Reform Administration Act 2006

<sup>9</sup> Section 2 of the Act.

<sup>10</sup> Section 14 of the Act

<sup>11</sup> The 2010 election manifesto of the Liberal Democrat party supported votes at 16; the coalition agreement did not.

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.votesat16.org.uk>

<sup>13</sup> The most recent attempt is the Voting Age (Comprehensive Reduction) Bill 2012-2013, a private member's bill, introduced in the House of Lords, which did not succeed.

in which they can actively participate in the political process. A useful analysis of the different degrees of political participation open to children and young people is provided by Hart whose table of participation ranges from consultation to full participation.

As suggested by the Innocenti research referred to above, if children and young people are to be genuinely empowered to participate in the political process, certain conditions must be present including access to those in power and relevant information; genuine choices; and finally, a means of appeal or complaint if things go wrong. In some parts of the UK, the Commissioners offer avenues for complaints. So too do parliamentary complaints procedures, although this is largely limited to those eligible to vote. All too often though, participation is adult-driven and adult informed. Prout argues that due regard must be given to the well-being and social participation of children and young people, rather than concentrating solely on improving children's future lives as adults (Prout, 2000), and Ennew has pointed out that often, 'The discourses on child participation are embedded in the romance about childhood and sentimental views of children that characterize post-industrial societies' (Ennew, 1999).

There is increasingly research into the different models of children's participation, the motives behind its advocacy,<sup>14</sup> and the value of that participation.<sup>15</sup> In Scotland, the political will to enhance children's participation in the decision-making process is evident. The establishment of a new Parliament and Executive in May 1999 promised a new political culture in Scotland in which children's participation could be included from the outset. In the immediate future, Scotland's young people have new and exciting opportunities to participate in the political life of their country. The forthcoming 2014 referendum, with full voting rights for sixteen and seventeen year olds will undoubtedly be closely scrutinised and voting figures analysed. Whether – regardless of the outcome – the views and opinions of this age group will continue to be valued and given effect thereafter remains to be seen; certainly the Scottish Youth Parliament potentially provides a model for what can be achieved if the requisite political will is present. Similarly the impetus that this might give to the rest of the UK to lower the voting age more generally may depend on the extent to which young people in Scotland actively engage in the process. If, as is suspected by some, they do not turn out to vote, they question should be not 'what is wrong with young people' but 'what is wrong with the model' and 'how might Article 12 UNCRC rights be given better effect'?

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<sup>15</sup> See Tisdall 2013.

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# **‘UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL’: A CASE STUDY OF SRI LANKAN YOUTH IN CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

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## **Abstract**

Citizenship is essentially a legal formality that denotes membership of a state. However, it should contain an emotional element for individuals to willingly identify themselves with the nation-state. The absence of such emotion often prompts bloody conflicts where people attempt to carve independent entities of power by fragmenting the nation-state. Youth, with their inherent zest for grand ventures, are often keen participants and even initiators of such conflicts. Citizenship therefore should entail an active process of emotional engagement especially of youth in order that sustainable solidarity may be fostered. Sri Lanka stands as an ideal case study in this regard, demonstrating the terrible consequences of the isolation of youth – whether real or perceived – from the collective identity of the state and the equally powerful impact they can have when properly integrated into the state mechanism. This paper discusses Tamil youth disillusionment in Sri Lanka that manifested itself in a vicious ethnic conflict in juxtaposition with the role of Sri Lankan youth as agents of peaceful change in a post-war nation-building context. In drawing a conclusion the paper discusses the importance of active civic engagement of youth in building ‘One Nation One People.’

**Key Words:** *Youth, Sri Lanka, Citizenship, Conflict, Identity*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The language of citizenship is essentially vague, with a myriad of competing interpretations suggesting close, almost overlapping connotations. Nonetheless citizenship today is an element chiefly identified with the identity of an individual especially in terms of his affinity to a political community.

Owing to differences in historical contexts within which the concept emerged and later on developed, citizenship signifies a variety of diverse socio-political notions to diverse communities. Its legal implications however denote membership of a particular state, specifically a nation state, as yet the most important political community with the power to award or decline membership to individuals thus providing them with an identity.

However the legal factor alone is not sufficient for individuals to feel they are a part of the collective identity of the state either by birth or by naturalization. For citizenship to be meaningful, the emotion of belonging has to be present. This feeling is usually generated by inclusion-oriented policies states adopt to accommodate diverse ethnic/religious groups in order to create a shared identity as ‘One Nation One People’. Failure of state mechanisms to generate such feelings of solidarity often constitutes the ideal ingredient for revolutions or in extreme cases even protracted and bloody conflicts.

Youth, with their inherent zest for grand ventures, are often keen participants and even initiators of such conflicts. Youth led revolutions comprise a compelling case for the promotion of solidarity in the quest to preserve the character of nation-states in ethnically diverse societies.

This paper is chiefly concerned with unearthing the connection between the absence of the emotional element of citizenship and youth led violent conflict through a case study of Sri Lanka. The paper offers a historical analysis of the failures on the part of the Sri Lankan state in integrating Tamil youth

into the collective identity of the state, a failure that ultimately erupted in a bloody ethnic conflict that dragged for three decades, and juxtaposes it with the equally powerful impact Sri Lankan youth have as agents of positive change in a post-conflict nation-building scenario.

The paper progresses in three phases. First it discusses the notion of citizenship within a democratic context taking into account the multifarious features of it. Following this will be an analysis of the role of youth in identity driven conflicts. In section three the Sri Lankan case study will be presented as testimony to the role of youth in violent conflicts prompted by the absence of citizenship feelings in democracies, which will be contrasted with their role in post-conflict Sri Lanka as instruments of positive change in building a united country. Finally the paper will conclude on the point that the notion of citizenship becomes meaningless if it is devoid of active emotional engagement of citizens, especially youth who are more often at the forefront of conflicts that arise due to deprivation of rights to which they are entitled to by virtue of being citizens.

## **2. CITIZENSHIP: POLICY OF INCLUSION OR THE ART OF EXCLUSION?**

Citizenship as is commonly understood refers to a “personal status consisting of a body of universal rights (i.e., legal claims on the state) and duties held equally by all legal members of a nation-state” (Marshall, 1964; Brubaker, 1992, as cited in Somers, 1993, p.588). It therefore denotes a certain legally recognized condition by which an individual becomes a member of a particular state that makes him dependant on said state for the custody of an identity.

From a socio-political perspective citizenship can be understood in relation to two aspects. 1) The legal framework that stipulates rights and duties for citizens. 2) The creation of a common cultural identity for the citizenship of a particular state. In democracies that entertain an array of differing opinions, it is of crucial importance to sustain both elements because the idea of citizenship rests upon the attitudes of diverse political subjects who are free to make their own choice to adhere to or rebel against the established parameters of citizenship. Democracies require

... a certain degree of commitment on the part of its citizens... It requires that its members be motivated to make the necessary contributions: of treasure (in taxes), sometimes in blood (in war); and it expects always some degree of participation in the process of governance. A free society has to substitute for despotic enforcement with a certain degree of self-enforcement. Where this fails the system is in danger (Taylor, 1997, as cited in Haas, p.1-2).

Therefore it is understood that for citizenship to be meaningful citizens of a democratic state have to feel loyal towards the political community of which they are members. For minorities the intensity of this loyalty depends on the degree to which they are content as a minority. In other words, the condition of their rights is the key driving force behind their loyalty, or lack thereof, towards the state. Where minority discrimination is prevalent, whether in a real or perceived capacity, the lack of solidarity towards the state community is particularly evident.

Demand for equal political autonomy thus becomes the dominant feature of a democratic system that fails to guarantee equal rights to all its citizens irrespective of their religious, ethnic or political affiliation. This demand reaches a pinnacle and culminates in violent conflicts if minorities continue to feel excluded from the main body polity for a long time.

The notion of citizenship is quite ironical since the basic premises on which it is constructed namely 1) legal rights and duties and 2) other criteria of citizenship that effectively demarcate one political community from another, become the very reason for conflict in divided societies since in such societies the creation of a common citizenship essentially involves compromising sensitive elements of the culture, religion and ethnicity especially of minorities in exchange for a hegemonic and collective identity. In such cases the state is usually defined by symbols of the majority ethnicity. The very notion that aims to introduce a policy of inclusion hence results in generating a feeling of exclusion for some communities.

Irrespective of what the law stipulates and expects of a state's citizens, socio-cultural bonds of belonging should be prevalent for individuals to identify themselves as citizens of a nation-state. In the absence of protection, respect and recognition for cultural/ethnic differences such bonds cease to

exist and minorities become suspicious of the majority thus challenging the unitary character of an ethno-culturally diverse nation-state. Such fears result in violent conflict where minorities attempt to carve independent entities of power by fragmenting the nation-state proving that healthy sustenance of a nation-state rests not only upon the legal formalities of citizenship but also upon the willingness of its citizens towards identifying themselves as members of the nation-state.

### **3. YOUTH, IDENTITY AND FUEL FOR CONFLICT**

Youth, a term that refers to a transitional period in human life from childhood to adulthood, has no precise universally accepted definition. It therefore has no fixed age group across regions. For statistical purposes United Nations defines youth as persons between ages 15-24 while leaving space for other regional definitions as well.

The problem in specifying a particular age group for youth lies in its mental aspect. Youth is more of a psychological condition than a statistical category. It refers to a period in life where one transforms from a dependent child to an independent adult, undergoing many emotional and intellectual changes in the process. According to UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) youth can be defined in relation to education and employment where youth refers to the age group in which people leave compulsory education in search of their first employment opportunity. All these definitions illustrate that 'youth' is necessarily a period of transition and as such can involve many frustrations linked to ambiguous identity issues.

This provides ideal grounds for identity seeking ventures. When frustrations peak and identity is most easily contested, young people tend to devise solutions to their issues as a collectivity. In cases where social injustices play a major role in challenged identity, this method results in bloody conflicts through which they aspire to attain social justice as a group with a distinct identity and common grievances.

The case is even severe in heterogeneous societies where political and economic injustices are practiced for decades against a particular social group. Youth of such social groups feel more agitated than the average youth with identity issues and they tend to pin all their grievances on the historic process of discrimination exercised against their group. These perceptions are sometimes exactly that – perceptions. Discrimination might not always be real. For instance, the reason for a youth to be job deprived might be global factors such as global economic recessions or even corrupt governments who manipulate a country's wealth. S/he will most likely, however, blame it on historical discrimination against his/her ethnic group.

If a group of youth is denied equal employment and education opportunities on racial or ethnic grounds, the struggle in retaliation usually goes out of control. Their anger if discriminated on such particular grounds is usually directed towards segments of society that comprise perpetrators of the initial injustice or a larger group of people to whom the perpetrators bear affinity. These violent outbursts essentially require a mass of supporters to be rallied behind the cause. Such endorsement is usually drawn from among youth who entertain marked sympathy for the cause of the master minds of the struggle and who are also from the same deprived (subjective or otherwise) economic/social context.

This process necessarily involves a labeling process where two distinct groups are constructed: Us and Them. Whatever they do from this point onwards is viewed in zero-sum terms, for Us and against Them.

Such emotions are more intensely expressed in societies where state mechanisms fail to guarantee citizenship rights of all communities irrespective of their ethno-religious affiliations. Structural failures fuel violent youth led protests and conflicts in which they aspire to create separate distinct identities for themselves by divorcing themselves from the nation-state and crafting autonomous political entities where the rectification of injustices (perceived or otherwise) is sought. Sri Lanka stands a model example in this regard.

### **4. SRI LANKA: ETHNICITY, CITIZENSHIP AND POLITICS OF EXCLUSION**

Sri Lanka, an island off the southern coast of the Indian sub continent is blessed with moderate climate, scenic beauty, a rich culture and best of all warm and smiling people. It is therefore rightfully called the 'Land of Smiles'.

However, the picture is not as bright as these smiles suggest. Sri Lanka has a history marred with ethnic strife that found expression in a protracted armed conflict that endured for a staggering three decades.

Since the scope of the paper only entails the role of youth in the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict, an exhaustive list of reasons that spurred the conflict will not be discussed. Only a brief mention of historical factors that divided the Sri Lankan society will be made in order to get a basic understanding about the background to the problem. This section will be predominantly concerned with the lack of assurance Tamils had as rightful citizens of the country and the deadly response it elicited of Tamil youth towards the state.

#### *4.1 Roots of the Conflict*

Even though in popular belief it was the infamous 1983 communal riots that sparked the violent armed struggle between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL), history of communal tensions date back as far as the beginning of British rule in the island. Pre-colonial Sri Lanka despite having had accommodated different ethnic, religious and caste groups holds no record to bear testimony to intense divisions between said groups. The British during their rule from 1796 to 1948 exercised their notorious principle of 'Divide and Rule' to fuel communal hatred in order that the imperial agenda maybe executed with more ease.

Sri Lankans (then known as Ceylonese) like many other colonial subjects were naive enough to fall in the trap. The introduction of a market economy resulted in the creation of a new social group of elites who were quite different from the traditional ruling elite. This new group consisted of English educated anglicized locals who later went onto assume political office. This led to the creation of a new social class of ruling elites who during the colonial rule were only interested in securing their class interests as opposed to ethnic ones. This fact was clearly demonstrated by the very gesture of Sinhalese not opposing the election of Ponnambalam Ramanathan as the first Ceylonese representative in the legislature in 1910 because their intention was still to secure ruling class interests.

Class politics continued to dominantly inform politics of the island until the introduction of universal adult franchise in 1931. Even though the ruling elite (both Sinhalese and Tamils) opposed this move vehemently, the British granted franchise to the commoner. Seeing the wisdom of supporting this new system that so clearly assured them a continued hold on state power because of the numerical advantage, Sinhalese politicians craftily exploited it, a practice that did much to increase ethnic tensions in post-independence Ceylon.

##### *4.1.1 Politics of Post-Independence Ceylon*

As S.J. Thambiah (1986) correctly notes "... Sinhalaese-Tamil tensions and conflicts in the form known to us today are of relatively recent manufacture- a truly twentieth century phenomenon." These tensions owed much to the exploitative nature of the Sinhalese ruling class who fuelled communal tensions to their advantage. The first blow to the collective Tamil consciousness came in 1948 when Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake introduced the Citizenship Act depriving thousands of Up Country Tamils of their Ceylonese citizenship. Next it was the 1956 Language Act by Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike that left distaste in the Tamil mind-set. This Act not only forced a notion of Sinhala supremacy into the Sri Lankan consciousness, but also denied generations of Tamils of employment opportunities.

The growing discontent of Tamils due to the isolation from the main body politic led to Tamil demands for more political autonomy. These demands were comprehensively articulated in the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam Pact of 1957 and Senanayake-Chelvanayagam Pact of 1965. However, both pacts failed in the face of fierce Sinhala opposition.

Apart from political blunders, violence instigated by Sinhalese against Tamils engulfed the nation in the years 1957, 1977, 1981 and 1983. The incidence of violence was on the rise since 1977 and such occurrences became more frequent. What is the reason for ethno-religious riots to become frequent from 1977? What was the response of Tamils to the violence unleashed against them? What role did Tamil youth play in retaliation? Are interesting questions worth investigating.

Newton Gunasinghe in his essay "The open economy and its impact on ethnic relations in Sri Lanka" (Winslow & Voost, (Eds.), 2004) provides a detailed list of reasons for the increase of violence against Tamils after 1977.

- 1) Failure on the part of GoSL to provide a satisfactory political solution to the Tamil Question resulted in an armed struggle by military groups.
- 2) Violent fights between security personnel and militants being wrongly interpreted by the Sinhala population at large as fights between Sinhalese and Tamils due to calculated misinformation spread by some popular Sinhala press.
- 3) Mobs with political patronage taking law into their hands due to the general collapse of law and order in the country. These mobs played a major role in the 1983 riots.
- 4) Organized attempts of some extremist segments of Sinhala society to hit the Tamil entrepreneurial base resulted in pogroms.

What then was the Tamil response to these developments? An answer to the question is essentially interlinked with the role of Tamil youth for it was the youth who took it upon themselves to rectify the erroneous situation.

#### *4.2 Tamil Youth and their Separatist Venture*

Whilst the decline of political cordiality between Sinhalese and Tamils was the driving factor behind the growing ethnic rift, these issues were essentially underpinned by economic and social dynamics. These factors were what actually led Tamil youth to resort to an armed struggle since their presence was more obviously felt in regular life and as such encouraged more than politics did the perception that Tamil youth is unjustly deprived of certain citizenship rights that were in all fairness as much their entitlement as they were of the Sinhala youth.

Ethnic politics of exclusion which held special significance to Tamil youth were predominantly in the areas of language, employment and education.

Immediately following independence, Sri Lankan Tamils had more access to civil administration opportunities than Sinhalese as a result of their missionary English education. Christian missionaries opened schools mainly in the Northern parts of the island either because they found Tamils to be more willing to get educated (Mehrotra, para. 9) or merely to exercise their 'Divide and Rule' principle. Whatever their intentions were, the ultimate result was an English educated Tamil class leading government sector employment figures – numerically quite disproportionate to their population ratio to boot – a fact that left distaste in the minds of Sinhala politicians in post-independence Ceylon.

The Sinhala method of reversing the 'injustice' was perhaps more damaging than the method that caused the disparity in the first place. Prime Minister Bandaranaike, whose voter base comprised largely, if not entirely, of Sinhala nationalist factions whose support was mobilized and aggregated with the promise of nationalist reforms, made true of his promise and declared Sinhala the sole official language, straining the already fragile relations between Sinhalese and Tamils. The already highly selective and competitive affair of securing state sector employment was thus intensified by intentionally placing a bar that was sure to rule out Tamil participation to an alarmingly high level. Thence, minority figures kept dropping in the state dominated job market. Rising unemployment figures were a natural reason for youth who were directly affected by the phenomenon to rebel against the state of which they once considered themselves an intrinsic part.

Despite having fair job openings in the private sector which was still English dominated, Tamil youth considered themselves to be relatively deprived because state sector employment was still considered

the height of prestige for professionals in Sri Lanka. The drastic drop of Tamil figures in the state sector was quite conspicuous:

While 30 percent of the Ceylon Administration Service, 50 percent of the clerical service, 60 percent of the engineers and doctors, 40 percent of the armed forces, and 40 percent of the labour force in 1956...By 1970, they had plummeted to 5 percent, 5 percent, 10 percent, 1 percent, and 5 percent respectively (DeVotta, 2006, as cited in OBriain, 2012).

It is also important to note that apart from gradually falling employment figures, the introduction of an open economy in 1977 also had a significant impact on Tamil youth discontent. The dawn of the open economy also marked a not-very-healthy politicization process (one that had begun under the former government anyway) of the state administration sector which required political backing to secure employment. Most Tamils lacked such patronage because they were not properly integrated into the Sinhala dominated political scene, which effectively kept them out of the sphere of new employment (Gunasinghe in Winslow & Voost (Eds.), 2004). Added to this, public sector development in the Northern and Eastern provinces was not on par with the rest of the country which made the situation more disadvantageous for Tamils (Ibid.). Youth who were already agitated with the prevailing situation saw no wisdom in following the footsteps of their elders who demanded political solutions, lost faith in democracy and took affairs into their hands. It could be persuasively argued, however, that their response was quite disproportionate to the actual grievance.

Added to these was the issue of access to education. Education underwent a process of ethnicizing since 1970s that limited Tamil students from accessing education as freely as their Sinhalese counterparts. A standardization policy adopted in 1971 introduced new criteria for university entrance according to which the number of students qualifying for university entrance from each language was proportionate to the number of students who sat for university entrance from each language (World Bank). Thus for the first time in the history of independent Ceylon, university entrance too was conditioned by ethnic politics. In actual terms this policy meant that Tamil students had to score higher in order to get into university. Prior to the introduction of this policy university entrance depended purely on merit and thus Tamils who had a better secondary education thanks to the advanced system of schooling in the Northern parts of the country maintained impressive figures at university entrance. Though the policy was abolished in 1977, Tamil youth considered this to be a calculated move against Tamils at large since Tamil representation in the higher education system was severely tinkered by this policy.

While an array of other reasons including issues pertaining to land distribution and political discontent were adding one glum colour after another to the fabric of ethnic rivalry, Tamil youth in particular were directly affected in the spheres of language, education and employment, results of which had a tremendous impact on radicalizing some of them.

The ethnic conflict instigated by short-sighted Sinhalese politicians and fuelled by a minority of extremist factions of the Sinhala population did not until the 1980s transcend the boundaries of macro politics, essentially existing in the form of political bargaining between leaders of the two ethnicities. By the 1970s Tamil youth began to feel that their leaders were not able to protect their rights as lawful citizens of Sri Lanka and to accord them their due place in the land they call home. Frustrated with the existing conditions, an alluring yet brutal youth whom most discriminated young Tamils viewed as their saviour mobilized the disgruntled sections of Tamil youth towards a dear aspiration of a homeland where they could live with dignity. Hence the fight for a separate Tamil Eelam within the sovereign boundaries of Sri Lanka was started by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, an organization that was to grow muscle in years to come and become the world's deadliest terrorist organization.

Irrationalities on the part of Sinhalese politicians who discriminated a segment of the country's own people for decades on the grounds of language, education and employment thus resulted in political, economic and social alienation of Tamil youth who, seeing the futility of demanding their rights through political channels, with the impetus provided by 'Black July'<sup>1</sup> 1983 launched a deadly

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<sup>1</sup>Black July refers to anti-Tamil pogroms and riots in Sri Lanka during July 1983 that began as a response to an ambush on 23 July 1983 by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a Tamil militant group, that killed 13 Sri Lanka Army soldiers.

campaign against the Sri Lankan state which went on until 2009 when the LTTE was militarily defeated by Sri Lanka armed forces. Their failed quest for a separate state came at the cost of life and property damage of untold proportions.

#### *4.3 Youth in Post-conflict Sri Lanka*

After three decades of wasted prospects, lost opportunities and thousands of deaths, Sri Lanka today is on the path of reconciliation, with youth playing a major role to propel the country there. The terrible expression of youth discontent and its staggering cost have made policy makers today realize the crucial role of youth as potent forces of change. With an aim to engage this potent dynamism for positive change and to construct an inclusive notion of citizenship by cultivating strong bonds between youth from different ethnic groups of the country, post-conflict Sri Lanka finds herself concerned about empowering youth communities as a future investment for sustainable peace than ever before.

Youth being in a transitional age are impressionable and as such are easily influenced by certain notions passed onto them by older generations. In a post-conflict context such as the one found in Sri Lanka, such identities are necessarily informed by ethnic demarcations which can have adverse effects on sustainable peace. Therefore a healthy youth population is paramount to reverse the vicious cycle of hatred that plagued the country ever since independence.

Interestingly the current post-conflict situation in the island bears testimony to the growing tendency of Sri Lankan youth to actively participate in constructive societal transformation through youth led organizations dedicated to reconciliation. This is perhaps due to the fact that youth who were born into war and had witnessed the terrible consequences of it have realized the futility of such violent ventures that result only in destruction. They therefore have become the most ardent proponents of peace and demonstrate a promisingly strong need to avoid taking a path back to violence at any cost. Many initiatives are being taken all around the country displaying the willingness of youth to be dedicated to post-conflict reconciliation and stand up as 'One Nation One People.'

However, the state should take care not to take such feelings of common citizenship for granted and fulfill its role in order not to risk a relapse into armed conflict. Since policy blunders were chiefly responsible for the violent insurrection of Tamil youth in the 1980s, remedial initiatives have to be made at the highest level to negate the effects of lingering bitterness and successfully construct and promote reciprocal trust as well as inclusive citizenship in the collective mindset of all Tamils especially youth in general and radicalized segments of Tamil youth in particular. For this to be realized the government has to generate viable livelihoods for youth and embark upon a process of case-by-case healing especially when dealing with ex-LTTE cadres who were directly exposed to a hateful picture of Sinhalese. The state has to guarantee rights of all her citizens as equal, sovereign subjects irrespective of their ethno-religious affiliation. If this is not realized, the passions of youth might yet again be unleashed in favour of destruction instead of positive change as is now the case.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This paper has presented the nexus between youth unrest and absence of citizenship feelings through a case study of Sri Lanka. Despite being legally recognized as lawful citizens of a country, certain segments of society might resort to violence if state mechanisms continue to exclude them from the full range of benefits they are entitled to by virtue of their membership in the nation-state.

Sri Lanka stands a monumental example that illustrates how youth related issues are directly linked to the strength of a nation and how, if not properly integrated into an inclusive citizenship, youth with their intrinsic gusto for change can be a destructive force that might challenge and even destroy the very foundations of a nation. Youth therefore have to be ensured equal access to employment,

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Beginning in the capital Colombo on the night of 24 July 1983, the riots spread to other parts of the country during which Sinhalese mobs with political patronage burnt, looted and killed Tamil targets.

education and political opportunities so as not to let them entertain perceptions of injustice that would crack the foundations of a nation.

Creation of the LTTE explains the failure on the part of the Sri Lankan state in facilitating genuine fraternity between all her ethnic communities. Discrimination specifically in the areas of language, education and employment that had direct, adverse effects on Tamil youth indicated how their political leaders had sadly failed in winning them equal status as Sri Lankan citizens. In response they embarked on a secessionist movement of which the ultimate goal was the creation of a separate state where they were at liberty to exercise their free will for the benefit of Tamils and to provide Tamil identity with a respectable status.

In contrast to their negative role in retaliation to the injustice exercised against them (that owed largely to discrimination even though the violence they unleashed was not proportionate to their cause), youth in post-conflict Sri Lanka have assumed the role of agents of positive change and boarded a cause of creating a united Sri Lanka devoid of ethno-religious hatred.

The paper argued that Tamil political demands for equal accommodation of their collective identity as lawful citizens of post-independence Ceylon (later Sri Lanka) later on developed into a fully fledged armed conflict because they could not identify themselves as dignified citizens of the nation that excluded them from the collective identity of the Ceylonese/ Sri Lankan nation. Tamil youths' frustration manifested itself in the form of militancy since they were directly affected by calculated discrimination by the Sinhala ruling elite and had enough and more reason to lose faith in peaceful negotiation.

Numerically larger and more significant participation of youth in all spheres of society as active citizens is therefore pivotal in the attainment of sustainable peace. State mechanisms have to be more accommodative to realize this ideal. Unity within diversity in such instances will make a more telling case for emotional citizenship. The paper concludes by juxtaposing the different roles played by Sri Lankan youth in the initiation of the three decades long bloody conflict and in attaining peace in a post-conflict scenario. It hints that youth should not be ignored when negotiating citizenship ideals since they have the potential to have a heavy impact on society, negative or otherwise. Since they comprise a large portion of society their impact on citizenship, and everything else, is very much felt and thus they need to be mobilized to have a feeling for 'One Nation One People', the attainment of which will only be possible where there is genuine commitment to address their grievances be they political, economic or social.

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# THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INTERRACIAL INTERACTION, INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND INTERRACIAL BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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## Abstract

In this study, the author examined the relationships between interracial interaction, intercultural sensitivity, and interracial bridging social capital among Malaysian students of difference races at a Malaysian public university. Results of the regression analysis revealed that, while intercultural interaction and intercultural sensitivity are significantly correlated with interracial bridging social capital at bivariate level, only intercultural sensitivity has a direct correlation and significantly predicted interracial bridging social capital. Implications of the findings are discussed in the paper.

**Keywords:** *Interracial bridging social capital, interracial interaction, intercultural sensitivity, undergraduate students, Malaysia*

## 1. BACKGROUND

Universities with a multiracial student body offer opportunities for students of difference races to foster cross-race ties. Social ties are useful for personal and social developments because they constitute a form of social capital (Goddard, 2003). Much has been studied on bonding and bridging social capital, both at the individual and aggregate levels, but little has been studied on interracial bridging social capital-- social capital that allows individuals to draw resources and get support from others from different races. As interracial bridging social capital is basically about interaction, connection, and access to resources from culturally dissimilar others, intercultural sensitivity and interracial interaction are assumed pertinent. Yet, empirical evidence on the contribution of intercultural sensitivity and interracial interaction, both individually and collectively, on interracial bridging social capital are lacking.

In Malaysia, interracial bridging social capital is an important subject because student bodies in most universities are multiracial; thus, emphasizing the relevancy of racial integration among students. Equally important, social capital including bridging social capital has been found to correlate with a number of educational outcomes as observed in the literature (Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2009). Despite the presumed importance, little is known about the nature of relationships between intercultural sensitivity, interracial interaction, and interracial bridging social capital. To address this knowledge gap, the present study employed multiple regression analysis for examining the contribution of intercultural sensitivity and interracial interaction on interracial bridging social capital among students of the three major race groups in a public university in Malaysia. Within the framework of students' educational benefits and race relations, this study adds to the theoretical understanding of the role of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity in predicting interracial bridging social capital among students of a university with a multiracial student body.

### *1.1 Interracial Bridging Social Capital and Its Educational-Social Relevance*

Social ties, from the social theory perspective, have many benefits as they constitute a form of social capital. Sandefur and Lauman (1998) have asserted that social capital conveys benefits through the provision of information, influence, control and social solidarity. The growing social capital literature has been able to differentiate bonding from bridging social capital. Bridging social capital connects individuals to the social world and resources that exist outside their inner circles, as Fernandez and Nichols (2002) and de Souza Briggs (2007) have argued. Accordingly, the term interracial bridging social capital used in this study refers to social capital that allows individuals to draw on resources or get assistance from those that are racially different. This definition is consistent with Bourdieu's (1986) and Coleman's (1990) conception of social capital at individual level.

The significance of interracial bridging social capital to students can be inferred from educational benefits deriving from the weak ties. Chin et al. (2006) considers interaction and social ties channels for information and resource flow. Cross-race ties enrich the structural diversity that is present in a multiracial university setting and creates richer and more complex social and learning environments than the racially homogeneous ties. And in cross-race ties students can use socio-cultural identities as resources for intercultural understanding and collaboration. As observed in past studies (e.g., Arellano, Torres, & Valentine, 2009; Chang, Austin, & Kim, 2004; Hurtado, 2005; Milem et al., 2005), high levels of interracial interaction is linked to a more positive self-concept, problem solving skills, growth in leadership and cultural awareness/understanding, as well as a high level of civic interest.

### *1.2 Linking Sensitivity and Interracial Interaction to Interracial Bridging Social Capital*

Interracial bridging social capital is a social phenomenon that is centered on interaction, connection, and resources acquisition-sharing across racial boundaries. The positive impact of positive interaction across racial boundaries has been observed in many past intergroup contact and intercultural friendship studies. According to the intergroup contact theory, the positive contact across racial boundaries can also be seen in terms of improvements in interpersonal relations across race (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Saenz, et al., 2007; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). Accordingly, it is reasonable to expect that individuals who are actively involved in interracial interaction with peers of different races experience a higher level of social capital.

A discussion on the possible influence of interracial interaction on interracial bridging social capital must take into consideration one's ability to enact positive interracial interaction and relations. From the social cognitive theory perspective, ability is an important factor that affects behavior and functioning (Larsen et al., 2004). In the context of interracial communication and relationships development, one such ability is intercultural sensitivity. Intercultural sensitivity implies ability to produce a positive outcome of intercultural interaction (Chen, 1997) and capability for managing barriers to effectively working with people across cultural boundaries (Bennett, 1997). Past studies have suggested that individuals with higher intercultural sensitivity tend to do well in intercultural communication and relationship settings (Peng, 2006; Matkin & Barbuto, 2012). In examining the relationships of interracial interaction, intercultural sensitivity and interracial bridging social capital, it is also important to consider the probable confounding influence of self-identification orientation--seeing self either in racial identity first or in nationality term first. Past studies have found that communication and relationships across racial boundaries are affected by strength of identification with racial identity (e.g., Gudykunst, 1991; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2006; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009).

### *1.3 The Research Context*

Even though promoting and sustaining positive cross-race contacts and ties is important, and student-student interracial interaction is strongly endorsed and promoted by public universities in Malaysia, while assuming educational and social relevance of intercultural bridging social capital to the students, not much is known on the nature of the relationships between interracial interaction, intercultural sensitivity, and interracial bridging social capital among students of various race groups in Malaysian public universities.

The university being studied is a premier public research university with a multiracial student body. Racial breakdown of the student population closely reflects the 6:3:1 national ratio of Malay to Chinese to Indian, the three main racial groups in Peninsular Malaysia. The university is not only multiracial in its student population but also multicultural in its academic staff population. Malay, Chinese and Indian racial groups are quite well represented among members of the academic faculty.

#### *1.4 Research Hypotheses and Question*

Drawing on the above discussion, the present study addresses the following hypotheses and research question.

H1: Interracial communication is positively related with intercultural sensitivity.

H2: Interracial interaction is positively related with interracial bridging social capital.

H3: Intercultural sensitivity is positively related with interracial bridging social capital.

RQ: What is the contribution of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity, individually and collectively, on the students' interracial bridging social capital?

## **2. METHOD**

### *2.1 Sampling and Data Collection Procedure*

Self-administered survey questionnaires were used to collect data. The respondents were randomly drawn from a list of undergraduate students obtained from residential colleges of the selected university. The university is located close to the capital city of Kuala Lumpur. Although these colleges had a multiracial student population, the Malays were the dominant group--about 60 percent of the undergraduate students were Malays and this matched the race ratio in the country. First, three colleges were randomly drawn from a total of seventeen residential colleges. These residential colleges were contacted for a list of students and their student room numbers. Only Malay, Chinese and Indian students, the three major races in Peninsular Malaysia, were included in the sampling frame. Random sampling was done from the sampling frame and based on the last three digits of the students' matrix number. Trained research assistants met the respondents on an individual basis to invite their voluntary participation in the survey. Those giving their consent were requested to complete questionnaires. The respondents received a token amount of money for their participation. Out of the 460 students approached for the survey, a total of 193 Malay, 165 Chinese, and 72 Indian students participated giving a survey response rate of 97 percent. The samples represent all levels of undergraduate students—first-, second-, third- and fourth-year students, 29.5 percent, 35.1 percent, 30.2 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively.

## 2.1 Measurement

All respondents completed an eight-item interracial bridging social scale developed for the purpose of this study. The items were specifically developed but ideas for the items came from Ellison, Steinfield and Lampe's (2007) social capital scale. The eight-item interracial bridging social capital scale assesses the extent to which students were integrated in the multiracial environment and were able to draw resources and get support from others of different races. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to the following eight items: At this university, getting to know people with racial backgrounds different from my own has been easy; I'm able to find out about happenings in the university from friends of a different race; If I needed to, I could ask my student friends of a different race to do a small favor for me; I would be able to get necessary information from friends of a different race; There is someone of a different race in the university I can turn to for advice about making important decisions; There is someone of a different race in the university I can turn to for advice in solving a problem. Reliability analyses of the scale provided evidence of the internal consistency of the items ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ) for the entire sample.

Frequency of interracial interaction was indexed using two items with a 6-point scale. The respondents were asked "How frequently do you interact with peers from different race groups on this campus?" and "How frequently do you socialize with peers of different race groups on this campus?" The response scale for both items was: every day, 3-5 days per week, 1-2 days per week, once every week, and less often or never. A higher mean composite score on the scale indicates a more frequent interracial interaction. The alpha reliability of the scale is .72.

Intercultural sensitivity items were those from Chen and Starosta's (2000) intercultural sensitivity scale. The respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement, on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), to the items on the scale. The scale includes five sub-scales-- interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. The items were related to individuals' feelings about interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. The 24-item scale includes "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures," "I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterparts during our interactions with each other," "I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded." The alpha reliability of the scale is 0.90. Higher mean scores on the scale indicate higher ability.

The respondents were also required to state their year of birth and the number of semesters they had been at the university, and to mark the appropriate category pertaining to their gender, ethnicity, and how they preferred to identify self. Responses to the question on orientation in self-identification were categorized into two different groups - identity of self as a member of his/her racial group first or seeing him/herself as Malaysian first.

## 2.3 Analytical Approach

Descriptive analyses and zero-order correlations were performed prior to the stepwise multiple regression analyses. The descriptive analyses explored variations in the dependent and independent variables. The data were segregated by race group in the regression analyses.

## 3. RESULTS

With regard to the sample characteristics, as summarized in Table 1, the mean age for the Malay sample group was 21.09 years ( $SD = 1.45$ ), Chinese was 21.30 years ( $SD = 1.31$ ) year and Indian was 21.81 ( $SD = 1.42$ ) years. There were more female respondents than males in all three samples-- 64.9%, 64.3% and 73.6% females for the Malay, Chinese and Indian samples, respectively. The three sample groups were similar in terms of the number of semesters they had been in the university ( $M_{\text{Malay}} = 4.09$ ,

$SD = 1.66$ ;  $M_{\text{Chinese}} = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 1.74$ ;  $M_{\text{Indian}} = 4.63$ ,  $SD = 1.82$ ). More of the Malay samples identified self in racial terms first. More of the Chinese and Indian samples, on the other hand, identified self as Malaysian first, 61.8% and 73.6% respectively.

The frequency of interracial interaction with peers seems to differ across racial groups. The Indian sample had a higher mean ( $M = 5.13$ ,  $SD = 1.203$ ) than that of the Chinese ( $M = 4.70$ ,  $SD = 1.224$ ) with the Malays having the lowest mean ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = 1.211$ ) [ $F(2,427) = 13.528$ ,  $p = .000$ ]. Level of intercultural sensitivity also differs across racial groups. The Indian sample had the highest mean ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = .608$ ), followed by Malay ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = .479$ ) and Chinese ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SD = .477$ ) [ $F(2,427) = 6.295$ ,  $p = .002$ ]. With regards to level of interracial bridging social capital, the Indian sample had the highest mean ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = .641$ ), followed by the Malay ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = .689$ ), with the Chinese sample having the lowest mean ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = .749$ ) [ $F(2,427) = 10.467$ ,  $p = .000$ ].

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable		All n= 447	Malay n= 193	Chinese n= 165	Indian n= 72
Age (year)	Mean	21.22	21.09	21.13	21.81
	<i>SD</i>	1.431	1.450	1.311	1.429
	Range	18 - 27	19 - 26	19 - 27	20 - 27
Gender	Male	33.8%	33.1%	35.7%	26.4%
	Female	66.2%	64.9%	64.3%	73.7%
No of semester	Mean	4.18	4.09	4.08	4.63
	<i>SD</i>	1.730	1.659	1.741	1.821
	Range	2 - 8	2 - 8	2 - 8	2 - 8
Self-identification orientation ...					
	As member of racial group first	44.6%	56.9%	38.2%	26.4%
	As Malaysian first	55.4%	43.1%	61.8%	73.6%
Frequency of interracial interaction					
	Mean	4.58	4.29	4.70	5.13
	<i>SD</i>	1.250	1.211	1.224	1.203
	Range	1 - 6	1 - 6	1 - 6	1 - 6
Intercultural sensitivity	Mean	3.77	3.77	3.70	3.95
	<i>SD</i>	.518	.479	.477	.608
	Range	2.6 - 5.0	2.7 - 5.0	2.6 - 5.0	2.7 - 5.0
Interracial bridging social capital					
	Mean	3.61	3.63	3.45	3.89
	<i>SD</i>	.720	.689	.749	.641
	Range	1 - 5	1.5 - 5	1 - 5	2.1 - 5

*Note: Higher means indicate more frequent interracial interaction and high level of intercultural sensitivity and interracial bridging social capital.*

Table 2 presents zero-order correlations between the variables. As shown in Table 2, age was positively and significantly related with the two independent variables-- frequency of interracial interaction ( $r = .104, p = .014$ ), intercultural sensitivity ( $r = .081, p = .043$ ), and the dependent variable-- interracial bridging social capital ( $r = .104, p = .014$ ). Gender and number of semesters were not significantly correlated with the independent and dependent variables. Self-identification orientation was negatively related with frequency of interracial interaction ( $r = -.159, p = .000$ ), intercultural sensitivity ( $r = -.099, p = .019$ ) and interracial bridging social capital ( $r = -.102, p = .015$ ). As expected, frequency of interracial interaction was positively and significantly related with intercultural sensitivity ( $r = .284, p = .000$ ) and interracial bridging social capital ( $r = .219, p = .000$ ). It was found that intercultural sensitivity is positively and significantly correlated with interracial bridging social capital ( $r = .473, p = .000$ ). There was no multicollinearity problem because none of the main variables highly correlated with each other.

Table 2. Zero-Order Correlations (Overall Sample)

Variable	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(1) Age	.025 (.299)	.586 (.000)	-.018 (.350)	.104 (.014)	.081 (.043)	.104 (.014)
(2) Gender (1= Male)	-	-.015 (.379)	.017 (.360)	.011 (.406)	-.064 (.088)	.015 (.379)
(3) No of semester		-	.012 (.404)	.058 (.110)	.038 (.214)	.063 (.094)
(4) Self-identification (1= Racial group first)			-	-.159 (.000)	-.099 (.019)	-.102 (.015)
(5) Frequency of interracial interaction				-	.284 (.000)	.219 (.000)
(6) Intercultural sensitivity					-	.473 (.000)
(7) Interracial bridging social capital						-

Note. Figures in bracket are *p* values.

Results of stepwise regression analyses by racial group are presented in Table 3. The frequency of interracial interaction, self-identification orientation, and age were excluded variables. As shown in Table 3, only intercultural sensitivity was found to significantly contribute to interracial bridging social capital. The findings hold true for all three race groups. Nevertheless, the strength of contribution varies across the three race groups. Intercultural sensitivity explained 23.4% for the variance [ $F(1,191) = 58.237, p = .000$ ] in interracial bridging social capital for the Malay group. The same predictor explained slightly less, 19.7% [ $F(1,163) = 33.175, p = .000$ ] and 16.9% [ $F(1,70) = 17.150, p = .000$ ] of the variance in interracial bridging social capital for the Indian and Chinese samples, respectively. The findings clearly indicate that intercultural sensitivity is the only significant predictor of interracial bridging social, although frequency of interracial interaction correlates significantly with interracial bridging social capital at the bivariate level.

Table 3. Stepwise Hierarchical Regression Predicting Interracial Bridging Social Capital

Variable	Malay		Chinese		Indian	
	$\beta$	<i>t</i> -value	$\beta$	<i>t</i> -value	$\beta$	<i>t</i> -value
Intercultural sensitivity	.483	7.631*	.411	5.760*	.444	4.141*
R square	.234		.169		.197	
F	58.237		33.175		17.150	
<i>df</i>	1, 191		1, 163		1, 70	
<i>p</i>	.000		.000		.000	

Note. \*  $p < .01$ ; Frequency of interracial interaction, self-identification orientation, and age are excluded variables.

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to examine the relationships between interracial interaction, intercultural sensitivity, and interracial bridging social capital among students in a university with a multiracial student body. The impetus of the study comes from the gap in the local literature on factors affecting students' interracial bridging social capital. Results of the bivariate correlations analysis lend support to the hypothesized positive relationships between frequency of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity (H1), and between frequency of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity with interracial bridging social capital (H2 and H3). The findings are in line with past studies suggesting the positive role of frequent interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity in higher education practices (e.g., Arellano, Torres, & Valentine, 2009; Chang, Austin, & Kim, 2004; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Milem et al., 2005; Saenz, et al., 2007; Stearns, Buchmann, & Bonneau, 2009). The present findings suggest that students who frequently interact with peers of different races are more likely have a higher level of intercultural sensitivity. And these two variables are correlated significantly with interracial bridging social capital.

However, the nature of relationships of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity with interracial bridging social capital are not the same. Results of the stepwise regression analysis clarify the relationships further. Intercultural sensitivity is the only variable to have a direct positive relationship with interracial bridging social capital and is a significant predictor. The relationship of frequency of interaction to interracial bridging social capital, on the other hand, is indirect and is not a significant predictor. This means that frequent interracial interaction is not enough but it is the quality that matters more with regards to level of interracial bridging social capital. The assumption here is quality of interaction is much associated with abilities to interact and relate to culturally dissimilar others effectively -- intercultural sensitivity. This argument is in line with findings of past studies that individuals with higher intercultural sensitivity tend to do well in intercultural communication and relationship settings (e.g., Hurtado, 2005; Peng, 2006; Matkin & Barbuto, 2012).

In sum, the major contribution of the present study lies in not only providing evidence but more importantly clarifies the role of interracial interaction and intercultural sensitivity on interracial bridging social capital, and thus underscores the theoretical and practical significance of intercultural sensitivity for the purpose of improving students' interracial bridging social capital. The practical significance of intercultural sensitivity to students of the university being investigated is obvious. Hence, what the university can do is to reasonably enhance intercultural sensitivity which, in turn, will heighten interracial bridging social capital among the students. In addition to endorsing, promoting and enhancing greater positive cross-racial interaction among students, the university should provide



students with greater opportunities for intercultural sensitivity development through well-designed programs and the university should also implement soft skills development instructional programs-- both in and out of the classroom activities.

The present study was carried out in a public university with predominantly Malay students. Although this study is a step towards raising important questions and revealing the critical factor influencing interracial bridging social capital among students, the generalizability of the findings is limited to universities with a similar context. In addition to replicating the study in other public universities with a similar context, a similar study should be replicated in private universities where Malay students are the minority to see whether the patterns in the findings can be replicated. Finally, to enable a better and more comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand, a model of drivers of and barriers to interracial bridging social capital in an increasingly diverse campus environment should be developed.

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# YOUTH BACKGROUND AND FINANCIAL WELLBEING

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## Abstract

**Objectives:** The study aimed to (a) assess the difference based on ethnicity and age in financial well-being among Malaysian youth. **Methods:** Data were obtained from 2011 Youth Index (MYI' 2011). The MYI' 2011 provided indicators of the overall health and well-being status of Malaysian youth and was designed to identify potential issues affecting young people's quality of life and well-being. For this study authors used financial well-being indicators from MYI'2011. **Sample:** The sample consisted of 5720 young Malaysians between the age range of 18 and 40 years old. Majority of the sample (68.3%) were Malay, 14.2% were Chinese, 7% were Indians and the remaining 10.5% were east Malaysians and other ethnicities. Majority of participants lived in urban areas (56%) and rural areas (46%), while a very small portion of the sample resided in Felda/Felcra communities. **Results:** There were significant differences regarding financial security indicators among Malaysian youth based on youth's ethnicity and age groups. Financial security was also found to be significantly associated with security. **Implications:** The findings indicate that young people's financial wellbeing might be an aspect that could be enhanced through tailored youth programs

**Keywords:** *Ethnic differences, Economic Well-being, Youth Development,*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Report on youth in Asia Pacific by United Nation (2012) revealed that young women and men are spending more time in school hence delaying their time entering labour market. The report also highlight that youth are three to five times more likely to be unemployed than adults in some part of Asia Pacific. In other words, this statement shows that there is high tendency on financial dependency among youth in Asia Pacific. Currently, Malaysian youth has been bombard with similar issue which is very significant to their future. Financial issue namely saving, education debts, high cost of living, financial security and many more has been preoccupied the mind of our youth. Research suggests that young people have different view on debt: some focus on credit as a necessary investment in status accomplishment (Frank, 1999; Bowen et al., 2009) while others concern that readily available credit invites carelessness that can erode the self-concept as debt encumbers achievement and future consumption and increases a sense of hopelessness (Manning, 2000, Loonin and Plunkett, 2003). Current report in Malaysian Youth Index 2011 shows that there are areas in youth financial wellbeing that need to be improved to ensure the stability of these young people. Hence this study aims to focus on financial issue among youth in Malaysia.

## 2. BACKGROUND

Steps taken by Malaysian government to introduce an educational loan to help lessen the burden of our university student has both positive and negative impact. Initially it helps these young group of people to starts their independent life, however a study on selected University students in Malaysia by MohdFazli et al., 2008 shows that 46.3% has low level of financial wellbeing and almost all of them had low level of financial behavior. This finding is crucial since it shows that the tendency of this young group of people to be involved with debt would be high. With the latest 20 cents increment per liter for petrol consumption,

Malaysian society has to accept the fact that they have to expect increment in other aspect of their life too. Due to the increment, most of expenses are increasing for instance, prices of food and groceries, vitamins and medicine, school bus fares and tuition fees are on the rise every now and then. The most fearful increment is in the area of housing, the housing price is beyond people's budget whereby 20' to 70' square foot house would cost an individual around RM423, 000 the minimum and the most affected groups are these young people. To understand more about the financial wellbeing of Malaysian youth, this paper try to explore and understand the very basic of Malaysian youth financial situation such as the relationship between their background and their financial wellbeing aspect such as their saving, financial security and indebtness.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

Data for this article is gathered from Youth Index 2011 questionnaire. Variable used for this article are demographic and financial wellbeing which covers the issue on indebtness, employment, workability and financial security. Indebtness represent the amount of debt that the Malaysian youth is having, whereas employment and workability covers the issue of ability of having job and amount of salary in comparison to cost of living. Finally, financial security which reports the ability of Malaysian youth to safe money for their future.

### **4. RESULTS**

Table 1 summarizes the Sample's Demographic & Socio-demographic characteristics. One can observe that 52.3 of the sample consisted of Male youth, that majority of the sample (44.2%) was between 21 and 30 years old; also 69.8% of the sample was Malay and 73.1% of the participating youth reported to be Muslim. Also from table 1, it indicates that 32% of the sample reported a Total Household income between rm1001-rm2000; 41.4% has already obtained their SPM/SPMV. The youth that took part of the study were mostly living in Cities (56%) and rural areas (40.6%) and a very small portion of the sample (3.3%) were living in FELDA/FELCRA compounds<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup>FELDA/FELCRA are Federal Land Development Authority and Federal Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority

Table 1: Demographic &amp; Socio-demographic

		N	%
<b>Gender</b>	female	2731	47.7
	Male	2989	52.3
<b>Age groups</b>	Adolescence (15-21 years old)	1826	31.9
	Youth (21-30 years old)	2528	44.2
	Young Adults (31-40 years old)	1365	23.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Malay	3906	69.8
	Chinese	812	14.5
	Indian	403	7.2
	Sabah natives	279	5.0
	Sarawak natives	192	3.4
<b>Religion</b>	Muslim	4105	73.1
	Buddhist	686	12.2
	Hindu	360	6.4
	Christian	465	8.3
<b>Total Household income</b>	less rm500	590	12.4
	rm501-rm1000	1187	24.9
	rm1001-rm2000	1524	32.0
	rm2001-rm3000	995	20.9
	rm3001-rm4000	470	9.9
<b>Highest Education</b>	not in school	81	1.4
	UPSR	216	3.8
	SRP/PMR	975	17.2
	SPM/SPMV	2351	41.4
	STPM/STAM/Sijil/Diploma	1322	23.3
	Degree (BA/BS)	603	10.6
	Master's degree	131	2.3
	PhD	5	.1

For the purpose of the analysis, Malaysian youth was categorized into Adolescence (15-20 years old); Youth (21-30 years old); and Young Adults (31-40 years old). And in terms of ethnicity, there are 5 groups in which Malaysia youth are categorized as Malay, Chinese (Chinese heritage); Indian (Tamil heritage) Sabah natives; Sarawak natives.

The frequency analysis results show that the distribution of religion among the five (5) different ethnicities was significant, [Chi square (12) = 11754.32;  $p = .000$ ]. Among Malay youth 99.6% reported to be Muslims. In contrast 82.9% of Chinese youth reported to be Buddhist and 15% to be Christians. Whilst majority of them (88.8%) were Hindu, 3.3% of them indicated to be Muslims and 7% Christians. Among Sabah natives 36.0% reported to be Muslims and 61.8% Christians. Similarly 30.6% of Sarawak natives indicated to be Muslims and 68.3% and said to be Christians.

#### 4.1 Financial wellbeing among Malaysian youths by ethnicity

The descriptive for the scales used to measure financial wellbeing among Malaysian youth are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Descriptive for financial wellbeing

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min.Score	Max. Score
indebtedness index	4602	42.99	28.72	.00	100.00
employment index	3421	44.28	22.98	.00	100.00
workability index	3912	49.85	29.38	.00	100.00
financial security index	3713	50.67	17.55	.00	100.00

The analysis Of Variance indicated that there were differences between the 4 types of races of Malaysian youth in terms of financial security index [F (4, 3622) = 18.011, p = .000]; indebtedness index [F (4, 4500= 4.634; p=.001]; employment index [F (4, 3332= 7.70; p=.000] and workability index [F (4, 33818= 3266; p=.011].

More specifically, a Post hoc test revealed that Chinese youth score significant higher (M=56.14; D=16.22) than the other 3 race groups (p<0.05); while Indian youth score only significant higher (M=52.35; SD=17.18) than Sabah natives (p<0.05). However Malay youth (M=49.83; SD=17.66), Sabah natives (M=46.24; SD=16.64) and Sarawak natives (M=48.81; SD=19.03) did not differ at all in financial security index (p<0.05). In terms of indebtedness index [F (4, 4500= 4.634; p=.001], the Post hoc test reveals that only Malay and Chinese youth score significantly difference. That is, Malay youth (M=41.90; SD=28.49) scored significantly lower than Chinese youth Chinese (M=47.25; SD=29.12) (p<0.05).

According to the Post hoc test, in employment index [F (4, 3332= 7.70; p=.000], Sarawak natives (M=38.93; SD=25.22) scored significantly lower than both Chinese (M=48.43; SD=23.79) and Indian youth (M=47.74; SD=25.90) (p<0.05). While Malay youth (M=43.48; SD=22.29) scored significantly lower than Chinese youth; Malay youth scores were not significantly different to Sarawak natives and Sabah natives (M=45.94; SD=24.08) or Indian youth in employment index (p<0.05). Also the Post hoc test indicated that in Workability index [F (4, 33818= 3266; p=.011] Sabah natives scored significantly lower (M=42.52, SD=32.24) (p<.05)

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## 5. CONCLUSION

Overall result shows that Chinese youth are more prepared in term of financial security which means they have better preparation for their future than the rest of the group. They are also better in handling debt. Result also portray that among these five groups of young people that have been the focused on this study, Malay youth need to be empowered in term all aspects of financial

wellbeing. Youth in Sabah and Sarawak scored fairly in all sub domain of financial wellbeing except workability. There were significant differences regarding financial security indicators among Malaysian youth based on youth's ethnicity and age groups. The findings also indicate that young people's financial wellbeing might be an aspect that could be enhanced through tailored youth programs. Since most of the youth involved are from 21-30 years old (44.2%) with only SPM or SPMV (41.4%) level of education, focus need to be given on this group for any intervention to be.

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# Factors Contributing to Creativity among Youth: A Review

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## Abstract

Youth have a critical role to play in every country. Hence it is important to preparing youth with appropriate competencies. Creativity is becoming increasingly important for our society. It empowers young people with the notion that they can translate their goals into tangible reality and also in order for youth to be prepared to work in partnership with adults, they need to develop and enhance their creativity. It contributes to economic prosperity as well as to social and individual wellbeing. This article reviews factors that may contribute to creativity among youth. A model developed based on review of possible determinants of creativity. Results of the study would help policy makers to give greater focus on the factors affecting creativity among youth. Thus the scope of youth activities, budget allocation, staff training, educational approach and goal would be better defined by taking cognizance of the results from this study.

**Key words:** *Creativity. Competency. Development. Youth.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Youth have a critical role to play especially in developing countries that aim to achieve the status of a fully developed country. Hence it requires preparing youth with appropriate competencies. In order for youth to be prepared to work in partnership with adults, they need to develop and enhance their competencies. Creativity is one of competencies that becoming increasingly important for our society. It contributes to economic prosperity as well as to social and individual wellbeing. Creativity as form of knowledge creation can stimulate learning, supporting and enhancing self-learning and life-long learning skills and competences among youth (Ferrari, Cachia&Punie, 2009). Creativity has been defined as a product or process that shows a balance of originality and value. It is a skill, an ability to make unforeseen connections and to generate new and appropriate ideas (Ferrari et al., 2009). The above description makes it clear that creativity is essential for youth development and there is a need to encourage the development of creativity among youth. It is therefore important to explore factors that contribute to their creativity. The purpose of this article is to review the results of literature to identify factors contribute on youth's creativity. It is important to note that this article was not intended as a comprehensive review of all the factors that may influence creativity.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW



## *2.1 The Concept of Creativity*

Creativity means many things to many people (Madden & Bloom., 2007). The concept of creativity has been used in numerous contexts. Creativity is often perceived as synonym for originality, and is allegedly connected to arts, music and artistic performance. However all areas of knowledge and all school subjects can benefit from creativity (Ferrari, Cachia&Punie, 2009). Creativity as form of knowledge creation can stimulate learning, supporting and enhancing self-learning and life-long learning skills and competences among youth (Ferrari, Cachia&Punie, 2009). The concept is generally defined as useful novelty that can be applied and add value to an organization (Oldham & Cummings, 1996). McGoldrick (2002) and Oliver (2002) defined creativity as personal innovation, as taking risks, as making sense out of difficulty, as process of narrative. Landry (2001) defined creativity as ways of thinking that encourage innovation and generate new possibilities. Carty (2002) defined the essence of creativity as the capacity to consider new ideas and develop new technologies. Creativity involves bringing together pieces of information from different places and combining them into something useful to the organization (Amabile, 1988). Creativity is the development of ideas about practices, procedures, products that are novel to an organization (Oldham and Cummings 1996; Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham 2004). Some researches on creativity focus on individual differences in personality, cognitive abilities, and problem- solving styles. However, recent theoretical work looks at creativity as something the brain does naturally. From this perspective all human beings have the potential to develop creativity. However, whether the creativity is expressed or not depends on factors such as the socio-cultural context, personality differences as well as personal experiences (such as knowledge and skills). Within work settings, it is also apparent that organizational policies and practices as well as managerial behaviors influence creativity among workers. By defining creativity as useful novelty, psychologists have clearly placed the emphasis on creativity as an outcome. Others, however, are beginning to look at creativity as a process that flows over time in response to problems (Drazin et al., 1999).

## *2.2 Factors Contribute to the Creativity*

### *2.2.1 Goal setting*

According to Egan (2005) goals enable to stimulate personal creativity. On the other hand, creativity can be encouraged when the goals aim toward crucial areas for improvement.

### *2.2.2 Evaluation and feedback*

Feedback also plays a crucial part to boost creativity among youth. Some studies have shown that the evaluation and feedback enables to less creativity of employees because intrinsic motivation by employees maybe decreased (Amabile, Goldfarb, &Brackfield, 1990). However other studies indicated that evaluation can increase creativity by increasing the levels of motivation (Harackiewicz& Elliot 1993). Therefore, it is dramatically essential for any organization to know how to evaluate their people in the way that can stimulate their creativity. Feedback and evaluation can be applied for youth in high school, university and any other organization in order to increase their level of creativity.

### *2.2.3 Teamwork (workgroup)*

Partnership with teammates could generate new ideas that may influence the level of individual creativity. However some people create more ideas when they are discrete or isolated. Therefore individual creativity may or may not be increased by teamwork (Shalley, 1995). However result of study conducted

by Thatcher and Greer (2008) and Amabile et al. (1996) revealed that workgroup positively affect individual creativity.

#### *2.2.4 Role models*

Role models are an important influence for personal creativity. Learning from role models such as leaders can develop creativity among youth (Bloom & Sosniak, 1981).

#### *2.2.5 Supervision*

There are various researches demonstrate that supervision behavior affect the creativity of individuals in any organization. The role of supervision is to support employees to generate creative ideas by stimulating their intrinsic motivation. Study by Oldham and Cummings (1996) have shown supportive supervisors positively affect individual creativity.

#### *2.2.6 Personal Characteristic and Creativity*

Research has suggested that certain personality characteristics such as confidence and high levels of self-esteem may be correlated with individual creativity (Martindale, 1989; Goldsmith & Matherly, 1988). Creativity is affected by a variety of individual characteristics (Rodan & Galunic, 2004; Schaefer, 1969; Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Even though the cognitive processes of creativity are the same for everyone, there is no doubt that some people are more creative than others (Dacey and Lennon 1998). Individual differences influence creativity of individuals. Creative individuals have several features that separate them from others. For example; they have a rich body of domain-relevant knowledge and well-developed skills, and they find their work really motivating (Simonton, 2000). They tend to be independent and more risk-taking, and to have wide interests and a greater openness to new experiences (Simonton, 2000). Results of past studies show that openness to experience generally relates positively to creativity (Feist, 1998). Researchers examined the possible effects of individual 'mood states on their creativity (Madjar et al., 2002). Previous work suggests that mood consists of two separate dimensions: positive and negative (Burke et al., 1989). Much of the prior work in this area focused on positive mood. It suggests that when individuals experience positive moods, their creative thinking and problem solving skills will be facilitated (Hirt, Levine, McDonald & Melton, 1997).

#### *2.2.7 Creative self-efficacy and Creativity*

Indeed, self-efficacy beliefs for engaging in creative behaviors appear to be important in helping youth creative activities (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Creative self-efficacy is the subjective belief in one's personal ability to be creative, that is, a personal assessment of one's own creative potential (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). Creative self-efficacy, on the other hand, involves a specific judgment regarding the capacity for creative action (Tierney and Farmer, 2002). The greater the creative self-efficacy possessed by a person, the more the person will have opportunities to apply their creative potential in the form of creative action. According to Jeffery et al. (2009) this relationship is likely to be strongly positive.

#### *2.2.8 Motivation and Creativity*

Findings of creativity research showed that intrinsic motivation is correlated with higher creativity (Keith Sawyer, 2011). Researchers reasoned that intrinsic motivation can generate new ideas.

#### *2.2.9 Leadership and Creativity*

According to (Elkins & Keller, 2003; Gumusluoglu&Ilsew, 2009) leadership behaviors such as vision, support for innovation, autonomy, encouragement, recognition, and challenge are the determinants of creativity. According to a recent survey of 1,500 chief executives conducted by IBM's Institute for Business Value, CEOs identify creativity as the ability to generate novel and useful solutions, as the most important leadership competency for the successful organization of the future (Kern, 2010). Creative leadership allows leaders to move organizations in profitable new directions, a view supported by management research showing that leaders with creative ability are more effective at promoting positive change and inspiring their followers than leaders who lack creative ability (Mumford, Marks, Connelly, Zaccaro, & Reiter-Palmon, 2000; Shin & Zhou, 2003; Shin & Zhou, 2007; Sternberg, 2007). Shin and Zhou (2003) stated that transformational leadership was relatively more positive influence on personal creativity because of high-orientations. We propose that people who express creative solutions may be viewed as having higher levels of leadership competency.

#### *2.2.10 Physical Environment and Creativity*

Vithayathawornwong et al. (2003) studied the physical environment and its influence on creativity. They found that physical environment influenced creativity. Finding of study on perception of undergraduate business students about the extent to which the classroom environment supported creativity showed that the classroom can be a hospitable place for creative development (Driver., 2001). These findings are important for educators and managers as well. How might the arrangement of studio and lecture space be in order to enhance students' creativity?

#### *2.2.11 Socio-Cultural Environment and Creativity*

According to Rudowicz (2003) a person can make a change in an area only because of the existing knowledge and tradition. This change can be evaluated, accepted and transmitted through time. Hence, the social and cultural environment in which an individual functions affects the development and expression of creativity. Culture influences how creativity is channeled. Different cultural, social, political and historical circumstances have encouraged creativity in certain human activities, while discouraging it in others. Therefore, depending on the cultural setting, some people receive more or less encouragement to be creative (Weiner, 2000).

#### *2.2.12 Training Creativity*

Pinard and Allio (2005) designate an approach to integrate creativity into the university curriculum. They also offered some evidence of its effectiveness. McIntyre, Hite, and Rickard (2003) also reported that graduate business students provided creativity training showed an increase in their creativity ability. In addition, Anderson (2006) provided evidence that creativity in MBA courses can increase student creativity and the value that students place on creativity.

A model developed based on review of literature. Figure 1.

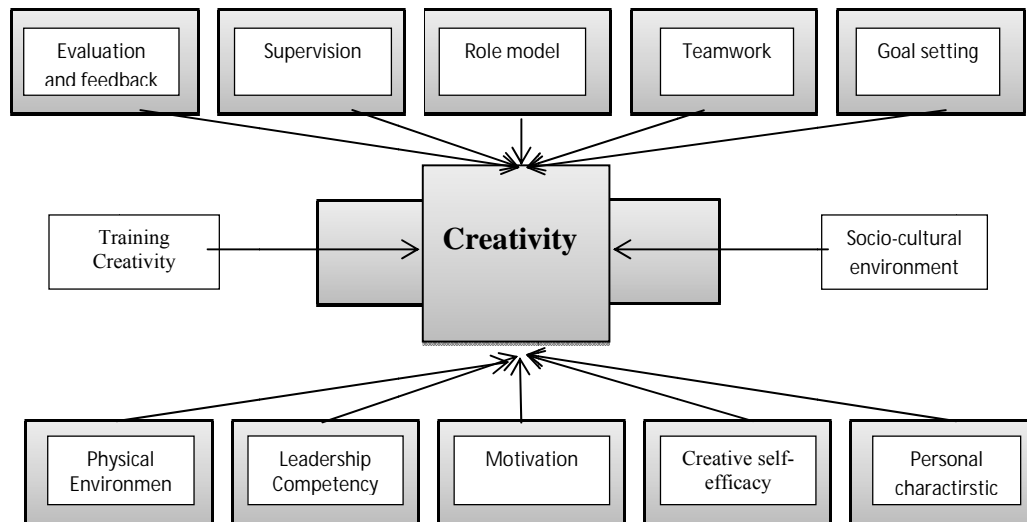


Figure 1. Factors contribute to youth creativity

## CONCLUSIONS

Creativity is a basically human characteristic. People usually feel motivated and fulfilled if they are creative. Literature indicated the importance of several factors such as evaluation and feedback, supervision, teamwork, goal setting, role model, physical environment, social-cultural environment, motivation, creative self-efficacy, and personal characteristic that may have significant effects on individual creativity. Education has a crucial role in promotion creativity among youth (Andiliou& Murphy, 2010). Higher education is about helping youth to develop their full potential. Hence the goal of higher education should be helping youth to understand and develop their unique creativities. It means, enabling them to be a creative, should be part of a higher education missions. Thus educators, leaders, manager, even parents should nurture and develop creativity competency among youth though education and training. It is also suggested to engage youth in creativity behaviors in order to enhance the creativity among youth. Youth can be taught to use creative thinking and problem solving for specific aspects of their life. It is vital to encourage creative self- efficacy and goal setting among youth and also provide a good role model and physical environment for them in order to develop creativity competency among youth. The practical implications of this review paper are clear. The importance of creativity in industry, education and any organization is increasing and youth can be prepared for future. Another clear implication is that multimodal approaches and learning activities stimulate and improve creativity among youth that should be taken into consideration.

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# DEVELOPING YOUTH ASSETS FOR NATION BUILDING THROUGH LEISURE

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## Abstract

Leisure is a significant part in the life of every individual as they spent a large portion of their lives on leisure activities. For the youth, it is also an important component for their development, particularly in developing their positive assets. Through leisure, the youth are able to freely explore various roles and experiment with their lives to establish their self-identity and competencies in their daily lives, as well as for leadership and nation building. However, as an activity, leisure does also have its shortcomings and can lead to negative behaviours. This though can be addressed through proper engagements by the youth, through purposeful and intentionally structured leisure programme/activities, through leisure education, as well as from services of leisure providers and supports of the community. Leisure is an attractive proposition for youth because of its pleasurable, fun, challenging and developmental characteristics. This paper then demonstrates how the concepts of leisure relates with positive youth development through leisure programmes and leisure education.

*Keywords: Leisure, Positive Youth Development, Leisure Programmes, Leisure Education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Leisure time is one of the most significant of time of the youth. It is where it defines and redefines their identity, and directions in life and their micro and macro environments (Caldwell, in Jackson, ed., 2006). It has a major impact on their development, socialization, and future life (ibid). Nonetheless, Caldwell believes that leisure can promote and contribute to positive development of youth and prevent risky behavior. She also conclude that leisure (time, activity, and infrastructure) is a key context for education, learning, human development, and full participation in civic life and society, including global interdependence (ibid).

This concern of how the youth spend their leisure time was highlighted by the international community when the United Nations demonstrated its importance in their World Youth Report 2003. The report pointed out that it is during this out-of-school time when the youths are faced with risky situations that could lead them to at-risk behaviours such as drinking, smoking, unprotected sexual activity, delinquency and violence. On the other hand, the United Nations also pointed out that the discretionary leisure time can also play in integral role in the individual youth's development and their communities. Constructive, voluntary activities and opportunities can engage the youth in their development and their contributions to the community. This is where opportunities offered by institutions and organisations could address this issue of ensuring the positive development of youth in their leisure.

Where leisure time activities are concerned, the Malaysian Youth Index 2011 published by the Malaysian Institute for Research in Youth Development indicated a high score of 51.5 suggesting that Malaysian youth spend a significant amount of time on their leisure activities, and that generally the youth are more interested in these leisure activities as compared to conventional sports, clubs and associations. Waterman (cited by Caldwell, in Jackson, 2007) pointed that it is through such activities that youth are able to experiment with their lives that are self-depressive and self-defining. And it is through these self-defining activities that youth determines their identity (ibid).

Basically, youth leisure activities should not be considered as a contributor to youth problems or at-risk behaviours. Their leisure itself has nothing to do with that. It is the other associated elements that determine whether the youth will become an asset in nation building or a deficit or at-risk to their community from their leisure. It is how they engage in leisure activities that will determine whether there will be positive or negative outcomes. For instance, some leisure activities such as sports and recreation have been found to be associated with high intrinsic motivation, participation, interest, playfulness, and well-being. In contrast, hanging around and watching television or videos lead to low levels of positive development (Weichold, in Silbereisen & Lerner, 2007). Leisure contexts moreover, stimulate positive youth development, but should be characterized by structure, supervision, safety, and support; and that it can incorporate life skill programmes (ibid).

The purpose of this paper therefore is to examine the various contexts of leisure, discuss how leisure relates to youth asset development, the contribution of leisure education in developing youth competencies and positive assets, and share examples of cases where leisure contributes to positive youth development. It is therefore to generate awareness on how leisure activities should be programmed and its education so that leisure becomes a constructive platform for developing youth assets. It demonstrates the concept that leisure is a very important component of positive youth development, but provided that the activities are purposely structured with the element of education.

## **2. LEISURE AND DEVELOPMENT**

Leisure is considered as a contributor to human and community development socially, culturally, and economically. Through leisure, cultural life in societies are preserved; cultural identity is formed; valued lifestyles are formulated; health and well-being are enhanced; families are developed; relationships are built; and communities are bonded.

The World Leisure Organisation (WLO), an international and world-wide non-governmental association of individuals and organisations engages in advocacy for optimizing leisure experiences, legislation, infrastructure, leadership, and programming. They also conduct research, and foster leisure as a force for human growth, development and well-being.

Members of World Leisure through their scholarly work of researchers, educators, practitioners, professionals in the field and others, believe that leisure enhances the human condition, through exploration, renewal, reflection and self-actualization. Leisure is integral to social, cultural, economic, and sustainable environmental development. It is from leisure that an individual derives social benefits, develops the family, builds relationship, bonds the community, share experiences, promotes intimacy and emotional closeness, cooperation and collaboration. It is also a contributor to the quality of life and well-being comprising of relaxation, satisfaction, self-fulfillment, and happiness.

In its broadest context, leisure encompasses play, recreation, arts and culture, sport, festivals and celebrations, health and fitness, travel and tourism, education. All these contexts of leisure manifests in *time*, that is, time left over after all obligations or *surplus time*, where work and other duties have been fulfilled or free time; *activity* – pursuits during free time and are uncoerced; *experience* – something that is perceived as freedom, as condition, self-fulfilling and self-enriching; as *state of being* – a psychological state of mind, an attitude, a mental condition.

Leisure is characterized by intrinsic motivation, sense of freedom, time that is voluntary, pleasure, satisfaction, personal choice, self-determination. The purpose of leisure is relaxation, diversion, social achievement, personal development. It has been categorised in three forms: serious leisure, casual leisure, project-based leisure.

Nonetheless, leisure is a very complex concept where there is no universal shared meaning for it. The free time concept is what most people associate leisure with. In reality, it goes far beyond that.



Leisure is a very important component of an individual's life. It is part-and-parcel of every person's life other than work and family life. Simple daily activities like relaxing over television, a recreational walk, social gathering, playing games, surfing the internet, are some activities considered as leisure. However, they are to be not part of a person's work, are participated voluntarily, uses surplus time that is left over, and are engaged in out of free choice, that is, not out of coercion. However, sleep cannot be considered leisure as it is an obligation of the human condition. Even household chores are not leisure because it is an obligation.

But a word of caution though. While leisure has many benefits for the individual, wrong engagements can also lead to serious consequences. By itself, leisure is neutral and is neither positive nor negative. It is the other contributing elements in leisure that could lead to negative outcomes. Nonetheless, it has many positives for youth development. And this paper shall share that.

### **3. LEISURE AS CONDITION FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Robert A. Stebbins from the University of Calgary, Canada and a distinguished member of World Leisure Organization has proposed three perspectives of leisure: *serious leisure*, *casual leisure*, and *project-based leisure* (Cohen-Gewerc & Stebbins, 2007). It is an expansion of the fundamental concept of leisure to define leisure in more precise perspectives.

In these perspectives, *serious leisure* is the type of leisure activities that are of the hobbyist, amateur, or volunteer activity type where it is centred on building special skills and knowledge and has long-lasting benefits (Blackshaw, 2010) that participants find them substantial, interesting and fulfilling (Cohen-Gewerc & Stebbins, 2007). And it is also where it could lead to a career. However, serious leisure requires perseverance and involves challenges, but also where participants will still find their engagements as enjoyable, fulfilling, and or both, as well as being personally and socially rewarding (Cohen-Gewerc & Stebbins, 2007).

*Casual leisure* on the other hand is leisure that can be considered as being unproductive, as argued by Blackshaw (2010). However, it is intrinsically rewarding, are pleasurable requiring little or no special training to enjoy, and is pursued purely for enjoyment or pleasure (Cohen-Gewerc & Stebbins, 2007). Casual leisure is usually found in activities that are considered as relaxation, passive entertainment, sociable conversation, sensory stimulation, and casual volunteering. Its main benefits as explained by Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins are creativity, play and development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

The third perspective is *project-based leisure* which requires planning, effort, some skill or knowledge, but neither really serious and is voluntary. It is short-lived though because it depends on one-shot or occasional projects. After the project is over, that's it. There are some benefits derived from them such as a learning experience from engaging in the project as a volunteer. Some new basic skills could also be learned. It is just that the engagement may not last long enough for any potential career skills to be developed. In this sense, such leisure may not contribute to sustainable or long-term benefits.

So based on these forms of leisure, serious leisure and to a bit of extent, project-based leisure are the forms of leisure where leisure has the prospects of contributing to youth assets for nation-building. These engagements develop the 6 Cs of positive youth outcomes – competence, confidence, character, connection, caring, and contribution. A youth's involvement in serious leisure activities will him enable to develop new knowledge and skills from the hobbies or volunteer activities they pursued in. They would also learn about values and ethics from their volunteer or amateur work. When they link up with their counterparts with similar interests, they develop their connection and networking as well as social competencies. At the same time, the time they commit to such activities enable them to learn how to manage their time constructively. As they develop all these, they build their character to be more responsible members of the community. They learn how to care and understand their community. And in a way, contribute to their organization or community or nation.

A good example of a serious leisure activity is amateur radio or *radio ham*. These hobbyists have to be skilled in radio communication where their international networking has enabled them to help save lives in emergencies. Likewise, are those on social networking (ie. the positive side of it). And being involved in volunteerism activity in a voluntary NGO leads them to learn about and develop competencies in managing an organization as well as events which are actually careers in the professional world. It is however, not easy to cite all cases because each leisure activity has its own specific competencies and required skills. Those who have interest in and pursue the field of arts and drama have ended up in careers as dancers or actors. Even a negatively pursued favourite leisure activity of young people, the *mat rempitsor* illegal motorcycling racers could actually develop positive competencies because they can become professional racers or motorcycle mechanics.

Nonetheless, to ensure that leisure contributes to development of positive assets of the youth, we have to recognise and understand the conditions that enable the youth to engage positively in leisure. And these conditions are the values and benefits the youth seek from their leisure experiences and what they expect to gain from the activities. These values and benefits are what Edginton, et al. (2004) referred to as *preferred conditions*. While they thought of values as preferences or ideals people desire, benefits are the improved condition or desired change of state.

DeGraaf et al. (1999) have argued that for leisure and recreation to benefit the individual, there must be certain conditions. They are: *freedom*, which is the ability to act without interference or control from another and that a successful leisure experience requires some element of personal choice by participants; *perceived competence*, where the participants have a degree of competence equal to the challenges of the intended leisure experience and where they match their skill levels to a particular experience; *intrinsic motivation* in which the pursuit of leisure must come from within each person and that the leisure activity itself motivates the individual to act; *locus of control* which is where the individual is able to exert some influence within the leisure experience for the successful leisure experience to occur; and, *positive effect*, the satisfying leisure experience that result is positive affect for the participants.

Understanding and incorporating these conditions into leisure programmes for a satisfying leisure experience and positive outcomes is what is expected from leisure professionals when planning and programming such activities. While some leisure activities such as play need not be programmed and be just a spontaneous activity that occurs suddenly through the initiative by the participant, purposeful leisure or recreation intervention programmes are necessary for the programmes to be deliberately designed and constructed in order to produce certain behavioural outcomes in an individual or group. These behavioural outcomes can include learning new skills, increasing fitness levels, having fun, meeting new friends, and so forth (DeGraaf et al., 1999). Leisure programmes, according to Edginton et al. (2004) “provide opportunities for participants to develop skills, form values, learn processes, and express themselves creatively, intellectually, socially, and physically” (p.32).

There may be a variety of ways in programming leisure experiences, but DeGraff et al. (1999) argued that it requires a holistic view of both the individual and the community; and that of the nation. Youth are the future leaders and future builders of the nation. As such, they are the main stakeholder in the progress and development of the nation. Therefore, in designing any programme, there has to be a systematic process of preparing, delivering, and evaluating the programme (ibid) to ensure that goals and objectives are met. At the same time, programming is an art where it requires creativity and experience, according to DeGraaf et al. (1999).

#### **4. ELEMENTS OF LEISURE PROGRAMME FOR YOUTH**

In designing any leisure programme for youth, it has to go through a process of programming. The **programme** should also be structured in ways that are developmentally appropriate to accommodate the biological and neurological stage of **development** of the intended participants (which in this case are the youth) (Witt & Caldwell, 2010). Witt and Caldwell (2010) also suggested that sound

**principles** are also important to ensure that youth join and do not drop out of the programme because it is through sustainability of involvement in a programme that will ensure achievement of its long-term **outcomes** of changes in attitudes, knowledge, or skills, as well as in behavior and skill competence (ibid). Once the outcomes are determined, then the process leads to identification of the needed **resources and inputs** that could produce the results. Hence, programmes should therefore be **purposive and intentional**.

As a guide, Witt and Caldwell (2010) cited eight features of quality youth programmes for positive development that were identified by the National Academy of Sciences: physical and psychological safety; structure that is developmentally appropriate; supportive relationships; opportunities to belong; positive social **norms**; **support** for efficacy and mattering; opportunities for skill building; and **integration** of family, schools, and community efforts. However, Witt and Caldwell (201) also cited a study that found out that certain characteristics are critical factors to ensure that youth attend or not drop out of a programme. The responses are: flexibility of rules and programme **content**; variety of **activities** with hands-on learning experiences; opportunities to learn practical skills; programmes that are interesting and engaging (not boring); programmes that address family issues; programmes offered at convenient hours or suitable **time**. The study also found staffing as an important issue to youth participation and these issues include: people who treat youth with respect and trust; and, **people** who are skilled at working with youth. This means that a programme need people who **serve** to enable the youth clients to make use of the services provided that can include transportation or provision of logistics, health care, instruction, training, management, leadership and so forth.

To begin with, programming should first identify and assess the *Needs* of not only the individuals, but also of the community and the nation. The identification of needs would then define and outline the philosophy and framework of the programme to be planned and organized. Since individuals have diverse needs and that leisure programmes itself are so broad, it is not possible to neither generalize nor meet every need. Since youth development is about developing their assets, the assessment and identification of needs helps to enhance the assets that they already possess and to facilitate those that they lack (Witt & Caldwell, 2010). If a programme does not meet their need, they will not participate nor be involved as they are not able to **value** the leisure experience nor benefit from it. And the developmental needs that Witt and Caldwell (2010) referred to are five: **the need to establish an identity; the need to establish autonomy; the need for achievement; the need to develop a moral compass, and the need to develop close relationships, intimacy, and become comfortable with one's sexuality**. Nonetheless, the developmental needs of the youth has to also consider and be balanced with the needs of the community and the nation as we want our youth to be fully functional, healthy, competent, knowledgeable, and progressive adults who can be future leaders and enablers in nation building.

However, in programme planning, Witt and Caldwell (2005, 2010) have proposed the use of **logic models** where a programme begins with identifying the *impacts* which is the long-term outcome of the programme that should be achieved after more than a year from the completion of the programme. The planning then works backwards to short-term outcomes of the changes that were taking place or attainable immediately after the programme; then the outputs which are the results from the activities and participation that would be achieved from the programme; the activities and participation that would be achieved as a result of the activities of the programme; and finally, the resources and inputs that are needed for the programme to work. In planning, this process work backwards, but in implementation, it works forward from determining the desired programme objectives and outcomes, to organizing the resources and inputs, implementing the activities, and produce the desired outputs. These four phases of the model is dependent on the skills of the programmers and within their control; but when it comes to the outcomes, that depend on the participants to facilitate the necessary changes within themselves. In facilitating change, the central component is **education** that could only be enabled from their own self-directed **learning**.

To grow and develop themselves, the youth need to learn, but with the adults as enablers in this process (Witt & Caldwell, 2010). Witt and Caldwell (ibid) pointed out that youth do not need adults to

do things “to” or “for” them; but they need the opportunities to “develop themselves” through active experience or *experiential learning*. This is where in this context of leisure, we have *leisure education*.

## 5. LEISURE EDUCATION FOR YOUTH

Leisure-based programme have been found to contribute significantly to the development of a youth’s identity, self-esteem and competencies. This becomes a platform to learn skills that are associated with character values, among them responsibility, conformity, persistence, risk-taking, courage and self-control (Danish et al., 2006). However, the experience gained from the participation alone may not enhance positive development (Bengochea, 2001, cited in Danish, Taylor & Fazio, 2006). Smith and Smoll (1996, cited in Danish et al., 2006) argued that experience must be accompanied by learning skills that can lead to fostering positive development. Learning from the leisure experience must therefore accompany their leisure activity participation (Lee, K.M., 2012).

In developing youth, one of the principles suggested by Edginton et al. (2005) is that learning has to take place since it involves exploration, experimentation, and building competence. And it is this learning that contributes to the three learning taxonomies of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Edginton&Edginton, 1994). Nonetheless, if youth are to develop their assets, they have to learn and be educated, which in this context, be educated on their leisure and learn from their leisure experience.

The youth must be educated on their leisure so that they would be able to learn through their leisure activities. Through leisure education, they are *educated on their leisure* so that they will engage in their leisure positive and constructively; *educated through their leisure* so that their leisure experiences become their ‘classroom’ for learning; be *educated about leisure* to enable them to be able to differentiate between leisure engagements that are either positive or negative and to be able to decide wisely on their involvements (Henderson, in Jackson, 2006; Witt and Caldwell, 2005). Leisure education also provide them with skills for self-discovery, and like other forms of education, effect changes in their knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Knowles et al., 2005).

If youth leisure is to be developmental contributing to their positive assets and growth, and to avoid negative impacts on their lives, it becomes necessary to educate the youth on taking charge of their leisure activities. This will then enable the youths to develop their positive assets and resources.

When education in leisure is introduced, it could provide skills, develops confidence, and foster abilities to raise competencies. For the young people, not only can leisure enable them to engage in leisure positive, but also to be educated through leisure. According to Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins (2007), “the main responsibility for education now is to initiate and train our youth such that they will first develop, and then profit from their own high-vitality” (p.38). It is about preparing the individually internally in their journey of conscious improvement, to find the necessary knowledge to realize themselves through knowledge gained from experience (ibid). Education basically is an activity designed to effect changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals, groups or communities (Knowles et al., 2005).

Leisure education is a learning programme where the youths learn and develop their knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies through leisure education. At the same time, it fosters a learning environment that is fun, enjoyable, and fulfilling that enhance their well-being and quality of life. The purpose of leisure education is to engage fully with the opportunities to make leisure count in ways that benefit the social good (Stebbins, 2007). It is also to teach and train people how to choose, and how to change. Leisure education enables the youth to undertake their own metamorphosis that are positive, and also empower them as a whole and autonomous being. It is to develop the appreciations, interests, skills, and opportunities that will enable the use of leisure in personally rewarding ways (Brightbill, 1961, cited in Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins, 2005). The aim of leisure education is after all, about teaching and training people how to choose, that is, how to change; how to sense,

distinguish, catch, and understand; and to empower the individual as a whole and autonomous being (ibid).

Ultimately, leisure education is a *developmental process* (Mundy, 1998; Kleiber, 2001, in Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins, 2005), for people to know themselves, their abilities, talents, and interests (Brightbill and Mobley, 1997, cited by Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins, 2005); to develop a sense of freedom, enjoyment and self-worth; experience personal growth; develop personal values, individual goals and objectives, self-determination and self-esteem skills, knowledge, and competencies (Cohen-Gewerc and Stebbins, 2005). It will further benefit the individual through the enhancement of self-initiative and self-reliance, and increase ability and responsibility in time planning (ibid).

## 6. CASES OF POSITIVE ASSET DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LEISURE

To prevent risk situations, a successful prevention or intervention strategy is required. And leisure education and recreation programmes have been identified as being successful in addressing risk situations (ibid). For example, Witt and Compton (1996, cited in Ruskin, 2000) have concluded through various studies that leisure and recreation programmes have a role in preventing teen pregnancy, school dropouts, delinquency, drug and alcohol abuse, poverty, and perceived lack of safe places to play.

Caldwell's *TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time* is a leisure education programme that was introduced to increase leisure motivation and leisure skills, and to prevent or mitigate substance use and increasing positive and healthy leisure behavior (Caldwell, 2005; Witt and Caldwell, 2005; Witt & Caldwell, 2010). Their evaluation of the programme concluded that it results in lower levels of amotivation but higher intrinsic motivation, higher levels of interest in their leisure, were better planners and decision makers, and more time spent in organized sports and youth activities. Most importantly, *TimeWise* led to decrease in substance use including smoking less cigarettes. Another leisure education programme that Caldwell conducted in South Africa and modeled on *TimeWise* is *HealthWise* which is to reduce risky behavior also resulted in reducing risky behaviours and increasing positive use of free time among the sample of South African youth (Caldwell et al., 2004).

Sport participation, being a form of leisure programme, has also been found to be a significant factor in the development of an adolescent's identity, self-esteem, and competence (Danish et al., in Adams & Berzonsky, 2006). Through sports participation, life skills such as goal setting, effective communication, problem solving, dealing with conflict, managing emotions, providing and receiving feedback, accepting interdependence, appreciating differences, and managing time and stress can also be learned (ibid). Sports help youth define their identity, discover other skills and interests, and applying some of the principles of sport to other areas of their lives.

Among sport-based life skills programmes that contributes to youth development is the *Sports United to Promote Education and Recreation (SUPER)* peer-led series of 18 modules for participants to learn the physical skills related to a specific sport; learning life skills related to sports in general; and playing the sport. This set of modules taught youth *how* to participate, not *how well* they perform (Danish et al., in Adams & Berzonsky, 2006; Theokas et al., in Holt, 2008). Another programme modeled under the SUPER programme is the *Rugby Advantage Program (RAP)* in New Zealand. And likewise, New Zealand's *Hokowhitu* programme which taught life skills such as decision-making, time management, task-related discipline, and goal setting.

Sandford et al. (in Holt, 2008) also cited a well-known and internationally implemented leisure-based youth development programme is that of the *Duke of Edinburgh International Award for Young People* that is based in London, UK, but being implemented successfully in more than 130 countries worldwide (Lee, 2012; The International Secretariat, 2004). This is a balanced youth development programme for young people aged from 14 to 25 years. While it was not explicitly as a leisure education programme, it employs experienced adult mentors to guide and facilitate youth development.

These are just a few examples to illustrate the application of leisure education in facilitating and enabling positive youth development. Since leisure covers a broad field as outlined by World Leisure, there could be other examples from other leisure forms such as in arts and culture, performing arts, hobbies, travel and tourism, etc. However, these examples are sufficient in this paper to demonstrate that leisure could contribute to development of positive youth assets.

It should however, be realized and understood that since leisure includes a broad area such as play, recreation, arts and culture, sport, festivals and celebrations, health and fitness, travel and tourism, education (World Leisure, 2009), each of these area itself has a many forms of programmes and activities. And it is therefore not possible for any one of the leisure activities to contribute to all aspects of youth development. Sports, for example, could contribute to mainly to physical and emotional development, whereas, education activities contribute to intellectual development, and arts and cultural activities contribute to creativity, innovativeness, and communication. Moreover, since an individual has his/her own strengths and shortcomings, as well as motivation and interest, they will only pursue leisure activities that complement their interest.

## 7. CONCLUSION

It is important that if we want youth to engage in leisure positively and develop their assets, learning should take place from their leisure experiences. Such learning experiences have therefore to be experiential, nonformal and informal. And if they have the motivation and interest in a more structured programme of learning, there are many opportunities for a formal learning programme through institutions of higher learning and earn degrees in leisure studies or in recreation. This is also another form of leisure education, that is, *learning about leisure*. In this way, one will be qualified with some form of leisure education and can pursue a professional career in recreation service provision or programming. With a postgraduate degree qualification, the individual could become an authority and expert in a specialized leisure, recreation, or sport field.

What we can however learn from these discussions are that for leisure to contribute to youth assets that could lead to youth as nation builders, the youth has first to be *enabled* and be attracted to participate and to commit and sustain their participation over a long period of time. Second, be *educated* through their leisure experiences, where they learn experientially informally by themselves, or nonformally with adult guidance and mentoring. Thirdly, they have to *engage* seriously in their chosen leisure activity or activities with support from adults, the community, the authorities, and including leisure service providers. Fourth, they must have the opportunities to *explore* the varieties of activities and make their qualified choices. Fifth, when exploring, they have to *experiment* with various roles in order to develop their own self-identity. Sixth, the youth should be allowed to *express* themselves through the various forms of leisure choices that projects their interests and self-identity. Seventh, the youth must have the support to *equip* themselves with whatever resources and services that they require to facilitate their positive development. Eighth, they need to be *empowered* in their decision making regarding their leisure engagements so they can *engineer* their future role as nation builders, ninth. And lastly, tenth, leisure should be all *encompassing* for them to decide on their future identity and role in their community and country.

So here we have the “10 Es” of leisure in developing positive assets of youth in nation building: (1) *Enabling*, (2) *Educating*, (3) *Engaging*, (4) *Exploring*, (5) *Experimenting*, (6) *Expressing*, (7) *Equipping*, (8) *Empowering*, (9) *Engineering*, and (10) *Encompassing*. The ultimate goal in developing positive youth assets is to establish the youth with qualities, positive values, knowledge, and competencies as nation builders. And leisure is one effective contributing programme to shape and equip the youth.

Nonetheless, leisure education’s contribution to positive youth development requires more study especially in a diverse cultural and ethnic environment such what is prevalent in Malaysia and some

countries. There are many intervening variables involved in these diversities. There are also many variables in each leisure activity that contributes to different youth development asset.

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# EXPLORING THE EFFICACY OF MALAY SILAT AS A VEHICLE FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

Critical analysis of a wide range of research findings unravels the opposing views that have long been subject of discussion and contention pertaining to the efficacy of martial arts as a vehicle for positive youth development. Review of past and present literatures has highlighted the abundance of benefits associated with martial arts among youth, especially in terms of enhancement of physical health, self-esteem and general improvement in academic achievement. On the other hand, some researchers differ radically as they dismiss the positive benefits of martial arts as something that have not been comprehensively or conclusively researched. An overwhelming amount of attention has also been given to researching the efficacy of specific and non-specific martial arts; i.e. traditional or contemporary martial arts in dealing with youth at risk. Along these lines, scant research has been conducted on the efficacy of a specific Malay martial arts known as ‘Silat’ as a vehicle for positive youth development. Little is known about the extent of how this particular martial art can be used to promote positive, tangible developmental outcomes. The limited research in this area presents a risk such that if palpable conclusions regarding the efficacy of Silat cannot be made known to policy makers, the legendary art of Malay Silat stands to lose its historical significance, lineage and prominence in Malaysia. This review thus aims to explore the efficacy of martial arts -- and Malay Silat in particular – in promoting positive youth development.

**Key Words:** *Malay martial arts, Silat, Positive Youth Development, Leisure Education.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this study is to explore the efficacy of Malay martial arts as a viable vehicle for positive youth development for Malaysian Malay youth. Limited research has been conducted in this regard, especially in the context of Malay martial arts and youth development. Nevertheless, sports or physical activity has always been touted as a precursor to youth development and along these lines martial arts advocates and researchers have also documented the positive benefits in terms of youth development. An inquiry into past research on martial arts as a means for youth development must be made to better understand the dimensions and efficacy of martial arts as a vehicle for positive youth development. To address these concerns, this review has been divided into the following topics:

- Positive Youth Development (PYD)
- PYD through Sports
- Efficacy of Martial Arts for Youth Development
- The role of Martial Arts Teachers in PYD
- Martial Arts as After-School Leisure Activity
- Malay Silat as Vehicle for PYD

### 1.1 Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Prior to the twentieth century, reformation of teenagers with socially troubling behaviours was the focus of approaches for youth development programs. Most programs concentrated on strategies to interrupt the progressions of detrimental behaviours. Throughout the span of the 1980's, youth programs inclined towards those who had fallen through the system. Many programs were tailored towards prevention or treatment of those who succumbed to drugs, academic failure, sexually transferred maladies, aggression, unintentional pregnancies and a gamut of other deviant or socially unacceptable behaviours. Studies conducted on youth development were negatively centred on the application of developmental psychology and sociology (Benson, 2006). Youth were deemed as problematical, precarious and an endangerment not only to themselves but to society (Arnet, 2000).

Adolescence has been pilloried as a life period fraught with problems (Cargo et al., 2003). In fact, in over 85 years of scientific adolescent development research, the extent of youth development research has been heavily inclined to a deficit standpoint (Lerner, 2005). Adolescence is considered the most challenging period of youth. Trulson (1986) described it as "a notoriously turbulent emotional time during the development of the individual."

However, in the 1990's, advocates of youth development masterminded a huge "paradigm shift". Instead of focusing on the deficits that youth are plagued with, as an alternative, they focused on youth as having strengths that can be developed. Hence, programs which address the developmental requirements of youth were introduced and implemented. Hence, PYD was defined as a set of strategies that programs can adopt to promote better outcomes for a successful transition to adulthood.

PYD researchers hope that as this field gains recognition as a discipline, more articles will be available and help build foundations for future research, theory and application (Brennan & Barnett, 2009). As PYD gains its foothold in terms of research maturity, more programs can be developed to ensure a sustainable positive progression into adulthood.

### *1.2 PYD through sports*

Sports have always been assumed to be full of benefits for those who partake in it. Coakley, (2011) asserts that there is a prevalent notion that sports participation inexorably culminates in positive youth development because many assumes that there is indispensable advantage and wholesomeness that is associated with those who partake in it.

Although much has been touted in terms of sports or physical activity interventions, there is scant evidence to support claims of its advantages, especially when it entails the positive development of youths (Kathleen, Sandford, & Duncombe, 2012). Arguments ensued among those questioning if sports involvement are actually stronger for disadvantaged youth who are socially and academically deficient. For these reasons, sports are increasingly used by non-sports organizations and services, such as youth work organizations, community and welfare services. Hence, sports is regarded not only as an activity that has physical benefits but for these youth, they provide viable opportunities in terms of education, self-sufficiency and the opportunity to become role-models and leaders in their sports communities.

Researchers such as Orlick (1973) warned that a flawed sport program design is instrumental in contributing to negative youth sports experiences and Cote (2004) opines that if youth are forced to specialize in a particular sport at an inappropriate age, sporting advantage can be undermined by injuries, fear of failure, and a host of other social and psychological inadequacies.

In general, positive youth development through engagement in sports and other forms of physical activity has been successful in tackling youth disaffection and disengagement (France, Sutton, Sandu, & Waring, 2007), (Trulson M. E., 1986), (Twemlow and Sacco, 1998), (Reinhard, 2012). Participation in sports is greatest in young individuals.

To solve the problem of juvenile delinquency, sport/physical activity interventions are sometimes seen as a cure for problems related to adolescence (Armour, Sandford, & Duncombe, 2012). In their research, they concluded that there is little evidence that supports the fact that by engaging in sport/physical activities, a sustained development for youths can be achieved; although the worth of sport involvement has gathered empirical support, research evidenced that athletic envelopment can also have a damaging effect on children and adolescents (Petitpas et al., 2005); it is believed that extracurricular activities offer occasions and circumstances that may be principally appropriate to nurturing adolescents' growth (Hansen et al., 2003). On the other hand, they also warned that negative experiences might derail youth development. Amongst these are stress and anxiety associated with highly competitive sports and negative group dynamics and encouragement of alcohol use in some sport events. Another downside is undesirable dealings with leaders that could be due to conflicts, leaders' coerciveness and leaders' modelling of unsuitable behaviour (Smoll & Smith, 1996).

Hence, while engaging youth through sports or physical activities serves as an enormously appealing platform for positive youth development, serious attention must be given to the philosophy underlying the sport, the content of the program, parental and participants' involvement and resources required to make the program a success.

### *1.3 Efficacy of martial arts for youth development*

The efficacy of martial arts as a vehicle for youth development has been acknowledged by researchers. Trulson (1986) discovered that after 6 months of training, his respondents experienced lower levels of aggression and anxiety and instead, reported amplified self-esteem. Zivin and colleagues (2001) tested a traditional martial arts intervention on a sample of boys with bullying behaviours in a large urban middle school and found a significant decrease in violent behaviour, improved schoolwork and increases in self-reported happiness. Nevertheless, since the scope of the studies conducted by these researchers were limited to small groups, more work needs to be done to determine if the same research can be conducted and replicated in a bigger population, such as an entire school or youth establishment.

Vick and Otto (2004) who studied the benefits of school-based traditional Chinese martial arts programming found that traditional martial arts training, when accessible in a school setting, may diminish student aggressiveness, improve social competency, and positively influence student conduct, self-regard, outlook and educational achievement.

### *1.4 The role of the martial arts teacher in PYD*

Martial arts teachers or instructors play a vital role in shaping and moulding not only a student's agility but specifically, when it comes to martial arts, a teacher imparts wisdom and has the ability to influence a student's trajectory where teachers help students meet suitable challenges by scaffolding and supporting their learning process (Jimenez, Delgado, & Suarez, 2009).

Despite popular movies that showcase the influence of a martial arts teacher such a *Fist of Fury*, *Drunken Master*, *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon*, *Karate Kid* and many others, scant research has been conducted on the influence of that a martial arts teacher can have on a student. Vertonghen et al. (2012) believed that martial arts can produce educational opportunities for youth but discovered that there is a paucity of research in examining the role of the martial arts teacher. The martial arts instructor is instrumental in propagating the traditional values of any given martial arts. These researchers also state that because of this, there may be significant differences in terms of lessons learnt within one martial art. According to them, teachers who espouse more traditional and pedagogical elements of a particular art would spend more time focusing on the values that the art imparts while teachers who are more inclined towards a contemporary form of martial arts would focus more on the physical and sporting aspect of martial arts.

### *1.5 Benefits of martial arts*

Martial arts have been intrinsically related to possible socio-psychological benefits. Trulson (1986) estimates that over 10 million Americans are either currently active in martial arts practice or have taken such lessons in the past and more than 500,000 Americans are currently registering for lessons in the various martial arts each year.

Studies have also been conducted to differentiate the efficacy of traditional and modern martial arts. Nosanchuk and MacNeil, (1989) conducted a study to determine if traditional or modern martial arts training is more effective in dealing with aggressiveness. They opined that if a student is taught martial arts without the philosophy or traditional influence, then the tendency of the student to return to aggression increases over time. It has also been determined through their study that if the martial arts teacher negatively sanctions overly aggressive and dangerous actions, it will provide a model for restraint and lowered aggression. Engagement in extracurricular activities, such as martial arts acts as a buffer against school disengagement, according to Mahoney & Cairns, (1997) and Egan (1972) found that youth exposed to martial arts demonstrated improvements across many variables including self-acceptance and self-esteem (Blowers, 2007). Nevertheless, they concluded that there is no clear indication about the mechanisms leading to aggression reduction in traditionally trained students.

In positioning martial arts as a vehicle for PYD, researchers are at a crossroads as to whether traditional or a more contemporary form of martial arts is better suited for this purpose. Donohue and Taylor (1994) have indicated that the popular argument for a dichotomy between Eastern and Western martial arts lies in the fact that, with regard to the former, there is an additional gain in other aspects besides fighting skills, such as the promotion of a nonviolent attitude and artistic enjoyment. In the traditional approach to martial arts, participants strive for unity and coordination between internal (e.g., spiritual and mental) and external (e.g., physical) elements.

Damien Martin (2006) noted in researching the psychosocial benefits of martial arts training that there is a positive correlation between length of time practicing or belt rank and self-confidence (Duthie, Hope & Barker, 1978; Konzak & Bourdeau, 1984), independence, self-reliance (Konzak & Bourdeau, 1984; Kurian, Verdi, Caterino & Kulhavy, 1994), and self-esteem (Richman & Rehberg, 1986).

### *1.6 Martial arts as after-school leisure activity*

Developmental scientists and youth policy advocates have observed that children and youth spend half of their waking hours in leisure activities but most of this time is spent in unstructured peer focused activities which could be better spent in after-school programs that could facilitate positive development and prevent the emergence of developmental problems (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003). Positive leisure engagements have the potential to spur successful transition from adolescence to adulthood (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls, & Smith, 2004).

The potential benefits of well organized, structured and supervised leisure activities can lead to positive outcomes such as intellectual development, prevention of problem behaviors and psychological adjustment. If martial arts are seen as a form of leisure education, it has much to offer in terms of both faith-based and sports-based development (Wilson, Gottfredson, Cross, Rorie, & Connell, 2009).

Planned leisure activities, such as those which center around art, music, sport or volunteering have the potential to kindle attention, enable the procurement and training of new skills, and institute a social network that can be used to foster treasured relationships between youth and resource-rich adults (Jimenez, Delgado, & Suarez, 2009).

Conversely, some researchers warn of over-involvement in leisure activities, citing concerns of extreme pressure from families, coaches or organizations. This could be detrimental to the

psychological development of a youth. An activity which was supposed to encourage learning and empower could quickly be harmful to those who are pressured to excel.

Much attention has been attributed to after-school activities of late because of its potential to facilitate youth development. Studies suggested that positive experiences such as identity development and supports for youth development were associated with after-school leisure activities (Hansen et al., 2003). He further argues that as youth spend a significant amount of time in school environment, youth development strategies, if applied directly to the academic environment, will retain great potential in scaffolding positive youth development. Pursuant to that, he suggests that by implementing school-based martial arts program and espousing desired protective factors would add an innovative tool to the existing prevention cache (p. 3).

From the literatures reviewed above, it can be concluded that not all martial arts programs are the same, so it is imperative that martial arts if used as a vehicle to scaffold PYD needs to clearly define its philosophy, objectives, instruction and delivery methods so that it can be suitable used for youth development purposes.

### *1.7 Malay Silat as vehicle for PYD*

The indigenous art of Malay Silat has been described to be one of the most complete and sophisticated fighting systems. Its propagation is backed by centuries of ethnic diversity and spiritual dominance known to have stretched through the numerous islands within the Indo-Malaysian archipelago. PencakSilat (training for combat) came into presence at the onset of 4<sup>th</sup> century CE (Khamouch, El-Gomati, Abattouy, & Ayduz, April 2007) and is heavily embedded with Islamic beliefs.

Positive youth development programs, such as Malay Silat must be able to help youth to successfully navigate their developmental stages. It is hoped that through Malay Silat, Malay youth will find opportunities to nurture their interests and talents, practice their skills and competencies and increase their connectedness to their community so they can cope with risks, overcome personal and external challenges, and develop into well-adjusted adults. If Malay Silat's potential as a vehicle for positive youth development can be positioned as a form of leisure education, it has much to offer in terms of both faith-based and sports-based development.

Therefore, it is important to explore the values and study the efficacy of Silat as a possible positive youth development vehicle, which is predicated on the use of positive development perspectives outlined by developmental scientists for understanding and enhancing the lives of adolescents. Despite its central role historically among youth in Malaysian society, few studies have been conducted on Malay Silat in the context of youth development, and how its role has evolved over time. Thus, future studies should explore how the younger generation of Silat practitioners perceive the meaning and value of Malay Silat in Malaysia, as compared to those who were responsible for its early development and propagation when it was seen as an effective vehicle for developing young people. Therefore, in this context, martial arts can be seen as a way to engage youths and at the same time, assist them in developing vital lifelong skills that will guide them through to positive adulthood.

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# ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AMONG UNDERGRADUATES: THE ROLE OF NEUTRALIZATION ATTITUDE

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## Abstract

Skyles & Matza (1957) proposed that individuals tend to use neutralization to motivate their decisions to engage in deviant behaviors. This indicated that even though students have strong motivations not to cheat they may do so anyway after employing neutralizing strategies. Hence, this study attempted to examine the role of neutralization in influencing students' attitude towards academic dishonesty. Students tended to use neutralization technique in order to free themselves from feeling guilty in engaging academic dishonesty. This study employed 620 randomly selected students from 6 different academic institutions. Results supported that students who engaged in academic dishonesty differ significantly from those who did not engage in this deviant behavior with respect to their tendency to neutralize cheating. Results showed that cheating and neutralization were positively correlated among male and female. Hence, it showed that nowadays there are not differences in neutralization between male and female as their attitudes are no longer different with respect to their achievement goals and expectations. Through the finding, it showed that the use of neutralization techniques explained why students acknowledged that cheating is wrong but still chooses to do it anyway.

**Keywords:** *Academic Dishonesty, Cheating, Behavior, Attitude, Neutralization*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"It is ok for me to cheat, as everyone is cheating in order to get the distinction in the study..."

Confession of a student.

Due to the red warning signals raised from the recent ethical scandals in the learning institutions and in the workplace, the interest in ethical behavior in academic study and academic dishonesty in particular has increased the interest among the researchers. Academic dishonesty is not a new topic, indeed it has been extensively studied in the past researchers (Graham, Monday, O'Brien, & Steffen, 1994; McCabe & Trevino, 2002; Pullen, Ortloff, Casey, & Payne, 2000; Williams & Hosek, 2003). This epidemic phenomenon is increasing over the years, seems to be justified by the fact that academic dishonesty is normal among the students (Williams & Hosek, 2003). From the past studies, rates of academic dishonesty among undergraduate students have been consistently high, ranging from 13% to almost 95% (Graham, Monday, O'Brien, & Steffen, 1994; McCabe & Trevino, 2002; Pullen, Ortloff, Casey, & Payne, 2000; Williams & Hosek, 2003)

Pottle (2012) pointed that due to the turbulence of economic conditions in the market, it causes the undergraduates have more competition in entering the volatile job market. Hence it resulted they attempted to develop certain unethical behavior in academia in order to obtain better grade so that they will have better opportunities in the workplace. Students are aware of this unethical practice, however, they still engaging in it, due to the influences of neutralization. Neutralization has changed students' attitude toward cheating. Towards the students, they feel guilty to cheat, but with the present of neutralization, they deflecting the blame in order to achieve the materialistic rewards – good fortune in the workplace.

Neutralization enables students to achieve their good grade with little or no consequences. This is a deflecting blame process, where it enables us to neutralize our wrongdoing with valid reasons or based on valid causes, such as difficulties in catching up the syllabus, the lecturers are too strict in marking etc (Stone, et al, 2010). Stone et al (2010) suggested that those who engaging in academic dishonesty can find justification for the deviant behavior they committed and therefore mitigate the cognitive dissonance of their behavior.

By understanding how students perceive toward academic dishonesty and what are the influences in their decisions to engage in academic dishonesty may give an insight to academicians and researchers to discourage such deviant behavior, and to promote academic integrity at different education levels.

Hence, this study attempted to study the behavior and the neutralization attitude of undergraduates towards academic dishonesty. It also attempted to describe the relationship of neutralization attitude and academic dishonesty behavior

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1 Academic Dishonesty*

Nuss (1984) defined academic dishonesty as a behavior that resulted in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. This definition is broader by the study of Gehring&Pavela (1994), where they defined it as an intentional act of fraud, in which “a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercises... [or] forgery of academic documents, intentionally impeding or damaging the academic work of others, or assisting other students in acts of dishonesty (pp. 5-6)”.

As time passed, the definition of academic dishonesty is further strengthened and enhanced through various studies. De Lambart, et al (2003) suggested that academic dishonesty involving various deviant behavior that breached the rules and regulations of learning institutions. They pointed that this deviant behavior is multifaceted, which based on the wealth of research that spoke to practices that could be deemed as cheating.

Graves (2008) acknowledged that academic dishonesty is a crucial academic disease as its powerful impact on the quality of education and the reliability of assessment. This deviant behavior, not only bring the harms to students, but also the reputation of the learning institutions. Stone,Jawahar, &Kisamore (2009) furthered strengthened that students who cheat on tests are more likely to engage in dishonesty activities in the workplace to those who do not. Furthermore, Michaels &Miethe (1989) suggested that once undergraduates successfully engaging in such deviant behavior and attaining the rewards of good grades they do not deserve, they tend to set up a pattern for future deception. Indeed, research on the

nexus between academic dishonesty and fraudulent behavior in the workplace demonstrates that individuals who cheat in college go on to behave unethically at work (Harding, et al, 2007; Nonis& Swift, 2001; Sims, 1993; Stone, Jawahar, &Kisamore, 2009).

## 2.2 Neutralization Techniques

The concept of neutralization is originated from the study of Gresham Sykes and David Matza (1957) in the field of criminology. Skyes&Matza (1957) defined neutralization is deflecting blame process, which it explained how a criminal legitimizing his/her dishonest behavior rendering it neutral or not longer dishonesty. It represents the rationalization and justifications for unethical behavior used to deflect self – disapproval from others (Skyes&Matza, 1957). Through this theory, it suggested that students, who neutralize express support for a societal norm, yet rationalize to permit to violate those norms. Through the process of neutralization, undergraduates will cheat without feeling inherently dishonesty, thereby eliminating a sense of guilt for the dishonest behavior.

Skyes&Matza (1957) proposed that in the process of neutralization, following methods are used by the delinquents justified their illegitimate behaviors (refer table 1.0):

Table 1.0: Methodology of Neutralization Theory

<b>Method</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Example</b>
Denial of responsibility	The offender will propose that they were victims of circumstance or were forced into situations beyond their control	"It wasn't my fault"
Denial of injury	The offender insists that their actions did not cause any harm or damage	"It wasn't a big deal. They could afford the loss"
Denial of the victim	The offender believes that the victim deserved whatever action the offender committed.	"They had it coming"
Condemnation of the condemners	The offenders maintain that those who condemn their offense are doing so purely out of spite, or are shifting the blame off of themselves unfairly	"You were just as bad in your day"
Appeal to higher loyalties	The offender suggests that his or her offence was for the greater good, with long term consequences that would justify their actions, such as protection of a friend.	"My friends needed me. What was I going to do?"

Past studies (Murdock & Stephens, 2007) suggested that neutralization attitudes has significant positively correlations with cheating behavior, as students tended to engage in cheating even though they are aware that cheating is an unethical behavior. But due to the various reasons, etc poor performance in class, difficulties of subject, causes them to rationalize this deviant behavior as legalize action. In the study of Storch, et al (2005), they suggested that students tended to use neutralization to justify and deflect the reasons for their morally ambiguous, unethical or unacceptable behaviors and for any blame they feel as a result of their behaviors. Rettinger& Kramer (2009) further strengthened that the presence of neutralization attitudes is strongly correlated with academic dishonesty as in their study; they realized that with the presence of neutralization, students will not feel the guilty he or she normally would, with the example statement respondents shared "Everyone else is doing it" (Rettinger& Kramer, 2009).

### 2.3 Relationship between Academic Dishonesty and Neutralization Attitude

From the review of past studies, neutralization attitudes showed significant relationship in influencing students in engaging in the academic dishonesty, like cheating in exam, plagiarism etc.

Table 2.0: Review of past studies on Academic Dishonesty and Neutralization Attitude

Haines, et al (1986)	Neutralization attitudes significant correlated with students cheating behavior
Daniel et al (1997)	A correlation was found between cheating and neutralization behaviors
Kisamore et al (2007)	Dishonesty was framed positively by students.
Bernardi et al (2004)	Students tended to legalize their wrong doing as their peer groups are doing the same deviant behavior.
Ahmad et al (2008)	Students admitted to cheat as everyone else was cheating

Through the findings, it suggested that reasons students employed neutralization attitude in their cheating behavior, included the lack of a threat of punishment (Ahmad, et al, 2008), peer influence (Storch&Storch, 2002; Whitley, 1998), irrelevant courses or assignments (Mudrock& Stephens, 2007), difficulty of work and competitiveness (Stevens &Stevens, 1987), successful personal histories of cheating (Whitley, 1998), and efficiency (Daniel, Blount, & Ferrell, 1991).

In addition, in the study of Daniel et al (1997), it found significant gender differences in the usage of neutralization attitude. He pointed that male students report cheating more often than female students, with male tended to cheat when they believe they can deny responsibility for their behavior. In the study of Roig& Ballew (1994) suggested that attitude toward cheating could bear a relationship to actual cheating behaviors as of the finding that more tolerant attitudes toward cheating indicate greater incidences of cheating. Furthermore, Michaels &Miethe (1989) also pointed that cheating is learned behavior, which motivated by a variety of pressures, has rewards and costs, and is normative, not deviant. Hence, it resulted that even though students are aware that cheating is a wrongdoing action, however, through neutralization, they managed to argue that in some special circumstances, cheating is an acceptable action. Therefore, it may suggest that neutralization seems to be common and normal among the students.

Past researchers (Nonis& Swift, 1998; Kisamore et al 2007) suggested that students may use more than one of the neutralization methods to neutralize some or all of the perceived costs associated with academic dishonesty when they have a positive image toward academic dishonesty. Hence, in this study, following hypothesis is proposed as following:

Hypothesis: Neutralizing attitudes are positive correlated with one's own academic dishonesty.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Respondents

620 undergraduates from 6 different universities in Malaysia were surveyed about their own attitude toward cheating and their neutralization attitude towards cheating. This group of respondents consisted of 50.2% of female undergraduates and 49.8% of male undergraduates. They came from two main stream of study: Humanities (51.9%) and Science (48.1%). 45.5% were first year undergraduates, 21.1% second year, 17.7% third year and 15.6% final year undergraduates.



### 3.2 Measurement

*Academic Dishonesty Behavior* – Twenty – five item modified questionnaires consisting of measurement on respondents’ frequency in engaging cheating, and assisting others in cheating. The questionnaires was used the adopted version of questionnaire from the several studies of past studies with some modifications in order to adapt the Malaysia culture, with 1 indicating never and 7 indicating many times. Example of the attitude question sounded like this: “How frequent did you using signals to exchange answer during examinations?”

*Neutralization attitude*: 11 item modified questionnaires consisting of personal neutralization attitudes (Haines et al, 1986) was used. Respondents respond on a 1 to 7 scale with 1 indicating that cheating is not all justified and 7 indicating that cheating is completely justified. Example of this survey is “Cheating is okay if someone does it to help a friend”.

### 3.3 Results

Based on Table 2.0, it showed that overall score of cheating behavior of undergraduates is 2.11, which male scores higher than female. This indicates that female undergraduates are more reluctant to engage in academic dishonesty compare with their male counterparts. This is further strengthened from the result of neutralization attitudes, where overall score of undergraduates are 3.06, where the male undergraduates score higher than female.

Table 2.0: Descriptive Statistics of Cheating Behavior and Neutralization Attitude

Item		Mean	Std. Deviation
Cheating Behavior	Overall	2.11	0.78
	Male (n = 309)	2.26	0.84
	Female (n = 311)	1.96	0.68
Neutralization attitudes	Overall	3.06	1.44
	Male (n = 309)	3.35	1.41
	Female (n = 311)	2.77	1.42

Besides that, correlation analysis were conducted (refer Table 3.0). From Table 3.0, cheating behavior score showed positively related with neutralization attitude with a Pearson correlation coefficient of  $r = .418$ , and the significance value is less than .002. Hence, it can conclude that there is a moderate and positive relationship between cheating behavior and neutralization attitude

Table 3.0 Correlations of Mean Score for Cheating Behavior and Neutralization Attitude

Neutralization		Cheating Behavior
	Pearson Correlation	.418**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	620

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the result, it showed that neutralization attitude help undergraduates to find justification to their deviant behavior. This indicated that undergraduates who admit cheating is bad but they still engage in it, due to several reasons, such as laziness, grade, peer pressure etc. Furthermore, students tended to neutralize their cheating behavior as a result of the learning process, either from peer or due to the difficulties of the particular subject. Therefore, hypothesis is supported. The result also further

strengthened the study of Bernardi, et al (2004), which support Skyes&Matza (1957), students tended to rationalize their wrong doing – cheating as ok, so that they will not feel the guilty after the action.

#### **4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Neutralization is a technique used by individuals to rationalize or justify their decisions in order to engage behaviors that they know to be wrong (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Neutralization has been explored extensively in the cheating literature and has often been associated with increased cheating frequency (Haines et al., 1986; Smith et al., 2004; Ward & Beck, 1990), as was the case in the present study ( $M = 2.11$ ). In addition, neutralization also found to be significant moderate and positively correlated with academic dishonesty behavior. This indicated that neutralization attitudes can increase the frequencies of students to engage in academic dishonesty, which causes them to more prefer to cheat when they believe it is ok for this deviant behavior.

Neutralization theory can provide insight into the cognitive processes of undergraduates who engage in academic dishonesty, a behavior considered deviant or delinquent in the university environment. Bernardi et al (2004) surmised that these students engage in external attributions, or blame, to explain their abnormal behaviors and suggested that understanding the role of neutralization in cheating could indeed provide valuable insight for preventing cheating. These students might experience a threat to their “survival,” academically speaking, and regard the rules of academic honesty as mere guidelines when their ability to remain in college is threatened by course grade problems.

The results of this study could potentially both facilitate cheating prevention and influence efforts to educate students who have been found guilty of academic dishonesty. The results might provide knowledge to influence how student affairs professionals and faculty think about students who cheat so that they could reach out to the students more effectively. This study investigating cheating from a cognitive, or critical thinking oriented, perspective could enable researchers to move toward a deeper understanding of the underlying causes of cheating behaviors to facilitate more effective prevention efforts on college campuses.

According to Pulvers & Diekhoff (1999), one of the reasons that students neutralize their academic dishonesty is the belief of “Everyone does it”. This is further strengthened in this study, as students consider that it is a valid reason for this deviant behavior. It showed that students perceived that cheating is not a really deviant behavior, but more as an acceptable action due to external factors. Hence, neutralization attitudes are known as valid behavior in order to find justifications to their actions. As conclusions, the findings suggested that context emerges as a very crucial influence in the decision to engage in academic dishonesty and the neutralization attitudes towards academic dishonesty are the main influences on the academic dishonesty.

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSLIM PERSONALITY AND FAMILY ATTACHMENT AMONG VOCATIONAL YOUTH TRAINEES IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

A strong family is the foundation of nation building. It is influenced by many factors such as human personality. Muslim personality is one of the core elements of strong family. Personality is part and partial of religion. It possesses the internalization of ethical values in Islam which is pertinent in family development. Accordingly, a study was conducted to identify the relationship between Muslim Personality and family engagement among vocational youth trainees in Malaysia. A total of 756 respondents from 9 public vocational institutes in Malaysia were involved in this study. A self-administered instrument was developed by the researchers using the domains of educational activities or learning by Bloom (1956) which constitute cognitive, affective and psychomotor (CAP). Results indicate a significant relationship between Muslim Personality and family attachment. The CAP of Muslim Personality has strong and positive relationship with CAP of family attachment. Therefore, the empowerment and enhancement of Muslim Personality should become the main agenda of Muslim family in order to achieve a strong family.

**Keyword:** *Youthengagement, Family engagement, Muslim personality, Islamic Psychology and CAP.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Muslim personality has a significant impact on family engagement among youth. Extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism in the big 5 personality interact positively with warm interaction in the family. A person with high agreeableness tends to be more compassionate and sensitive to others. In contrast, a person with high neuroticism tends to be more intrusive and unresponsive to others (Webster, Low, Silleh, & Hackett, 2013).

### *1.1 Muslim Personality*

Muslim personality is a healthy and balanced personality amongst Muslim which is based on two supreme Islamic guidance: Quran and hadith. Muslim personality is a comprehensive and balance personality based on Islamic *syariah*, the practice of *ibadah* and the internalization of Islamic values (Raba, 2001). The personalities are developed from strong faith and pure salvation to Allah. In contrast, a bad personality reflects some corruption in faith and acts of disobedience (Jamiah et. al., 2013). Muslim personality is equal to *akhlak* or good ethic of conduct in Islam. There are many characteristics of positive Muslim personalities such as purity, obedience, sincerity, humility, trustworthiness, grateful, caring, friendly, merciful, love towards knowledge, altruism, respect others, consistent and punctual. Abdullah, Salleh, Mahmud and Abd Ghani, (2010) developed Moral Value Inventory for Muslim Adolescent (MVIMA) to measure Muslim adolescent personality. The nine main characteristics measured by MVIMA are patient, gratitude, humility, positive regard, honesty,

love and care, *tawakal*, sincere and *taqwa* (god-consciousness).

### 1.2 Engagement

The word 'engagement' is synonymous with participation, motivation, attachment, self-related-behaviour, thoughtfulness, belonging and investment of ideas, content and skill (Fredericks et al., 2004). In the early study, engagement encompasses three main dimensions: cognitive, behavioural and emotional. Cognitive engagement defines as youth participation psychological and social investment in mastering ideas, knowledge and skills (Newmann, 1992). Emotional engagement refers to the youth's affect in family and community and the extent the youth feels connected with them (Frederick et. al., 2004). Behavioural engagement refers to youth participation in the family and community (Green et. al., 2008). To date, engagement study has employed a multidimensional approach. Researchers seem to combine all aspects of engagement in their study (Yonezawa, Jones, & Joselowsky, 2009).

### 1.3 Youth Family Engagement

Family engagement refers to family-centeredness and strengths based approach to partnering with families in decision making, goal setting and achieving desired outcomes through positive communication to meet the needs of each family member (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2013).

Youth family engagement is essential for youth development and family survival. Based on suggestions on engagement given by Yonezawa et al. (2009), youth family engagement could also be seen from three perspectives: cognitive, emotion and behavioural aspect or cognitive, attitude and practical aspects. Cognitive and attitude aspects in family engagement could be measured from parent-child relationship and family attachment. Meanwhile, behavioural aspect of family engagement could be measured from youth's commitment towards family.

Strong relationship between parents and children is one of the best prevention mechanisms for school violence, juvenile delinquency and aggressive behaviour among youth (Ismail & Rahman, 2012). Parent-child relationship process is a long and complicated journey. The process needs mutual trust and effective communication between both parties (Ishak, Yunus, & Iskandar, 2010). Trust is developed through parent's responsiveness towards their children. Parents' responsiveness could be measured through; (a) parents' prompt response to their children's needs in times of crisis, (b) parents' attentive behaviors, and (c) parents' support and care of children's wellbeing. Ishak et al. (2010) found that parents in their study were extremely fast in responding to crisis. For example, one of the participants said: "*I told them I need the money to pay for my rent, and the next day I saw more money in my account*". (Ishak, Yunus, & Iskandar, 2010).

Family engagement is pertinent for social development. Warmth father-child relationship during early childhood influences the social outcomes of the daughters at the later age (Webster et. al., 2013). Successful families have high family engagement (Jamiah, 2013). For example, in *Ibu Mithali's* family, youth family engagement is very high. They love their family, work together, helping each other and leads their family members towards success in the world and hereafter. The strong engagement begins since early years through family team-building, religious education and effective parenting skill.

Youth family engagement roots and build-up from healthy parental attachment (Mohd. Ishak, Md. Yunus, & Iskandar, 2010). Research among 98 academicians studying in five universities in United States found 10 themes of which contribute to healthy parental attachment. Six of them categories under trust. The trust themes are understanding, respect, shared trust, accessibility, responsiveness and expectations. Meanwhile, another four themes described as communication. The communication themes are extensiveness, quantity, quality and modes of communication.

### 1.4 Family Engagement and Personality Development

A successful family has high attachment within each other (Jamiah, 2013). Family attachment is pertinent for children social development. A close relationship between a father and his child during early childhood influences the social outcomes of the daughters when they grow up (Webster et. al., 2013).

Family attachment affects human personalities in the later years. Separation from family during early childhood is a traumatic event for some adults. Attachment distraction or traumatic separation is associated with borderline and avoidance personality disorder. A research was conducted among 203 adults with histories of traumatic separation using a personality pathology instrument named Shedler-Westen Assessment Procedure (SWAP-II). Using a Q-factor analysis, results have identified five (5) distinct personality subtypes: internalizing/avoidant, psychopathic, emotionally deregulated, hostile/paranoid, and resilient (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

Internalizing/avoidant personality subtype is characterized by feelings of inadequacy, guilt, anxiety, and unhappiness. These personalities are usually constricted and unassertive, fear rejection and abandonment, feel as outsider, avoid social situations, self-conscious, easily feel embarrassed and having high self-critic due to unrealistic standard of moral and ethics (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

Emotionally deregulated personality subtype is characterized by unstable, out of control and unpredictable emotion, easily get angry, unhappy and impulsive, fear abandonment and unable to see positive and negative characteristics of individuals simultaneously (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

Resilient personality subtype is characterized as articulate, conscientious, creative, insightful character. They enjoy challenges, use talents effectively, have meaningful relationships, tend to be well liked, feel comfortable in social situations, find meaning both in nurturing or mentoring others and belonging to a greater community, competitive and controlling (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

Hostile/paranoid personality subtype is characterized as self-righteous, angry, arrogant, and unhappy. As a result, individuals are described as critical, suspicious, having high tendency to blame others for their own shortcomings, tend to feel like outsiders and feel misunderstood or mistreated (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

Psychopathic personality disorder is characterized as deceitful, impulsive, angry, manipulative, lack of empathy, little psychological insight and taking advantage of others. Individuals suffering from this type of disorder tend to abuse drugs and alcohol, engage in unlawful behavior, have unstable work and living arrangements, and con others (Malon, Westen, & Levandosky, 2011).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted using the quantitative methodology via distribution of questionnaires. In this research, the inferential method was used to identify the correlation between the CAP of Muslim personalities and the CAP of family development.

A total of 756 youth vocational trainees were selected through systematic sampling method from 9 vocational institutes in Malaysia. All of the respondents are aged between 18 to 24 years old and were also participants in the *Citra Ibadah* programme.

In this study, data collection method was done by gathering questionnaires in the vocational institutes. The questionnaire which is a self-designed instrument consists of 132 items of CAP for Muslim Personality and 119 items of CAP for family attachment. On average, the respondents took about 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Pearson Coefficient Analysis was conducted to determine the significance of relationship of two variables; Muslim personality and family engagement. These tests were used to investigate and explain the strength and direction of the relationship found between Muslim personality scores and family attachment, and whether it is acceptable and indicates strong relationship, or unacceptable which shows poor relationship.

The scales are shown in Table 1 below:

Values	Statement
0.00 – 0.19	Very poor relationship
0.20 – 0.29	Poor relationship
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate relationship
0.50 – 0.69	Strong Relationship
0.70 – 0.99	Very Strong relationship

### 3. FINDINGS

Generally, the result from correlation analysis shows that all Muslim personality dimensions have significant relationship with all dimensions of family attachment. The relationships between all dimensions are strong and positive as shown in Figure 1.

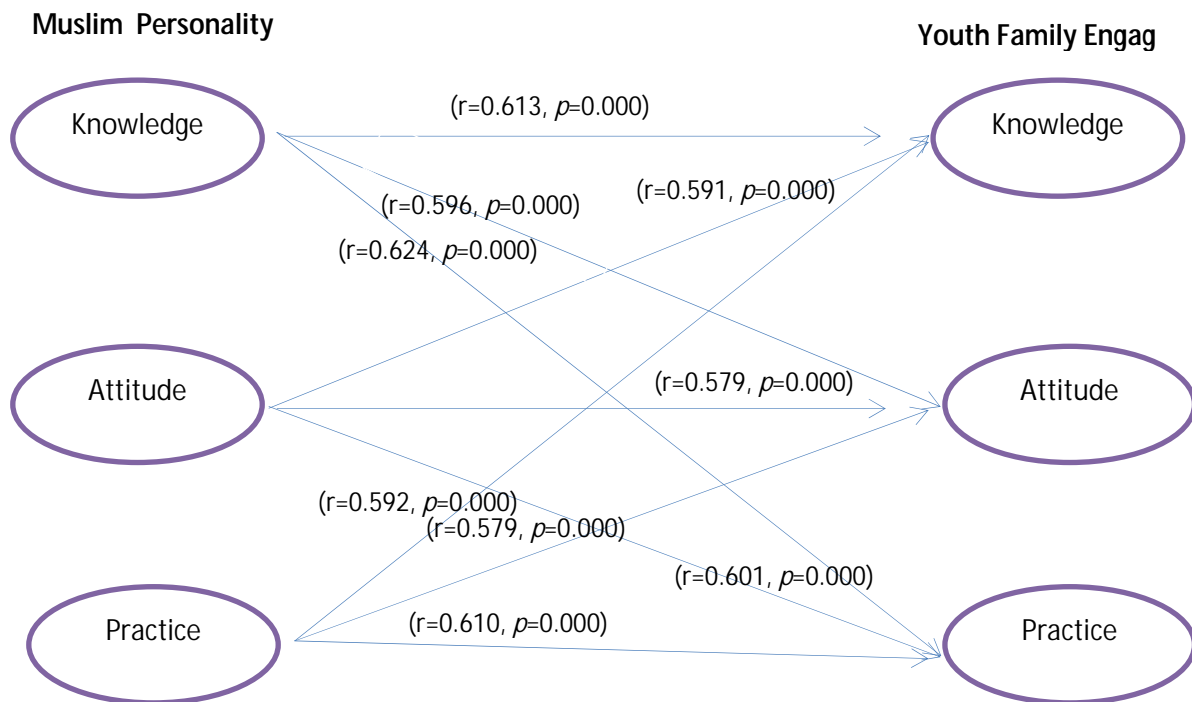


Figure 1: Spearman Correlation between Muslim Personality and Youth Family Engagement

Knowledge of Muslim personality refers to a Muslim's understanding of good and ethical conducts from Islamic perspectives. As a Muslim, a good practice which is not based on knowledge can be considered as wasteful. Knowledge will affect the attitude and practice of family attachment. Thus, this research proves that there is positive and strong relationship between the knowledge of Muslim personality with the knowledge ( $r=0.613, p=0.000$ ), attitude ( $r=0.596, p=0.000$ ), and practise ( $r=0.624, p=0.000$ ) of family engagement.



Meanwhile, Muslim personality attitude refers to a Muslim's awareness and perception towards the ethical values in Islam. Results indicate positive and strong relationship between the attitude of Muslim personality and the knowledge ( $r=0.591, p=0.000$ ), attitude ( $r=0.579, p=0.000$ ), and practise ( $r=0.601, p=0.000$ ) of family engagement.

Muslim personality practisee refers to a Muslim's behavior in his daily life. A higher score of Muslim personality indicates a more positive behavior among the respondents. Based on the findings of this research, there is positive and strong relationship between the practice of Muslim personality with the knowledge ( $r=0.592, p=0.000$ ), attitude ( $r=0.579, p=0.000$ ), and practice ( $r=0.610, p=0.000$ ) of family engagement.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The Muslim personality knowledge, attitude and practise ( $r>0.6, p=0.000$ ) have stronger relationship with youth family engagement practise compared to Muslim personality knowledge and attitudes. This indicates that the Muslim youth's love and commitment towards their family were strongly determined by their knowledge attitude and practise of Muslim personality.

Youth's family engagement is pertinent to positive youth development. Thus, family acts as a strong foundation of youth societal well-being and should be strengthened and developed adequately. At youth stage, youth play multiple roles. They can be a father or mother, a husband or wife, a brother or sister, a son or daughter or an extended family member.

As a father or mother, youth must be capable to nurture the utmost potential of their children. They should be very committed in building strong and positive attachment with their children since early years to prevent borderline and avoidance the emergence of personality disorder sub types such as avoidant personality, psychopathic personality, emotionally deregulated personality and hostile or paranoid personality. They should also become the best educator and positive role model to their children. They should open their minds and always update their knowledge and parenting skills for effective parenting.

As a husband or wife, youth must build positive climate and mutual relationship in the family. They should build trust in the marital relationship, also protect and support each other. They should always enhance their love and commitment towards each other. They should also show great responsibility and encourage their spouse for betterment.

As a brother or sister, youth should be able to support their siblings towards excellence. They should work together and help each other in all predicaments.

As children, youth must build positive relationship with their parents. They should show respect to their parents, fulfill the parent's need within their ability, makes them happy and take good care of them. Meanwhile, as an extended family, youth should support the family and build together the mission and vision of the family.

Youth with strong and energetic character in the family is the most powerful wave at any roles they play. They are very influential in leading and supporting the family towards true success and happiness. They must build strong attachment in the family and spread the awareness to the peers on the importance of family attachment and engagement. Through active engagement in the family, youth get the empowerment to determine family well-being together with other family members.

Muslim personality is the third level of personality which is determined by human perspectives and paradigm. Strong personality takes years to be developed until it becomes a constant personality trait. The enhancement of knowledge, attitude and practice of Muslim personality enhances family engagement among youth. This is because Muslim personality encompasses human obligations and responsibility towards family well-being. Thus, effort must be taken to nurture the Muslim personality

among Muslims since the early years to establish greater personality and greater youth family engagement.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Muslim personality affects family engagement among youths. The level of knowledge, attitude and practice of Muslim personality is congruent with the level of youth family engagement. Thus, more effort must be taken to nurture the values of positive Muslim personality from early years until adulthood. This is because the development of positive Muslim personality takes a long process in order to become a constant personality trait. Thus, from positive personality, youth becomes more responsible and ready to engage positively with the family. Besides, youth tend to lead and work in synergy with their family as a catalyst agent towards success in the world and hereafter. It is clear that positive family engagement is a key factor of the family wellbeing. Indeed, a family is the basic unit in the society. As a result, positive family engagement among youth becomes the key factor of societal well-being and progressive nation building.

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# LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF LOVE AMONGST THE MUSLIM YOUTH IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

Love is the feelings of the soul, the vibration of the heart, the instinct which has existed within oneself, especially youth. If these feelings of love are built upon the understanding in adherence to Islam, then the self will prosper, or otherwise our lives will turn into shambles. In relation to this, this study is conducted to measure the understanding of love among the Muslim youth. Total of 641 respondents (N=641) comprising of the Muslim youth in Malaysia had taken part in this study. The questionnaires that were distributed are divided into two parts, namely the demographic section and the section which asks questions on the understanding of the concept of love according to Islam. The instrument used was evaluated by the experts before it was given out to the respondents. The level of value of the Cronbach Alpha obtained was high (>0.8). The study data were analysed descriptively by looking at the mean, percentage and the standard deviation. The findings show that the Malaysian Muslim youth have high level of understanding on every dimension of love according to Islam.

**Keywords:** *understanding, concept of love, Muslim youth*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'love' can be interpreted in many different meanings depending on the context. Love is complex, but basically it is an emotion that unites strong affection, tenderness feelings, unpleasant sensations in the presence of the love object, and the duration of their well-being. It is an emotion that has many forms: a concern for a human partner (brotherly love); responsibility for the welfare of the child (parental love), sexual attraction and passion (erotic love), self-esteem and self-acceptance (self-love); and identify the overall (love of God) (Goldenson, 1984). Rubin (1970) also defines love as the behavior of someone towards the other person including ways of thinking, feeling, and part of a person's behavior. According to Knox (1970), love is an experience which most have had or expect to have. Love is the greatest thing. It is experience to be sought, and when achieved, to be cherished.

Our younger people today only see 'love' as the epitome of the romantic relationship between a man and a woman. The confusion and shallow-mindedness in understanding the whole concept of love are not only something that the youth have to face, but also by most of the Muslim communities. Only few have come to understand the concept of love in Islam in a comprehensive way (Nor Asiah 2001, Syaidatun 2004, Salamatussadah & Nor Ba'yah 2009). Therefore, studies done in Malaysia have found that the confusion or lack of understanding about the concept of love has led to the fact that a lot of young

Malaysians are caught in social ills that stem from love (Johari, Nasruddin&Siti Nor Baya 2009, Syaidatun 2004, Nor Asiah 2001). The issue of conceiving outside of the wedlock always seems to be linked with the young people who get pregnant outside of the wedlock resulted from their romantic relationships (Jaafar 2005).

In line with this, most young couples who were involved in sexual relationships before marriage have the misconceptions on the notion of love. As a result, they are involved with cases of baby abandonment in the drains, rivers, mosques, and dumping sites. In some cases, they are even willing to kill their babies due to their overbearing sadness towards their irresponsible lovers (Johari, Nasruddin&SitiNorBaya 2009). Their poor understanding of the actual meaning of love (Salamatussadah&NorBa'yah 2009) reveals that most of the youngsters investigated express their desire and love-seeking nature from their partners. They have placed a lot of confidence and the desire to love and be loved and these lead them to consummate their relationship. According to Maslow (1970), the need for love and the feeling of belongingness are both propelled by the need to be loved, admired and needed. Rubiah (2001) states that when they are in love, they are not able to handle a healthy friendship among them and instead become too obsessive, or too much influenced by their friends or loved ones so much so that their relationship has gone beyond the boundaries allowed for them. The repercussion from this is what brings them towards committing negative endeavours and into the pithole of multifarious conflicts of morale which have been increasingly becoming commonplace in the society.

A very advanced development process that has taken place in Malaysia, welcome a lot of unhealthy Western values and culture that permeates into the community, especially among teens (Hushim et al. 2006). Consistent with Hashim et al. (2008), they discover that moral decline among us Malaysians reaches an alarming rate, and subsequently can impede the country's excellence. Baby abandonment is the most obvious proof that Malaysians are hit by a severe wave of moral decline. Therefore, it is very important for the young people to have the right level or measure of understanding that can prevent them from committing activities which challenges those preached by the religion.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The data obtained were processed using the social science statistical package of SPSS 20 and come in the form of descriptive statistics. Alias Baba (1997) explains that descriptive statistics are used to elaborate on the information concerning the study sample. The elaboration is confined to the sample involved, and not employed to derive any conclusion or make overall generalization to the population investigated. The mean serves as the average score for a set of data that takes into consideration all scores in the data set, and serves as the accurate value that representing the data set (Steinberg, 2008). While the variants and the standard deviations (SD) make use of the overall score in the set that is in the measurement of distribution (Keiss, 2002). The descriptive statistics concerns with data compiling, conclusion-making and the act of delivering the conclusion in a way that is easy to understand by the target group.

The survey instrument had been of choice, as a tool for gathering data on people's understanding towards the notion of love- the Islamic way. Respondents were asked to provide some answers on the form of understanding on the concept of love, whereby the item scores are based on the Likert Scale from 1 to 5. The scale of 1 denotes strongly disagree, 2 means disagree, 3 means uncertain, 4 means agree and 5 signifies that people are strongly agree with the item.

This study uses the survey distributed to the respondents according the established objective, namely to identify the understanding that people (or especially the Muslim youth) have over the idea of love in Islam.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha's Coefficient of Reliability

Instrument	Item No.	Reliability coefficient
Dimension of Love of Allah SWT	4	0.779
Dimension of Love of the Prophet Muhammed SWT	6	0.824
Dimension of Love of Oneself	5	0.797
Dimension of Love of Parents	5	0.788
Dimension of Love of Creatures	7	0.716
Dimension of Love of Knowledge	5	0.809
Dimension of Love of Goodwill	5	0.879

Data were analysed using SPSS version 20.

### 3. STUDY FINDINGS

To be specific, this study only focuses on the understanding of the Muslim youth towards the concept of love according to Islam.

Every item is subject to the Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5. With this, the classification level dictates that the minimum scale of 1 is minused from the maximum scale and divided with the number of class, as expressed below:

Classification level =  $\frac{\text{maximum scale} - \text{minimum scale}}{\text{Number of interpretation}}$

Classification Level =  $\frac{5-1}{3}$

Classification Level =  $\frac{4}{3}$

Classification Level = 1.33

As the result, the classification determined for this study is as such:

Table 2: The Interpretation of The Concept of Love According to Islam

Interpretation Level	Range of Level
Low	1.00-2.33
Moderate	2.34-3.67
High	3.68-5.00

Table 3: The Mean Score of the Students' Understanding Of the Concept of Love According to Islam.

Instrument	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Dimension of Love of Allah SWT	4.75	0.384	High
Dimension of Love of the Prophet Muhammed SWT	4.85	0.323	High
Dimension of Love of Oneself	4.47	0.517	High
Dimension of Love of Parents	4.71	0.407	High
Dimension of Love of Creatures	4.66	0.384	High
Dimension of Love of Knowledge	4.73	0.392	High
Dimension of Love of Goodwill	4.72	0.420	High

N=641

Diagram 3 illustrates the score of the understanding the students of higher learning institutions in Malaysia on the dimension of love according to Islam. All seven love dimensions are shown to have high scores, followed by the dimension of love of Allah SWT (mean=4.75,SD=0.384), dimension of love of Our Prophet Muhammed SAW (mean=4.85,SD=0.323), dimension of love of oneself (mean=4.47,SD=0.517), dimension of love of parents (mean=4.71,SD=0.407), dimension of love of creatures (mean=4.66, SD=0.384), dimension of love of knowledge (mean=4.73,SD=0.392), and dimension of love of acts of goodwill (mean=4.72,SD=0.420). This goes to show that the students' understanding of the concept of love has been very impressive. Thus, this study shows that students' understanding and knowledge on this concept are at satisfactory level.

These data were analysed descriptively, and by each dimension.

### 3.1 The dimension of love of Allah SWT

Table 4: Dimension of love of Allah SWT

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency & Percentage (N=641)					Mean & SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C1_1	Allah will love those who love Him	1	4	10	57	569	4.85	0.460	T
		(0.2%)	(0.6%)	(1.6%)	(8.9%)	(88.8%)			
C1_2	Those loved by Allah will be taken care of by Him.	-	2	7	5	581	4.89	0.373	T
			(0.3%)	(1.1%)	(18.0%)	(90.6%)			
C1_3	Those who have faith are really in love with God.	1	-	9	68	563	4.86	0.410	T
		(0.2%)		(1.4%)	(10.6%)	(87.8%)			
C1_4	Allah loves people who surrender. after they with determination, work for it.	-	-	9	97	535	4.82	0.419	T
				(1.4%)	(15.1%)	(83.5%)			
Overall							4.85	0.323	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 4 shows four items with high mean scores namely C1\_1 (mean=4.85,SD=0.460), C1\_2 (mean=4.89,SD=0.373), C1\_3(mean=4.86, SD=0.410), C1\_4 (mean=4.82, SD=0.419). Therefore, all four items for the dimension of love of Allah is at high level, suggesting that students do have a certain level of understanding and knowledge on love, in adherence to Islam, whereby this special kind of love is put above others. The way to obtain this feeling of love is through doing what we are asked to do in Shari'a and leaving behind what we are prohibited to do.

### 3.2 Dimension of Love of Our Prophet, Muhammad SAW

Table 5: Dimension of Love of Our Prophet, Muhammad SAW

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency & Percentage (N=641)					Mean & SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C2_1	The love for Rasulullah gives blessings to the whole universe.	1 (0.2%)	2 (0.3%)	20 (3.1%)	118 (18.4%)	500 (78.0%)	4.74	0.542	T
C2_2	The love for Rasulullah overcomes the feeling of love to all other humans.	-	6 (0.9%)	47 (7.3%)	157 (24.5%)	431 (67.2%)	4.58	0.669	T
C2_3	The love for Rasulullah will eventually lead to the love for Allah.	-	-	13 (2.0%)	107 (16.7%)	521 (81.3%)	4.79	0.453	T
C2_4	Rasulullah loves his people until the Final Day	-	1 (0.2%)	8 (1.2%)	54 (8.4%)	578 (90.2%)	4.89	0.368	T
C2_5	Rasulullah is really concerned with the safety of his people	-	1 (0.2%)	9 (1.4%)	54 (8.4%)	577 (90.0%)	4.88	0.375	T
C2_6	Love of Rasulullah is the prerequisite for the flawlessness of faith.	3 (0.5%)	3 (0.5%)	41 (6.4%)	128 (20.0%)	466 (72.7%)	4.64	0.666	T
Overall							4.75	0.384	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=L

Table 5 highlights that these six items also have high mean scores, namely C2\_1 (mean=4.74,SD=0.542), C2\_2 (mean=4.58,SD= 0.669), C2\_3 (mean=4.79,SD= 0.453), C2\_4 (mean= 4.89,SD= 0.368), C2\_5 (mean= 4.88,SD= 0.375), C2\_6 (mean= 4.64,SD= 0.666), and they are also found to be at high level of understanding. With this, this study outcome has unraveled the fact that students grasp the idea that towards reaching the love for Allah, an avenue for this is to materialize the love of His Apostle, Rasulullah SAW. The way to show one's love of Allah is by adhering to what is delivered by His Apostle and not doing what is forbidden through the Messages conveyed by Allah to His Apostle, Rasulullah SAW.



### 3.3 Dimension of Love of Oneself

Table 6: Dimension of Love of Oneself

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency & Percentage (N=641)					Mean & SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C3_1	People who love themselves will perform obediently the Sunnah of Rasulallah.	-	5	57	239	340	4.43	0.685	T
			(0.8%)	(8.9%)	(37.3%)	(53.0%)			
C3_2	People who love themselves will succumb to other people	9	15	64	240	313	4.30	0.848	T
		(1.4%)	(2.3%)	(10.0%)	(37.4%)	(48.8%)			
C3_3	People who love themselves will work hard to become individuals with strong physicality.	3	6	61	245	326	4.38	0.734	T
		(0.5%)	(0.9%)	(9.5%)	(38.2%)	(50.9%)			
C3_4	People who love themselves will often evaluate themselves to make self-improvement.	2	2	23	180	434	4.63	0.602	T
		(0.3%)	(0.3%)	(3.6%)	(28.1%)	(67.7%)			
C3_5	People who love themselves will prepare themselves to face the Judgement Day.	-	2	26	176	437	4.63	0.576	T
			(0.3%)	(4.1%)	(27.5%)	(68.2%)			
Overall							4.47	0.517	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 6 shows that all five items carry equally high mean scores- C3\_1(mean= 4.43,sd= 0.685), C3\_2 (mean=4.30,sd= 0.848), C3\_3(mean= 4.38,sd=0.734), C3\_4 (min= 4.63,sd= 0.602), C3\_5 (min= 4.63,sd= 0.576). These high mean scores show that students claimed that they love themselves with close adherence to the Shari'a of Islam. By following the dos' and donts' dictated by Allah SWT, in order for us to take care of ourselves in this World and the next, ridding ourselves from the tortures in Hell in the afterworld, this is what the students believe as a sign that they do love themselves in accordance with Islam.

### 3.4 Dimension of love of parents

Table 7: Dimension of love of parents

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency and Percentage (N=641)					Mean&SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C4_1	Sacrificing for parents is an epitome of loving	1	4	11	142	483	4.72	0.541	T

C4_2	them. The love of a child to their parents is manifested through their loyalty.	(0.2%) -	(0.6%) 2	(1.7%) 8	(22.2%) 118	(75.4%) 513	4.78	0.463	T
C4_3	The love of parents towards their children has made them appreciative of all the things they do.	1 (0.2%)	4 (0.6%)	21 (3.3%)	130 (20.3%)	485 (75.7%)	4.71	0.574	T
C4_4	Love for parents will give blessings in life.	-	-	7 (1.1%)	79 (12.3%)	555 (86.6%)	4.85	0.382	T
C4_5	Being kind to the friends of the parents is one form of deeds that can be committed to our parents.	2 (0.3%)	7 (1.1%)	62 (9.7%)	160 (25.0%)	410 (64.0%)	4.51	0.740	T
Overall							4.71	0.407	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 6 shows that the five items have high mean scores- C4\_1 (mean=4.72, SD=0.541), C4\_2 (mean=4.78, SD=0.463), C4\_3 (mean=4.71, SD=0.574), C4\_4 (mean=4.85, SD=0.382), C4\_5 (mean=4.51, SD=0.740). This particular dimension with six items are at high level, showing that the students' understanding on the concept of love for their parents is extremely good, where they know how to prove their love to their parents (being loyal and obedient to what their parents want them to do or not do, as long as they do not conflict with the Shari'a of Islam).

### 3.5 Dimension of Love of Creatures

Table 8: Dimension of Love of Creatures

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency & Percentage (N=641)					Mean & SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C5_1	Doing good deeds to our partners (husband or wife) is one proof of love of Allah.	-	2 (0.3%)	60 (9.4%)	205 (32.0%)	374 (58.3%)	4.48	0.676	T
C5_2	Love of creatures cannot overcome the love of Allah and the Apostle.	6 (0.9%)	5 (0.8%)	20 (3.1%)	91 (14.2%)	519 (81.0%)	4.73	0.646	T
C5_3	The love between the husband and wife is not only to fulfill sexual needs	8 (1.2%)	8 (1.2%)	24 (3.7%)	94 (14.7%)	507 (79.1%)	4.69	0.717	T
C5_4	Love is a gift.	-	-	12 (1.9%)	100 (15.6%)	529 (82.5%)	4.81	0.440	T

C5_5	There should be justice in love.	-	3 (0.5%)	19 (3.0%)	99 (15.4%)	520 (81.1%)	4.77	0.513	T
C5_6	Love between the husband and wife necessitates good communication .	-	2 (0.3%)	4 (0.6%)	109 (17.0%)	526 (82.1%)	4.81	0.432	T
C5_7	Love between the husband and wife seeks to sustain the generation.	9 (1.4%)	17 (2.7%)	66 (10.3%)	204 (31.8%)	345 (53.8%)	4.34	0.871	T
Overall							4.66	0.384	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 7 shows seven items with high mean score which is C5\_1 (min=4.48, SD=0.676), C5\_2 (min=4.73, SD=0.646), C5\_3 (min=4.69, SD=0.717), C5\_4 (min=4.81, SD=0.440), C5\_5 (min=4.77, SD=0.513), C5\_6 (min=4.81, SD=0.432), C5\_7 (min=4.34, SD=0.871). These findings highlight that the dimension of love of creatures is at a high level. This portrays that the Muslim youth are really aware and understand clearly the notion of love following Islam, and this indicates how important it is to know and understand this, towards taking care of the husband-wife relationship, in the sustainability of their generation.

### 3.6 The dimension of love of knowledge

Table 9: The dimension of love of knowledge

Item Code	Sub-category	Frequency & Percentage (N=641)					Mean and SD		
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	Level
C6_1	Knowledge-seekers are prayed for forgiveness by Allah's creatures.	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	59 (9.2%)	178 (27.8%)	402 (62.7%)	4.53	0.680	T
C6_2	Muslims are encouraged to seek knowledge.	-	-	4 (0.6%)	63 (9.8%)	574 (89.5%)	4.89	0.333	T
C6_3	Allah gives the highest rank to those who seek knowledge.	-	-	15 (2.3%)	90 (14.0%)	536 (83.6%)	4.81	0.446	T
C6_4	Those who love knowledge will share his knowledge with others	-	1 (0.2%)	16 (2.5%)	104 (16.2%)	520 (81.1%)	4.78	0.479	T
C6_5	People who teach his knowledge to others will be prayed by creatures of both worlds	-	-	44 (6.9%)	122 (19.0%)	475 (74.1%)	4.67	0.598	T
Overall							4.73	0.392	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 8 illustrates 5 items with high mean scores which are C6\_1 (mean=4.53, SD=0.680), C6\_2 (mean=4.89, SD=0.333), C6\_3 (mean=4.81, SD=0.446), C6\_4 (mean=4.78, SD=0.479), C6\_5 (mean=4.67, SD=0.598). The understanding of Muslim youth towards the dimension of love for knowledge stays at a high level, which suggests that the respondents are aware of the importance of seeking for knowledge and whereby the need for knowledge serves as a shield, as we make our life decisions. The advantage of seeking for knowledge also functions as the motivating factor to the respondents, as to ignite their Spirit in seeking for knowledge and delivering it to others.

### 3.7 The dimension of love of goodwill

Table 9: Dimension of love of goodwill

Item Code	Sub-Category	Frequency and Percentage (N=641)					Mean & SD		Level
		STS	TS	TP	S	SS	MIN	SD	
C7_1	Positive-thinkers are often high-Spirited to perform goodwill.	-	3	13	174	451	4.67	0.537	T
			(0.5%)	(2.0%)	(27.1%)	(70.4%)			
C7_2	Allah loves people who do good deeds	-	-	13	105	523	4.80	0.451	T
				(2.0%)	(16.4%)	(81.6%)			
C7_3	People of good morale are included in individuals who love and are loved.	-	1	32	156	452	4.65	0.580	T
			(0.2%)	(5.0%)	(24.3%)	(70.5%)			
C7_4	One good deed will lead to more good deeds.	-	1	12	149	479	4.73	0.496	T
			(0.2%)	(1.9%)	(23.2%)	(74.7%)			
C7_5	Allah loves people who are determined to do something.	-	-	17	121	503	4.76	0.487	T
				(2.7%)	(18.9%)	(78.5%)			
Overall							4.72	0.420	T

T=High, S=Moderate, R=Low

Table 9 highlights 5 items with high mean scores- C7\_1 (mean=4.67, SD=0.537), C7\_2 (mean=4.80, SD=0.451), C7\_3 (mean=4.65, SD=0.580), C7\_4 (mean=4.73, SD=0.496), C7\_5 (mean=4.76, SD=0.487). The five items for the dimension of love of goodwill are also at high level. From this, the outcome of the study shows that the understanding and knowledge of the youth in terms of the love for acts of goodwill have moved them to perform acts of kindness in achieving Divine love.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The study outcome finds out that the level of understanding of the Muslim youth towards the concept of love according to Islam is high. This is evident when the study findings show that all dimensions of love in accordance with Islam remain at high level of interpretation, namely the dimension of love to Allah (mean=4.85, SD=0.323), the dimension of love to the Apostle (mean=4.75, SD=0.384), the dimension of love to oneself (mean=4.47, SD=0.517), the dimension of love to parents (mean=4.71, SD=0.407), the dimension of love of creatures (mean=4.66, SD=0.384), the dimension of love of knowledge (mean=4.73, SD=0.392) and the dimension of love of goodwill (mean=4.72, SD=0.420). In a study by Ab.

Halim and Khadijah (2004), they point out that the social ills can be explained by the misunderstanding, the lack of understanding, ignorance and arrogance amongst people towards the order of God and His Apostle, Muhammad SAW. Apart from these, the surrounding factors also give contributions to the moral decline. This study outcome demonstrates that there is high level of understanding in the youth, concerning the concept of love within the scope of Islamic teachings. This is going against the direction steered by the researcher in terms of the study problems, whereby the the issues raised relate with the moral decline amongst students and which, in turn, is connected to their lack of understanding towards Islamic concept of love. If such an understanding follows closely the statement of Sternberg (1988), the understanding of the concept of love comprises of three elements- *intimacy, passion dan commitment*. Passion (lust) embodies the feelings of romance constituted into physical and sexual appeal between partners. An example for physical appeal can be seen in the men choosing sexy women and the women going for well-built, good-looking and strong men. This is when the problems emerge, as the understanding of youth on the idea of love is very much conflicted with the idea of love as demanded by Islam. This study shows that the real problem does not begin from their lack of understanding on what constitutes the actual notion of love.

The actual issue really stems from the fact that the actions committed are not in adherence to the knowledge learned. The knowledge they gain has not been uphold as principles that can guide them through life. The outcome of a study written by Baharom, Ali and Za'ba (2008) reveals that the students' level of understanding is high, as far as Islamic Education and Moral Education are concerned, but remains moderate when it comes to the implementation or practising the knowledge in their dalily lives. Hence, at this point the theoretical knowledge is insufficient to make a person become the best person that he or she can be. According to Imam Fakhrurazi (cited in Salehudin 2012), we need to make sure that wisdom does not escape from two concepts- theory and practice. This is due to the fact that, human wisdom is identified only by two things- getting to know what is the truth and have faith in it, and secondly, knowing the truth and praying. The first aspect is based on the aspects of appropriate knowledge, while the second aspect is based upon its implementation.

Based on the Quran, from the verse of As-Saf, 2-3. Allah dictates:

*O you who have believed! Why do you say what you not do? Great is hatred in the sight of Allah that you say what you not do*

Hushim (2006) in his study advises that we are not supposed to be comfortable with the idea that students who excel academically are also excellent in their character and morale. It is also worth pointing out that teenagers in this era become mature ahead of their time caused by various external pressures. Understanding and implementation are expressible, as they are both rooted from the mind. Meanwhile, appreciation is expressed from Spiritual practices which are rooted from the heart. Najati (1993) contends that the decline of moral values in a society is not only threatening to the individual's sense of mentality but Malek Bennabi (1998) adds that morale is also the actual reason for societal destruction as it can break every vein in the society.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study findings show that the level of understanding of the Muslim youth towards the concept of love according to Islam is at high level. Therefore, this study shows that the theoretical knowledge alone is insufficient to form one's personality. As a result, as knowledge is deemed insufficient, practical aspects and behaviour should also be emphasized.

In relation to this, similar studies need to be prolonged and improved, whereby aspects like attitude and practice that lead to such misbehavior should be given equal focus. Therefore, it may not be enough to look into the aspect of understanding alone, but the practical aspect should also be examined. It is anticipated that further studies can be done in the direction of knowing the real reason behind the emerging issues, and seeking to find a way out to curb social ills that are becoming widespread in the current Malaysian community. This is because, the emerging issues among the youth today do not just give effect to the society, but also able to stunt the development of the country.

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# YOUNG MOTHERS IN WOMEN SHELTERS: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE PREGNANT AND UNMARRIED

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## Abstract

Unplanned pregnancies, especially those that are unwanted, bring about emotional, financial, physical, and social distress to the mothers. The issue is more critical when it involves teenagers or young mothers who at their age are usually those who should be in school or college. Nevertheless, there are young mothers who choose to continue their pregnancy despite experiencing the trauma and stigma of being pregnant out-of-wedlock. This research seeks to examine the experiences of unmarried teenagers and young women who choose to continue their pregnancy while staying in women shelters.<sup>1</sup> The research utilizes a mixed methods approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative methods. A total of 101 participants were recruited from five women shelters in Malaysia who responded to self-administered questionnaires. Eighteen participants were selected as participants in the qualitative study by means of semi-structured interviews. The main reason for seeking shelter was to avoid shame and embarrassment for being pregnant out of wedlock. Majority had sex with their boyfriends and half admitted to having attempted abortion. Immediate family was most frequently consulted after discovering pregnancy, which was closely followed by those who informed their boyfriend first. Family involvement and spiritual input are found crucial to the well-being of the young mothers.

**Key words:** *Premarital pregnancy, adolescent pregnancy, teenage pregnancy, women shelters*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that 83.3 babies are born out of wedlock in Malaysia every day. According to the statistics from 2005 to 2009 produced by the National Registration Department, more than 214,000 newborn babies across the country were registered without their father's name documented. Of these figures, 17,303 illegitimate babies were born to Malay mothers in the year 2009 (Mohd Azis Ngah, 2010). Young mothers (particularly teenage girls) are among those included in the statistics and present with the most risks which include baby and mother's health hazards, substance abuse, impediment to education opportunities and not forgetting imposing costs to the government (Kohn, 2013; Leve, Kerr, & Harold, 2013; Pazol, Warner, Gavin, Callaghan, Spitz, Anderson, Barfield, & Kann, 2011, Khairani Omar, Suriati Hasim, Noor Azimah Muhammad, Aida Jaafar, Syahnaz Mohd Hashim & Harlina Halizah Siraj, 2010; Kurup, Viegas, Singh, & Ratnam, 1989). Moffitt and the E-Risk Study Team (2002) for example, conducted a longitudinal study of mothers of same-sex twins

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born in 1994 and 1995 in the United Kingdom. The study included mothers who were twenty years old and below when their baby was born. It was found that the younger mothers confessed to more anti-social behaviour, reported more substance abuse problems, and had a higher rate of depression than older mothers. The lack of emotional and financial supports received by the young mothers contributed to their socio-economic deprivation..

Although consensual sex may be the contributing factor to pregnancy among these young mothers, it is important to note that sex with a minor (i.e. those aged 16 and below) with or without consent is considered statutory rape under the Malaysian Penal Code. According to the statistics released by the Royal Malaysia Police, there were 2,419 sexual crimes or rape cases involving girls aged 16 and below in the year 2011, which showed an increment as compared to 1,777 similar cases reported in the year 2010 (Raja Syahrir Abu Bakar, Marzita Abdullah & Kamil Maslih, 2012). Unwanted pregnancy, especially when it is the result of premarital sex, may pose as a traumatizing experience, what more when it is not a norm accepted by the society. The high stigma linked to unwed pregnancy, however, has not been successful in preventing adolescents and young Malaysian adults from committing premarital sex. Teenagers in particular, may not have the knowledge on pregnancy prevention or what to do if they get pregnant. As a result, the high likelihood of unwanted pregnancy will continue to be a serious concern in the society. Nevertheless, there are young women who choose to continue their pregnancy despite experiencing the trauma and stigma of being pregnant out-of-wedlock. One of the solution options would be admitting themselves into women shelters.

In Malaysia, it is common that women shelters which accommodate pregnant unmarried young mothers are seen as places to rehabilitate those who have “committed sins”, including the (mis)perception that these places are punishment or correctional facilities. While private shelters are typically run by private or non-government organizations, there are also residential care facilities for pregnant youth run by the government. The Taman Seri Puteri (TSP) is such facility with a mission ‘To rehabilitate women and girls who are exposed to moral danger or facing moral decay’ (Department of Social Welfare Malaysia, 2013). The TSP offers vocational classes (e.g sewing, gardening, handicraft), religious classes, recreation activities, job placement, counselling, and voluntary work (Department of Social Welfare Malaysia, 2013; Nor Jana Saim, Dufaker, M., Eriksson, M., & Ghazinour, M., 2013). The rules and regulations may differ from one shelter to another, including the types of activities and services provided. While the government-run shelters may have a more prescribed administrative structure that includes social workers and counselors, private shelters may be administered by the owner, administrative staff and / or volunteers. These shelters are typically funded by monthly fees paid by residents (or their families) or by donations received from the public.

A couple of studies on pregnant teen mothers in residential care present similar issues regarding the needs of those who seek shelter in residential care facilities. Driskill (1998), for example, found that residential care facilities should be sensitive of six categories of needs for pregnant teenagers when providing services to these residents. These are socialization, emotional, mental / intellectual, physical / health, functional and spiritual needs. Likewise, Woo and Twinn (2004) who conducted a study on pregnant teenagers in a Hong Kong shelter also found six perceived needs which are acceptance of pregnancy, psychological reactions during pregnancy, use of contraception and health advice, social support, love, and romance. Both of these studies highlight the awareness that pregnant young mothers who seek shelter are not living in a void space where all connections to their social surroundings are being cut off. Hence, they need to be given support and assessed for provisions of proper services.

The aim of this paper is to present the thoughts and views of unmarried Malaysian adolescents and young women after discovering they were pregnant since often, this group of young people gets ostracized easily and their voices unheard. The study is part of a larger research project funded by a government research grant to examine the experience of pregnant young mothers who sought protection and care in shelters for women and girls.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Mixed-methods approach was deployed in the data collection. Mixed-methods approach was selected because it offers a “complete” picture of the phenomenon (i.e. unwed pregnancy) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007) which could not be obtained through one approach (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2009) as it seeks to explain the causes and consequences of beliefs and actions (Axinn and Pearce, 2006). The statistical software SPSS version 17 was used to analyze the quantitative data. Meanwhile, the analysis of the qualitative data was performed through the utilization of the software NVivo version 10. Thematic analysis was utilized to code the interview transcripts according to identified patterns within the data (Bazeley, 2007; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### *2.1 Location*

The study was conducted at five women shelters across the country; three of which are government-funded shelters, while the other two are private-run shelters. It is important to note that the shelters also provide a safe haven for cases other than unwed pregnancy, such as abuse or domestic violence. However, only those who fit the inclusion criteria of being pregnant and unmarried (at the time of first discovering pregnancy) were selected as participants for the study.

### *2.2 Participants*

Overall, a total of 101 participants were recruited for the study. The age range of the participants was 14 to 25 years, with more than a third of them ( $n = 36$ ) being below 18. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the participants that include questions such as demographic background, sexual experience, and pregnancy experience. Eighteen participants were then selected to participate in semi-structured interviews for more in-depth understanding of their experience.

### *2.3 Procedure and Ethical Considerations*

The approval to conduct research was sought from the private shelters and the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia. Prospective participants were then approached for their consent to be included in the research. The research only commenced following approval and consents from all parties involved. Since the issue being addressed by the research involved potentially sensitive and/or traumatic experience, special care was taken into consideration by the researchers before embarking on and during data collection. Rapport building was crucial before we began with data collection. As part of ethical considerations too, we also conducted debriefing sessions and mini-counselling with the participants after data collection was completed to increase their hopes and motivation, and particularly to check for any possible distress following data collection procedure.

## **3. RESULTS**

### *3.1 Sexual and pregnancy information*

Majority of the participants admitted that they had sex with their boyfriends (76 %). More than half (56.4%) admitted that their pregnancy was the result of consensual sex, as opposed to rape (25.7%). The rest reported that the sex was initially forced but later became consensual (17.8%). Five participants reported that this was not their first pregnancy. Majority (77.2 %) did not use any contraceptive methods during sex. Half of the participants admitted that they had attempted abortion (see Table 1).

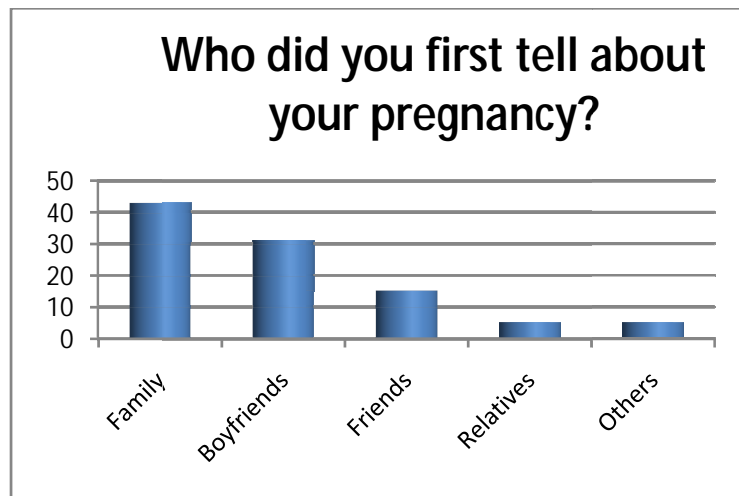
Table 1. Sexual and pregnancy experience information

Information	N	%
Who did you have sex with?		
Boyfriend	77	76.2
Family member	4	4.0
Friend	12	11.9
Stranger	6	5.9
Neighbour	1	1.0
Fiancée	1	1.0
Cause of pregnancy		
Consensual	57	56.5
Forced sexual initiation	18	17.8
Rape	26	25.7
First pregnancy		
Yes	96	95.0
No	5	5.0
Used contraceptive methods		
Yes	22	21.8
No	78	77.2
Unreported	1	1.0
Abortion attempt		
Yes	50	49.5
No	50	49.5
Unreported	1	1.0

### 3.2 Reactions after discovering pregnancy

When asked about the first person that they reported their pregnancy to, a majority (42.6 %) admitted that they told their immediate family, with mothers being the person that they turned to most (n = 25). They were followed by those who told their boyfriends (30.7%), while the rest told their friends (n = 15), relatives (n = 5), doctor or nurse (n = 3), teacher (n = 1) and the shelter (n = 1) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. First person to know about pregnancy



Reactions after discovering pregnancy was later further explored with the participants in the interview. Reactions can be categorized into self-reaction and reactions by others. These themes were further categorized into emotional reactions and actions taken subthemes. Self emotions include feelings of shock, regret, anger, distress, and ashamed. The following are two examples of how participants recalled their reactions:

“Hmmm.... I feel ashamed, but because in here I don’t get to see friends or people that I know..... (I feel) like I regret (what has happened).”

“Worried, many things came to my mind.... But after I found out (I was pregnant) I initially kept it a secret from my family.... I felt afraid, after I did it (had sex), I wasn’t feeling good about it.”

The emotional reactions received from the family were mostly anger, sadness, and disappointment. One participant related what happened when the doctor told her mother about the pregnancy:

“At that time, my mother was shocked. Then she asked the doctor, “is it true?”, this can’t be because I was always with her. Then the doctor said yes and that was what she saw in the result. Then, my mother asked me who did I do it with. I told her my boyfriend..... (My parents) They were angry. When they found out, they were angry.”

Among the commonly reported actions taken by others after finding out that the participants were pregnant was searching for shelters and sending the participants to the shelters. One participant who was raised by her single mother reported that she initially wanted to get married, to which her mother initially agreed but later retracted, and sent her to the shelter.

“After she found out, my mother was angry but she said things have happened, what to do. I told my mother that I wanted to get married, she gave me an ok at first. I already attended the pre-marital preparation course and ready to go to the court to appoint a ‘wali’ (as part of Muslim marriage requirements), but then my mother said she did not want to go (to the court). Then, I had a big fight with my mother and she sent me here.”

There were two participants who reported that they were beaten by their fathers after finding out that the daughters were pregnant. The following is an excerpt of disclosure from one of the two participants. She recalled what her father did after he hit her.

“My dad wanted to send me to Thailand to abort the baby. Then my brother said let’s not do that. She has already committed a sin, and now (we want to ask her) to commit another one. Then, my dad asked me to come here.”

### 3.3 Reason for admission into shelter

Majority of the participants in the quantitative study reported that they found the shelters through the internet (30.7%) followed by those who were informed of the place by their family (21.8%). Admission into the shelters appears to occur after the second trimester when the increase in their belly size becomes more visible. The most frequently reported stage of pregnancy at shelter admission was seven months (30.7 %), followed by five months (21.8%) and four months (14.9%).

Avoiding shame and embarrassment (i.e. *malu*) was an overarching theme for the reason for seeking shelter. The decision to come to the shelters was mainly due to hide their pregnancy from relatives, neighbours, or friends. These two excerpts provide examples of how avoiding shame and embarrassment is the motivation behind shelter admission.

“To cover my tummy. I don’t want people to know.... I don’t want my family to feel embarrassed.”

“(I came here) because I’m going to deliver this baby..... to avoid from people finding out.”

### 3.4 Decision to maintain pregnancy

As presented earlier, half of the participants admitted that they had attempted abortion, albeit failing, before coming to the shelter. This issue was later explored in the interview regarding why they decided to continue with the pregnancy. Avoiding from committing (more) sins (*dosa*) or having done wrong (*buatsalah*) was the most commonly cited reason, as reported by this participant:

“Because I feel that I have committed enough sins, so if I abort this baby, I’ll commit more sins. So, that’s why I took this decision (to keep the baby).”

### 3.5 Plans after leaving the shelter

In the interview, the participants were asked regarding their plans after leaving the shelter. The plans were further categorized as plan for baby and plan for self. The participants were not unanimous with their plans regarding the unborn baby as three were unsure about what to do with the baby. Half of the rest (n=7) wanted to keep and raise the baby on their own, while the other eight wanted to give the baby away. Of the latter, five wanted to give their babies to relatives, as reported by this participant:

“At first, I told my sister to give (the baby) to JKM (Department of Social Welfare), but then she said don’t, because her husband’s aunty is looking for a baby. She asked me to give it to her (the aunty) because I would know then who is taking care of the baby. She said that if I gave to JKM, I wouldn’t know what would happen (to the baby).”

Meanwhile, although one participant married her boyfriend, majority of the rest (n = 13) did not see marriage (i.e., marrying the boyfriend or perpetrator) as a viable option for themselves. Those who were students stated that they wanted to get back to school or college. While those who were working, wanted to continue working or find another job.

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Being pregnant and unmarried is still considered undesirable and is a frown upon behaviour in Malaysian society. This is supported by the participants' report for seeking shelter to avoid shame and embarrassment, and the attempts to abort the baby by half of the participants. It was found that the shelters require family involvement or approval prior to being accepted into the shelters. Therefore, the families were all informed of the participants' pregnancy. Mothers were the most frequently consulted family member after the participants found out that they were pregnant. Family involvement is important in the well-being of the pregnant adolescents and helps good decision making behaviour. Family involvement has been found to be important in regulating adolescents' sexual behaviour and preventing the latter from engaging in deviant activities (Benda and DiBlasio, 1994). When the family displays acceptance and responsiveness towards children, it helps the children to feel important and guides them in thinking about their actions. As such, this helps in preventing the adolescents from engaging in further problematic behaviours such as baby dumping or substance abuse as a way of coping with their pregnancy.

As the research project is only limited to pregnant young mothers who were seeking protection and services from the women shelters, it shows that support from the family and receiving services from social service agencies help these young mothers to re-examine their behaviour and plan for a better future. The findings raise question about the experience of other teenagers and young women who are unmarried and pregnant, but are not residing in any shelters. Involving in unwanted pregnancy could be a traumatic experience for a young woman or girl as it brings about emotional, financial, physical, and social distress to the mothers (Finer, & Zolna, 2011; Berger, Manlove, Wildsmith, Peterson, & Guzman, 2012). Hence, not receiving any support might be detrimental to the expecting mothers and the unborn baby.

Although avoiding shame and embarrassment was the most cited reason for shelter admission, being pressured to marry the perpetrator was not imposed by a majority of the participants' family nor was it a favourable solution option for the participants. A majority of the non-married respondents reported that they were not planning to get married after they leave the shelter. This was in contrast to the not uncommon belief that a pregnant girl should marry the one who caused the pregnancy. Nevertheless, the issue of committing sin and repentance was commonly brought up during the interview with the participants. Many participants regretted their behaviour which led to the pregnancy. This is customary for a country with a high spiritual society like Malaysia, as opposed to other more liberal and secular countries (Leve, Kerr, & Harold, 2013; Finer, & Zolna, 2011, Singh & Darroch, 2000). Therefore, it is highly recommended that spiritual and religious input be a focus for intervention when working with this group of clients, apart from working on developing plans for self and baby, since the input contributes to inner strength and resilience. Believing in their potentials and believing in a second chance in life will encourage this group of young people to overcome their current problems and become productive members of the society.

More than a third of the participants were minors and considered as children (i.e., being under 18 years old according to the Malaysian Child Act 2001). At their age, the youngsters should be in school and receiving education. The disturbing phenomenon of "kids having kids" is a concern since they may not be psychologically, physically, or financially ready to become mothers. A few of the older participants were also students (i.e., college or university) prior to entering the shelters. Pregnancy has indeed caused an impediment to their education path. In line with this, preventive work which focuses on educating young people on sexuality should be a comprehensive effort which covers the social, spiritual, and health impact of sexual behaviour. Although much debate has been occurring regarding the implementation of a compulsory sex education in Malaysian schools, such education would benefit many of Malaysian youngsters regarding making the correct choice when dealing with sexuality issues. Therefore, sex education should also aim at encouraging youngsters to think carefully before

engaging in any risky sexual behaviour that could affect them socially, physically, spiritually or even financially.

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# INVESTIGATING THE COPING STRATEGIES IN CYBERBULLYING: A GROUNDED THEORY APPROACH

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## Abstract

This paper focuses on four coping strategies implemented by the victims of cyber bullying in order to cope with the phenomenon being studied. The actual research tried to fill the knowledge gap in cyberbullying phenomenon by focusing on factors that contribute to its activities among adolescents in Malaysia. In addition, the research seeks to understand the antecedents and the contexts and prevailing conditions that influence it, as well as the phenomenon, the coping strategies and the consequences resulting from the coping strategies. Using a grounded theory methodology, in-depth interviews were conducted on adolescents aged between 12 to 18 years from different schools in the state of Perlis. The data were analyzed using NVivo 8 by methodically coding and categorizing the data in open, axial and selective coding to arrive at a model development. A paradigm model will be obtained based on informants' individual comments and experiences which uniquely contribute to the body of knowledge on cyberbullying phenomenon in Malaysia. The involved elements derived from the model are; the antecedents of cyberbullying; the phenomenon; the coping strategies by informants and the consequences resulting from these strategies. The significance of this study lies in its attempt to provide a working framework for reducing adolescents' technology abuse that will eventually lead to cyberbullying and to find solutions for adolescents to tackle cyberbullying problems if it ever happened. This study is hoped to benefit all the parties: adolescents, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders to minimize adolescents' cyberbullying phenomenon. At a time when most adolescents are exposed to cyber bullying around the world, this research is both timely and necessary. At a time when most adolescents are exposed to cyber bullying around the world, this research is both timely and necessary.

**Keywords:** *Cyberbullying, Paradigm model, Grounded theory, Facebook, Adolescents.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The intention of current research was to construct a grounded theory of cyberbullying phenomenon on the basis of adolescents' reports about their own cyberbullying incident. Secondly, most of existing researches were based on traditional bullying occurrence, therefore it is hoped that this study can provide a more in-depth descriptive account of cyberbullying phenomenon. The most fundamental ground to the researcher nevertheless is to come out with a working hypothesis or process model of cyberbullying. The researcher conducted the present study to examine the process by which cyberbullying occurs and to propose a preliminary paradigm model (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) that can be tested in future research. The researcher preferred grounded theory methodology as it is preferably suited to construct a data-based theory that can be utilized as a foundation for future study (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Given the prevalent nature of cyberbullying, the researcher questioned how adolescents perceive cyberbullying, and whether their experience are aligned to the existing views in the literature. The researcher believed that a grounded theory analysis would facilitate researchers to ascertain other characteristics of cyberbullying that might justify its widespread unremitting incident.

## **2. DEFINITIONS OF CYBERBULLYING**

Descriptions of cyberbullying are consistent from author to author. Shariff (2009) in her book 'Confronting cyberbullying' stated that definitions of cyberbullying by experts in this field share some similarities in defining it. Other experts such as Hinduja and Patchin (2009) developed cyberbullying definitions to be straightforward, brief, and practically comprehensive and encapsulates the most significant elements such as: (1) Willful: The behavior has to be purposeful, not accidental; (2) Recurring: Bullying displays a pattern of manners, not just one isolated occurrence; (3) Harm: The objective must distinguish that harm was imposed; and (4) The usage of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices: Differentiates cyberbullying from traditional bullying. Therefore, cyberbullying in a sentence is willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009).

## **3. METHOD**

### *3.1 Informants*

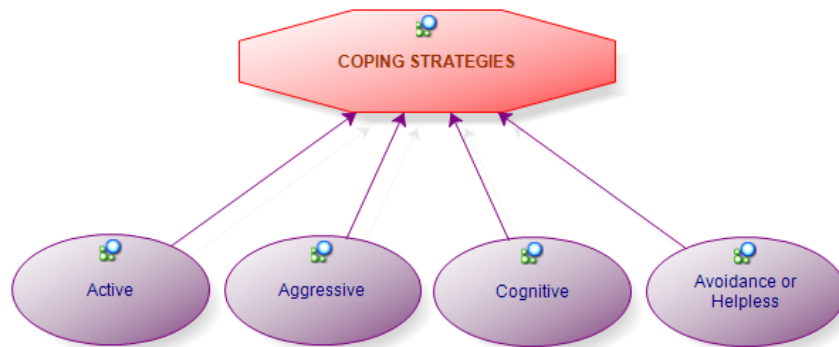
One hundred and five adolescents (n=105) from four secondary school and three from a primary school participated in this research. Data were collected over a period of seven months and these were done after major examinations as not to disrupt their academic activities. All respondents were enrolled in various educational backgrounds and ranged between the ages of twelve to eighteen. Most of the respondents were chosen through the school counselors but many of the informants were picked up by snow-balling technique as the adolescents will inform about others who have engaged in the cyberbullying activities as a perpetrators or victims. The researcher also went online for a period of six months in order to experience the real situation of cyberbullying phenomenon and to collect the examples related to themes of study. This was done particularly via one of the most prominence social networking sites among adolescents – Facebook.

### *3.2 Procedure*

Data were collected using grounded theory procedures described in Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998). Creswell (1998) suggested that a standard grounded theory research will comprise 20 to 30 interviews that collectively saturate the categories that emerge during analysis. Data are accumulated in four phases that differ with regard to purpose and data collection strategies (Harry, Sturges, & Klingner, 2005) is summarized in Table 1. Analysis of data of current study were completed by using NVivo Version 8 Software as to meet the terms of "trustworthiness", "rigorousness", or "quality" of the data, therefore it is important that this are carried out in a thorough and transparent manner (Crawford, Leybourne & Arnott, 2000; Creswell, 1998; Kirk & Miller, 1986; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Seale, 1999). Therefore, using software in the data analysis process has been thought by some to add rigor to qualitative research (Richards & Richards, 1991).

#### 4. FINDINGS

Figure 1: Four Coping Strategies



When it comes to coping strategies for adolescents to cope with cyberbullying, the researcher adopted Seiffge-Krenke and Shulman's (1990) approach. Seiffge-Krenke and Shulman (1990) empirically identified the following general coping strategies for bullying: active coping (including usage of social support), aggressive coping, avoidance or helpless coping and internal (cognitive) coping (Figure 1). The researcher anticipates a more or less similar structure for coping strategies regarding cyberbullying.

Figure 2: Active Coping Strategies

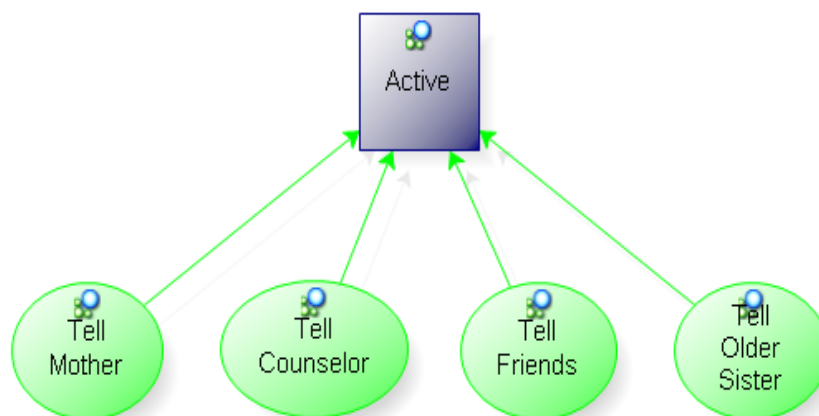


Figure 3: Active Coping Strategies – Number of Cases Coded by Gender

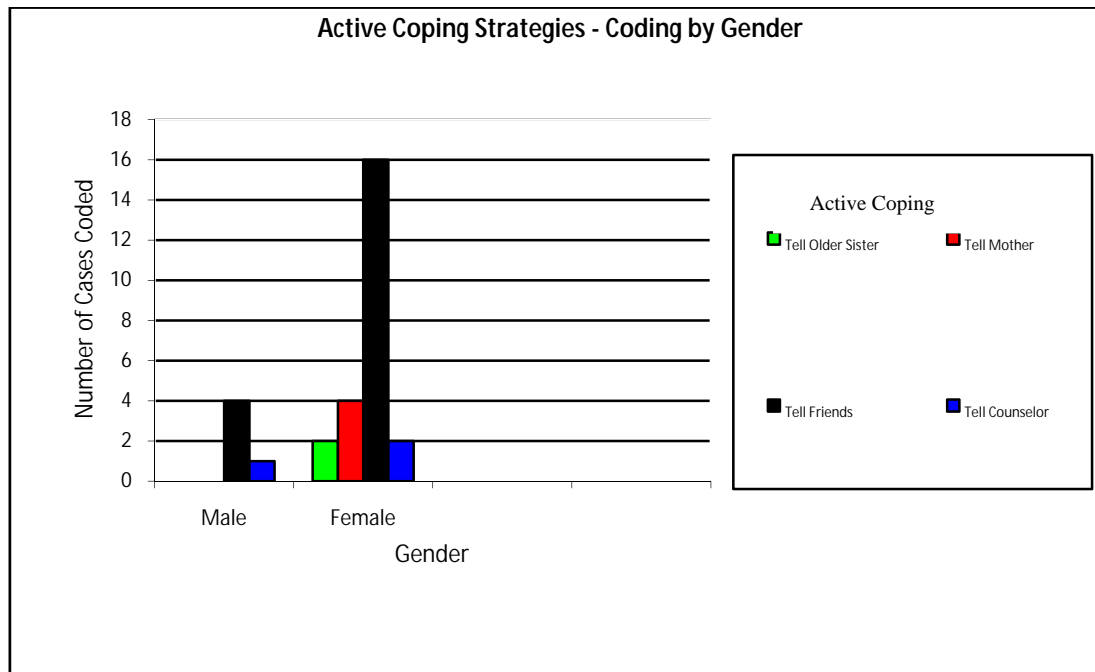


Figure 3 demonstrates an active coping strategy among the victims is seeking social support (Naylor, Cowie, & Rey, 2001). From the interviews, the researcher found the victims (M = 21%, F = 79%) frequently seek empathy from friends because talking about hurting experiences to someone who listens and cares makes victims feel more accepted and provides strength (Naylor et al., 2001; Kochenderfer, Ladd, & Skinner, 2002). Second most sought after to seek sympathy is the victims' older sister while parents and teachers are third and fourth respectively.

From the interviews, the researcher managed to conceptualize the refrain from adults due to the distance between them. Responses showed that adults were 'not appreciative' when it comes to online bullying and many adolescents replied that they were uncomfortable to reveal cyberbullying incidents to adults as they think that cyberbullying is only small matter thus when relay it to adults, it will make it more messy. Therefore, the researcher's proposition is adolescents will seek sympathies from those who manage to understand cyberbullying so that the advice given is accurate.

Figure 4: Aggressive Coping Strategies

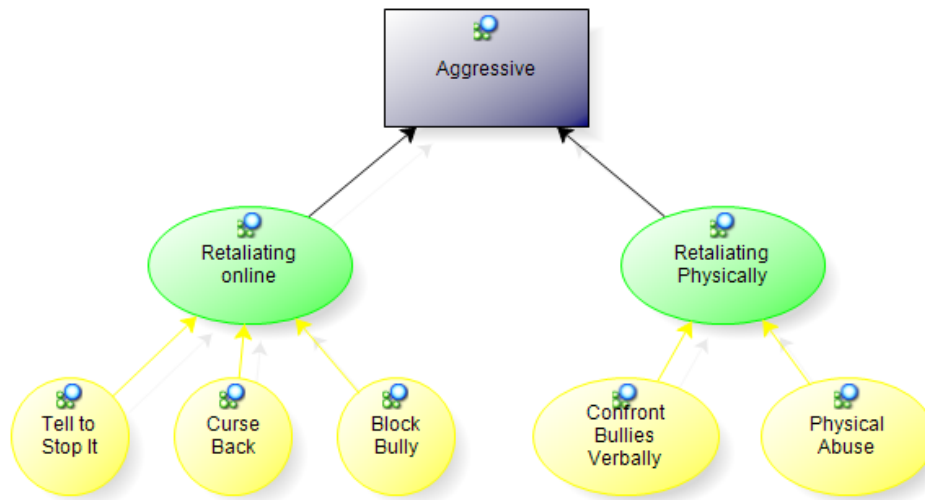
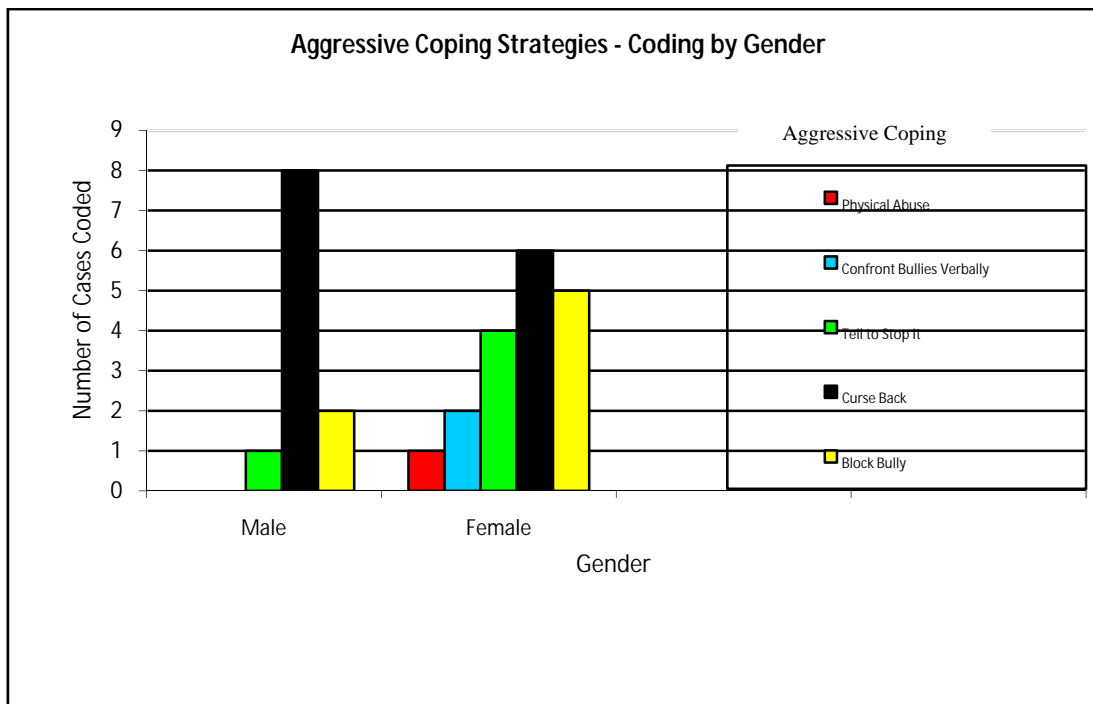


Figure 5: Aggressive Coping Strategies – Number of Cases Coded by Gender



Meanwhile, aside from active coping, cyberbullying victims did perform aggressive coping strategies. As illustrated in Figure 4 and explained in Figure 5, the researcher found that there were two types of aggressive coping performed – online and physical retribution. Online retaliation, for example, is when the victim blocked the bully (M = 13%, F = 87%) by removing the bullies from his or her friend’s list. Some informants (M = 29%, F = 71%) got even by cursing back the same manner the bully did to them or simply told the bully to stop harassing them (M = 15%, F = 85%).

However, there was one informant with enough courage to confront her bully face-to-face to seek explanation why she was being harassed and to some extent performed physical abuse.

It is a clear concept of aggressive coping strategy, the best way for her due to the failure of other strategies. Another interesting point is that this also means that cyberbullying has led to physical harassment between the two, thus the researcher's proposition is that cyberbullying and traditional bullying is interrelated with one another. Sometimes cyberbullying triggers the traditional bullying and vice versa.

Figure 6: Cognitive Coping Strategies

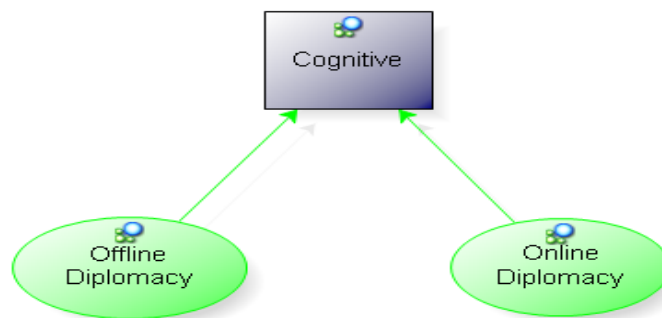
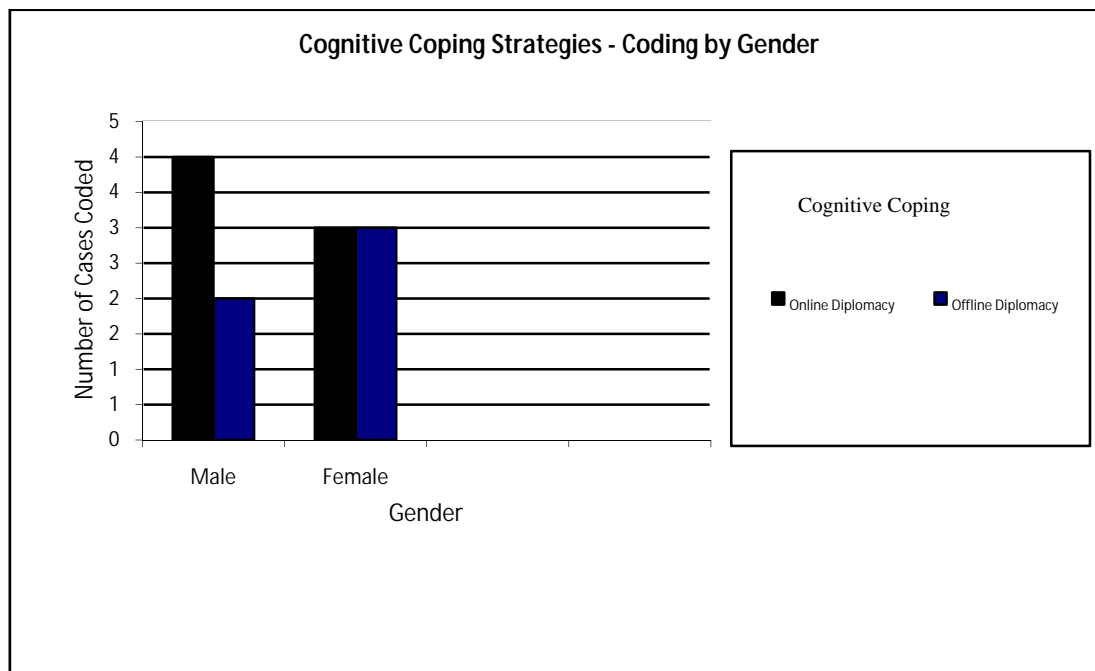


Figure 7: Cognitive Coping Strategies – Number of Cases Coded by Gender



Unlike the previous two strategies, the third strategy is by using the diplomatic approach. As pointed up in Figure 6 and Figure 7, the victims tried to reason with the bully whether via online (M = 18%, F = 82%) or offline (M = 32%, F = 68%) by questioning what could have

been the motive behind the bully’s behavior. Some of the informants reacted that they did not even know why they were bullied and they wanted this to stop by disregarding the incidents or tried the diplomatic way to solve the problem.

These informants described the ‘gentle way’ to ward off cyberbullying. The researcher conceptualized this as a cognitive coping strategy; the strategy used in order to stop the online bullying by a win-win situation. The cognitive coping strategy from the researcher’s proposition happened because the victim did not want to further encourage more hatred between both of the informants.

Figure 8: Avoidance or Helpless Coping Strategies

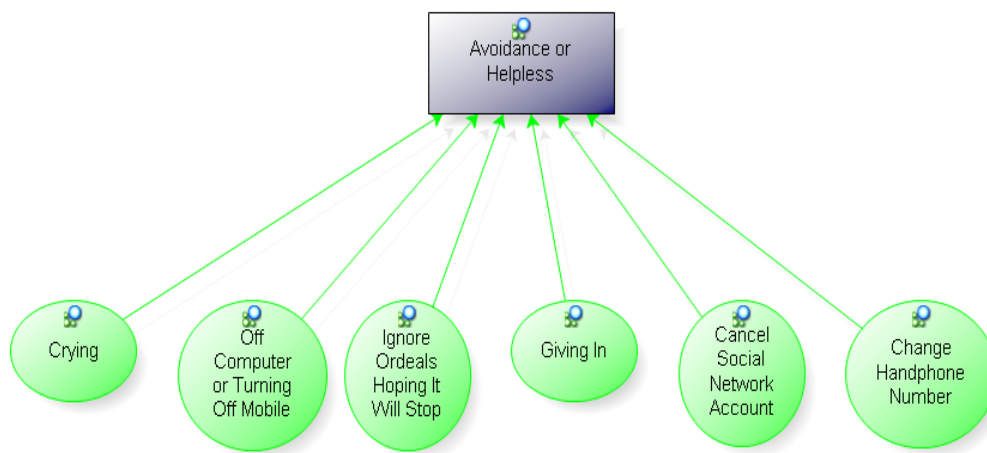
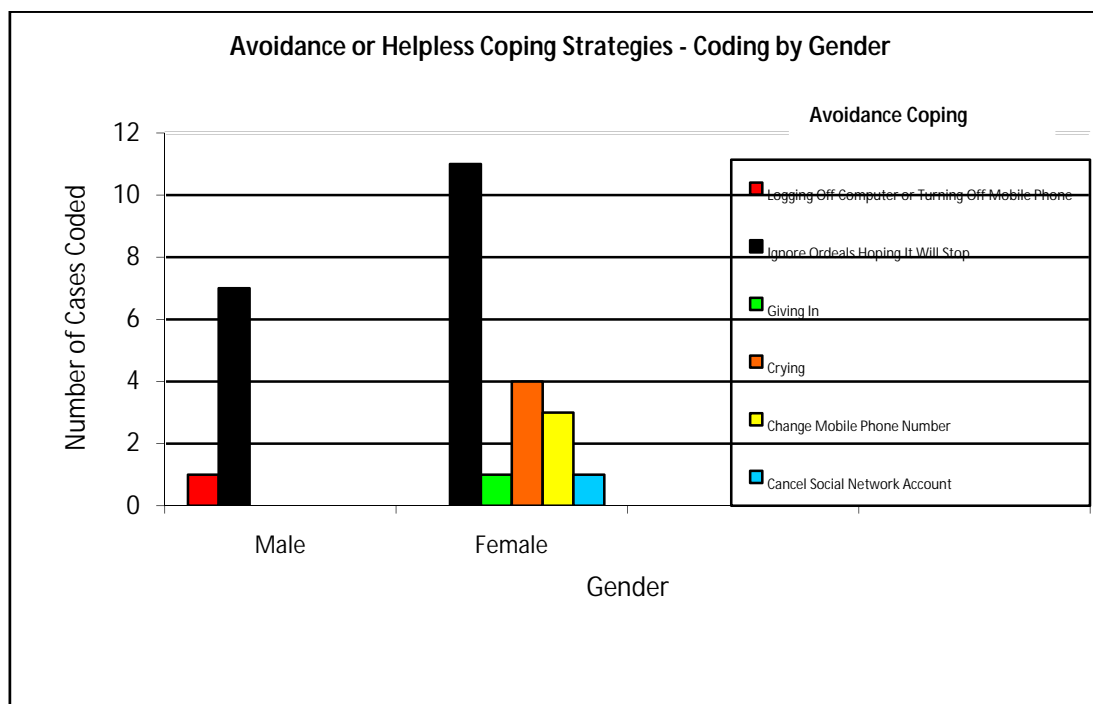


Figure 9: Avoidance or Helpless Coping Strategy – Number of Cases Coded by Gender



Finally, as demonstrated in Figure 8 and Figure 9, the victims simply did not know what to do and they just gave in to the circumstances by crying or trying to run away from cyberbullying by logging off the Internet or switching off their mobile phone or even replacing the password or their mobile's SIM (Subscriber Identity Module) card. However, many of the informants (M = 24%, F = 76%) admitted trying to ignore the ordeals hoping it will stop. This type of strategy is called avoidance or helpless coping. This is the weakest strategy the researcher came across as it is due to a lack of active coping strategies, thus reflects a more passive, emotion-focused avoidance reaction.

The researcher's proposition is that either the victim is afraid or does not know the right way to deal with the circumstances. Therefore, the victims feel it is better for them to punish themselves even though it is not their fault cyberbullying takes place. The researcher's other proposition is that the adolescents will use one or more strategies mentioned earlier in order to cope with cyberbullying. They will or will not succeed and their coping strategies will trigger more violent backfire if the strategies are not successful.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Through a comprehensive qualitative study, the researcher found that cyberbullying phenomenon consequently generated four types of coping strategies, namely active, avoidance, internal and helpless coping strategies (Seiffge-Krenke, I., & Shulman, S., 1990) in order to manage cyberbullying activities. Active coping means victims go for social assistance. Meanwhile, when the victims try to avoid the ordeals it is called avoidance or helpless coping strategy. In a cognitive coping strategy, the victims usually attempt to stop the tribulations by reasoning with the perpetrator. However, only one informant had taken a brave step to confront the bully face-to-face in a strategy described as aggressive coping.

Given the sparse research concerning cyberbullying in the Malaysian context, the researcher believes that the current study has provided many contributions to existing literature. The current study shows the voices of the informants who were directly and indirectly involved in cyberbullying. Also, this current study exhibits the connection between the first theme - contexts that influence the main actors until the consequences in cyberbullying activities.

Informative findings in this study provide crucial information for policy makers such as the positive connection between perceived Internet supervision and rates of reporting to adults such as parents and teachers. As discussed, cyberbullying may be discreet and reporting is essential in resolving individual occurrences; thus future research regarding perceptions of Internet supervision and related rates of reporting to adults is required. The current study has also provided preliminary data on the relationship between positive outcomes and cyberbullying. Interestingly, the present findings indicated that both the perpetrators and victims have experienced some level of positive consequences after they experienced cyberbullying activities.



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# DETERMINANTS OF FINANCIAL WELL-BEING AMONG YOUNG EMPLOYEES IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

Current high levels of individual indebtedness and increasing focus on individual responsibility for financial planning shows that there is a growing need for better financial management particularly among the young adults. The purpose of this study is to identify the financial status of young employees in Malaysia, to examine the levels of financial literacy, financial capability, financial problems and financial well-being of young employees and to examine factors affecting financial well-being of young employees. The sample consists of 508 of young employees age 40 and below in central zone of Malaysia, which selected through multi stage sampling technique. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires. Results of the study showed that the respondents consisted of 195 males (38.4%) and 313 females (61.6%) with mean age of 31.2 years old. Most of the respondents represented high-income group (earning monthly income above RM 3,500 with mean monthly household income RM 4937.66) and had secondary education level. Only 28.0% of the respondents had high level of financial literacy, 73.6% of them had moderate level of financial capability, 77.0% had low level of financial problems and 78.5% had moderate financial well-being. Results of Pearson Correlation indicated that there were significant relationships between financial literacy ( $r = .205^{**}$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), financial problems ( $r = -.565^{**}$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), financial capability ( $r = .358^{**}$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) with financial well-being. The multiple regression results showed that there was an influence of demographic characteristics (household income) toward financial well-being of young employees. Financial literacy, financial problems and financial capability had significant influence toward financial well-being whereby financial problems become a major contributing factor to the financial well-being ( $r^2 = .455$ ,  $p = .000$ ). By understanding more about the factors that hindering and promoting the financial well-being, it is hoped to help young employees to become financial prudence and in the long-run could decrease the number of young employees declared bankruptcy.

**Key words:** *Financial literacy, financial problems, financial capability, financial well-being*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Financial problems are not just the concerns of the poor. The declining employment opportunities, income instability and tough purchasing power of Malaysian households are among the important issues facing by families. As a result, these issues captured the attention of policy makers and educators. In recent times, economic changes have made an impact towards how the people spend, save, invest and manage risks in order to protect their standard of living especially in long-term plan.

Young or prime adult is generally a person in the age range of 20 to 40 whereby these individuals and households have relatively low incomes and few assets such as homes, savings and stocks. However, it is also a time when young adults make a decision and significant investments in their future and mostly require debt (Haveman & Wolff, 2005).

According to the report by Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (FOMCA) in 2011, many of those declared bankrupt due to credit card debt were under 40 years old and 72 percent of them have no retirement plans. Apart from that, it was reported that 47 percent of these young employees were in serious debt with monthly debt payment were 30 percent or more of their gross income and had enough savings on an average for only four months if they stop working. This is seen as unfavorable financial management activities especially for their long-term planning.

Many young employees were experienced problems in managing their finances. According to the Central Bank of Malaysia (2010), there are increased tremendously in household debt such as car loans, housing loans and personal loans within eight years. It was reported that as in August 2010, personal loans were RM 20.9 billion, car loans were RM 116.2 billion and housing loans were RM 218.9 billion compared in 2002 whereby the loans were just RM 1.9 billion, RM 36.7 billion and RM 71.5 billion respectively.

Apart from that, the combination of financial problems such as high debt, low income, and low levels of financial literacy may adversely affect individuals' financial well-being. Income uncertainty, rising petrol prices and physical pain for instance, have a more drastic influence on well-being. The concept of well-being or people's perception on well-being may be varies and depend on change in the level of people life. In the past, well-being had a meaning of overall happiness or satisfaction with their financial status or assets. However, in present the concept of well-being has been expanded to material and non-material aspects of a person's perception from their financial status, improving their standards of living, ability to meet the needs, feeling safe, comfortable and satisfied with the income.

Today's young adults are clueless when it comes to their finances, retirement savings, smart investing, credit card and debt. There are still low in financial literacy among young adults especially when they were asked about interest rates, inflation and risk diversification. This is seen as an obstacle to the financial well-being as young adults are difficult in struggling to their own financial prosperity because they never learned how to budget and plan to achieve financial security. The increasing levels of compulsive buying among young adults have contributed to personal financial problems, personal bankruptcy filings and credit card debt (Roberts & Jones, 2011). Young people today face different financial challenges than their parents did. They also accumulate greater debt at younger ages, largely due to high college costs. More than ever, they need to gain skills to take a more active, responsible role in their personal finances.

In addition, the financial problem is an important indicator of well-being that is strongly related to mental and physical health. According to Family and Work Institute (1997), employees' personal finances are related to work outcome whereby it associated with characteristics of employees, aspects of their personal well-being, and characteristics of their jobs and workplaces. Employees with less satisfied with their personal finances report more conflict between money and work. Problem employees can damage workplace morale as well as diminish their productivity (Garrett, 1993).

However, there has been scarce research on financial well-being in Malaysia particularly among young employees. Thus, this study explores the relationship between financial well-being to financial literacy, financial problems and financial capability among public and private employees in Malaysia. By understanding more about the factors hindering and promoting the financial well-being, it is hoped to help young employees to become financial prudent and in the long run could decrease the number of young employees declared bankruptcy. Financial well-being concepts are intended to help people to satisfy with their financial status, improving their standards of living, able to meet the needs, feeling safe, comfortable and satisfied with the income.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1 Financial Well-being*

Financial well-being is defined as a state of being financially healthy, happy, and free from worry and is typically based on a subjective appraisal of one's financial situation (Joo, 2008). Financial well-being has often been measured by overall satisfaction with one's financial situation (Van, Frijters & Carbonel, 2003). Malone, Stewart, Wilson, and Korsching (2010) posited four domains of financial well-being: buying behaviors, perception of current finances, perception of the financial future, and attitude toward long-term care insurance. Overall satisfaction with one's financial situation is often used as a measure of financial well-being (Joo & Xiao, 2008).

### *2.2 Determinants of Financial Well-being*

Researchers have reported that a number of variables appear to influence financial well-being. Among the most common are demographic and socioeconomic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, age, income, education, and marital status (Hira & Mugenda, 1999). It has been suggested that while financial well-being is significantly related to some demographic factors, other variables such as financial literacy (Joo & Grable, 2004; Shim et al. 2009), financial problems (Drentea & Lavrakas, 2000) and financial capability (Financial Service Authority [FSA], 2009) can also affect financial well-being.

### *2.3 Financial Literacy*

Financial literacy become one of the important indicator to financial well-being as increased financial literacy has a positive impact on people's personal life whereby it helps to reduce social and psychological pressures (Fox, Bartholomae & Lee, 2005). In work life, higher financial literacy has higher efficiency and productivity in result and help employees to better understand benefits offered by the organization and improve their satisfaction (Brennan, 1998).

### *2.4 Financial Problems*

According to Burkhauser, Gustman, Laitner, Mitchell and Sonnega (2008), burden measures relative to current budget or income and measures of burden relative to assets become key macro measures of financial well-being. Financial problems not only associated with individuals' financial well-being but also affect the productivity of the individual itself. According to Family and Work Institute (1997), employees' personal finances are related to work outcome whereby it associated with characteristics of employees, aspects of their personal well-being, and characteristics of their jobs and workplaces.

Employees with less satisfied with their personal finances report more conflict between money and work. Problem employees can damage workplace morale as well as diminish their productivity (Garrett, 1993).

### *2.5 Financial Capability*

According to the findings from Financial Service Authority in 2009, it was found that there is a strong association between financial capability and psychological well-being and between changes in financial capability and changes in psychological wellbeing. A greater financial incapability is associated with greater mental stress, lower reported life satisfaction, and a greater likelihood of reporting health problems associated with anxiety or depression.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### *3.1 Sample*

The sample comprised of 508 employees in public and private sectors, in which 290 from public sectors and 218 from private sectors participated in the study. Samples were selected using multistage sampling technique. The data were collected using self-administered questionnaire which were distributed through human resource personnel of selected agencies. Data was coded and analyzed using SPSS to identify direct and indirect determinants of financial capability among young Malaysian employees.

The mean age of the sample was 31.2 years (SD= 4.853, median age = 31 years). Of this sample, 38.4% were male and 61.6% were female. The majority of the respondents were Malay (90.4%). The mean monthly household income of the respondents was RM 4, 937.66. Regarding marital status, more than half of the respondents (68.5%) reported that they were married.

### *3.2 Dependent Variable*

The employees' financial well-being was measured by twelve statements describing their financial satisfaction with a ten-point-likert scale question. A financial well-being score was computed by summing the averages score for all twelve items. Those who were less well-being ended up towards the lower scores, while those who were more well-being ended up towards the higher scores. The Cronbach's alpha reported was 0.935.

### *3.3 Independent Variables*

#### *a) Financial Literacy*

Financial literacy was measured by an instrument developed by Sabri MF., Masud J., Paim L. (2006) based on the Malaysian context. The instrument consisted of 34 statements indicate the true, false or don't know answer relating to financial aspects covering general knowledge of personal finance, savings, investments, financial records, credit, retirement, banking system, wills and insurance. Each correct answer carried one point, incorrect (wrong) and "don't know" answers were given zero point. Item analyses with correctly identified items were summed and the score was transformed into a percentage. Higher percentage scores indicated higher level of financial literacy. In this section, financial literacy was divided into three categories, namely low mean score (0-10), medium mean score (11-21) and high mean score (22-34). The average score was 17.81, with a standard deviation of 5.53.

### *b) Financial Problems*

The frequency of financial problem scale was employed to measure the frequency of problems related to lack of money for essential expenses, uncertain about where money is spent, owe friend(s) money and spend more than can afford. This scale comprised of twenty-six items scored from (1) never to (3) always. A financial problems score was computed by summing the averages score for all twenty-six items. Those who were less financial problems ended up towards the lower scores, while those who were high financial problems ended up towards the higher scores. The Cronbach's alpha reported was 0.928.

### *c) Financial Capability*

The employees' financial capability was measured by twenty statements comprising of four domains which are, managing money, staying informed, choosing products and planning ahead with a five-point-likert scale question. A financial capability score was computed by summing the averages score for all twenty items. Those who were not capable ended up towards the lower scores, while those who were more capable ended up towards the higher scores. The Cronbach's alpha reported was 0.896

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### *4.1 Demographic Details of the Respondents*

The respondents consisted of 290 employees from public agencies and 218 from private agencies. The majority of the respondents were female (61.6%), and the male constituted 38.4%. The majority of the respondents were between the ages of 26 to 30 years. A total of 90.4% (459) were of Malay ethnicity, 4.5% (23) Chinese, 3.7% (19) Indians and 2.6% (13) of other ethnic background. More than half of the respondents were married (65.9%). Most of the respondents were Degree holders (29.5%). More than half of the respondents had a monthly household income above RM 3, 500 (51.1%) and 11.8% of them were reported to earn less than RM1, 500 per month (Table 1).

Table 2 provide data on financial status of young employees. Respondents were asked about percentage of monthly savings that they made. The result shows that slightly more than half (53.1%) of the respondents save at least 1 to 10 percent of their income. 32.2% of the respondents save about 10 to 20 percent while 7.9% of the respondents were able to save more than 20 percent from their income. However, it was found that 6.7% of the respondents were never put their income aside as savings.

The respondents were also asked about their current income adequacy. Half of the respondents (52.8%) tend to feel that their current income was good enough to meet their basic needs only while 26.2% of the respondents feel that their current income was enough for most things and 12.4% of the respondents were able to buy anything that they wished and could do savings from their income. Only one-tenth (8.7%) of the respondents tend to feel that their current income was not enough even to meet their basic necessities.

In term of financial status, the result shows a slightly equal percentage of respondents' financial status whereby 35% of them had property values more than their outstanding debt values, followed by 32.7% of them had equal values of property and outstanding debt and 32.3% of them felt their property values were less than their outstanding debt values.

Table 1 Profile of Respondents

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>n=508</b>	<b>%</b>
Agency	Public	290	57.1
	Private	218	42.9
Gender	Male	195	38.4
	Female	313	61.6
Age	20-25 years	68	13.4
	26-30 years	180	35.4
	31-35 years	159	31.3
	36-40 years	101	19.9
Marital status	Single	160	31.5
	Married	335	65.9
	Others	13	2.6
Ethnicity	Malay	459	90.4
	Chinese	23	4.5
	Indian	19	3.7
	Others	7	1.4
Education	SPM/STPM	162	31.9
	Certificate/Diploma	173	34.1
	Degree	150	29.5
	Master/PhD	23	4.5
Number of financial dependents	1-3	403	79.3
	4-6	63	12.4
	More than 6	11	2.2
Household income	> RM1, 500	57	11.8
	RM1, 500- RM3, 500	179	37.1
	Above RM3,500	247	51.1

Table 2: The Financial Status of Young Employees

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>n=508</b>	<b>%</b>
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Household income	> RM1, 500	57	11.8
	RM1, 500- RM3, 500	179	37.1
	Above RM3,500	247	51.1
Monthly savings	0%	34	6.7
	1% - < 10%	270	53.1
	10% - < 20%	164	32.3
	> 20%	40	7.9
Financial status	Property values less than outstanding debt	164	32.3
	Property values equal to outstanding debt	166	32.7
	Property values more than outstanding debt	178	35.0
Current income adequacy	Not enough	44	8.7
	Enough for basic needs	268	52.8
	Enough for most things	133	26.2
	Enough to buy all the thing wished and could save money	63	12.4

#### 4.2 Financial Literacy

In order to identify the levels of financial literacy, the respondents were tested with thirty-four questions concerning general knowledge on personal finance, savings, investments, financial records, credit, and retirement, banking system, wills and insurance. In general, most of the respondents were understood with the concept of credit whereby three-quarter (78.3%) of the respondents knew that credit card holder cannot spend without limit as credit card spending limit may vary from one store to another. 64.2% of the respondents answered correctly on cash withdrawals by credit card is not a low-cost of financial sources. Meanwhile, 69.3% of the respondents answered correctly on the credit card holder will be charged for cash withdrawals by using credit card. The result also indicated that a large number of respondents (72.0%) gave a right answer when they were asked about repayment loan. However, there were 33.3% of the respondents did not know that they can't spend more than 40% of their monthly income for installments while 39.8% of them gave a wrong answer on this statement. Only the remaining of 27.0% of the respondents answered it correctly. According to Garman and Fogue (2004), savings should be included in spending plans (budgeting). However most of the respondents had a wrong interpretation on savings. The result showed that 74.8% of the respondents agreed that savings is extra income after deducted expenses. The answer given was wrong and contrary with the recommendations of expertise in the field of finance whereby savings is actually the portion of income not spent on current expenditure. Apart from that, the respondents were also asked on their knowledge on Islamic financial products. The tremendous growth in Islamic banking has encouraged banks globally to move into this area that has become more popular among consumers. However, the results showed the respondents were less knowledgeable about Islamic financial products. Less than one-third (19.5%) of the respondents gave a right answer on borrowings in Islamic banking and only 23.0% of the respondents answered correctly on interest rates and returns when making investment in Islamic banking. Table 3 shows the financial literacy scores by categories. The result indicated that 142 of the respondents (28.0%) were in high levels of financial literacy.



Table 3 Financial Literacy Levels

Category	Total	Low	Medium	High
Scores	31	0-10	11-21	22-34
Respondents	508	45 (8.8)	321(63.2)	142 (28.0)

#### 4.3 Financial Problems

Respondents were asked to answer twenty-six situation of financial problems that they are currently facing. Mean score was used in order to determine financial problems of the respondents on a three points Likert scale from never (1), sometimes (2) and always (3). This subjective appraisal of financial situation was coded 1 to 3 so that the higher scores refer to higher levels of financial problems. The result showed that the statement of save less than 10% from total monthly income indicated the highest mean score (mean= 1.97) among the young employees, followed by spend more than earning (mean= 1.67), did not know how the money spent (mean= 1.66) and disagreement with spouse regarding financial matters (mean= 1.50). Table 3 shows the financial problems levels. The result indicated that only seven of the respondents (2.0%) were in high levels of financial problems (Table 4).

Table 4 Financial Problems Levels

Category	Total	Low	Medium	High
Respondents	508	274	75	7
(%)		(77.0)	(21.1)	(2.0)

#### 4.4 Financial Capability Levels

The respondents' financial capability was measured by twenty statements comprising of four domains which are, managing money, staying informed, choosing products and planning ahead. In term of managing money, most of the respondents agreed that they had managed their money properly whereby 64.1% of them make plans for their expenses and pay bills on time and 60.5% of the respondents had regularly set money aside for possible unexpected expenses. In term of planning ahead, there were still less than half of the respondents had plan ahead especially for their retirement life. The results indicated that only 48.7% of the respondents make financial provision for retirement. In term of staying informed, there were very few of the respondents who interested to keep up to date with the financial information and did not interested to seek information through professional advice. The results indicated that only 30% of the respondents keep up to date with financial information and only 22.4% of them willingly to get advice from the professionals. In term of choosing products, most of the respondents considered several policies or loans from different companies before make decision, read the terms and conditions in detail before agreeing or signing and make personal consideration rather than believe and accept what had recommended by the financial advisers. Figure 1 shows the financial capability scores by categories. The result indicated that 73.6% of them had moderate levels of financial capability.

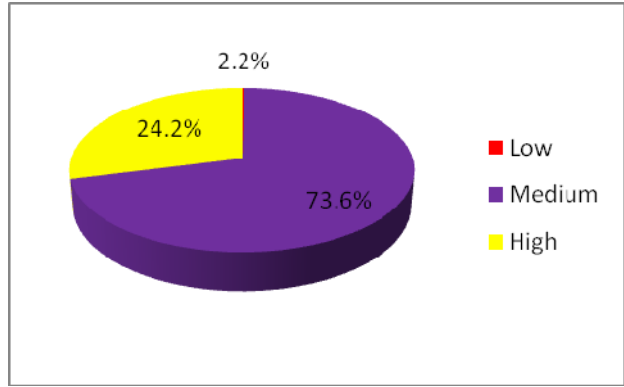


Figure 1: Financial Capability Levels

4.5 Financial Well-being Levels

The respondents’ financial well-being was measured with twelve statements indicate their financial status. The respondents were asked about their satisfaction on their current financial situation, current financial adequacy and how confident in having enough money to cover their life after retirement. In general, the highest mean score for financial well-being was about frequency having trouble in paying bills. The mean score of 7.32 indicated that most of the respondents did not frequently face a problem in paying their bills. Apart from that the respondents were confident enough that they can control their finances (mean= 6.57) and they were confident enough that they have a power to control their personal finances (mean= 6.36). Even though most of the respondents believe they have a good financial condition but they were still worried about their current financial situation whereby the statement of “ Worry about your current financial today” indicate the lowest mean score which is 4.93. The result shows that the respondents had moderate level of financial well-being (Figure 2).

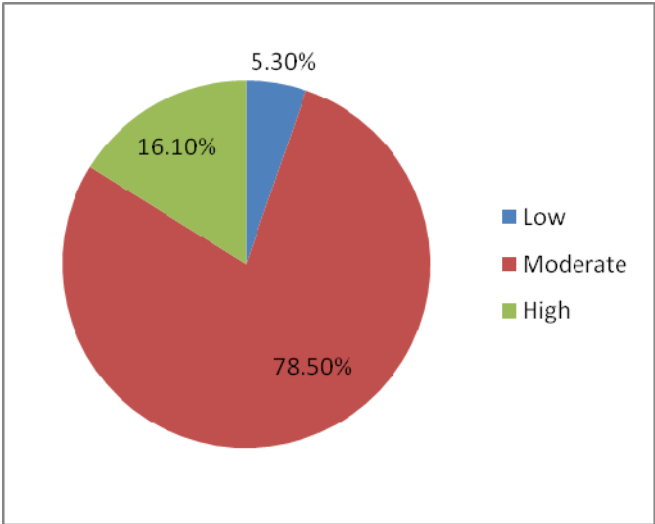


Figure 2: Financial Well-being Levels

The relationship between financial literacy, financial problems and financial capability with financial well-being was investigated using Pearson's correlation coefficient (Table 5). From the result, there was a weak positive relationship between financial literacy and financial well-being [ $r=0.205, p<0.01$ ] and between financial capability and financial well-being [ $r=0.358, p<0.01$ ]. However there was a moderate weak negative relationship between financial problems and financial well-being [ $r=-0.565, p<0.01$ ].

Table 5: Pearson's Correlation Coefficients between Financial Literacy, Financial Problems, Financial Capability with Financial Well-being

Variables	Pearson's Correlation (r)	P
1.Financial literacy	0.205**	0.000
2.Financial problems	-0.565**	0.000
3.Financial capability	0.358**	0.000

Significant:  
\*\* $p<0.01$

By referring to the table of coefficient (Table 6), the Beta value shows which variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explain the dependent variable and the significant value will explain whether the variable making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of dependent variable. From the result obtained, financial literacy, financial problems and financial capability make a unique contribution to financial well-being whereby financial problems contributed most (Beta=-0.494). For demographic characteristics, only household income contributed to financial well-being. The adjusted R square indicates that 45.5% of the variance in the financial well-being can be explained by the independent variables (financial literacy, financial problems and financial capability).

Table 6 Multiple Regression Results

	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	60.818	6.620		9.187	0.000
Gender	-2.001	1.308	-0.620	-1.529	0.127
Household income	3.498	0.983	0.15	3.560	0.000
Financial literacy	.260	.104	.095	2.508	0.012
Financial capability	.475	.065	.301	7.343	0.000
Financial problems	-.902	.076	-.494	-11.888	0.000

## 5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored the determinants of perceived financial well-being among young employees. Multiple regression analysis was used to explore the contributor or factor toward financial well-being. The results of this study suggest several important conclusions. First, it is apparent that positive early consumer experiences improve young employees' financial literacy which in

turn has significant effect on their financial management and in turn increase the perceived level of financial well-being. Providing basic knowledge on personal finance to this group of young employees would seem to be an effective approach to educate them to become responsible and prudent consumers. Second, the most revealing results of this study and those most consistent with previous studies are that perceived financial well-being can be increased by indirect effect of financial knowledge (literacy) through financial management. In other words, to ensure financial well-being, financial education should be made available to all employees particularly among the young employees as they are started to face with various financial commitment in their earlier career and gaining stability in their personal life. Apart from that, being financially capable also becomes the indicator of financial well-being as financial capability will help the young employees to keep track with their money so that they can make ends meet and help them to make a sound choice due to any circumstances or unexpected things happen.

The result also indicates that household income becomes one of the factors that affect financial well-being. A large number of studies had done to see the relationship between subjective well-being and income (Rogers & DeBoer, 2001; Hamermesh, 2004). Access to greater economic resources infers higher living standards and well-being as people with higher incomes are more able to meet their material aspirations and will feel better off (Easterlin, 2001).

Most importantly the negative effect of financial problems on financial well-being may receive more attention. For some couples, existing problems made worse because of the additional pressure they are feeling. For others, coping with a new situation can lead to tension. Financial difficulties can make people blame each other for their situation. These findings have implications for parents, university administrators, financial counselors, financial planners, educators, and young employees themselves. These findings could be used to develop financial education programs that would provide young employees with the knowledge and skills to better manage their finances and improve their financial well-being. Past research confirms that financial education is the best single method available for practitioners, educators, and policymakers to improve financial satisfaction and overall consumer well-being of individuals and families (Joo & Grable, 2000).

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# ENHANCING RESILIENCY OF AT-RISK YOUTH THROUGH FINANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION: EVALUATION OF THE *MONEYMINDED* PROGRAM

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## **Abstract**

Young people are particularly vulnerable to the effects of economic crises. Negative economic conditions are only exacerbated by inexperience, low levels of financial literacy, young people's propensity to delay addressing financial issues. These factors lead to stress and anxiety and contribute to poor mental health outcomes. Young people who do not have access to advice and support within their social networks are likely to be far less successful in navigating financial systems of ever-increasing complexity and are particularly vulnerable to the effects of poverty and indebtedness. Financial literacy education may be a particularly valuable and under-utilised strategy for disengaged and disadvantaged young people. This paper draws from data that evaluates the effectiveness of *MoneyMinded*, a financial literacy package delivered to at risk 15 to 24 year-olds involved in six community-based programs across four Australian states. Findings are contextualised by a framework for resiliency-based intervention. It discusses how the benefits of this program extend further than young people's financial literacy and had positive effects across a range of wellbeing measures. The learnings from this evaluation are valuable in international contexts where the full impact of economic crises on young people's mental health outcomes are yet to be fully realised.

**Keywords:** *Financial literacy, resiliency, young people, evaluation, Australia*

## 1. INTRODUCTION: FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND YOUTH AT-RISK

The constantly changing economic and regulatory landscape in which we live affects all individuals; however, there are many reasons that young people are particularly vulnerable to financial exclusion. First, they have lower than average earnings and less steady employment compared to the overall population. Australian census data collected in 2011 indicated that over a quarter of 18 and 19 year old Australians were not fully engaged in full-time work or full-time education (ABS, 2012). An online study involving 752 Australians aged 18 to 35 years found that 30 per cent of 18 to 20 year olds worked on a part-time or casual basis and the median income of these participants was less than \$AU20,000 and between \$AU30,000 to 40,000 for 21 to 25 year olds (REST, 2011, p.4, 6). In the same year, the average weekly earnings of Australians was almost \$AU70,000(ABS, 2011).

Young people's vulnerability to experiencing unemployment has been realised in countries that have experienced economic crises in recent years. Some member states in the European Union reported over 50 percent youth unemployment in late 2012 (European Commission, 2013). The effects of this situation on young people's wellbeing and future prospects will be enduring and pervasive. Young people are undoubtedly seriously impacted by conditions that are beyond their control. It is of ever-increasing importance then, that they are equipped to be financially capable – to stack the odds in their favour.

Researchers in the U.S. find that young people are not well-equipped to make good financial decisions (Lusardi, Mitchell, & Curto, 2009). Australian young people are shown to have the lowest levels of financial literacy in the population, alongside the elderly (ANZ, 2011). They are also less likely to read and monitor financial documentation (ANZ, 2011). Low overall financial competence among young people makes it more difficult to access and use the financial system. They are most likely to be excluded in terms of lack of ownership of financial products (ANZ, 2003, 2005, 2008,2011; Chant Link and Associates, 2004; Connolly, Georgouras, & Hems, 2012). Having access to financial products (e.g., insurance) and small amounts of credit is recommended by financial institutions because it helps to smooth out financial 'shocks', enables young people to develop a credit rating and to learn financial skills. However, (mis)management of credit among young people is an area of growing concern (Wilkins & Wooden, 2009).

The links between financial capability and wellbeing are discussed in the literature. An Australian wellbeing survey showed that people who have low control over their finances have the lowest level of wellbeing (Okerstrom, 2010). This is significant given that mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are common causes of morbidity (Muir et al., 2009) and suicide is the leading cause of death among Australians aged 12 to 24 years (ABS, 2010). A survey of over 15,000, 15 to 19 year old Australians found that coping with stress was one of the top three issues of concern among respondents, with 40 per cent saying that they were concerned or extremely concerned about this issue (Mission Australia, 2012, p.14).

When socio-economic disadvantage is combined with age-demographics, it becomes clear that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds suffer from a 'double whammy'. Young people who are from low-socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to be financially excluded in the future. Social and financial exclusion are products of individual, household and community characteristics (Mission Australia Research and Social Policy, 2008).

Factors within the family background environment are strongly linked to financial literacy outcomes (Kim & Chatterjee, 2013; Shim, Xiao, Barber, & Lyons, 2009). Gutter, Garrison and Copur(2010) show that spending behaviours are learnt primarily during adolescent years and that the influence of 'socialisation agents' (parents, family members and other influential individuals) is one of the strongest determinants of financial capability. According to Allen (2008), financial socialisation involves modelling consumer behaviours, making rules about children's consumer behaviours and engaging in direct discussions about purchasing decisions, money, credit and related topics (p.352). Researchers argue that the role played by parents in financial socialisation was substantially greater



than the role played by work experience and high school financial education combined (Shim, Barber, Card, Xiao, & Serido, 2010).

There is a significant and growing body of literature around youth financial literacy, and mounting evidence that carefully planned programs do have a positive impact on financial knowledge at a high school level (Bernheim, Garrett, & Maki, 2001; Tennyson & Nguyen, 2001; Walstad, Rebeck, & MacDonald, 2010).

The Australian Government has recently invested in financial literacy education in schools (see <http://www.financialliteracy.gov.au>). However, young people who are not school engaged are likely to fall through the gaps. Moreover, young people who are disconnected from school are also more likely to have strained family relationships (Dale, 2010) and to miss out on the conversations and supervision that support the development of financial capability. Despite their vulnerability, there is far less prominent investigation of the outcomes of financial literacy interventions delivered to disadvantaged and non-school engaged young people.

This paper examines the findings of an evaluation of *MoneyMinded* (MM), a financial literacy program that specifically targeted at-risk young people. It examines the findings by drawing on the concept of ‘resiliency’, which is prominent in positive youth development literature. Resiliency researchers consider the multiplicity of factors that often coalesce and contribute to poor outcomes for some young people (risks) and the individual and external factors that are protective. They explore the factors that improve the ability of young people to be successful in their lives when they are exposed to risks or adversity (Coleman & Hagell, 2007; Luthar, 2006; Masten, Obradovi, & Burt, 2006; Shortt, Toumbourou, Chapman, & Power, 2006; Ungar, 2006). The concept of resiliency has been seldom utilised in the financial literacy literature. We explore whether and in what ways MM might be considered a resiliency-enhancing intervention.

## **2. MONEYMINDED AND THE YOUTH FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM**

MM is a financial literacy program developed by the Australian and New Zealand Banking group (ANZ) to assist people, particularly those of low-income, to build their financial skills, knowledge and confidence. MM is the most widely used financial literacy program in Australia. In 2010, ANZ estimated that since the inception of the program in 2005 it had reached over 125,000 people. Based on successes with minority and disadvantaged groups, and with the support of ANZ and CPA Australia, Mission Australia developed the Youth Financial Literacy Program by adapting MM to the specific needs and circumstances of their at-risk youth participants.

MM was delivered by Mission Australia facilitators in the context of the young person’s participation in six youth programs delivered in New South and Victoria.<sup>1</sup> One of the common themes across the programs is an emphasis on transitions into employment and training through skill building. The objectives of MM were to: provide at-risk young people with quality training in basic financial literacy; provide support to young people who receive the training, in putting the skills and knowledge they have learned into practice; and, provide incentives for young people to adopt positive behavioural change. More specifically, the program was designed to improve participants’ skills to: identify their income and expenses; set and work towards a realistic financial goal; and, to increase confidence levels in dealing with money management issues. The program consisted of six hours of group financial literacy training and two follow-up sessions with case workers over six months. The program commenced in July 2008 and was completed in June 2009.

## **3. METHOD**

The aim of the evaluation was to assess levels of financial stress, changes in confidence, and financial behaviours (such as spending, planning and saving) that could be attributed to the program. A pre- and post-training methodology was employed to track changes in participants’ financial knowledge,

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<sup>1</sup>Triple Care Farm (NSW), Creative Youth Initiatives (NSW), Links to Learning (NSW and VIC), Getting to Work (VIC), Urban Renewal Landscaping and Construction (VIC), South West Youth Services (NSW).

skills and confidence levels. A pre-training survey was conducted with 153 participants before they undertook the program. Two post-training surveys were conducted after training was completed.

The first post-training questionnaire Post (P1) was completed by 153 participants six weeks after the program. The second post-training questionnaire Post (P2) was completed by 98 participants three to six months post-training. The program facilitators administered the questionnaires through group training workshops and/or one-to-one case management sessions. Analysis of data was performed using SPSS statistical software.

#### 4. RESULTS

In order to assess the level of financial stress on participants, they were administered questions that were adapted from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) surveys and that have been used in previous financial literacy research (Russell, Brooks, & Nair, 2006; Russell, Wall, Doan, & Brooks, 2009). The participants were asked if they had experienced any of the set of circumstances listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicators of financial hardship

Influencing factor	Yes (%)
Could not pay a bill on time	51.7
Could not pay your living expenses	46.6
Pawned or sold something because you needed the money	29.7
Went without meals	58.4
Did not have a place to stay for the night	28.6
Asked for help from family or friends	50.0

The results show that these participants were more financially stressed than low income households in general, as reported in ABS (2007). Indeed, around half of the sample indicated that they struggle to meet basic necessities. For example, 46.6 per cent indicated that they could not pay living expenses and 58.4 per cent went without meals.

The following results show the changes over a three to six month period in the young peoples' knowledge, attitudes and confidence in dealing with money.

##### *4.1 Confidence in managing money*

The results show strong increases over the time period in the participants' levels of confidence in managing money. Figure 1 shows that, before undertaking the program, just over a quarter (27.3 per cent) of respondents rated their confidence at five or higher on a seven-point scale (1 = not confident, 7 = very confident). Over time, the proportion of responses shifted to indicate a greater level of confidence in managing money. At the first post measure (P1) respondents answering five or higher increased to almost 60 per cent. At the second post measure (P2) this increased to 81.6 per cent.

##### *4.2 Attitude towards being 'ripped off'*

Given that young people are less experienced they are less likely to identify the characteristics of unfair deals or financial scams. The issue of being 'ripped off' and how participants might deal with this was explored in the survey. Figure 2 represents results across at the pre-training ('pre') and at the P1 and P2 measures. The bulk of the changed response occurred between the pre and the P1 survey and, encouragingly, there was a small continued drop in the proportion of young people who indicated that they would respond by getting angry. Responses also indicated that a larger proportion of participants would 'try to find out what to do about it' after the course – rather than 'try to forget about it'. This indicates a change in attitude and also a sense of empowerment and having some control over the situation.

Figure 1: Comparison across pre and post surveys of participants' confidence levels in managing money

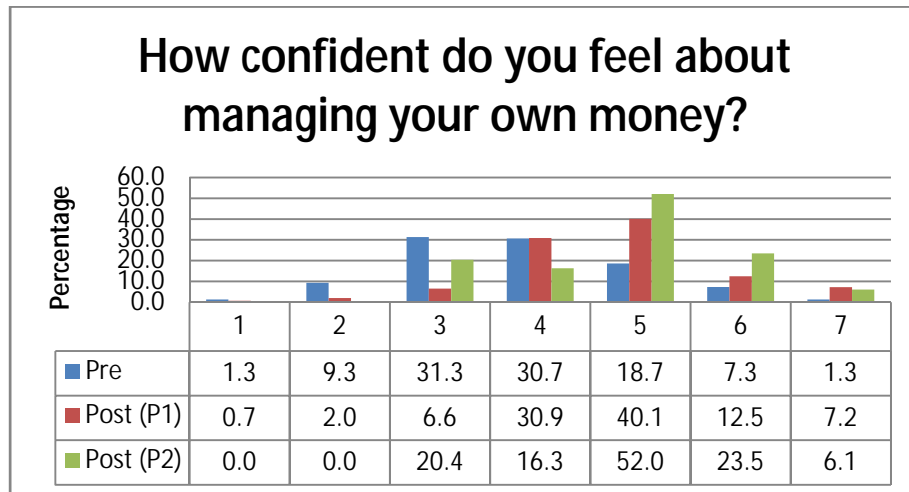
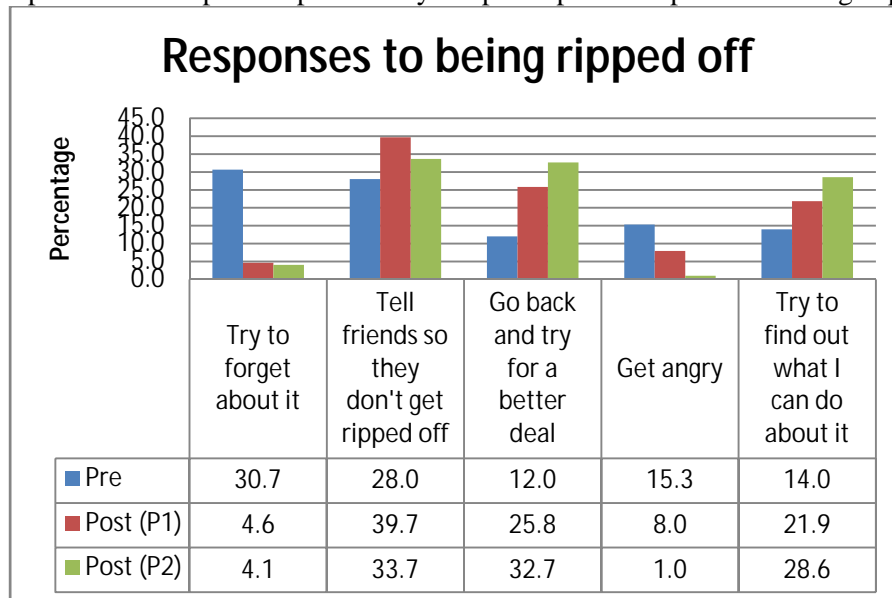


Figure 2: Comparison across pre and post surveys of participants' responses to being 'ripped off'



#### 4.3 Spending, planning and saving behaviour

Spending, planning and saving behaviour are key components of money management. Figure 3 indicates that there were improvements over time in three key components of money management: spending, planning, and saving. The most significant increase was in the number of participants who indicate that they use a budget after the program. There was also a substantial fall in participants who indicate that 'I spend all of my income as I get it' from 50.3 per cent to 20.4 per cent. There was also a positive increase of 13.3 per cent in self-reported adherence to the longer term goal of saving. This was captured in the question 'If I had a major loss of income I could manage for a while'.

#### 4.4 Propensity to shop around for products and services

Figure 4 compares the participants' self-reported propensity to shop around before purchasing a product or service across the three time periods. The results again indicate that there was a continued improvement with over a third more respondents (33.5%) seeing greater value in shopping around for a better deal at the P2 measure.

Figure 3: Comparison of participants' spending, planning and savings behaviour pre and post-training

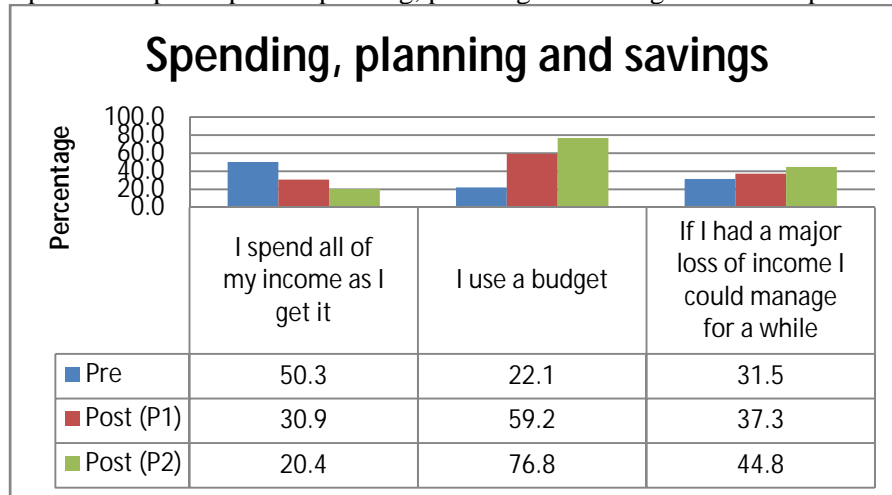
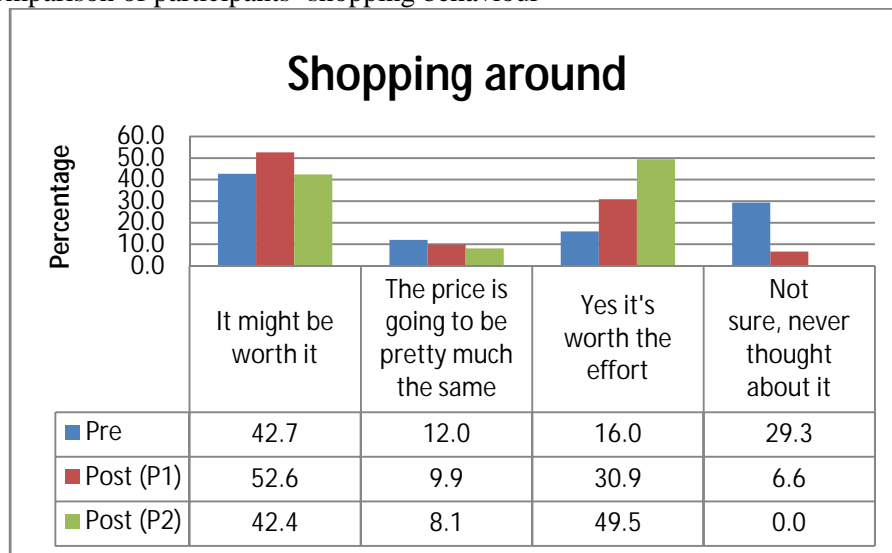


Figure 4: Comparison of participants' shopping behaviour



#### 4.5 Responses to receiving a large bill

The survey also investigated participants' reactions to receiving a big bill that they couldn't pay. The results (Figure 5) show that the bulk of the positive change in response to this question took place between the Pre and P1 points. Around a third more participants (33.3%) indicated that they were more likely to ask for help at P1 and the response was similar at P2.

#### 4.6 Savings and goal setting behaviour

The final money management area explored was about savings and ability to set and achieve a financial goal. We again compare the results across the pre-training and the two post-program (P1 and P2) surveys. The results show a continued improvement over the time periods in saving and goal setting behaviour (see Figure 6). Over 40 per cent more participants continued to save at P2 compared with the pre-program measure. Further, at the P2 measure, almost 90 per cent of participants reported that they continued to set financial goals, compared to 45.6 per cent, pre-program.

Figure 5: Comparison of responses to receiving a big bill across pre and the two post training surveys

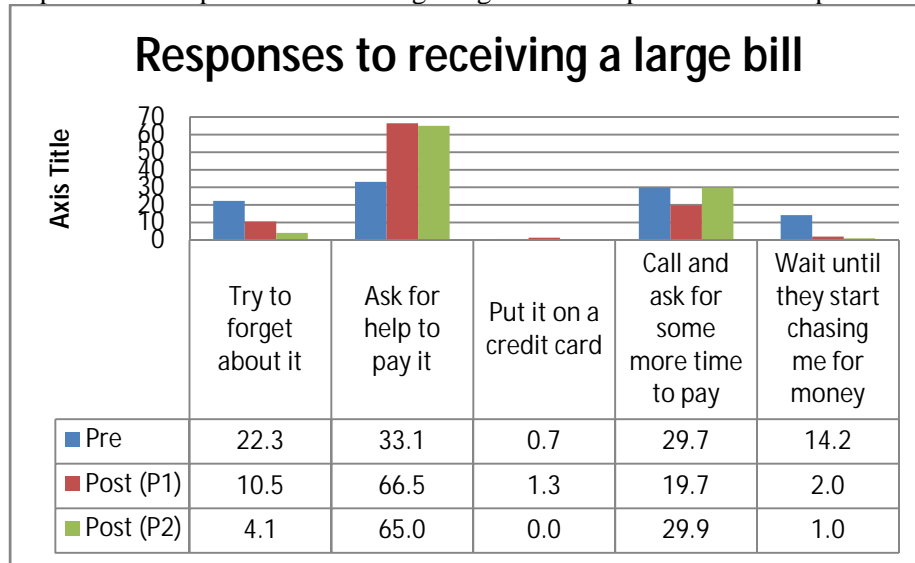
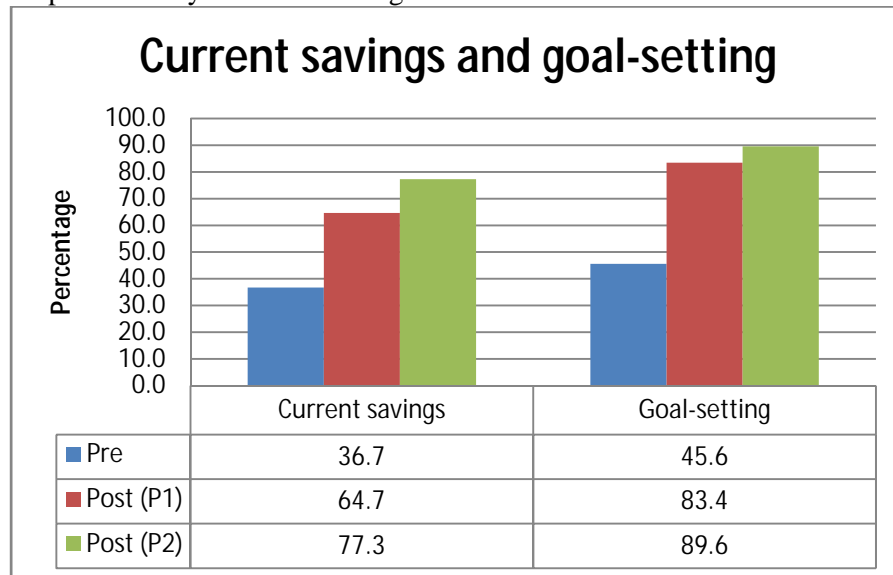


Figure 6: Participants' ability to save and set goals



## Discussion

The financial exclusion of young people is an issue across the world. While structural factors that lead to financial exclusion (e.g. economic crisis) may be beyond the scope of financial literacy education, we argue that programs like MM improve young people's financial resiliency – that is, their ability to make sound financial decisions, to establish and maintain planning and savings habits, to manage financial stress and have a sense of control given their particular their situation. We draw on the concept of resiliency to discuss some of the benefits of MM on participants wellbeing.

Ungar et al. (2007) describe how resilience is a product of both individual assets (emotional, psychological qualities and skills), and the resources available to them.

The concept of resources encapsulates external factors like access to information and social capital (through networks). According to Fergus and Zimmerman, “the term resources emphasizes the social environmental influences on adolescent health and development, helps place resilience theory in a more ecological context, and moves away from conceptualizations of resilience as a static, individual trait” (2005, p.399). Our data shows that MM participants had improved

knowledge of where to access information and of who they can talk to when they need help. We suggest that access to resources could be improved in future programs by linking young people to financial mentors or adults who can otherwise offer ongoing support.

The concept of assets also encapsulates personal attributes like emotions and psychological outlook. The data indicates that MM increased participants' sense of confidence that they know what to do in a financial emergency, their sense of control over their financial situation, and helped them to develop financial goals. This is an important finding given that psychological factors, including emotional and cognitive processes, appear to be the main drivers of what one actually does with their money. Indeed, the findings of the Financial Literacy Foundation in Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2007) and the Financial Services Authority (FSA, 2008) in the UK, suggest that psychological (attitudes and behaviour), rather than informational differences, explain much of the variation in financial capability.

Creating positive shifts in emotional outlook and improving motivation may be particularly important among young people experiencing intergenerational poverty, significant financial stress and low income. This is because being future focused is necessary if an individual is to commit to the activities (e.g. planning and budgeting) that are foundational to improving financial capability.

One of the aims of MM was to improve the skills of participants. Having the necessary life skills is a key aspect of resiliency (considered an asset). The results indicate that MM was successful in this aim. A feature of MM was delivery of relevant material that is transferable to 'real world' scenarios. Education experts argue that 'experiential learning' or learning that can be applied directly to experiences enhances its meaningfulness and is the key to effective and long-lasting learning (Beard & Wilson, 2007). In particular, young people who have had negative or difficult experiences in formal education may require material to be highly relevant and tailored to their personal situation in order to be motivated to engage. Financial literacy education is an area that is readily amenable to creating experiential learning opportunities because of its applicability to everyday life.

One of the strongest results of this evaluation was the substantial increase in the proportion of participants who reported having savings after the education (36.7% pre-program and 64.7% at P1). The proportion of participants who reported saving increased again at the P2 measure to 77.3 per cent. This result can be attributed to the program component whereby young people were assisted to set up small auto-payments from their everyday spending accounts into saving accounts. We acknowledge the inter-dependence of the domains of resources and assets when interpreting this finding. We argue that, while this strategy provided participants with access to a 'resource' that they may not have previously known about (that of direct debit), it taps into the psychological component of financial capability because it establishes a positive habit without the young person having to make a constant conscious effort. Drawing on Pathak and Zimmerman's work (2011), we argue that this very practical strategy provided a critical 'nudge' that resulted in transforming knowledge and intentions (e.g. to save, to pay off debt) into behaviours or action for participants of MM. Given the positive result in this area, the strategy is particularly recommended for implementation with young people in future programs.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

It is clear that financial skills are critical, life-long skills in a monetised society. Research shows that, alongside age, socio-economic disadvantage is a predictor of low financial capability. This is particularly due to the strong intergenerational transmission of poverty and the significant effect that family factors have in the relation to young people's financial wellbeing.

However, while there has been significant recent attention to improving capabilities of school-engaged young people in Australia at the policy level, there has been little relative attention to programs that target the specific needs of young people in areas of disadvantage, those who have poor school attendance or those who leave school early. This group are the most likely to fall through the gaps in relation to financial literacy education. Moreover, young people from poor families are less

likely to have financial support should they find themselves in difficulty – they have less room to make mistakes (Lusardi, Mitchell, & Curto, 2010; Shim et al., 2009).

Research indicates that subjective experiences of ‘control’ in financial matters correlate with measures of wellbeing. Young people in this study commonly report feeling stressed and anxious about money. This is notable given the overall burden that poor mental among young people has in Australia, as with many developed countries. Improving financial literacy is thus an area where there is the potential to bolster the ability of young people to manage their financial situation, and to ameliorate some of the effects that place them at risk – both in terms of knowledge and decision-making ability but also psychologically. The positive results from this study affirm that financial literacy, when programmed into holistic community programs, can have a positive impact on the overall wellbeing of young people who are at-risk and that they are armed with improved resources and assets to help them to navigate to a successful future.

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# CONSUMERISM, OBESITY, YOUTH AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

The price of not addressing effectively the issues related to consumerism and ‘modern’ lifestyles have resulted very costly to society’s sustainable development, health and wellbeing. This might have, indirectly, detrimental impact on nations’ civic development, prosperity and human happiness. Thus, the importance of considering the effect that consumerism has on community’s health and wellbeing. For example, the rapid economic growth and marked socio-economic advancement in developing countries has resulted in significant changes in the lifestyles and consumer’s habits. An imminent and worrisome problem related to these changes is the increased prevalence of obesity among children and teenagers.

**Keywords:** *Consumerism, Civic Development, Obesity, Youth*

## 1. CONSUMERISM & LIFE STYLE

The rapid economic growth and marked socio-economic advancement in developing countries has resulted in significant changes in the lifestyles and consumer’s habits. These changes are easily perceived when one observed the people at food hawkers, food courts, or at the numerous fast food establishments that have mushroomed in most urban and semi urban areas. Changes in people’s lifestyles undoubtedly are the result of a complex interaction of the increase of consumers’ choices, easy accessibility to technology and rapid urban developments. As result we live in a society where everything is processed, pre-cooked, and disposable; a society where sidewalks are virtually inexistent and youth seem to be attached to their mobile devices. While seemingly unaware we assimilate into progress and happily adopt ‘new ways’ because they make life easier, our health and wellbeing deteriorate.

Malaysia has a young population with a median age of 26.5 years (World Factbook, 2011), and it is estimated that by 2015, about 50% of the population in Malaysia will be in their 30’s (Euromonitor, 2011). Furthermore, according to the international statistics, great part of these young adults is already part of the Malaysian workforce and as result they are located in urban areas (Euromonitor, 2011; World Factbook, 2011). It has been reported that Malaysian young workforce have, in comparison with previous decades, higher incomes and education, fewer dependents and a disposable income. Undoubtedly, the disposable income combined with the fast-paced lifestyle of this young work force dictates and shapes their consumer habits and food trends. However, the quality of life of these emerging young work force is unknown.

As part of modern living in urban areas people keep running out of time and easily become willing to pay for what was once free or cheaper (meals, housekeeping, laundry, etc.). A few questions arise when observing the patterns of emerging young workforce in Malaysia. Do they consume too much? Is this emerging human capital becoming too materialistic focusing on getting and spending and

moving away from non-materialistic values? Is their health and wellbeing being compromised? To what extent young marriages & young families are able to keep up with the rising tide of consumer standards? There is no empirical data to answer these questions. However, it is evident, that in Malaysia the lifestyle has shifted from rural to urban as the emerging young professionals are primarily located in urban areas where there are more jobs available. Living in urban areas and working longer hours have undoubtedly contributed to young people's changes in eating habits, favouring the options of convenience of ready-made and/or processed meals and a more sedentary life style. Thus new health issues are emerging among young Malaysians; and the rapid increase of obesity among young people is the most noticeable of these new health issues. It is obvious that the mushrooming of fast food establishments, availability of cheap and high calorie food combined with disposable income, increasingly sedentary lifestyles, urbanization and changes in modes of transportation have contributed with the rapid increase of overweight and obese youth in the last 20 years.

## **2. OBESITY AND YOUTH**

The availability of cheap, high calorie food combined with the increasingly sedentary lifestyles, disposable income, urbanization and changing modes of transportation are contributing factors to the rapid increase of obesity and overweight related problem among youth in Malaysia. However these factors have not yet received much attention by researchers. Consumer behaviour data indicates that most of fast food advertising is viewed by children under 11 years old. While young people between 18 and 25 years old have become the preferable target group for fast food and soft drinks companies (Nelson et al. 2008).

Although some issues related to consumerism and 'modern' lifestyles are more 'visible' than others, they all contribute to people's quality of life, health and wellbeing. For example, not much thought goes into filling up the shopping baskets with sodium packed frozen meals, or picking up breakfast, lunch and/or dinner from the many food hawkers or fast food restaurants available. Nor do people stop to think that the ever so comforting and convenient and unlimited 'fast food' choices are slowly killing them. Recent statistics show major shifts in morbidity and mortality trends among young people between 10 and 24 years old (Patton et al. 2009), and youth's eating behaviour patterns is listed as one of the factors related to this increase in mortality rates. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that the prevalence of obesity in children and adolescents was rising rapidly and linked to this 'obesity epidemic' type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and cardiovascular diseases in children and young people are becoming common health problems (WHO 2012). That is, children and youth health concerns are the same as those of older adults.

Youth Civic Engagement activities and programs normally focus towards improving the local community while providing the opportunities for young people to develop themselves as agents of change. Also through civic engagement youth have the opportunity to critically assess and understand the social and political issues that interconnect members of their society. However, according to Hill (2011) consumerism among children and youth has created endless needs and dissatisfaction. As a result children and youth have less opportunities to learn how to initiate or make meaningful contributions to their communities; as a result young people are unable to exercise their creative and critical thinking. Thus with reduced opportunities to put in practice creative and critical thinking, civic development cannot take place. Furthermore Schor (2004) reported that consumerism among children and young people is linked to negative wellbeing, low self-esteem, and anxiety. That is, in modern societies children and youth are far from being healthy, and without proper guidance they find it difficult to adopt and maintain healthier lifestyles and habits.

## **3. CONCLUSION**

Perhaps then, the question should not really be how overweightness and obesity can be potentially detrimental to young people's civic engagement. But rather, how can we expect young people to

work towards the sustainability of their community and/or country's economy, when they are facing health issues, or battling with chronic illnesses? In other words, how can an unhealthy human capital with vulnerable self-identity can contribute to the developing of the nation?

Rather than investing time, money and effort in one-off awareness events, more effort should be deploy in developing effective and realistic ways to promote healthier living style among young people. Youth engagement and advocacy could serve as keystones for programs and initiatives to reduce the obesity epidemic among youth. Promoting healthier and well balanced individuals will reduce national and personal economic burden related to a poor quality of life and unhealthy choices.

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# Obesity, Youth Quality of Life and Competency Development

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## Abstract

According to the available data from the Institute for Public Health (NHMS III 2006) 5.4% of children younger than 18 years old in Malaysia were either overweight or obese. Being overweight or obese has detrimental effects on individual health and wellbeing and serious repercussions in terms of economic and social costs for a young, developing nation such as Malaysia. Children and teens that are overweight or obese face increased health problems; and suffer from social stigmatization, poor self-image, and depression. And as overweight and obese children get older they will be at risk of developing eating disorders, and/or becoming addicted to substance abuse. Thus, the negative impact of overweightness and obesity can spill over to society and derail the country's economic plans of becoming a fully developed nation. The literature reviewed uncovered queries about the possibility of Malaysian youth being affected by health risks related to obesity and the impact on their quality of life; as well as the question of whether health competency development could contribute towards health promotion and improvement in youth quality of life as well as positively contribute towards Nation development.

**Keywords:** *Competency Development, Quality of Life, Overweight, Obesity, Youth development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Blum (2009) nowadays young people are not as healthy as they are perceived or expected to be. There has been major shifts in morbidity and mortality trends among young people; specifically the rise in mortality rates have been observed among 10-24 years old youth in developing countries; and it has been reported that mortality rates are 2.4 times higher among 20-24 years old youth (Patton et al. 2009). Eating behavior (e.g. eating habits, eating patterns) is listed among the leading factors related to this shifts in morbidity and mortality trends among youth (Blum, 2009; Fatusi & Hindin, 2010). Probably because eating habits, eating patterns, etc. are linked to the increase of obesity and overweight among young people; a major concern worldwide.

Currently, childhood obesity is one of the most serious public health challenges currently faced worldwide. The World Health Organization reported that in 2010 about 43 million children under the age of five were overweight (WHO, 2012); and according to the Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity, childhood obesity levels in Malaysia are the highest in Asia.

## **2. OBESITY AND YOUTH IN MALAYSIA**

The most recent obesity statistics from the Institute for Public Health (NHMS III, 2006) indicates that by 2006 the prevalence of obesity 5.4% among children and adolescents under 18 years old; and based it was estimated to be higher in 2011 (Institute for Public Health, 2008). However, in 2004 Poh and colleagues reported the prevalence of obesity for adolescents between 12 and 18 years old Malaysians to be 20.3% for boys and 17.7% for girl. Another survey, also conducted in 2004, reported that the prevalence of obesity was 11.7% for 15 years old and older Malaysian youth (Rampal, et al., 2007).

Another study, using a school children sample reported that among 6 to 12 years old 10% were overweight and 6% were obese (Ismail et al, 2009). Similarly, Ruzita and colleagues (2009) using BMI-for-age-growth as reference reported that 12.6% of school age children in Malaysia were overweight and 13.5% obese.

There are noticeable inconsistencies in the measurement and discrepancy in the cut-off criteria for overweight and obese in these studies. Nonetheless, the findings of the above described studies present an alarming reality; especially because the young people participating in those studies are between 18 and 30 years old and there has not been follow up studies to assess the current health status. In other words, the health and wellbeing status of the most important assess of the Nation, is in actual fact unknown!

## **3. THE RISKS**

Being overweight or obese has detrimental effects on individual health and wellbeing and serious repercussions in terms of economic and social costs for young and developing nations such Malaysia. It is well documented that children and adolescents that are either overweight or obese are at high risks of developing or suffering from type 2 diabetes, impaired glucose tolerance, decreased insulin resistance, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cardiovascular problems, liver or gall bladder disease, gastritis reflux disease, sleep apnea, hypertension, breathing difficulties, joint and musculoskeletal problems (Must, Jacques, Dallai, Bajema, Dietz 1992; Whitaker, Wright, Pepe, Seidel, Dietz, 1997; Must, Anderson, 2003). So young people under 25 years old are suffering from same health risk that are normally considered as older adult's diseases and health complaints.

However, it is not only their physical health that is diminishing at younger age, but also their social and psychological wellbeing is impaired. There is early empirical evidence for the association between overweightness and obesity in children and teenagers under 18 and risk of social stigmatization and poor self-image (Stunkard & Mendelson, 1967; Stunkard & Burt, 1967). In line with these earlier findings, more recent research indicate that children and adolescents that are either overweight or obese have high risk of suffering from negative self-image, depression, and being bullied at school; and as they get older these young people are prone to develop eating disorders (e.g. anorexia nervosa, bulimia) and/or addiction to substance abuse (Pollack & Shuster, 2000; NOO, 2011). Thus, overweightness and obesity are potentially detrimental to the Nation's positive youth development efforts.

Furthermore, clinical studies have reported that obesity and overweight problems can impair children's quality of life (Zeller & Modi, 2006; Hughes, Farewell, Harris & Reilly, 2006). However, there is still a lack of understanding of the impact of psychosocial factors on the onset and/or progression of obesity and related health problems, and the implications of obesity and overweight problems for youth quality of life and development.

#### **4. BEYOND CLINICAL MEASURES**

As unhealthy trends and lifestyles in youth will progress to adulthood, this might result in huge economic costs related to health and social security systems (Sherina & Rozali, 2004). Therefore it is important to understand how life style, physical activity, resource scarcity and other psychosocial factors can contribute to the alarming increase in obesity and related health risks among youth. There is a need for multidisciplinary studies to investigate lifestyle and environmental factors that might be related to obesity and overweight problems among youth.

The research efforts worldwide are now focusing toward reducing obesity in children and teenagers through public health policies that champion regular physical activity, balanced diets and healthier eating habits among school children and teens. However, to successfully target and reduce the escalation of obesity and minimize its health risk and potential negative impact on youth health and wellbeing, it is imperative to assess and investigate the psychosocial environment, lifestyle and eating habits that might be contributing to the rapid escalation of obesity risks in young people.

Some authors have suggested that the adoption of Western lifestyles and dietary patterns in Asian societies has contributed to the increasing of the prevalence of obesity in countries like Malaysia. That is, as result of the economic growth and marked socio-economic advancement, communities have become more sedentary and experienced significant changes in the lifestyles dietary choices and meal patterns (Sherina & Rozali, 2004). In turn, sedentary lifestyles and food choices contribute with the increase of the prevalence of obesity, hypertension, coronary heart disease, type II diabetes and cancer (Tee, 1999).

The health effects as well as productivity and health care cost of obesity and overweight problems among young people are sources concern for Malaysian government and research efforts have concentrated in surveying the prevalence of obesity, mostly clinical studies (Tan, Yen & Feisul, 2012; Ismail et al., 2009; Rampal, et al., 2007; Ismail et al., 2002; Ismail, 2002; Ismail & Vickneswary, 2000); and a number of initiatives to raise awareness about the health risk associated with obesity and to promote better nutrition for young children (e.g. "Healthy Children, Healthier Nation – Start Young" in 2010; The National Plan of Action for Nutrition 2006-2015). However the problem has not being properly addressed yet; and still there are not programs of health competency development targeting young people between 18-25 years.

Nonetheless, poor eating habits, deficient nutrition levels, overweight problems, etc. can negatively affect the quality of life of these young people between 18 and 25 years old. That is their satisfaction with leisure or work activities and their physical or economic burden as result of ill health can have negative spillover effects for society and the country development. However the health and wellbeing of this demographic

group has not yet received much attention. There seems to be a lack of youth nutrition & fitness programs program initiatives to provide young people with health competencies.

## **5. HEALTH COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT**

Competencies are a set of behaviors that are instrumental in obtaining or delivering desired outcome (Bartram, Robertson & Callinan, 2002). Competency development could be described as a process of obtaining and integrating knowledge, skills, and abilities and to successfully achieve objectives and/or positive results either as individuals or as community. Often youth competency development programs focus on helping young people to achieve education and employment; social skills and citizenship are included as part and parcel of the process of becoming employable.

However preparing youth for transition to adulthood should not only focus on empowering them to achieve their employment and education goals; it is equally important to provide them with the knowledge, attitude and skills to take care of and maintain optimal physical and emotional health. In other words, health competency should be given more importance that what it has received till now, as developing health competencies will empower young people to make informed health decisions/choices.

Developing health competencies can also help to improve nutrition and the adoption and maintenance of healthier eating habits among youth. In line with the literature reviewed health competency development for maintaining healthy weight and optimal fitness might focus on:

- Understanding the relationship between food, health and energy balance
- Knowledge of what healthy weight is and its relationship to diet and physical activity
- Consumer awareness to make informed choices when buying food, snacks, etc.
- Understanding food labeling information
- Practical capability to prepare and cook simple and nutritious meals
- Knowledge and application of food hygiene and food safety principles

Nonetheless, in order to have a clear idea of what are the corecompetencies needed for Malaysian youth to improve their nutrition and fitness it is advisable to carry out an assessment of the current health competencies, health status, lifestyles and quality of life of Malaysian youth that are between 18 and 25 years old. This would allow identifying the information and skill gaps in this demographic group and enable to set realistic and relevant objectives for the program.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

The literature reviewed open up queries about the Malaysian youth's currently health risks and issues and its impact on the emerging adults' quality of life. Furthermore, it became obvious the existent research gap in health competency development and health promotion for young people between 18 and 25 years old. Although health competency development process and methodology could easily follow that of any leadership competency model, but should be relevant to the context of Malaysian youth. Therefore



research is needed to identify what are knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes gaps and realistic and relevant objectives.

Being overweight or obese has detrimental effects on individual health and wellbeing and serious repercussions in terms of economic and social costs for a country. According to the literature reviewed Children and adolescents that are either overweight or obese not only have high health risks, but also they suffer from social stigmatization, poor self-image, and are at risk of developing eating disorders. Thus, overweightness and obesity consequences can have a spillover effect in the community, society and the country. That is, youth's satisfaction with leisure or work activities and the physical or economic burden as result of ill health can have negative spillover effects for society and the country development.

However the health and wellbeing of 18-25 years old youth in Malaysia has not yet received much attention. There seems to be a lack of youth nutrition & fitness programs program initiatives to provide young people with basic health competencies. Nonetheless developing health competency can empower young people to (1) make informed health decisions/choices; (2) improve their nutrition, (3) adopt and maintain healthier eating habits through life.

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# EATING PATTERNS & STRESS IN MALAYSIAN YOUNG WORKING WOMEN

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## Abstract

This paper summarizes the results obtained from a study that explored the association of stress & eating habits among Malaysian working women<sup>1</sup>. Data was collected using a questionnaire consisting of self-reported measures of health, stress symptoms, and food related behavior pattern. The results indicated significant associations between level of stress and eating habits; underlining that poor management of stress paired with unhealthy eating habits could have negative impact in young women's health and diminish their ability to cope with the demands of their competing roles in society. Thus the importance of developing health competencies that ensures positive wellbeing among emerging young working women.

**Keywords:** *stress level, foods related behavior, working young women*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This conference paper summarizes the results from a descriptive research that surveyed the association between foods related behavior pattern and stress within the working women context in Malaysia.

Research shows that working women face competing demands (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Williams, 2000; McGoldrick, 1999; Walsh, 1999; Hochschild & Machung, 1989). That is, not only women experience daily occupational hazards and demands at work, but also they face demands related to their role in the family such as household tasks, childcare responsibilities, caretakers of ill and elderly family members, and the managing of their families (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Williams, 2000; McGoldrick, 1999; Walsh, 1999; Hochschild & Machung, 1989).

In Malaysia the number of young educated women entering the workforce is increasing; however, studies investigating psychosocial stress factors as well as risk factors for working women in Malaysia are limited. Nonetheless, in line with the literature reviewed, working women are exposed to an array of stressors such as lack of time, work overload, family work balance, financial burden, etc. Thus among women work related stress impact not only their health and wellbeing, but it also spill over to their household and family relationships (Grzywacz et al., 2002; Kossek et al., 1999; Jones & Fletcher, 1993; Haynes et al., 1983).

There are many physical and emotional consequences of work related stress, but one of the most pressing consequences in modern society is the impact on people's health behaviour and eating habits.

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Unhealthy or poor eating patterns can contribute to increased level of stress; consequently people under stress would find difficult to maintain a balanced nutrition. However, the reason for the attention given lately to the possible association of stress and health behaviour and eating habits is more related to the alarming increase of obesity and chronic illnesses among emerging adults worldwide. Authors have suggested that stress to be linked to the onset of eating disorders (e.g. bulimia, anorexia), obesity, poor food choices and unhealthy food related behavior (Loth et al., 2008; Renie&Jebb, 2005; Steptoe, et al., 2004; O'Connor, 2006; Canetti et al., 2002).

Some authors argue that stress through anxiety, depression, mood changes is associated to poor eating habits among women (Liu et al. 2007, Match et al., 2003; Wansink, et al. 2002; Canetti et al., 2002; Christensen & Pettijohn, 2001; Match & Simons, 2000). For example, recent studies show that when people are under stress they tend to eat more fatty foods and less fruits and vegetables (Habhad et al., 2009; Zellner et al., 2006; Cartwright et al., 2003, Hudd et al., 2000). Thus, being under constant pressure can become an obstacle against adoption and maintenance of healthy eating habits for young working women.

## **2. THE STUDY**

The data was collected using a face to face questionnaire administrated to a total of 541 working women in Klang Valley region. The questionnaire consisted of self-reported measures of health, stress symptoms, and food related behavior pattern; and objective measures of health behaviors and work context. The variables used for the statistical analysis were (1) food related behavior patterns, (2) stress indicators and (3) level of stress. Food related behavior patterns were measured with a nine items check list. Stress indicators were measure using with a 4-point-Likert; respondents indicated how frequent they experience stress related symptoms within the past 6 month. The frequency of stress related symptoms was used as proxy to calculate the level of stress.

The descriptive analysis shows that 61.4% of the women that participated in the study were single and that 87.2% of the sample were under 36 years old. A great portion of the participants did not to have kids (68 %) or dependents (74%). Most participants (91.9%) worked in the private sector, and 68% of the total sample reported their monthly income to be between RM600 and RM2100.

The frequency analysis revealed that the more commonly reported stress indicators were excessive sweating (69.6%); trembling (64.7%), chest pain (60.6%), neglecting personal appearance (57.0%), felling panic (41.7%) and performing poorly at work (41.1%). Alarmingly 53% of the sample presented high stress levels while 42.1% of the respondents showed moderate levels of stress.

Among the women with high levels stress 92.33 % indicated that they 'eat such a quantity of food, that end up feeling very stuffed' ( $\chi^2 (2) =13.16, p=0.001$ ). Also, 67.94% of the women with high levels of stress reported that they 'urge to snack when feel pressured' ( $\chi^2 (2) =7.61, p=0.02$ ); while 71.08% of them agree with the stamen 'Food will help me when facing a problem' ( $\chi^2 (2) =15.27, p=0.001$ ).

## **3. CONCLUSION**

The findings of the study are in line with the literature reviewed, as food related behavior was significant associated with level of stress. However, the most important issue to be highlighted from the results of the study is the fact that although majority of participants were single, independent and under 36 years old, they already exhibit high levels of stress, poor eating habits and diminished health and wellbeing. This is an alarming picture; young women's poor health and unhealthy habits could not only hinder their future career development, but also can negatively affect their fertility health and mental wellbeing.

Poor eating habits is one of the risk factors for obesity (Ng & Jeffery, 2003, Mozumdar et al., 2011); and obesity is associated with type 2 diabetes, hypertension, increase risk of cancer, coronary heart disease, and arteriosclerosis among young people (Reilly, 2005; Colles et al., 2008; Wadden et al., 2006). Therefore, negative effects of stress through food related behavior in these Malaysian young women can potentially increase their health risks and diminish their ability to cope with the demands of their competing roles in society. Thus, health promotion programs and initiatives should focus on developing the competencies needed by young working women to adopt and maintain healthier eating habits. However to ensure the sustainability of a healthier workforce it is vital to work towards effective and relevant policies as well.

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# MEASURING PERSISTENCE IN YOUTH COMPETENCIES DEVELOPMENT USING HEART RATE VARIABILITY (HRV)

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## Abstract

Persistence or hardworking is a self-regulation, self-control, an attitudes and beliefs pertaining work behavior, effort, strong will and motivational construct. This behavior is an important element for youth to build up their ability in planning and managing their goals. To nurture these positive behaviors, a study needs to be conducted to explore it from the aspect of psychophysiology. The objective of this paper is to measure the level of persistence from the HRV perspective. The Biofeedback Technique has been considered as the best mechanism to measure persistence profile of youth by investigating their level of achievement goal orientation. The subjects were exposed to the method of intrapersonal communication through zikr. The experiments were conducted by investigating their efforts, goal orientation and competence within one's self to achieve the targeted task. The study conducted involved questionnaires, structured interviews and clinical experiments using the Biofeedback emWave® Desktop Stress Relief System Software equipment. The results from these tests showed that there is a significant relationship between persistence and the HRV spectrum. A hardworking youth have higher HF spectrum compared to the lazy youth. The study shows that the persistence profile can be measured using the psychophysiology technique. This will enhance the individual profiling process that will assist competencies youth development program.

**Keywords:** *achievement goal, biofeedback, persistence, HRV, youth.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of the research is to measure persistence from the psychophysiology perspective by using the Heart Rate Variability (HRV) technique. It is the method of self-regulatory to increase the psychophysiology coherent that could reduce stress and increases the balance in the nervous system (McCraty, R., 2005). This psychophysiological state will then improve the emotional stability, cognitive functions, academic performance and social behaviour (Bradley, R. T., et.al., 2010).

Past research showed that motivation is the indicators of task persistence and academic behavior among youth (Good, T. L., & Brophy, 2000; Meece et.al, 2006; Gilman & Anderman, 2006).

Through HRV Biofeedback training, youth with anxiety problems can be determined psychophysiologicaly (Armour, J. 2003); (Childre, D. M., 1999); (McCraty, R., 2002b); (McCraty, R., 2006b). The RR-Interval analysis shown by the Heart Rate (HR) and the Heart Rate Variability (HRV) acts as an indicator to the functions of an individual autonomic nervous system (ANS) (Akselrod, S. et.al, 1981); (Lombardi, F., 2002); (Task Force, 1996). Youth with anxiety usually have excessive worrying, a

sense of fear, restlessness, overly emotional responses, and negative thinking (Prima, V. M., 2010). This behavior is opposite to a hardworking youth.

## 2. OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Persistence

Persistence or hardworking indicates internal, stable, and controllable attributions. As a result, a hardworking youth will have positive emotional and behavioral in terms of pride, motivation and valuing of the task (Reyna, 2000). The stability in cognitive and emotional is closely related with unnecessary need for change and high expectations to maintain the behavior or state of being (Anderson and Jennings, 1980; Forsterling, 1985, 1988). These expectations, affect the achievement within a person (Anderson et al., 1994; Carroll, 1978; Carroll and Payne, 1976).

Meanwhile the symptoms of laziness in youth are procrastination, low grades in examinations, degradation of health and constantly under stress (McCloskey, J. D., 2011). Procrastination is closely related to negative attitudes academically such as being late in submitting assignments or losing them, bad time management and giving up in studying (Van Eerde, W., 2003).

Most of the youth with excellence self-regulation, used the effective learning strategies and hold positive motivational beliefs such as high self-efficacy and performance goal orientations. It is also reported that excellence self-regulators rarely experience fear of failure and anxiety (Pintrich, P., 2000); (Zimmerman, B., 2002). The concept of persistence has strong relationship with high achievement goal orientations related to the performance benchmark. Thus, the training in HRV is to detect the achievement goal orientation in students while being given a task to finish reciting *zikr* during the training session.

From the physiology perspective, persistence is closely related to "antrieb". Antrieb is the inner driving force that maintains vitality, initiative, energy, focus, attention and efforts (Hohl Radke, F. & Lundershausen, C., 2010). The brain involves neurophysiological measurement for the individual autonomic nervous system (ANS) which mobilizes the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous system (Thayer, J. B., 2005).

Moreover, youth with anxiety disorder exhibit a passive attitude in their studies such as lack of interest in learning, poor performance in examinations, and do poorly in assignments (Task Force, 1996). The psychological symptoms of anxiety among students include feeling nervous before a tutorial class, panicking, going blank during a test, feeling helpless while doing assignments, or lack of interest in a difficult subject whereas the physiological symptoms include sweaty palms, cold, nervousness, panic, fast pace of breathing, racing heartbeat, or an upset stomach (Ruffin, P., 2007). These physiological symptoms could be detected through HRV spectrum during the training session, so it shows that persistence could be measured psychophysiological.

In order to measure their persistence, youth will be investigated psychologically on their self-regulation. Self-regulation is important for the enhancement in learning processes, therapy and organizational management. It is the process of exerting control over oneself in order to align with a desired standard (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). A self-regulatory framework has two predominant functions which are monitoring and controlling behavior towards achieving goals (Carver and Scheier (1982). Successful monitoring includes accurately assessing the discrepancy between current progress and a goal (which requires self-awareness), whereas successful behavioral control includes resisting temptation, altering behavior, or even maintaining behavior in light of environmental disturbances. A persistent youth is enabling in their goal-setting, planning, executing, managing, monitoring, self-evaluating and modifying



their fallacies (A. Kharrazi and H. Kareshki, 2010). The lack of self-regulation within a youth could be called as lazy which is a result of failure in achievement goal orientation (Steel, P., 2007).

So this study will be using the Achievement Goal Theory focusing on the Mastery Goal Approach. According to Elliot, (Elliot, A. J., 2006) approach motivation could be interpreted as a guideline towards positive stimuli such as objects, events, or possibilities. In other words, an achievement goal may focus on oneself efforts to achieve a positive target or to avoid a negative unwanted possibility (Elliot, A. J. and Murayama, K., 2008).

## *2.2 Achievement Goal Theory*

Achievement goal orientation means a benchmark in evaluating someone's level of competence and success in any given task. There are several definitions of competence, depending on the standards or criteria being referred to for the purpose of evaluation. Whenever the reference is definite, competence is identified by the task conditions. It is considered as a success when the task is fully done. On the other hand, if an intrapersonal reference is involved, competence is shown from the full understanding or mastery of the task. Whether it is an absolute or intrapersonal reference, either one shows the adoption of mastery goal (McGregor, H. A. and Elliot, A. 2002).

## *2.3 Mastery Goal Approach*

A mastery goal approach focuses one on attaining desirable possibilities according to absolute or intrapersonal standards such as gaining competence. Mastery goal affects on the competence, knowledge, and skill in oneself based on his/her achievement's or performances (Jang, L. Y. and Liu, W. C., 2011). The mastery motivation comprises the intrinsic motivation, self-adequacy and locus of control (Gilman & Anderman, 2006).

## *2.4 Intrapersonal Communication (IC)*

Cunningham, S. (1995) defined intrapersonal communication as the process of message exchange and information transformation within the individual. The intrapersonal communication through self-talk is a method to drive self-efficacy. *Zikr* is one of the self-talk methods of repeating words which carry certain meanings in the brain. *Zikr* is seen as one of the tested and effective method in increasing performance. It is a system of practice to increase the activity of cellular groups in the brain parallel to the meanings of words given in a list. Investigators from Washington University have used PET (Positron Emission Tomography) scan to measure neural activity indirectly by tracking changes in blood flow in subjects injected with a short-lived radioactive tracer. Research done by John Horgan (1993) concluded that when a person reads a new learned noun or repeats a given word, different regions and dormant neural groups of the brain engages and becomes active. As a result, the working capacity of the brain is increased where several distinct parts of the brain, including parts of the prefrontal and cingulate cortex, displayed increased neural activity. After repeating the same task several times, the activity shifted to different regions. When the volunteers were given a fresh list of nouns, the neural activity increased and shifted back to the first areas again.

## *2.5 Heart Rate Variability (HRV)*

According to Routledge et.al (2010), HRV is directly related to the balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic influences on the sinoatrial node's intrinsic rhythm (Freeman, J. V., et. al, 2006). The nature of the autonomic nervous system that it is able to adjust itself according to environmental changes results in increased HRV and this shows a healthy heart. A decrease in HRV indicates inability or attenuation in the autonomic nervous system's reactivity to change (McMillan, D.E., 2002).

Nares et. al (2011) named three frequency spectra as the VLF (very-low frequency) of frequencies below 0.03 Hz, the LF (low frequency), with frequencies range between 0.03 and 0.15 Hz, and the HF (high frequency) peaks which is between 0.18 and 0.4 Hz. These HRV spectral analysis parameter total powers indicate the ANS's parasympathetic and sympathetic branches of a body (Zimmerman, B., 2002; Birkhofer, A, S. G. 2005). The parasympathetic system was discovered to modulate the LF and HF peaks, the sympathetic system changes the LF peak, while the VLF peak was modulated by the renin-angiotensin system (Nares, L. R., et. al, 2011).

The HF coherence indicates the ability in cognitive, affective and physiology (Lehrer, 2007). Meanwhile the LF coherence implies the states of anxiety, depression and increasing in health conditions such as breathing, pressure in the arteries and other behavioral and physiological changes (Vaschillo et. al, 2006).

Through the HRV biofeedback, students in schools could reduce unpleasant behaviours and thoughts. It could develop and encourage stability in emotion, mental acuity and physiological efficiency. This research reported that the youth who underwent the HRV and the emotional management techniques training could improve their emotional stability, behaviours in classroom and academic performance (Arguelles, L. M., 2003).

HRV helps youth to self-generate a specific psychophysiological state- *psychophysiological coherence* – which has been shown to improve nervous system functions, emotional stability, and cognitive performance. Youth who received the intervention program had learned how to better manage their emotions and to self-activate the psychophysiological coherence state under stressful conditions (Bradley, R. T., 2010).

Thus, to reach the stability in sympathetic and parasympathetic condition, the respondents are being exposed to an intrapersonal communication through *zikr*.

### **3. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS**

This study has employed a measure of psychophysiological responses which is called HRV. The purpose of this study is to measure the coherence in psychophysiological that is “a state of sustained positive emotion, a high degree of mental and emotional stability, constructive integration of the cognitive and emotional systems and increased synchronization and harmony between cognitive, emotional and physiological systems” (McCraty, R. 2001). The experiment conducted observed the relationship and the effects of persistence on HRV. The research utilized the power spectrum analysis, the low frequency (LF) and high frequency (HF) components of heart rate variability that can be calculated reflecting the sympathetic and parasympathetic activities. HRV allows an analysis of the interaction between the activities in the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems by modulation of the heart beat to beat interval (Zengyong, L. and Kun, J., 2003).

#### *3.1 Participants*

Samples for this study consist of 20 secondary school students, at the age of sixteen. Their selection was based on their cognitive abilities in interpreting information input and their confusion about their direction in life, responsibilities and purpose of life. This experiment involved two groups of selected students which consist of 10 students with poor academic performance and 10 students with excellent performance in the examinations.

### 3.2 Protocols

Data were recorded with 12 minutes of heart rhythm. The youth underwent four protocols in the training. The protocols are namely by baseline, pre-recorded *zikr*, self-*zikr* and the intrapersonal communication script stimulation. The youth underwent one HRV training during the session. To investigate whether the students are self-regulated or not, they are given a task to achieve targeted coherence during the clinical experiment.

Each of them was asked to sit on a backrest chair peacefully. They were attached to a HRV sensor at their ear-sensor. A monitor was provided facing them, showing their level of heart rate coherence indicating HF, LF and VLF.

The experiment should be conducted in a quiet room such as private room or an office to make sure they are relaxed. Their heartbeat rate would be measured and recorded using the *emWave*® Desktop Stress Relief System Kit devices to detect their emotion through their achievement goal orientation focusing on mastery a given task which is implementing self-*zikr* while achieving targeted coherence.

They were encouraged to achieve a goal of 100% HF coherence while undergoing the training by applying the diaphragmatic breathing technique and self-*zikr*. They were told that if they want to improve their coherence, they have to apply the diaphragm breathing with the pace of 6 breath per minute (Lehrer et.al, 2000). To find the resonant frequency of their RSA, they have to undergo at least about 2 minutes procedure which is difficult ((Lehrer et.al, 2000; Vaschillo, et.al, 2006). The 100% goal is the benchmark to investigate their level of achievement by looking at their effort, persistence, will and patience.

At this stage, data was collected to measure the average HRV range and coherence ratio percentages. In the exercise, students were expected to achieve high frequency (HF) coherence. The assessment was done according to the youths' achievement goal orientation and mastering the given task. Those who manage to maintain the HF coherence during the second, third and fourth protocols showed that they have persistence attitude. This is because they have put an effort, low endurance and have high achievement goal orientation to maintain the HF coherence.

In the first protocol which is the baseline, it was fixed at 3 minutes. The challenge level was set at the lowest. They were asked to relax in a normal situation while their heart rate was recorded for 3 minutes. After the baseline was reached, the session was stopped.

In the second protocols, the students were asked to perform intrapersonal communication by reciting the "Lailahailallah" *zikr*. Before underwent the protocol, they were reminded to achieve the 100% HF coherence and maintain the frequency as long as they could. They were asked to *zikr* along with the pre-recorded *zikr*. This procedure was done for 3 minutes.

The third protocol is self-*zikr* which took about 3 minutes procedure. They recited the *zikr* in their heart while applying the diaphragmatic breathing technique. Again, they were being encouraged by the trainer to achieve the 100% HF coherence, improve and maintain the data. After 3 minutes, they were asked to stop the session.

Finally, the students were stimulated by an intrapersonal communication script (ICS) about the worship to the Creator and realizing about their sins, for 3 minutes in the fourth protocol. The script is created with the discussion with two psychiatrist based on the developed script from the *emWave*® Desktop Stress Relief System produced by Institute of HeartMath.

By stimulating them with the ICS, they will become calmer and more relaxed because it taught them to control their mind and body. Before the protocol was started, they have been showed their coherence's achievement during the 3 protocols. Whoever achieved the 100% HF coherence, they were asked to maintain the data as long as they could. Meanwhile students who failed to meet the targeted goal, they are encouraged to apply the diaphragmatic breathing using the right technique.

### 3.3 Results

The purpose to evaluate coherence ratio and scores is to increase the ability among the students to maintain a physiologically coherent state. From the data obtained, students were encouraged to finish the task of reciting *zikr* and maintain the HF coherence or improve it at the targeted goal. Investigation shows that hardworking students enable to meet the requirement, have their own achievement goal orientation and have ability in mastering and finishing the task successfully. Meanwhile the lazy students failed to meet the given task because of lack of effort, persistence and will.

Figure 1. HRV responses for hardworking youths

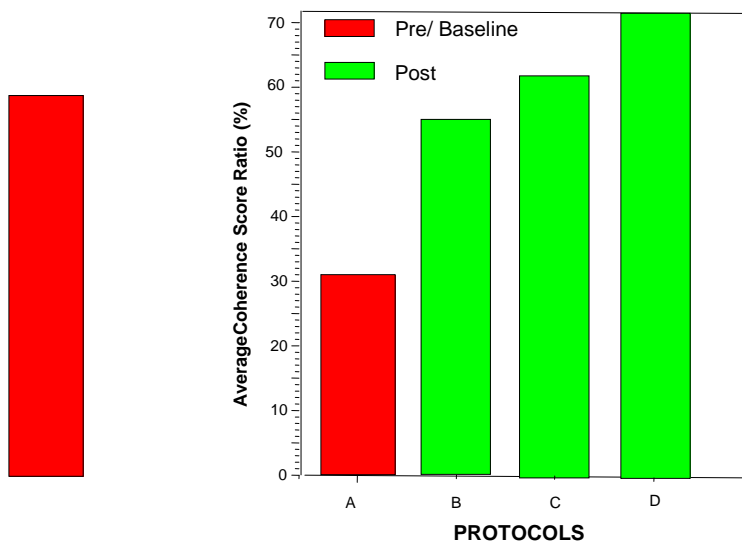
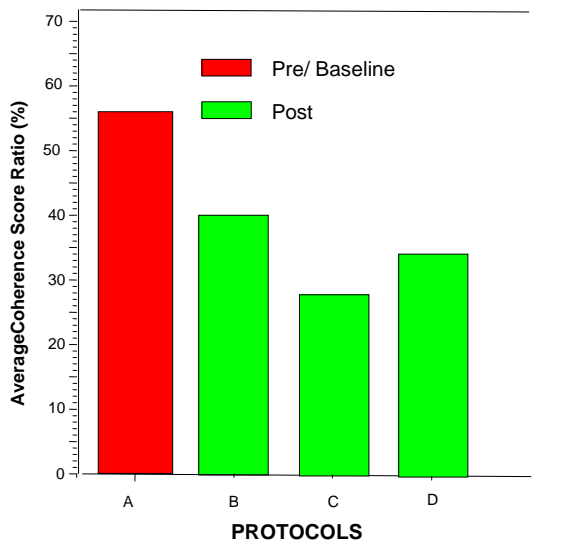


Figure 2. HRV responses for lazy students



As a result, figure 1 and 2 illustrates the average coherence score ratio in the different protocols achievement goal orientation of youth. After underwent the protocols, hardworking youth showed an increment from the baseline in the average coherence ratio. They showed a higher HF coherence.

Although there was a decrement in the second protocol, they showed effort and persistence by tried to increase the HF coherence and it was shown in the third and fourth protocols.

Meanwhile youth with laziness have higher VLF coherence than the hard working youth. The coherence of HRV biofeedback from the baseline to the final protocols effect was not so effective because most of the cases coherence was decreasing. It implies that a lazy youth has less effort, persistence and willingness to finish the task with successfully. The most decrement ratio is from the third protocols which is self-zikr because it was a self-regulated protocol. It needs an inner motivation within a person. This finding showed that a lazy needs someone to driven them to be active in doing any given task. They have less effort and persistence which indicated their less inner motivation.

Below is the table shows the comparison of the mean and standard deviation between a hardworking and lazy youth from the coherence ratio. It shows an increment of 7% in the Mean values with the decrement of 15.5% in the Standard Deviation among hardworking youth from the baseline/pre. Meanwhile, lazy youth shows 64.4% in the baseline and decrease to 51.6% after underwent the protocols with the standard deviation increase from 30.28% to 32.85%.

Table 1. Mean values, standard deviation of average coherence ratio: at pre and post

Measures	Mean Values	Standard Deviation
<b>HRV Coherence Score (hardworking youth)</b>		
Pre	68.5	33.37
Post	73.9	28.17
<b>HRV Coherence Score (lazy youth)</b>		
Pre	64.4	30.28
Post	51.6	35.85

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The observation showed that there were changes in the HRV readings in response to the changes in the students' psychophysiology. When they were in a relaxed situation, the average pulse wave in HRV readings will reduce. The high level of achievement goal orientation and mastering task, students showed increment in HF HRV with low average pulse wave. Meanwhile students with low achievement goal orientation and mastering task reported to have VLF HRV with high rate in the heart beat per minute.

The findings showed that HRV could become a benchmark in measuring human psychophysiology. It monitors the relationship between the body and mind in mobilizing the achievement goal orientation and mastering task.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, intrapersonal communication increased the achievement goal orientation and mastering task. If the students really maintain to meet the goal of finishing task, they could reduce laziness in themselves. This effect of achievement goal orientation and mastering task assisted with intrapersonal communication has significant impact on HRV data.

The students have also shown a tremendous decrease in their stress and anxiety after undergoing the HRV training. They also became more focused and relaxed after the training sessions.

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# STRESS AND ITS ASSOCIATED PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AMONG MALAYSIAN GIFTED STUDENTS

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## Abstract

**Introduction-**The gifted students in Malaysia are housed together in a residential school which provides a competitive, yet stressful environment. The high expectations for academic achievement coupled with perpetual public expectations to be the “future elites” in the society could have made them vulnerable to stress and other psychological disturbances. **Objectives-**The aims of this study were to assess the prevalence and level of stress among Malaysian gifted students, to determine its correlation with depression and anxiety, and to evaluate its association with academic performance and other socio-demographic factors. **Methods-**A cross-sectional study was conducted on 227 Malaysian gifted students aged between 16-18 years old, based at PERMATApintar™/ASASipintar, National University of Malaysia (UKM). Respondents were assessed through self-administered Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21(DASS-21) questionnaires. Data on socio-demographics, family characteristics and academic performance were also obtained and analysed. **Results-**Stress was detected in 117 (52.9%) respondents and the mean stress score was 15.6±7.5. Out of those with stress, 43% experienced moderate level of stress, followed by mild level of stress (40%) whilst the remainder 17% experienced severe or extremely severe level of stress. Male students had significantly higher mean stress scores compared to female students (15.7±8.3 vs. 15.5±6.7, p<0.05). Stress was noted to be positively and significantly correlated with depression (r=0.682, p<0.01) and anxiety (r=0.704, p<0.01). There was no significant association between mean stress scores and academic performance, race, parental marital status and total family income. **Conclusion-**Stress is highly prevalent and is positively correlated with depression and anxiety among these gifted students. The sources of stress need to be explored in a positive perspective. Early screening for detection of pathological stress is highly recommended and promptly managed by a multidisciplinary team.

**Keywords:** *Stress, Depression, Anxiety, Malaysian gifted students, Academic performance*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Stress results from the interaction between stressors and the individual's perception and reaction to those stressors. The amount of stress experienced may be influenced by the individual's ability to effectively cope with the stressful events and situations (Romano, 1992). Stress typically describes either a negative condition or a positive condition which may have an impact on an individual's mental and physical well-being. There are two types of stress; good stress and pathological stress. Good stress is beneficial and motivating while pathological stress can cause anxiety and even health problems. Stress is a driving key for survival and can act as a motivator, but too much stress can be detrimental. Emotional stress that persist for weeks or months could weaken the immune system and

cause high blood pressure, fatigue, depression, anxiety and even heart disease (Romano, 1992; Fine 1994 and Huebner et al, 2000).

Adolescence population (11-21 years old) is a vulnerable transitional stage from childhood to adulthood in which many psychological changes take place. Robert et al (1998) had reported that psychiatric morbidity such as stress and depression, among children and adolescents to be as high as 51% with a mean rate of 15.8% in adolescents. Depression, stress, and anxiety are among the psychological problems that are common among students (Robert, 1998; Drybye, 1997 and Dusselier, 2005). A research conducted in Saudi Arabia by Al-Gelban (2007) showed that 35.5% of Saudi adolescent school boys have stress problems, whilst another study from the same author (2009) among female Saudi Arabia secondary school students was as high as 52.5%. Furthermore, a research carried out in Klang Valley by Khadijah Shamsuddin et al (2013), Malaysia showed that 18.6% of university students have moderate and 5.1% have severe or extremely severe stress scores based on the DASS-21 inventory. Many studies had indicated that prevalence rates of stress, depression and other associated psychiatric morbidity are growing among teenagers and adolescents (Robert, 1998; Drybye, 1997; Dusselier, 2005; Al-Gelban, 2007 and Khadijah Shamsuddin, 2013).

Psychiatric morbidity such as pathological stress, depression and anxiety in this period constitute a major public health concern and can result in serious consequences, either academically, emotionally or physically (Huebner, 2001). Performance in academic and social life demands intactness of all aspects of well-being, those that include physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and psychological well-being (Crystal 1994). Saying that, psychological stability is indeed an important predictor that could contribute to high academic achievement making it much crucial to review and examine the psychological well-being of the students.

Stress, anxiety, and depression unfortunately do not stand on their own and had frequently being found to be intertwined between each other (Robert, 1998). The interrelation symptoms of these three psychological problems can lead to all sorts of emotional, social and physical problems that can give impact to academic achievement among students. It had been documented that students' performance in school, college, and university is influenced by the symptoms of stress (Al-Gelban, 2007 and Khadijah Shamsuddin, 2013), depression (Bartell, 1986 and Dusselier, 2005) and anxiety (Anson, 1984; Reynolds, 1983; Roome and Scholwinski, 1985) which could lead to poor concentration, reduction of motivation and interest, school abstinence and effecting physical health such as poor appetite, headache and fatigability.

Launched in January 2011, the PERMATApintar Education Program (PEP) is one of four sections of Malaysia's PERMATApintar National Gifted Center. A two-year university preparatory program, PEP brings top high school students in Malaysia together in a residential school purposely built for their special academic talents and needs following an extensive series of screening tests and programs. PEP's curriculum blends the best of both Malaysian and international education. A low student to instructor ratio (8:1) allows for individualized attention and specially tailored programs. Using the national curriculum as a starting point, PEP then supplements it by adding international components including AP courses and O level. PEP is a compact and accelerated program which uses differentiated learning method. While a highly competitive academic program is the hallmark of PEP, the program also emphasizes the importance of a well-rounded education. The aims of this study were to assess the prevalence and level of stress among Malaysian gifted students based at PERMATApintar™/ASASIpintar, UKM, to determine its correlation with depression and anxiety, as well as to evaluate its association with academic performance and other socio-demographic factors.

## **2.METHODOLOGY**

### *2.1 Sample population*

This cross-sectional study was conducted amongst gifted student population in Malaysia, aged between 16 to 18 years who were based at PERMATApintar™/ASASIpintar, UKM. Out of 266

students at the center, 227 students agreed to participate and provided complete data on the variables of interest in the study.

## *2.2 Study instrument*

Data on socio-demographic and family such as age, gender, ethnicity, family's monthly income, parents' marital status and academic Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) were obtained. The respondents were assessed using the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21), a 21-item self-report scale measuring characteristic attitudes and symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress (Lovibond SH & Lovibond PF, 1995). For the stress scale, scores less than 14 were considered 'normal', 15–18 were 'mild', 19–25 were 'moderate', 26–33 were 'severe' and scores greater than 34 were considered 'extremely severe'. For the depression scale, scores of 9 or less were considered 'normal', 10–13 were 'mild', 14–20 were 'moderate', 21–27 were 'severe' and scores greater than 28 were considered 'extremely severe'. Scores less than 7 on the anxiety scale were considered 'normal', 8–9 were 'mild', 10–14 were 'moderate', 15–19 were 'severe' and those above 20 were considered 'extremely severe'. This instrument mainly serves as a severity measurement tool but not as a diagnostic questionnaire. It has been well accepted globally and is a reliable, easy-to-use screening instrument. The reliability scores of the scales in terms of Cronbach's alpha scores rate the Depression scale at 0.91, the Anxiety scale at 0.84 and the Stress scale at 0.90 in the normative sample (Lovibond, PF & Lovibond SH, 1995).

## *2.3 Data Analysis*

Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software version 21.0. Student's *t*-test was used to test the differences in mean stress symptomscores by gender, while the one-way ANOVA test was used to test the differences in stress symptom scores by ethnicity, academic CGPA, family's monthly income and parental marital status. Pearson's correlation was used to evaluate correlation between stress scores and depression and anxiety. The significant level was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

## **3.RESULT**

107 (47%) of the respondents were of the male gender. The majority were of the Malay ethnicity (78%), followed by Chinese (12%) and Indian (4%). The rest were of other ethnic groups. About 12% indicated that their family's monthly income was less than RM 1000 (1RM = 0.33USD), 44% indicated their family's monthly income to be RM 1000-5000, and the residual 44% reported family's income of above RM 5000. 94% of the respondents' parents were still married whilst the remaining had divorced.

Table 1 Stress scores according to socio-demographic status and academic performance

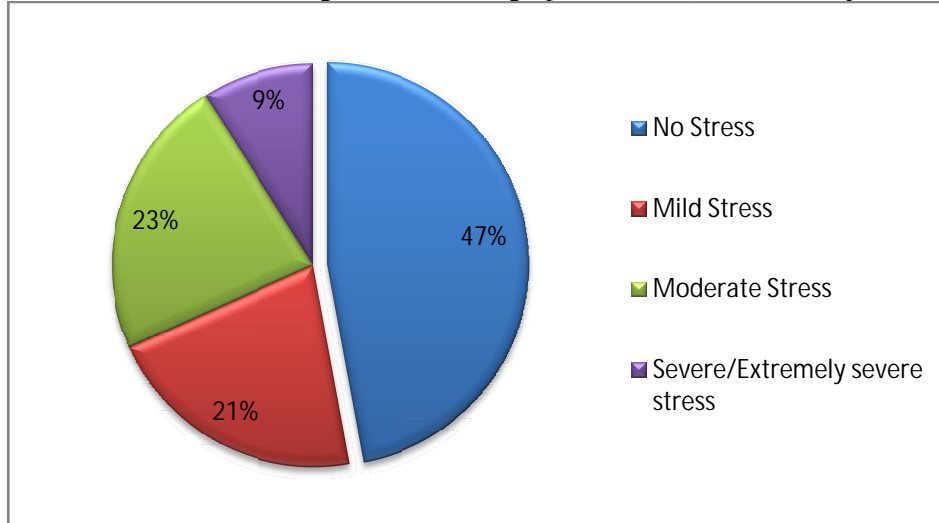


Figure 1 show that stress was present in 52.9% of the respondents, with 21% experiencing mild stress, 23% of the students having moderate stress and 9% of the students having severe or extremely severe stress.

Table 1 Stress scores according to socio-demographic status and academic performance

Factors	N (%)	Stress score, mean (SD)	<i>p</i> -value
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	107 (47)	15.7 (8.3)	<i>p</i> <0.05*
Female	120 (53)	15.5 (6.7)	
<b>Race</b>			
Malay	176 (78)	16.1 (7.2)	<i>p</i> >0.05
Chinese	27 (12)	14.1 (7.5)	
Indian	10 (4)	10.6 (6.7)	
Others	14 (6)	15.6 (9.5)	
<b>Family's monthly income</b>			
<RM1000	28 (12)	15.1 (5.7)	<i>p</i> >0.05
RM1000-5000	100 (44)	16.0 (7.1)	
>RM5000	99 (44)	15.3 (8.3)	
<b>Parents' marital status</b>			
Married	213 (94)	15.7 (7.5)	<i>p</i> >0.05
Divorce	14 (6)	14.7 (6.5)	
<b>Academic CGPA</b>			
<2.00	3 (1)	24.0 (3.5)	<i>p</i> >0.05
2.00-3.00	61 (27)	16.4 (7.5)	
>3.00	163 (72)	15.2 (7.4)	

Male students had significantly higher mean stress scores compared to female students (15.7 vs. 15.5,  $p < 0.01$ ) (Table 1). There was no significant difference in mean stress score between different ethnicity, family income, parental marital status and academic CGPA among the students. The correlation coefficient between the scales of DASS-21 Stress Scores and the DASS-21 Depression

Scores showed a significantly strong positive correlation ( $r=0.682$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly with anxiety, correlation coefficient calculated between DASS-21 Anxiety Scores and DASS-21 Stress Scores showed a significantly strong positive correlation between the two scales with  $r$  value of  $0.728$  ( $p<0.01$ ). We could therefore conclude in our study sample, when a student scored high for DASS-21 Stress Score, it could be predicted that he/she will have a higher score in both DASS-21 Anxiety and Depression scores.

#### **4.DISCUSSION**

It was alarming to discover that a high percentage of the Malaysian Gifted Students at PERMATApintar™/ASASIpintar, UKM were stressed, anxious and depressed. The prevalence of stress was 52.9% (mean Stress Score level of  $15.6\pm 7.5$ ), whereby 43% and 17% experienced moderate and severe/extremely severe level of stress, respectively. Among the respondents who experienced any level of stress, anxiety was noted to be present in 93% of them, while depression was present in more than half of them (53.8%). Stress was positively correlated with depression ( $r=0.682$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and anxiety ( $r=0.704$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The male students had significantly higher mean stress scores compared to the female students. Other than gender, there appeared to be no significant association between the mean stress scores with academic performance, ethnicity, parental marital status and total family income.

The results of our study is similar to some previous studies whereby the gifted students were found to experience higher levels of stress compared to their normal peers (Reynolds, 1983; Roome and Scholwinski, 1985 and Chan, 2003). However, based a previous study done by Brody LE et al (1986) on self-reported depressive symptoms among talented students,, there was no difference between the talented “gifted” students and their normal peers. Although it is expected that these gifted students would experience more stress because of their cognitive capabilities, it should not be taken lightly as an undue amount of stress would be detrimental to them (Neihart, 1999). Similar to previous research by Hubner et al (2001), our study found that overall, due to less stress symptoms, girls had higher life satisfaction compared to boys.

In an attempt to understand the relationship between psychological well-being and the stress level of Malaysian Gifted students, we found that stress was highly prevalent with a strong positive correlation towards depression and anxiety. The sources of stress need to be explored and identified. Screening and detection of pathological stress need to be carried out regularly and those identified to have pathological stress should be promptly managed with the support from a multidisciplinary team. If these gifted students with pathological stress are left unattended to, it would be a loss not just to them but our country as they would not be able to stand tall in the society and serve the nation with their gifted minds.

These gifted students are the *crème de la crème* and they should not be left in a high anxiety, stress and depression state. Target group or peer counselling services may be helpful to cater to their needs. It would provide an outlet for them to voice their concerns, worries and anxieties with the hope that it will help them to be more accepting and realistic to their self needs and life expectations. This would in turn translate to better and improved life satisfaction. These findings is valuable for academic “think- tanks “ and education policy makers as it would guide and aid them in designing programmes and strategies to boost students’ performance in academic life while maintaining low levels of anxiety, depression and stress within the nurturing environment. This approach is hoped to help raise both normal and gifted students to be leaders and valuable assets for our nation in the future. Nevertheless, this study could be improved with a control group of normal school going students for comparison purposes as it would yield differences between the groups in terms of stress, anxiety and depression levels if present.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Stress is highly prevalent among the Malaysian gifted students and has a significant association with anxiety and depression. Identification of pathological stress among the students is of utmost importance and sources of stressors need to be explored. Pathological stress should be managed promptly by a multidisciplinary team.

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# JAPANESE SUBCULTURAL EVENT PARTICIPANTS IN MALAYSIA AND THEIR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT: PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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## Abstract

Japanese subcultural products such as animations (anime), comics (manga) and role playing games have been produced primarily for the Japanese domestic market, yet a large amount are disseminated outside Japan. Consumption of these products is also extended to fan activities such as costume play (cosplay) of anime/manga/game characters and production of secondary products such as art works and fan magazines. There are noticeable numbers of events for anime/manga/game fans organized by students' clubs at universities and youth groups even in Malaysia. Youth subculture including fan activities is often appraised negatively as an undesirable anti-social activity for personal development of youth. Subculturalevent participation also might not be perceived positively by those who have never experienced it. Thus, the study was designed to understand experiences of Malaysian youth who are participating in Japanese subcultural events. This paper reports on preliminary findings from this study. In-depth interviews were conducted with youths who have participated in the events for more than 5 years. Their experiences were analysed by referring recent discussions to personal development models. These youth described their activities as a new culture and their parents' generation has negative perception of this culture. However, their descriptions indicate not only temporary enjoyment but also enhancement of their self-knowledge, and development of their social abilities.

**Keywords:** *Japanese subculture, fan activity, personal development, self-knowledge, social ability*

## 1. JAPANESE SUBCULTURAL EVENTS

In Malaysia, Japanese subcultural products such as animations (*anime*), comics (*manga*) and role playing games have been disseminated with Malay, Mandarin, or English translation for more than two decades. Some participants of my previous study (Yamato, et al, 2011) recalled that pirated video compact discs (VCDs) and digital video discs (DVDs) with subtitles, and translated Japanese comic books were sold in special shops in shopping centres and newspaper stands at an urban roadside in 1990s. After household Internet service began in the late 90s, anime and dramas aired on Japanese television channels were found on the Internet with English subtitles. Even translated manga were downloaded from the Internet in the 2000s. According to Mohammed Zin and Shanti (2011), Malaysian youngsters started to use the Internet earlier than the age of 13. These youngsters used the Internet as an important tool for their study and entertainment. Downloading games, music and videos were main activities for their entertainment through the Internet.

Against backdrop of this new consumption style of Japanese subcultural products, ACG (Anime, Comic and Game) related events in Malaysia were started on a fan basis more than 10 years ago. Among the ACG events, Comic Fiesta is the largest event and celebrated the 10th anniversary in 2011. Number of visitors in this event increased drastically as 7000 people in 2009, 9000 in 2010, 15,000 in 2011, and 25,000 in 2012 according to the number of tickets sold ("History of Comic Fiesta"). Besides the Comic Fiesta, students clubs (student based activity club) in private universities organized the ACG

events. Commercial events such as Anime Festival (Anime Festival Asia: AFA) initiated by the company based in Singapore was also held in Kuala Lumpur.

As Fiske (1992) discussed as “shadow cultural economy”, fans of subculture not only consume their favourite original products but also produce secondary texts and artworks based on the original one, and share these works with other fans. A main concept of the ACG event could be this “shadow cultural economy” since activities of the ACG events are cosplaying (costume playing: refers to fan activity, mainly dress up like a characters of anime, comic or games, and pose for photographs), and creating and selling *dojinshi* (a secondary work of manga). Yet, the “shadow cultural economy” would not be only reason of the increasing number of participants of the ACG events in Malaysia because the ACG fans are able to share their works and photos with other fans through the Internet nowadays.

Chen (2007) conducted observations at the ACG event in Taiwan and interviewed some participants of the events. Chen’s study explored reasons of liking Japanese subculture as well as purposes of participation in the events among cosplayers (costume player) and artists of armature comics (*doujinshi*). Chen reported that the event participants implied the event as a place for escaping from their daily life or reality. At the same time, the events appeared to be a comfortable place for them and also more democratic place than their real society. The participants worked hard with their group members; made their efforts to enhance outcome of their own works; their voice were heard; and the ways of doing things were negotiated among the members. Those mutual interactions among the group members and others took place in the reality and they did not need to cover up the part of themselves who like these activities.

On the other hand, youth subculture including fan activities is often appraised negatively as an undesirable anti-social activity for personal development of youth. Subcultural event participation also might not be perceived positively by those who have never experienced it. Thus, in order to explore the ACG event participation in Malaysian context, a qualitative study was designed. This study aimed to understand experiences of Malaysian youth who were participating in the ACG events. The preliminary findings are discussed in this paper.

## 2. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The term “personal development” is widely used, though it is not clearly defined its meaning. The meaning of “personal development” is similar to “professional development” and “personal awareness” in some contexts, but also referring different process in the other contexts. In the field of Clinical Psychology, Hughes and Youngson (2009) illustrated the diagram of “realm of personal development” (p.41) by incorporating the aspect of “self in the society” while criticizing previous studies that focused too much on “self”. Regarding this diagram, individuals enhance their self-knowledge in relations with other seven though the core realm of personal development is “self”, establish their sense of being a self in the society, and a working adult who has particular roles.

In order to develop effective curriculum for engineers, Bernelo, Honsberg and Jarelow (2011) highlighted inner-outer dimensions of the personal development: “self-knowledge” and “social ability”. According to their argument, these dimensions are necessary to realize the personal development since individuals could not improve themselves without knowing much about the self in relation with others. While having intimate conversations and mingling with close friends, individuals enable to achieve in-depth self-knowledge, and then their own strength and weakness would be seen through. Bernelo et al. edited personal development models for their engineering program by incorporating the ideas of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in Social Psychology. Those who have in-depth self-knowledge are described as a person who: “is able to adapt her behaviour in different situations”; “make rational choices”; and “make well-thought-out decisions and, in addition, had a higher degree of well-being” (p.5). People having a high social ability are assumed to be able to: “socialize in different contexts privately as well as professionally” and “cooperate with all, subordinates as well as superiors, even if the personal chemistry is not matching” (ibid.).

According to my own study of media consumption of Japanese popular culture in Malaysia (Yamato et al. 2011), one of the possible factors enable Malaysian youngsters to expand consumption activities of Japanese subcultural products were having fellow fans who can share the same interest in the local context. This study also suggested that the relationships with other fans would have a crucial meaning in young people’s life. Among participants of this previous study, some spent much time not only for

consuming subcultural products and attending the events but also planning and organizing the events. I also heard of a few stories of youngsters who were prepared for taking a part in the ACG event but abandoned their plans because of disagreement by their parents. This paper discusses aspects of personal development based on the descriptions of experiences in ACG events by referring the definitions of personal development in Bernelo et al. (2011) and Hughes and Youngson (2009).

### 3. METHODS

This study applied an interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA), one of branches in phenomenology. The phenomenology is a qualitative approach to understand experiences of people by focusing on a personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context. In this approach, it is crucial to find interviewees who have rich experiences of the phenomenon under study. The IPA suggests having variation among a homogeneous group of interviewees according to specific research questions set out in a particular context (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In this study, general criteria to select an interviewee for in-depth interviews were a Malaysian who: 1) has participated in ACG events for the past five years, and 2) is willing and able to be participated in interview session twice.

The first interview with each participant was semi-structured. The interviewer, though, maintained a conversational style as the prepared interview questions were referred towards the end of each interview. The second interviews were arranged after each participant read through their summary of the first interview transcription. The second interview was structured in order to confirm the descriptions in the first interview and get more in-depth descriptions. The interviews for four interviewees were conducted in between August 2012 and April 2013. Each interview lasted more than one hour. These interviews were recorded, transcribed, and each transcribed data was managed using NVivo, qualitative data management software. For the purpose of finding tentative themes, individual data were merged as one project in the NVivo and the categories (nodes) were refined. In order to analyse focusing on the personal development further, parts of the data in the selected nodes were extracted to the Word document. These selected extracts were repeatedly read and manually analysed by noting comments next to the extracts.

Background of the interviewees is shown in Table 1. The researcher met Kang in 2010 since he was doing side business of anime merchandise with his elder brother who was ex-vice-president of one of the ACG events in Kuala Lumpur. Lei agreed to be interviewed when the researcher contacted one of the ACG committee in Kuala Lumpur. She was a committee member of the same event Kang was involved but each interviewee did not know about their contribution for this study. The researcher first met Zain and Muna respectively during the ACG event held in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Zain lived in Kuala Lumpur when he was contacted for interviews. Only Muna were interviewed via Skype since she studied and did part-time work in Sabah.

Table 1  
*Background of Interviewees*

Name (pseudonym)	Birth	Gender	Religion	Area of Residence	Occupation	Event Involvement	Roles at the ACG Events
Kang	1986	Male	Christian	Kuala Lumpur	Software Engineer	Since 2002	Gamer, Helper, Vender
Lei	1988	Female	Buddhist	Kuala Lumpur	Management Associate	Since 2005	Cosplayer, Organizer
Zain	1987	Male	Muslim	Sabah/ Kuala Lumpur	Freelance Writer	Since 2007	Cosplayer
Muna	1990	Female	Muslim	Sabah	Student (Software Engineering)	Since 2008	Cosplayer

## 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 Mind-Blowing Experience

All four interviewees kept going to one particular ACG event held relatively near to their residence. Kang likes to participate in game competitions and also assisted his brother in organizing the event for ten years. Lei had been a committee member of the same event since 2007, and an active cosplayer besides playing a principal role in the organizing committee. Muna and Zain were started on their cosplay career in the event held in Sabah. All of them were interested in viewing anime, playing game, or/and reading manga before finding about ACG events held in their area.

When Kang was 16 years old, he participated in the ACG event with his brother. At the time, that event was held in a small hall but he described the venue as “it was very packed”. He expressed his excitement of the first event using the word “blow”, and “exploded”. He said that the event “was a big thing” for him. His feeling about the first event was further elaborated in the second interview as follows:

I was happy [to participate in the event] because in school, only few people to watch anime, ... I mean we really stick together lah, ... if you are an anime fan, or manga fan like consider outcast, you know like [other schoolmates] didn't know what we were talking about comparing to what on the TV and all the main stream [entertainment] which people know ..., so I was considered one of outcast people in the school...

He recalled that he had around ten friends to share about his favourite anime, manga and games in his school despite having other friends who could only talk about things other than ACG. When he stepped in the event hall, there were more than 100 people who have similar interest with him. He was not the outcast in this new community outside of his school. Thus, the first ACG event appears to be a meaningful discovery for this teenage boy at that time. Muna experienced the similar feeling five years later in another part of Malaysia as she said “because I heard about many events and stuffs in other countries when I heard about Sabah having its own event I felt a little bit ah-, excited and I felt pleasure of having [and] attending such an event”. According to the psychological development theory by Erickson (Cherry, n.d.), teenagers should develop their sense of self between 12 and 18 years of age. Answers of the questions: “who am I?”, “what do I know?” and “what do I want?” were crucial at this life stage for their forthcoming psychological development. Kang might leave his feeling of isolation if he only remained as one of outcasts in his school because the school was the main social community he lived at that time.

In the description of the first event, Lei claimed that she was not interested in cosplaying before seeing some cosplayers in her own eyes. Zain also started on cosplaying with a very simple costume at the first event. He recalled:

[W]hen HobbyCon [Name of the event] first started I thought well, I should jump in. But at that time the thought of cosplaying in open public was still very difficult for me. At first I didn't put much of a gear on because ... I was still very nervous. But that ... experience erm helped me gain some confidence. So by 2008, I was in full cosplay, full gear all the time. Of course from that point on, I kicked the ball rolling.

He was very much interested in putting on own costume just like his favourite military action figures before he heard about the ACG event held in his residence area. Before the first ACG event in Sabah, in fact, he did put on military gears at his school event. Even so, he expressed the first experience as a cosplayer at the public event as “it's very nerve cracking”. At the ACG event in 2007, he “was still very much shy and nervous person” as a cosplayer. However, seeing other cosplayers at the event site, he might affirm his interest in military cosplaying.

Since these four interviewees were getting information on anime, manga, or any other favourite items online they knew about the ACG events before. There were also online forums where Malaysian fans can discuss about ACG related topics and get new information before real ACG event emerged in both Kuala Lumpur and Sabah. These ACG events were a kind of small “off-line gathering” of ACG fans at the beginning. However, this emergent of a local event seems to be one of a turning point for these youngsters' life. The existence of the local event and their participation in the event had not only

generated excitement but also provided experiences along the way which they would not have in their school or university life.

#### 4.2. "Meeting People" is Core Part of ACG Events

The most of ACG events were organized with the purpose of sharing interests in ACG and having great time among fans. It was not expected to have similar claims from the four interviewees: "the core part of the experience in these events" is "the experience of meeting new people" (quoted from Zain's Interview 1). From descriptions of these interviewees, two main reasons for this claim were identified. The first reason is that they made many friends, and especially very close or life time friends through event activities. For instance, Lei met one cosplayer online during their cosplay preparation for the 2005 event. They had been cosplaying in the same group over the years and finally became best friends.

It started out as a group of cosplayers on Comic Fiesta forum. So we started with a topic like "are you interested in cosplaying Bleach [popular anime title]?" ok, so from there we did some research together. ... Most of them have never met each other before. But they made plans together [laugh]. So when they actually went to Comic Fiesta. Oh so you are who, so you are who. ... Then ... I think maybe in 2006, 2007, we were still not very close. We still met each other during events, we still talked to each other online, ... But it was only a few years later when, ... I think because we shared certain different interest besides anime and also manga. Like for example, she plays the piano and I play the piano too. ...

Her friendship became firm because she discovered other common interest with this particular friend besides ACG and cosplay over the years. Lei knew many people through the online forum of the event and she explained that "[s]o you know people by name but not by the real person. [Someone] said this is [Kiki], for example. I said, Oh, I have seen your name since ah...so that's how you actually developed relationships also". Of course there were many cases that their relationship did not develop further as Lei said "[s]ome we actually meet once and then we don't really talk to them". However, there were definitely chances to meet someone special and develop the relationship as a best friend or even as a partner for life or career.

Kang gave example of his friends who married someone met at the event and said "because we have the same interest and also have the same taste, and hobbies, [so] we actually get along much better. Then from there, we create ah-, long lasting friendship over time". Kang himself also has friends who met at the event in 2002 or 2003, and still kept in touch after one decade. The events provided occasions to meet new people who are potential to be a key person in life. In addition, an important part of making friends is not only doing activities at the events such as cosplay and game tournament, but also talking to these people after the activities was over or outside of the event. Kang who had participated in the game tournament aiming his win said:

[W]hen you win or lose you actually talk to them how do you use this character; who do you play the game [with]. Because when I play the game alone, I will be [just in the ways] I play the game. Other people play actually differently. I actually see ah-, from his point of view. We actually discuss.

Zain who is a cosplayer also described "I mean most of my experience making friends with other cosplayers who shared my kind of hobby is when we gear down. When the event is over..." He also added: "after we are done talking about hobby, that's when we start talking about our personal life; the other things that we liked. That's when you start making friends with them beyond just the common hobby that you shared". From their descriptions of the experiences in making friends, the ACG events seem to be the best possible occasions to meet a potential best friend. At the same time, these interviewees had experiences in meeting different kinds of people.

By meeting and talking to strangers, a valuable thing for each individual could be discovered. That is the second reason why the core part of events is "meeting people". For instance, Kang described what kind of anime fans he had met as follows:

He is working in the bank, he doesn't have much time watching anime but somehow he manages to have time to do so and there are some people I met who are really crazy, more crazy than me, and have different views of anime also, and there are some people who only watch few but he consider himself as anime fan also, so mix of people ... I met a lot of people...

When talking with strangers, Kang might reflect his own being as a hard core fan of anime. He also met people who brought their children to the ACG event. This reflected his view of himself in the future. When talking about his participation of the event in the future Kang said:

After seeing few families, [brought] own children, that might be possible ah. But of course you won't be joining whole day like last time, like from 10 to 7 o'clock, cannot lah, you have to attend to family matters at night also, maybe in future, I will still go but not fully attend.

If he had not seen any parents brought their children to the event sites he might not have idea to do so. Seemingly, some people have dilemma choosing between so called normal family life as a responsible adult and spending time for one's own hobbies. Zain also met the men in over 40s who married but still cosplayed at the event besides doing cosplay related work. Zain's following statement indicates his vision how he wants to be grown-up as a working adult: "so these two people are really inspired me ah... to ignore age, to always think about juggling the balance between your personal life and your hobby". Since all four interviewees had different hobbies from their parents, certain people they met in the events became a role model for their future. In fact, all of them did not get support from their parents about their event participation at the beginning. Kang and Lei convinced their parents over the years while participating in the events with their siblings. Zain and Muna ended up not explaining their parents because they assumed that their parents did not understand values of the event participation.

#### 4.3 Self-knowledge and Social Ability

Apparently, ACG events had provided the place or occasion for the four interviewees to explore themselves. The activities each of them engaged at the events were somewhat different because each had specific interests among ACG. Nevertheless, all of them pointed out that they met and talked to different kind of people and that was core part of participating in the ACG events. Kang was a self-claimed hard core anime fan but he explored degrees of "hard-core" and "non-hard-core" while taking a part in the game tournament, helping out organizing event, and selling anime merchandise during the event. Lei was one of cosplayers begun her cosplay activities at the time when there were not much ways to purchase cosplay costumes in Malaysia. From her years of experiences in cosplay, she explained that "when you really really like a [anime] character and when you see people don't cosplay in the way that you think it [should be], you feel a bit sad". There were cosplayers who were just interested in wearing a certain costume and would not bother to make a particular anime character look as similar as the original one in terms of head to toe appearance, personality, and behaviour. Lei would not criticize these new cosplayers but she explained about cosplayers who shared the same view with her as follows:

[B]ecause you started off as fans, you started off as so-called *otaku* [hard-core fan] so that means they really really like these things. So when they see people just erm not cosplaying properly, they have the tendency to avoid that person...

Lei explained as of other people's matter using the pronouns 'you' and 'they' in this description. However, she answered the question: "will you identify yourself as otaku?" as "if it was maybe five years ago, I would say 'yes' [laugh]." Then she restated "Oh, no, because now I don't have much time for it. But I still do cosplay and I still do watch anime, read a bit of comics so erm I would say maybe 'yes' [laugh]". Definition of the word 'otaku' as well as 'hard-core fan' is not essential (Yamato, 2013). Kang and Lei, though, knew what were their positions and meanings of their status as fans of ACG in relation to other people they met during the events.

When four interviewees went to the ACG event for their first time, they were excited because they found many ACG fans in Malaysia who were similar to them. When youngsters found that they were not in the majority, the youngsters might develop self-knowledge based on their differences comparing to the

majority around them. If the marginalized youngsters found another place or group they could be a part of different majority, their self-knowledge would be grown based on the both differences and similarities encountered in the both groups.

According to Hughes and Youngson (2009), “realm of personal development” includes ‘self’, ‘self in relation to others’, ‘self in community’, and ‘self in role at work’. A person would not accomplish developing ‘self’ within an individual mind and behaviour. Having environment where a person is able to have relations to other people is crucial to gain self-knowledge. When people were isolated they would not find about themselves other than the surfaced differences such as fans versus non-fans. When youngsters attend any ACG events, they may confirm or reconfirm own identity as a fan of anime, manga, or/and game. The youngsters, of course, know that they are not the same as non-fans who are not interested in things they love. Yet, the following questions could not easily answer without having other ACG fans around them: “what kind of a fan am I?”, “why do I love with certain products?”, and “what do I want to do with these products exactly?”

The interviewees did not change their favourite consumption activities of ACG products because of the event participation. After their first event participation, they expanded their consumption to new related activities such as cosplaying and organizing the ACG event itself. In other words, their ACG event participation did not cause them to be a hard-core fan of ACG products. Their ACG engagement was ordinary daily activities for them before participating in the local events. They did not know what type of fans they were until mingling with all kinds of fans face-to-face but they were ACG fans before participating in the events.

Lenn er-Axelsson and Thylefors (as cited in Bernelo et al., 2011, p.3) argued:

In the interpersonal dialogue, e.g. in the open and intimate conversation between people who know each other well, a comprehensive self-knowledge takes place. In this way you learn how you are perceived by others, both your strength and your weaknesses, and you can use this feedback to change yourself if you want to.

When youngsters have different interests or hobbies which are not the same as their schoolmates or family members, a possible place for the intimate interpersonal dialogues for their personal development is a fan gathering. As four interviewees met and talked to many people, and made friends who could hang out outside of the ACG events, the event participation would not only be considered as a just part of their entertainment activities which often tend to be binary opposition to ‘good life activities’ such as ‘study’. In fact, Kang and Lei had already grown up as independent working adults at the time of the interviews. Zain graduated from the local university, and was looking for stable job while doing part-time work and exploring business chances which related to what he adored as his hobbies. Muna also seemed not neglect her study while doing part-time work and planning for her next cosplay project.

Lastly, possible development of ‘social ability’ among the ACG event participants should be highlighted even only one interviewee claimed it among four. The following is Zain’s statement during the second interview:

I mean I’m not... not exactly a very sociable person before this but erm because of cosplaying and all... sorts of erm different people and hobbies that I picked up along the way. I felt that ya, erm the things I could not before, which is ‘socialise’. I can do it now.

He brought up the word ‘interpersonal skill’ while talking about the benefit of the ACG event during the first interview. The interpersonal skill he claimed to be developed does not mean only for ability to talk to others. It is ability to adjust himself depending on situations and people he faces to. Zain also said:

I treat anything that I do as a separate identity. ... I... wouldn’t like it if these identities start to clash or mismatch with erm each other. (With other people?) ya, unless that other people is ...familiar with me in ...In all sorts of my personal settings.

I could be a writer at one moment, and then a cosplayer at another moment and then just some guy on the Internet at another moment. (Erm...) For me, these identities are often kept er separate. Per... Perhaps because when I assume these different roles and identities, I would meet different kinds of people who

would of course react differently.I... I'm not very keen on suddenly dragging on something might be alien to them...

Zain used the word "separate identity" but this would not be about his identity crisis. He knew about himself well in different situations, but all his faces are his own face. He knew he is comfortable with integrated faces as he said "unless that other people is ... familiar with me in ...In all sorts of my personal settings". He would learn through participating the events that adults need to be able to adapt own behaviour in different situation for socializingwith different people, and corporate with others. Muna who had less experience in participating the ACG events seems be potential to develop her social ability. She described her personality as "I'm actually a quiet type" while she was saying "I talk a lot with those I'm close". The ACG events are occasionshe can share something she adored for. She came out from her room where she watches anime, plays games and does graphic designs, as well as her hometown where not many people know about cosplay.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

ACG related activities including cosplay are ICT (information communication technology) and consumerism driven hobbies. Many Malaysians use the Internet to obtain some anime, manga and games. At the same time, those who are more interested in these products need some budget to purchase them. Excess expense caused by entertainmentactivities is problem.However, once youngsters are interested in viewing anime, reading manga and playing game, the ACG events could be a good place to explore about themselves rather than being in their room. The ACG events are potential to be a place for personal development among ACG fans as in the descriptions highlighted in this paper.As of the dimensions of the personal development: self-knowledge and social ability are always associated each other, 'self' can be explored by interacting with others and those discovered more about 'self' could learnmore how to interact with different peoples. Probably in Malaysia, fewer parents know about the ACG events and entire ACG culture their children might adore for. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to all Malaysian youngsters, yet, it would be contributed to illustrate the ways Malaysian youngsters could engage in personal development while not giving up what they love to do as their hobbies. Since Malaysiaisaiming to be a developed countrynear future, personal development, development of human capital is crucial.This study aims to discover the potentiality of the ACG event for personaldevelopmentof youth further as an alternative to formalopportunities such as at schools and work places.

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# CHALLENGES IN A NEW ORGANIZATION OF YOUNG EMPLOYEES: ISSUES AND INTERVENTIONS

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## Abstract

Organization development is a systematic process to enhance organizational effectiveness through interventions involving technology, individuals and teams in the organization. It involves the design and improvement processes to help individuals, teams and organization function competently and effectively. Schein (1965) suggested two primary elements that must be given full attention by any organization development experts in order to develop successful interventions. First is the adaptability ability of the organization to cope with frequently dynamic changes and second is solid internal integration which allows the organizational components, including the employees, to adapt to changes in the external environment. The paper shall discuss the second element by referring to a case study involving a new organization of young employees. Data were collected via four focus group discussions. The first focus group discussion involved young employees of the organizations. Meanwhile the participants of the fourth focus group discussion were inclusive of the organizational management. Data was then analysed using the constant comparative method. Identified issues and challenges encountered by the new organization in terms of internal integration were (1) ensuring young employees' understanding of the organizational vision and mission, (2) consolidating the coordination and collaboration among the departments within the organization and (3) cultivating knowledge sharing and learning organization culture among the young employees. Several interventions were recommended based on the findings of the study.

**Keywords:** *young employees; Gen-Y, learning organization culture; focus group discussion*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

‘Organization development is a long-term planned change effort, involves a consultant, is a system-wide effort and utilizes a repeated process of data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention and evaluation, which is firmly rooted in behavioural science theory and technology’ (Beer, 1980).

As a matter of fact, since over three decades ago, organizational development has been acknowledged as a response to change. It is a strategy to systematically identify organizational behaviour problems with the intention to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours and structures of organizations through interventions so that organizations could adapt to new technology, markets and challenges (Bennis, 1969; Huszco&Sheahan, 1999). Most of the time, organizational management seek for consultants for this purpose because consultants are the third-party, objective people (Walton, 1987; Lewicki& Shepard, 1985) who advocate neutral interventions and strategies by resolving conflicts between parties. Prior to intervention suggestions, the consultants usually gather valid information to

allow clients' reflection on themselves and every components of the organization, identify options to deal with clients' issues by pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of each options and also help the client to commit and support the implementation of chosen interventions.

In this article we shall clarify the organizational development approach adopted by the consultants for a new organization to assist the top management to achieve the organization's vision and mission. We shall first begin by explaining important steps in organization development approach which was taken by the consultants. This section shall also elaborate on the organization development model which has been utilized to guide the consultants in their approach. Then, the next section of this article shall focus in explaining the identified challenges faced by the new organization. Last but not the least, the article shall produce several recommended interventions to encounter the identified challenges for the new organization.

Schein (1965) suggested two primary elements that must be given full attention by any organization development experts in order to develop successful interventions. First is the adaptability ability of the organization to cope with frequently dynamic changes and second is solid internal integration which allows the organization to adapt to changes in the external environment.

## **2. INTERNAL INTEGRATION**

Researchers found that in industrial organization, internal administrative coordination within large organizations is more efficient than coordination through market mechanisms. It permits greater productivity, lower costs and higher profits (Chandler, 1962, 1977, 1993). Nevertheless, sustaining internal integration could be challenging, especially in larger scale, because it involved the management of centralization v.s decentralization, interdependence v.s diversity, and integration v.s flexibility/innovation needs.

## **3. LEARNING ORGANIZATION CULTURE**

*Young, Gen-Y Employees*

Generation Y or Gen-Y is generally defined as those who were born roughly in between 1965-1976. In Malaysia, the total number of this particular generation is about 3855.4 million

Research by Martin (2005) showed that talented, Gen-Y employees were independent, entrepreneurial in thinking, demand immediate feedback and expect a sense of accomplishment hourly. They love challenges, freedom and flexibility, creative, and do not like micromanagement. According to Martin, if they were guided by organizational management which are willing to confront them with challenges and meet their expectations, Gen-Y employees would definitely be excellent performers.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

The data for this particular study was collected via focus group discussions (FGDs). According to Morgan (1998), FGD is 'a way of listening to people and learning from them'. FGDs have become popular because it produced quick results in a collective nature. It is suitable for participants who could not articulate their thoughts easily (Kroll et al., 2007; Wilkinson, 2004).

Four focus group discussions were conducted for this study. Three of the focus group discussions comprised of junior and senior executives from various departments within the organization. All of them were Gen-Y employees. The fourth group consisted of the organization's top managements. The

number of participants for each focus group discussions ranged from 10-12 people. Like in most social science researches, the FGDs were conducted in a less rigid approach with the researcher as the moderator. The aim of the researcher was to gain and understand a wealth of detailed information on issues and challenges which have emerged in a new organization, which was largely constituted by young, Gen-Y employees.

The average length of the FGDs was 1.5 hours. They were structured around a set of predetermined questions, also known as interview guide. Three types of predetermined questions asked during the FGDs were (1) engagement questions (eg: Do all of you share the same feelings about the issues around your organization?), (2) exploratory questions (eg: How do you feel about interdepartmental coordination in your organization?) and (3) exit questions (eg: Is there anything else that you would like to add before we end this session?). It was observed that throughout the FGDs, the participants were thinking and sharing their feelings and thoughts about the issues and challenges which emerged since they served the organization for about 1.5 years.

All FGDs were recorded using a digital recorder and later on transcribed into verbatim transcripts. Permission was sought from the participants prior to the FGDs. The use of digital recorder facilitated data management and transcription from the verbatim transcripts. Cross-case analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection. Data analysis was conducted using the constant comparative method. It included the following four stages: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). We initially read the verbatim transcripts several times, identified the incidents, and made simultaneous comparison of the incidents. The compared incidents were then recorded, classified and compared across categories. We continuously conducted constant comparison on the data and focused on discovery of new patterns through coding them into meaningful categories and themes. The categories and themes were labelled.

Also, in the process of categorization as proposed by Dey (1993), researcher read the verbatim transcripts several times to familiarize with the data, build, changed or sometimes even discarded categories, and avoided category overlaps by constantly referring to the research questions, literature review and related theories. The whole process of constant comparative analysis thus involved refinement, categorization and recategorization. This process saved the researcher from jumping into premature conclusions and manage voluminous data more systematically (Merriam, 1998).

The validity and trustworthiness of the findings were ensured through investigator triangulation. Researcher collected the data, analysed it independently and compared the findings (Patton, 2002). Another strategy used was an audit trail, where the steps were recorded throughout during the study, including how data was collected, how categories were built, and how decisions were made regarding certain questions, reflections, ideas and issues.

## **5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Analysed data using the constant comparative method has led to identified issues and challenges encountered by the new organization of young employees. All of the findings were related to internal integration. They were (1) ensuring young employees' understanding of their organizational vision and mission, (2) consolidating the coordination and collaboration among departments within the organization and (3) cultivating knowledge sharing and learning organization culture among young employees.

### *5.1 Ensuring young employees' understanding of the organizational vision and mission*

Results showed that most of the new employees were not clear of their organizational vision and mission. Although statements of the vision and mission are made physically visible to the young employees, most of them were still not clear of it. In other words, the effort to make the Gen-Y employees understand the direction of their organization required more than just such effort. Besides having high expectations on themselves, the young, Gen-Y employees also had high expectations on their management. They were seeking for more involvement from the management in explaining the direction of the organization.

‘What is the vision and mission..I am not sure. The statements were in many places and we read them. But we do not understand or feel engaged..’.

As a matter of fact, some of them even expressed that the vision and mission non-clarity was because the top management themselves were not clear of the vision and mission. No clear briefings of the overall organizational goals were ever made to the employees. And because of that, some of them felt that the roles and functions of their departments were not relevant to the organizational vision and mission:

‘The mission of the organization is basically to create jobs. Hence, the entrepreneurial development department is very much relevant. However, I still could not see and understand the purpose of existence for some of the departments here. They do not appear to be congruent with the goals of our organization. As a matter of fact, the role and function of a department here seemed to discourage entrepreneurial development as its activities were more of ‘feeding clients with fishes, rather than teaching them how to fish’. The function of the department does not seem to provide any impactful development for the clients.’

### *5.2 Consolidating the coordination and collaboration among departments within the organization*

Most of the FGD participants vocalized that there was no systematic coordination and collaboration among departments within their organization. Most of them were dissatisfied with the running and operations in the workplace. They described the coordination among the departments as being simply ineffective and inefficient. The operations were unclear and non-systematic:

‘The business does not seem to be focused at all. They spelled out the key performance indicator for us, but in terms of our specific functions and operations, they were not at all clear..’.

‘I felt that there is weak communication among the departments. Even the documentations and filing are non-systematic. It is difficult for us to process the payments when such things occurred..’.

‘No standard procedures for us to follow. At times, we were not alerted on new changes in procedures. There were loops here and there. So, most of the time the job specifications and locus of authority is not clear. I am new and the procedures are also new. There are so many unclear matters. We need mentors..’.

### *5.3 Cultivating knowledge sharing and learning organization culture among young employees*

They reported the yet to developed knowledge sharing and learning organization culture in the organization, when many of the employees fail to attain updated, important information regarding their work or work place. This was demonstrated in the unsuccessful strategy of the management to disseminate the vision and mission of the organization to the employees.

According to most participants, many of the employees from the headquarters had attended an organized workshop to enhance their job-related knowledge, skills and competencies. The direction of the organization was also shared during the workshop. Those who participated were of supervisory levels who represented their subordinates. Nevertheless, most FGD participants agreed that post-workshop knowledge sharing did not occur afterwards:

‘Only those from the headquarters were invited to the workshop...not from the branches. They were supposed to represent us. They should come back and share with us the knowledge which they have gained from the workshop. But, that did not happen. They did not share with us. They kept the information to themselves. We were still not clear of the organizational direction. They only paste or hang the vision and mission statements of our organization on the walls’.

# ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING YOUTH WORK PROFESSIONALS IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

The focus on youth development, the launching of the 6 Youth Development Initiatives which transpire from the National Youth Laboratory and the 1M4U project, provided an impact on the Malaysian youth. The country's current focus is about empowering youth and unleashing their potentials. The biggest challenge at present is to ensure that they are surrounded by the able youth work professionals who have the capacity and capability to support these efforts and ultimately transform this vision into a reality. This paper will review and address a number of significant points namely, (i) challenges and strategies to develop and retain talents into the youth work sector, (ii) efforts in changing the youth work professionals' mindset, (iii) indexing relevant knowledge and skills of youth work professionals, (iv) strategizing how both the youth work experts, higher education and research institutions and HRD professionals can collaborate as partners in the human resource development of youth work professionals, and (v) projecting future of and challenges to the HRD in youth work in Malaysia. It is believed that addressing these significant points will help us to engage and empower youth work professionals to ultimately engage and empower Malaysian youths as partners in nation building.

**Keywords:** *Youth Development, Human Resource Development, Youth Empowerment, Human Capital*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The focus on youth development, the launching of the 6 Youth Development Initiatives which transpire from the National Youth Laboratory and the 1M4U project, provided an impact on the Malaysian youth. The country's current focus is about empowering youth and unleashing their potentials. The biggest challenge at present is to ensure that they are surrounded by the able youth work professionals who have the capacity and capability to support these efforts and ultimately transform this vision into a reality (Gormally and Coburn, 2013).

This '1 Belia 1 Malaysia' aspirations can only be achieved through the support of able human resource. The community of practice in youth work is metaphorically the heart of youth work in this nation.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

This paper will review and address a number of significant points namely, (i) challenges and strategies to develop and retain talents into the youth work sector, (ii) efforts in changing the youth work professionals' mindset, (iii) indexing relevant knowledge and skills of youth work professionals, (iv) strategizing how both the youth work experts, higher education and research institutions and HRD professionals can collaborate as partners in the human resource development of youth work professionals, and (v) projecting future of and challenges to the HRD in youth work in Malaysia. To elaborate on these significant points, we conducted interviews and focus group discussions with the

youth work researchers and practitioners from both public and private organisations, carried out site observation, and analysed document and related literature on youth development.

The role of youth work professionals in facilitating and inspiring Malaysian youth to be ‘world ready’ is undeniably important in sustaining them as partners in nation building. They are the change agents that sustain the synergistic working relationship among youth, government, private organizations, NGOs and the community at large. In this study, we use Lave and Wenger’s (1991) work on communities of practice to explore how we can engage and empower youth work professionals. We view youth work professionals’ career as a process of lifelong ‘self-designed apprenticeship’ (Arthur et al., 1999). We suggest that a successful career in youth work depends on more than one’s professional qualification and technical competence. Empowered youth work professionals are individuals that have the ability to understand and to address issues like power relations, ideology and culture within various communities of practice in youth development (Curry et al, 2013; Gormally and Coburn, 2013).

At present, the youth work professionals in Malaysia are mostly educated and trained via the following sources of knowledge and information:

- a. The formal tertiary education and training as offered in higher learning institutions and training institutes
- b. The non-formal extension education through knowledge transfer programmes to youth work professionals
- c. The in service education and training for youth officers and NGO partners by both public and private training providers
- d. The mass media and other forms of distance learning programme offered by electronic and printed media to complement the face to face delivery education and training program

### **3. CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP AND RETAIN TALENTS IN THE YOUTH WORK SECTOR**

However, in an effort to engage and empower youth work professionals so as to enhance their talent to empower Malaysian youth, we are faced with some challenges due to the:

1. low work esteem image of youth work

To a certain extent, there is still a sceptical view that the profession is not that professional as compared to other professions like in the medical and legal sectors. This low work esteem image of youth work needs some image building and re-branding exercises, especially in Malaysia. Especially for the youth work segment which requires a strong desire for volunteering work, despite the effort made through 1M4U and other volunteering initiatives, it is still not that attractive enough to most local, graduates and non-graduates.

2. unclear career pathway of the youth work professionals

Another critical problem that needs to be addressed in engaging and empowering youth work professionals is on aspect affecting the career pathway of youth workers and professionals.



The basic level of education and training among officers and professionals also contributed to unattractiveness nature of the profession to some local graduates and non-graduates. Injecting some sort of proper career development pathways, systematic continuing professional development activities and better incentives might provide a more secured and clear career advancement of youth work professionals(Gormally and Coburn, 2013).

3. hesitant effort to move from bureaucratic (hierarchical and regimented work relations) to knowledge-intensive work sector (empowered or network oriented work relations) (Fleming &Soborg, 2002) and minimum investment on upgrading and training (continuing professional development) of youth work professionals, partly due to the big number of unskilled and semi-skilled youth workers who mostly are on short term contract and then move on to other sector.

To strategize ways to engage and empower youth work professionals in Malaysia, we connect ourselves with a number of authors who view career advancement as a learning process. This learning process is engaged through a form of participation and interaction within specific socio-cultural settings (Vygotsky, 1962; Bruner, 1991; Engestrom, 1987; Suchman, 1987; Lave, 1988; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Chaiklin and Lave, 1993; Wertsch et al., 1995; Wenger, 1998; Engestrom, 2001). We make use of the communities of practice model (COPs) (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) as a conceptual framework to scrutinise the challenges and provide strategies in engaging and empowering the youth work professionals. A Community of Practice indicates a group of personnel encompassing policy makers, subject matter experts, researchers, scholars, and practitioners in youth development that jointly connects working, learning and sharing information among each other. In supporting Rivera and Alex's (2008) and Gormally and Coburn's (2013) suggestion to link educational institution-advisory services-mass media-in service education and training, we integrate all the stakeholders and human capital in youth development together to complement each other in the form of a supportive Youth Work Communities of Practice.

The strategies to engage and empower the youth work professionals include:

1. makingyouth work sector more 'youthful' and less bureaucratic (i.e investing on technology and champion active and 'lateral' partnership among stakeholders).

Youth loves urgency and technology. In making the youth work sector more attractive to local graduates and non-graduates, efforts should be made to transform the sector into making it to become a more 'youthful', 'knowledge based' and a less bureaucratic work profession. Initiatives by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to intensively embark on working with NGO and private sector colleagues indicate how Malaysia is serious in leveraging youth work profession. However, it should be noted that these initiatives can be further escalated by reducing some bureaucratic 'red tapes' and change the mind-set of youth work professionals to really internalize and demonstrate a 'youth relevant' work practice to take it to the next level.

'Investing in technical and professional education has a high multiplier effect when trained personnel are properly employed as change agents, trainers, researchers, programme managers, and policy makers'

(Alexandratos, 1995: 8)

2. moving towards a more high technology mechanisation in the overall youth work process

In an effort to modernise the youth work sector, high technology mechanisation reduces our reliance on the traditional intensive labour work practice and transform it into a labour-efficient and technology based industry. Thus, to cultivate a high tech savvy work profession, HRD in youth work should also consider educating and training youth work professionals towards supporting this transformation. The success of the high tech savvy youth work sector relies on systematic and well-coordinated HRD in youth work.

3. focusing on recruiting university graduates through proper apprenticeship incentive and retraining of youth work officers

HRD in youth work should also start from early. Proper apprenticeship incentives enable university graduates to start their career in youth work from their early years and eventually climb up the ladder. In addition, the HRD in youth work should also capitalise on retraining the experienced youth work officers and redeploy based on their previous working experiences and qualifications to join various professions within the youth work sector.

4. providing opportunities for upgrading and training (continuing professional development and lifelong learning)

Through collaboration with related ministries, community colleges and higher education institutions, more initiatives like the skill-based certificate and diploma programmes i.e the Commonwealth Diploma In Youth Development Work at Universiti Putra Malaysia and several other private institutions and higher education institutions like Universiti Malaysia Sabah, via a route to a bachelor and postgraduate qualifications, will provide a rewarding career path for the human resource in the youth work sector.

With its significant focus connecting participation within work practice as part of human resource development initiatives, we believe that the HRD in the youth sector will engage and empower youth workers to grow throughout different stages in their careers.

### *3.1 How a Community of Practice can engage and empower Youth Work Professionals?*

As a Community of Practice (COP), the youth work sector communities are ‘formed among people whose interaction affects “mutual engagement”, “a negotiated enterprise”, and “a repertoire of negotiable resources” accumulated over time’ (Wenger, 1998, p. 126). These three dimensions of a COP establish to what extent an individual youth work professional is ‘a competent participant, an outsider or somewhere in between’ (Wenger, 1998, p. 137). Rivera and Alex’s (2008) and Gormally and Coburn (2013) suggest the importance of linking educational institution-advisory services-mass media-in service education and training, and our idea of integrating youth work stakeholders at the university, ministry, industry and community to complement one another (Ismi et al, 2011). In a more detailed explanation, the three dimensions are:

- “Mutuality of engagement”, which denotes the ability to engage with other members and respond in kind to their actions, and thus the ability to establish relationships in which this mutuality is the basis for an identity of participation.
- “Accountability to the enterprise”, which means the ability to understand the

enterprise of a community of practice deeply enough to take some responsibility for it and contribute to its pursuit and to its ongoing negotiation by the community.

- “Negotiability of the repertoire”, that is the ability to make use of the repertoire of the practice to engage in it. This requires enough participation (personal or vicarious) in the history of a practice to recognise it in the elements of its repertoire. Then it requires the capability and the legitimacy to make this history newly meaningful. (Wenger, 1998, p. 137)

Within these three dimensions, a COP indicates a practice that jointly connects working, learning and sharing information. Studies on talent development, career and organisational socialisation have developed the similar concepts of occupational community and career community (Bell and Staw, 1989; Gherardi and Nicolini, 2002; Parker et al., 2004). Both occupational and career communities provide the environment and resources for professional socialisation of members and the sustainability of their cultures and practices. Developing countries, in particular, Malaysia has to ensure that the HRD personnel in youth work sector consistently update themselves with the latest technology, skills and knowledge so as to support the youth to remain relevant, up to date and resilient to changes affecting them.

In a COP, learning becomes an important activity which sustains the primary practice. Learning is a form of social engagement (Ball, 2003). ‘Such participation shapes not only what we do but also who we are and how we interpret what we do’ (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). The engagement provides the avenue for members to share their experiences, reflect and eventually strengthen or modify any rules and norms of participating formed throughout their relationships. ‘It is the combination of membership and the mutual engagement in shared activity that is essential in learning’ (Wenger, 1998, pp. 138-139). Learning is ‘a way of being in the social world, not a way of coming to know about it’ (Hanks, 1991, p. 24). Education and training in universities and other higher learning institutions should be closely linked with the programmes and the in-service training delivered to youth work practitioners. At this point, the massive use of electronic and printed media and any form of distance education opportunity connect the potential and existing human resources in youth work together and bridge the gap between theory and practice.

These linkages enable participation within COPs to become an avenue where both the new and the experienced members learn from each other and simultaneously develop their understanding of the profession.

Communities of practice have histories and developmental cycles...knowing is inherent in the growth and transformation of identities and it is located in relations among practitioners, their practice, the artefacts of that practice, and the social organisation and political economy of communities of practice. (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 122)

Becoming a full participant involves learning to understand how to participate and to negotiate one’s identity. Fairly similar to Bourdieu’s idea of ‘field and the game’ (Bourdieu, 1988; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that participation in a practice requires an individual to engage and play a professional language game through mastering the rules and gradually being able to use them appropriately. In the context of this chapter, this professional language game is circled within the HRD in youth work.

Absorbing and being absorbed in the ‘culture of practice’...might include [knowing] who is involved, what they do, what everyday life is like, how masters talk, walk, work, and generally conduct their lives, how people who are not part of the community of practice

interact with it, what other learners are doing, and what learners need to learn to become full practitioners. It includes an increasing understanding of how, when, and about what old-timers collaborate, collude, and collide, and what they enjoy, dislike, respect, and admire. In particular it offers exemplars (which are grounds and motivation for learning activity), including masters, finished products, and more advanced apprentices in the process of becoming full practitioners. (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 95)

The language and action continuously shape the practice or the professional game. Within a COP, language is not only a medium of knowledge transmission but also conceived as the medium of culture (Vygotsky, 1978; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1992). As such, language and action facilitate learning, 'interaction [and identity negotiation] among individuals in a specific occupational and organisational culture' (Gherardi and Nicolini, 2002, p. 196).

### *3.2 Why and how should we develop supportive Youth Work Communities of Practice?*

COPs, as used in this study, refers not only to workers, professionals and practitioners, but also to others surrounding whole youth workforce network, the research, extension and implementation collaboration in which 'mutual engagement, accountability to the enterprise and negotiability of the repertoire' (Wenger, 1998, pp. 152-153) centre on knowledge creation, knowledge dissemination and knowledge utilization (Raja Ahmad Tajuddin Shah, 1992). These others include researchers, consultants, youth officers and other practitioners who normally collaborate with youth in their work practices. The boundary of practice cuts across national and international divides. As such, it is important to note that the use of the term 'community' does not usually 'imply harmony or collaboration' (Wenger, 1998, p. 85). The possibilities for disagreements and conflict among its members are ever present within COPs (Ismi et al, 2011).

In general, human resources in youth as well as other sectors, belong to various COPs throughout their careers. According to Billett (2001) and Boud and Middleton (2003), different COPs provide different opportunities for learning. Mutual engagement in these COPs implies that individuals constantly contribute and gain various social supports from others within their social networks. As community members, individuals generate their identities through continuous engagement with the orientation shared within their various COPs. In professional socialisation, the members of the youth work network learn to master the strategies, normally in the form of embedded or tacit knowledge and skills, through their exposure to the 'hidden curriculum' (Delamont et al., 2000), or 'the rules and the trade of a given practice' (Gherardi and Nicolini, 2002). The exposure to new situations and experiences transforms individuals' attitudes and identity towards the practice of their communities (Ismi et al, 2011). This contributes to the overall landscape of HRD in the youth work sector. Close collaboration in research and development, as well as training and development among educational institution-advisory services-mass media-in service education and training among the stakeholders will establish a strong and supportive youth work communities of practice (Gormally and Coburn, 2013).

## **4. INDEXING RELEVANT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF YOUTH WORK PROFESSIONALS**

Providing a rich and resourceful context to oneself is the key to members' career success. An individual should continuously update knowledge of his or her work practice, and awareness of how the market works within the national and international youth framework. Being aware of the current needs and expectations of their practice, institutions and nation enabled the youth work professionals to manage how they can participate and contribute within the whole system.

Human Resource Development must meet the demands of the current knowledge imperative, and fulfil the task of making knowledge work productively

(Rivera and Alex, 2008: 385)

The following are some relevant knowledge and skills of the workers which need to be acquired based on our data collection carried out with youth work stakeholders. They include knowledge and skills in:

- efficient youth work practice
- resource management
- the use of new technological processes
- the ability to communicate effectively

Formal developmental activities such as technology transfer training programmes and informal developmental activities such as mentoring, networking and most importantly, visiting, enabled the members of the youth work profession to share their experiences with their colleagues. The sharing of experiences will provide the members with the formal, informal and tacit knowledge on how they can develop their careers in youth work.

In practice, engaging and empowering youth work professionals is more likely to be effective when it is continuous, reflective and focused upon the needs of each stakeholder. The implementation of HRD in youth work should consider the varied interests and instrumentation across different partners. A collaborative HRD initiatives involving public and private sectors, higher learning institutions, as well as the community and industry which encompasses both formal and informal developmental activities, might provide the potential and present human resource with knowledge that is highly context-dependent, and at the same time allow them to reflect and to gain new perspectives through working with others in the youth work sector.

## **5. STRATEGIZING HOW YOUTH WORK EXPERTS, HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND YOUTH WORK PROFESSIONALS CAN COLLABORATE AS PARTNERS IN ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING YOUTH WORK PROFESSIONALS**

We provide the following recommendations that may facilitate the process of engaging and empowering members of the youth work profession.

- Individual members should develop a broad understanding of the youth work system and how they could relate to this system.
- Individual member, with the help of other members of the Youth Work Communities of Practice, should learn to negotiate access into various COPs via activities such as mentoring, networking, and visiting throughout their careers.
- Individual youth officers, practitioners, policy makers, decision makers and higher education institutions could jointly form a rich context for making explicit the informal and tacit processes in youth work through activities such as training and development activities, accredited qualification, complemented by other activities such as apprenticeship and mentoring programme, and flexible networking.
- Officer, youth work experts, researchers, lecturers and NGO members' professional attachment and mobility between the ministry, industry and the higher education institutions could enhance the sharing of information, documentation of empirical findings and development of a database that can facilitate the mastery of good youth work practices that relates to ways of knowing namely; knowing why, knowing how and knowing whom in diverse contexts.
- Individual industry player, special interest groups and institutions could provide more opportunities for an integrated continuous mutual learning among members at all levels so as to increase their understanding and ability to ensure that collegiality in youth work profession works successfully.

- Government and private sectors can champion the high technology initiatives in youth work sector as another way of rejuvenating its work esteem image among youth, graduates, youth officers and other NGO activist members.

A better human resource development initiative in youth work sector in Malaysia can be materialized through a dynamic and systematic education and training, research and extension collaboration, globally and locally.

## **6. CONCLUSION:PROJECTING FUTURE OF AND CHALLENGES TO THE HRD IN YOUTH WORK IN MALAYSIA**

The role of human resource development initiatives in engaging and empowering youth work professionals of the future is undeniably important in sustaining the sector globally in years to come. The future of and challenges to the HRD in youth work in Malaysia will see:

1. a change in the work esteem image of the sector
2. a clear protection of the economic and social interest of youth workers and professionals
3. a massive move from bureaucratic (hierarchical and regimented work relations) to knowledge-intensive work sector (empowered or network oriented work relations) (Fleming &Soborg, 2002)
4. a massive investment on upgrading and training (continuing professional development) and better physical and social amenities in the youth work sector
5. a youth work sector that is more labour-efficient, relying on high tech mechanisation, complemented by the information and communication technology initiatives
6. a sector with a flatter organisation model that provides ownership and passion to its human resource and client

In order to become a country that views youth as partners in nation building, Malaysia should consider the need for developing the youth's and youth work professionals' capacity and capability to support this effort and ultimately transform this vision into a reality. This paper has reviewed and addressed a number of significant points in helping us to engage and empower youth work professionals to ultimately engage and empower Malaysian youths as partners in nation building.

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# INVOLVEMENT OF RURAL MALAY YOUTH IN MALAYSIAN HERBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

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## Abstract

Rural entrepreneurship is recognized as a primary engine of economic growth. The government of Malaysia is trying to increase the number of successful rural Malay herbal entrepreneurs nationwide. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the involvement among rural Malay youth in herbal entrepreneurship in Malaysia. A qualitative approach using case study in-depth interview was used to gather data from ten rural herbal entrepreneurs. This study showed that in general Malay entrepreneurs are increasing gradually but technical based entrepreneurship is very low. It is suggested that the authorities of rural herbal development planners, government-link companies and other authorized agents need to focus on issues related to human capital, technical knowledge know-how and financial resources to increase the involvement of rural Malay youth herbal entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** *Rural entrepreneurship, small medium enterprise (SME), qualitative research methodology, case study, herbal industry.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Rural development on the basis of entrepreneurship aims to achieve the optimum use of local resources, while maintaining strong local and external ties among social capital (Gulumser et al., 2008). Now-a-days entrepreneurship is the main tool to create a new equilibrium whereby sustainable development will be obtained. Today, policy circles entrepreneurship is also seen as an engine for sustainable rural development.

Rural development policy makers research institutes and individuals seem to agree on the immediate need to develop rural entrepreneurship - NGO research unit, government rural development agent and other government link companies see rural entrepreneurship as a key potential element for job sectors, politicians see it as a key strategy to prevent rural unrest ,different types of farmers see it as an instrument for improving farm earning and development, rural poor women see it as an employment opportunity independence and a decreased for social support. Based on these, entrepreneurship acts as a vehicle to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities to sustain a healthy economy and environment (T. Petrin, 1994). According to Ahmed et al., (2012) rural entrepreneurship is an important component that contributes the country economy development. On the other hand, other authors also agreed, developing countries economy development is impossible without rural entrepreneurship development (Carree&Thurik, 2003). Therefore, the government of Malaysia is increasing the rural entrepreneurship development budget every year and giving them full support based on entrepreneurs need to become a successful entrepreneurs. Most of the rural development researchers believed, entrepreneurship is the key potential element for countries economy growth in developing countries, for example, China, Taiwan, Koren, India, Japan (Van Praag, and Vevsloot,

2007; Paul et al, 2013; McMullen, Bagby and Palich, 2008; Audretch 2007; Shu, 2001; Robinson et al, 2004; Norhaiyari et al., 2011).

Scapper (2006) mentioned 90% of developing countries are fully dependent on their economy growth through entrepreneurship. In Malaysian entrepreneurship is growing smoothly every year but Malay entrepreneurship successful level is too low compared to other ethnic group in Malaysia (Hamidon, 2009). Malaysian herbal entrepreneurship has become another economic engine growth and has the potentiality to become a significant element in the Malaysian agriculture industry (Murray, 2011). Day by day herbal products demands are increasing tremendously as in table 1.

Table 1: Comparison between global herbal market value and Malaysian herbal market value

<b>Global herbal market value</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>RM (billion)</b>	
2000	183 “	Annual growth 7%
2003	488 “	
2006	504 “	
2008	610 “	
<b>Malaysian herbal market value</b>		
1999	4.55	Annual growth 15 to 20%

*Source: World bank, Ministry of agribusiness, Malaysia, 2007*

From the table 1, it shows that Malaysian herbal market value yearly average annual growth is 15 to 20% which is higher than global herbal market value (7%). It was observed that despite the market value increasing rapidly but Hawa Jaffor of Crop Science, University Putra Malaysia, pointed out that the local herbal industry is still lacking in proper research and development (The Star online, Monday December 5, 2011).

Meanwhile table 2 shows that contract herbal manufactures have increased in Malaysia since 2003, 64 to 2013, 170. It is understood that herbal based business has a positive future in the country's economy growth.

Table 2: Number of Contract Herbal Manufacturer, GMP

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>
2003	64
2013	170

*Source: NPCB; Malaysian Journal of Public Health Medical 2011, vol,11 (2)*

Table 3: Trend on Herbal Based Business in Malaysia

CHM, GMP (no.)	THRP (no.)	Annual Growth %	HBP (no.)	GBHH	Annual Growth %	UTCHM %
64 (2003)	2,250 (May 1998)	16.5%	7,000 (2006)	1.27 billion (1990)	353%	M=69.4 In=67 A=42
170 (2013)	13,466 (Dec,2012)		11,691 (2011)	4.21 Billion (2000)		Af=80 Aus=48 Ch=40
				5.76 billion (2003)		C=70 Fr=49

Source: NPCB; Malaysian Journal of Public Health Medical 2011, vol,11 (2)

Note:

M= Malaysia; A= America; Af= Africa; Aus= Australia; Ch= China; C= Canada; Fr=France; In= India.

CHM= Contract Herbal Manufacturer

GMP= Good Manufacturing practice

THRP= Total Herbal Registered Product

HBP= Herbal Practitioner

GBHH= Government Budgeted for Healthcare on Herbal

UTCHM=Use of Traditonal Complementary Herbal Medicine

Table 3, shows the trend on herbal based business in Malaysia. It looks positively increased since 1998 (2,250) to 2012 (13,466). Besides that the herbal practitioner number are also 7000 at the year of 2006, which increase to 2011(11,691). From this data it was observed that day by day the demand of consumer for herbal medicinal products is increasing tremendously. Government also increased the budget 2003 at RM5.7 billion. Despite the increase in consumer demand and government support, Malaysian herbal products are still not in standard level. In fact, Ibrahim Jantan (2006) commented that most of the herbal products in Malaysia are sold in the market but not standardized.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

It was a qualitative approach case study using in-depth interviews among the rural Malay Youth herbal entrepreneurs from three states namely Kelantan, Pahang, Melaka. This study was conducted in Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) Malaysia during 10th International Halal Showcase, April, 2013. For rural entrepreneurship development, case study research methodology is useful (Barkley, 2006). This research includes the development theoretical model, research design, sample selection, data collection analysis. Henderson (2001), mentioned case study multiple approach is popular for rural entrepreneurship development relatively other approach such as phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory etc. Qualitative research would ensure that the analysis relied on all evidence and it is significant for the case study (Yin, 1994). It also provided rich and thick description from the respondents' individual experiences.

The primary goal of this research was to investigate the involvement of rural Malay youth in herbal entrepreneurship for this preliminary study, the researcher had selected ten rural youth herbal entrepreneurs from three states in Malaysia. These rural herbal entrepreneurs are running their entrepreneurship as their generation business. The details of the respondents' information are given below.

**Respondent 1 (R1):**Jafor Bin Arif, Entrepreneurship name 'A'. Mr. Jafr is 30 years old, owner of the enterprise 'A' which was established Kelantan in 1990. He was take over this family herbal business after his grandfather died in a road accident. All their five products are sold by government promotional support social network, internet marketing and authorized agents, and monthly sales about RM 50k. Our sales every month are reducing because of lack of technical knowledge and inadequate finance and government new rules to follow GMP (good manufacturing practice) guidelines. Currently, we involve with contract herbal manufacturer and they provide us all facilities. We are now fully stopped our traditional herbal entrepreneurship and myself only doing this business. All family members are not interested to continue business with any other contract herbal manufacturers. At the end his discussion said, "Currently only nascent youth herbal entrepreneurs are doing well and most of the old traditional rural herbal entrepreneurs are changed to other business or selling contract herbal manufacturer products under their enterprise name".

**Respondent 2(R2):**MrAli Bin Bakar, Entrepreneurship Name "B". Mr Ali is 37 years old and started his business in 2010 in his state Kelantan. It was his family business since 1970. Respondent said that they fully dependent on government promotional support sales and among our communities. But now, all herbal entrepreneurs have to follow government manufacturing guidelines which is impossible for us. As you know, we have limited fund and until today failed to get any business loan from government bank or other finance company. Now, we stopped our old business activities and promoting MARDI products under our brand. Every month our sales are increasing and hopefully, next year we will start export to middle east few countries. Current policy, youth are getting involve this herbal business with contract herbal manufacturer and day by day reducing genuine rural herbal entrepreneurship. But, we do not know how long we can run our this type of entrepreneurship. We never get any clear guidelines either from government or any other government link-companies and also need proper training, financial back up all the time because, we have limited technical knowledge about herbal.

**Respondent 3(R3) & Respondent 4(R4):**Muzafor Bin Hashem, Entrepreneurship Name ,"C" and Mohideen Bin Hashem, Entrepreneurship Name, "D". Both are from one family, aged between 32, 35. After graduate in business studies and marketing, they start it in home town Kelantan. About their business respondent 3 (R3) said that current sales monthly about RM50K to RM60K with three to five employees respectively and monthly sales about RM 70K to RM80K for respondent 4 (R4). It is mentioned that both of them are nascent herbal entrepreneurs. About their sales respondents 3 (R3) and respondent 4 (R4) provided as same comments "our sales volume okay but its common item like others herbal entrepreneurs. That's why sometimes, our sales suddenly dropped. We are from non-technical background, that's why need technical knowledge –know –how and financial support. If government provide full support to develop our herbal entrepreneurship then not only we will be benefited- but also lot of youth will come to join this herbal enterprise after complete their basic or higher education.

**Respondent 5 (R5), 6 (R6) & 7 (R7):** These three herbal youth herbal entrepreneurs are from Pahang and age between 29, 33 & 36. All of them were involve with their family traditional business since long time but after government new herbal production strictly implementation, they gradually change to nascent enterprise with contract herbal manufacturer. They are increasing sales every month, but for

our limited capital, lack of operational and technical knowledge cannot develop our entrepreneurship that much. We need full support from the government until improve our entrepreneurship. These three young herbal entrepreneurs told during in-depth interview that at present we are behind with other ethnic groups. They have own social network and they are getting better package facilities from the contract herbal manufacturer all the time. But no credit facilities either from manufacturer or from bank loan. Most of the present rural Malay youth herbal entrepreneurs are not interested want to do entrepreneurship with contract herbal manufacturer for long time and they need own manufacturing platform with the government support based on individual herbal need. One day we can do challenge with other ethnic groups in Malaysia.

**Respondent 8 (R8), 9 (R9) & (R10):**HaseenaBinti Mohideen,32 ; Resma Khan 29 &Fatima Binti Mustafa : All these rural youth herbal entrepreneurs are from Melaka. Two entrepreneurs got STPM and the other has basic education. These families migrated from India and Pakistan since long time and it was their family generation business. They have own sales team for different states and also own social network, monthly sales are about RM80K to RM100K. Until today, they are producing their products in their own location without government knowledge. All of them told during interview time “We are trying to get business loan from the government if get it we can manage with our profit capital to set up new factory out-let for large volume production and increase sales locally and internationally. If not we change to other general entrepreneurship because we are not interested at all to do sales contract herbal manufacturer products under our brand. We believe government will try to understand our problem because we are genuine rural herbal entrepreneurs”.

### **3. DISCUSSION**

Based on the ten rural herbal entrepreneurs information in term of entrepreneurial support and government policy factors sometimes affect negative rather than positive. Due to government new role on rural herbal entrepreneurs, they could not do as their own development plan. Government force them all of entrepreneurs to follow the GMP guidelines strictly. This study showed, this is a problem majority rural herbal entrepreneurs are facing problem but it is not known to the government until today. Anything can't change over night. Based on the respondents comment, from the current policy the government of Malaysia want to promote rural herbal entrepreneurship. These policies and initiatives sometimes put entrepreneurs in a critical stage, instead of development of rural herbal entrepreneurship.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the research integrated the reason to involvement of rural youth herbal entrepreneurs in Malaysia is decreasing. The findings of this study showed that lack of human capital, financial, technical knowledge know-how and government compulsory follow guidelines for rural herbal entrepreneurs are decreasing the genuine old rural herbal entrepreneurs and most of the young family members of these entrepreneurs are looking for new job instead of developing family generation business.The findings suggest that the government of Malaysia has made plans to increase numberof rural Malay youth in herbal entrepreneurship but it was unsuccessful to involve the youth in herbal industry. It was identified that government need to modify their rules and regulation to encourage directly rural Malay youth to the involved in herbal entrepreneurship.

## RECOMMENDATION

This study offers the government, who are rural Malay herbal entrepreneurship development planner, to provide full support mainly middle class aggressive rural herbal youth entrepreneurs and set up a government production facility in every state. These herbal entrepreneurs fully guided by the government time to time. Gradually, herbal entrepreneurs would develop their product in their place and later on they can set up their own GMP to capture local and international market, no need dependent on contract herbal manufacturer or government-link companies. Government should encourage rural Malay youth who are manufacturer and support them directly instead of third party. On the other hand, government also should provide necessary training for existing rural Malay herbal entrepreneurs and develop their entrepreneurial mindsets and knowledge.

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# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER ORIENTATION AND LEADERSHIP MOTIVATION OF MALAYSIAN YOUTH AT PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to determine the relationship between career orientations and leadership motivation among Malaysian youth. Data were gathered from 711 undergraduate students from four Malaysian public universities. Results showed that certain career orientation correlated significantly with motivation to lead (MTL) with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.1 to 0.4. Among career orientation dimensions, Managerial competency indicated the highest correlation coefficient at 0.48. Results of Regression analysis revealed that managerial competency is the biggest predictor of MTL followed by pure challenge. The findings suggest that not all the career anchors contribute significantly in explaining the variation of MTL. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.279 implies the career anchors explain about 27.9% of the variance/variation in the MTL. The findings from this study could be utilized by policy makers in formulating or developing youth career program.

**Keywords:** *career orientation, leadership motivation, youth, public university, Malaysia.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Clearly everyone should have an understanding of the nature of work and its relationship to their personal characteristic and family concerns (Schein, 1978, 1985, 1990). Career orientation (DeLong, 1982; Ginzberg and Baroudi, 1992; Igbaria, et al., 1991) or career anchor (Schein, 1971; 1975) refers to an individual's self-perceived needs, values, and talents that give shape to his or her career decisions. The career anchor or career orientation is significant because it influences career choices, affects decisions to move from one job to another, shapes what one is looking for in life, determines an individual's view of the future, influences the selection of particular occupations and work settings, and affects the employee's reactions to his or her work experiences (Schein, 1975). Career anchors focus on the individual's self-concept and career values. On the other hand, motivation to lead (MTL) is a desire to provide service to others, to enrich group experience or to initiate some desired change (Astin & Astin, 2000). People might be motivated to develop leadership skills, to serve others and to bring about some desired change. Ability to lead and motivate people is critical to the success of most careers. An effective career anchors involve the ability to orient one's leadership. In today's society, successful career orientation involves the ability

to orientate one's leadership, abilities to become more congruent with the demands of more complex work environments. Considering that, youth are the biggest source of human capital and the future leader of every nation in the world, this study seeks to examine relationship between career orientation and leadership motivation of youth in Malaysia. This study set out to determine the relationship between career orientation as conceptualized by Schein (1990) and motivation to lead proposed by Chan and Drasgow (2001) among Malaysian youth. Here, the research question is that, is there any relationship between young people's interests in the content of jobs and the leading roles that they might play in a job? To address this aim, we begin with a literature on career orientation and motivation to lead.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1 Career orientation*

The concept of career orientation or career anchors offers valuable insights in understanding diversity in career preferences and career patterns (Rodrigues and Guest, 2010). Career anchors are regarded as an important aspect of individuals' career self-concept, which provides clarity of career values, motives, interests and needs (Schein 1990). Schein (1978) defined career anchors as a pattern of self-perceived talents and abilities, basic personal values and an evolved sense of motives and needs that influence a person's career-related decisions. According to Schein (1996) these self-perceived ability and talents, values represents the person career's identity. Schein (1978, 1990, and 1996) suggests that most people's career orientation (self-perceived talents and abilities, motives and values) are grounded in eight career anchors. However, Feldman and Bolino (1996) categorized Schein's eight career anchors into three distinct groupings as being talents-based, needs-based and values-based anchors. The talents-based anchors consist of managerial competence, technical/functional competence, and entrepreneurial creativity. The needs-based anchors consist of security and stability, autonomy and independence and lifestyle. The values-based anchors consist of pure challenge, service, and dedication to a cause. According to Schein (1990), people's career anchors tend to develop over time. Considering that the career self-concept continuously evolves based on the insight gained through knowledge and experience (Schein, 2006; Super, 1990). Coetzee et al. (2010) also found that people's career anchors significantly predict their job and career satisfaction.

### *2.2 Edgar Schein's Career Anchors*

According to Schein (1990), eight career anchors themes can enable people to recognize their preferences areas in their job, which can help career-planning. People fulfilled in their careers when they can satisfy their career anchors and seek roles that are aligned with these. Research by Schein (1978, 1990, and 1996) suggests that most people's career self-concepts (motives and values) are grounded in eight categories or anchors:

#### *a) Technical/Functional*

People that their career anchor is strongly placed in some technical or functional area; seek for the opportunity to apply their skills in that area and to develop those skills to higher level. These people derive their sense of identity from the practicing of their skills and are most happy when their work allows them to challenge in those areas. They will seek higher levels of challenge within their skill area, and may go into administration or management in that skill area. But they will resist general management because that would require them to drop the exercise of their skills.

*b) General Management competence*

Individuals with this career anchor want to be responsible and accountable for total results and they identify their own work with the success of the organization for which you work. Their ambition is to get to a generalist. They want to rise to a high level in an organization where they can measure their own competence by the performance of the organization that you manage. Their basic identity and sense of success will come through the success of the organization you work for.

*c) Autonomy/Independence*

All these people want is that work life to be under their own control. They resist organizational routines, rules, uniforms, hours of work. These people always look for opportunity to define their own work in their own way. They prefer to remain in jobs that allow them flexibility regarding when and how to work. They turn down opportunities for promotion or advancement in order to retain autonomy.

*d) Security/Stability*

A person that their key careers anchor is security/stability; would not give up employment security or tenure in an organization. His/her value illustrated for financial security (such as pension and retirement plans) or employment security. The person primarily and always concerned about jobs that will make her/him feel economically secure and stable. Such stability may involve trading her/his willingness to do whatever the employer wants for some promise of job tenure. She/he less concerned with the content of the work and the rank that achieve in the organization, although she/he may achieve a high level if your talents permit.

*e) Entrepreneurial Creativity*

What these people want is to create an organization or enterprise of their own, built on their own abilities and willingness to take risks to overcome obstacles. They want to prove to the world that they can create an enterprise that is the result of their own effort. If they are working for others in an organization, they are always assessing opportunities for further and they will go out on their own as soon as they feel they can manage it.

*f) Service/Dedication to a Cause*

These people would not give up the opportunity to pursue work that achieves something of value, such as making the world a better place to live, solving environmental problems, improving harmony among people, helping others. You pursue such opportunities even if it means changing organizations.

*g) Pure Challenge*

This people look for the opportunity to work on solutions and overcome difficult obstacles. For them, the only meaningful reason for pursuing a career is that it permits them to succeed in the face of the impossible such as the professional athlete. They seek novelty, variety, and difficulty and if something is easy, it becomes immediately boring.

#### *h) Lifestyle*

These people seeking to balance and integrate their personal needs, family needs, and the requirements of their job. They want to make all sectors of your life work together toward an integrated whole. Therefore, need a career situation that provides enough flexibility to achieve such integration. They feel that their identity tied up with how they live their total life.

#### *2.3 Motivation to lead*

Motivation to lead is a desire to provide service to others, to enrich group experience or to initiate some desired change (Astin&Astin, 2000). People might be motivated to develop leadership skills, to serve others, to bring about some desired change. According to Barbuto (2001) although leadership has its challenges, but there is pleasure in being a leader. Good leaders work with the purpose of bringing improvements and gains. Some people become leaders because of the benefits they hope to obtain from leadership roles. According to Krasus and Abdul Hamid (2013), reputation is a strong motivator to seek a leadership position. Chan and Drasgow (2001) did a major work on motivation to lead. These researchers proposed the motivation to lead (MTL) model. According to Chan and Drasgow (2001), motivation to lead is as an 'individual difference' constructs affecting the leader's or future leader's decision to take on both the role and the responsibilities of leadership. The MTL construct is articulated along three dimensions: Affective-Identity MTL (AI), Non-Calculative MTL (NC), and Social-Normative MTL (SN). One person may simply like leading others, hence the affective-identity MTL, whereas others might choose the role of group leader because they feel it is their duty or responsibility, hence the Social-Normative MTL. On the other hand, some people may decide to accept a leadership role only if they are not too overly 'calculative' regarding the cost-effectiveness of being the leader of a group. Leadership usually implies personal responsibility and/or costs as well as benefits. Non-Calculative MTL measures one's willingness to take on leadership roles without being too calculative about the costs involved. The more calculative a person is about the costs, the less he or she wishes to take on the leadership role (Krauss and Abdul Hamid, 2013). Chan & Drasgow (2001) proposed a general individual differences construct called the MTL. Chan showed that MTL could be conceptualized and measured in terms of three correlated-dimensions: Affective/Identity, Social Normative, and Non-calculative.

**Affective/Identity MTL:** Individuals who score high on this dimension prefer to lead others. They see themselves as leader and tend to be outgoing and sociable. They value competition and achievement. They are confident in their own leadership abilities. **Social-Normative MTL:** People high on the Social-Normative MTL dimension are motivated by a sense of social responsibility and obligation. Like people high in Affective/Identity MTL, these individuals tend to have more past leadership experience and confidence in their leadership abilities. **Non-calculative MTL:** These individuals are not calculative about the costs and benefits about leading. Sociocultural values play a more important role in Non-calculative MTL. Agreeableness and emotional stability are significantly related to Non-calculative MTL, while leadership self-efficacy and experience are not significantly related to Non-calculative MTL. Results of study conducted by Suutari and Taka (2004) revealed career anchors of leaders through a qualitative research setting. Based on the results, most leaders saw that their decisions are based on two or even three career anchors instead of one dominating anchor. The most typical career anchors of the original career anchor classification were managerial competence and pure challenges.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### *3.1 Participants*

Four public universities were randomly chosen from four zones of peninsular Malaysia namely USM Penang, UPM Selangor, UTM, UMT, and UPNM. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed in four Malaysian public universities. 764 questionnaires were returned (response rate 95.5%). Of these, 53 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis due to incomplete data (N=711).

#### *3.2 Validity and reliability of the instrument*

Prior to conduct study, instrument checked for validity and reliability. Instrument was pilot -tested at one public university. Following pilot- test, some items were modified. Reliability analysis was also performed for each scale. The results of reliability statistics for MTL overall were 0.89 and for carrier orientation themes were all above 0.70

#### *3.3 Measuring Leadership Motivation/MTL*

In this study, we applied nine items Affective Identity (motivation to lead) MTL construct proposed by Chan and Drasgow (2001). MTL can be measured both as three first-order factors and as a single second-order factor (i.e., General MTL). In current study, we chose to capture students 'affective interest in leadership role. Hence, Calculative MTL and Social-Normative MTL were not applied in this research.

#### *3.4 Measuring carrier orientations*

In the current study, we used Shin (1990) career anchors to measure carrier orientations. Therefore, career orientation conceptualized as specific dimensions. Respondents were asked to assess their career anchors on eight dimensions of Shin (1990) career orientation namely; technical competence, managerial competence, security and stability, entrepreneurial creativity, autonomy and independence, service and dedication to a cause; pure challenge and lifestyle. The instrument contained eight dimensions of career orientation and in total 24 items.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### *4.1 Demographic profiles respondents (N = 711)*

Majority of students 79.3% (n=564) were female and 20.7% (n=147) were male. Regarding the age of sample, 520 (73.1%) of respondents were between 20-24 years old. Academically, 49.8% of the sample had a CGPA of 3.0-3.49, 31.4% had a CGPA of 3.5-4.0, 17.7 had a CGPA of 2.5-2.9 and 1.1% had a CGPA of 2.0-2.49. In terms of work and study, 51.8% were full time students but previously was working, 44.3%, full time students and never work, 2.5 % full time students and have job, 0.8% part time students and had job, 0.6% study leave from work. In terms of academic year, 32.6% were in their first year of study, 5.9% were in the second year, 37.7% were juniors in the third year and 23.8% were seniors in their final year of study. In terms of academic program, 50.6% were students from the Applied Science. 1.1% from Environmental Science including Marine and Geology, 5.5% from Business Economics and Management; 42.3% from Science and Math cluster and 0.4% from the IT Communication and Design Graphics cluster.

#### 4.2 Descriptive analysis of Motivation to Lead and carrier orientation

Means, standard deviations, and alpha scores for MTL and career orientation are listed in Table 1. For the MTL mean score was (M=3.44, SD= 1.04). For career orientation, the highest mean score of 4.45 was for challenging and the lowest mean score of (M=3.54, SD=.85) was for managerial. Security/stability (M=4.26, SD=.60), services (M= 4.26, SD=0.62) challenging (M=4.45, SD= 0.57) and lifestyle (M=4.13, SD=0.62) are the four dominant career anchors of the participants. These career orientation are need-based (lifestyle and security) and value-based (challenging and services). The overall mean of the dependence on MTL were divided into three levels for reporting purpose. Based on the interpret scale, majority of the respondents, 52.6% (n=374) had moderate level of interest in leading others. 38.8 % (n=276) high level of interest to lead others and 8.6% (n=61) low level of interest. The anchor that was to some extent more common than the expected one was the desire to serve. However, to some extent, this appeared to be connected with national pride and the feeling of doing something important for their country (Suutari and Taka, 2004).

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and reliability scores for carrier orientation and MTL (N= 711)

Variables	Items	Range	Mean	SD	Alpha
Motivation to lead	6	1-5	3.44	1.04	.893
Independence	3	1-5	4.07	.67	.709
Security	3	1-5	4.26	.60	.751
Technical	3	1-5	4.02	.70	.733
Managerial	3	1-5	3.54	.85	.774
Entrepreneur	3	1-5	3.76	1.0	.90
Service	3	1-5	4.26	.62	.749
Challenging	3	1-5	4.45	.57	.746
Lifestyle	3	1-5	4.13	.62	.746

#### 4.3 Correlations and regression of carrier orientation on motivation to lead

Table 2 presents the correlation between the eight career anchors and MTL. Each of the career orientation has a pattern of relationships with the MTL. Pearson correlations coefficient showed that career orientation significantly correlated with MTL, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.1 to 0.4. Managerial indicated the highest correlation coefficient at 0.48.

*Security and stability.* Security and stability is positively related with MTL ( $r=0.12$ ,  $p=.001$ ). From the pattern of correlations, there is a negligible/very weak relationship between security/ stability and MTL. People who seeking job in organization that give them security and stability, they tend to have interest to lead others. Job stability may involve trading their willingness to do whatever the employer wants for some promise of job tenure. We can conclude that Security/stability is related to interest in leading. As could be expected, people high in in this career anchor are highly motivated to lead.

*Technical.* A similar pattern of the relationship for security observed between Technical and MTL. Technical is positively related with MTL ( $r=0.159$ ,  $p=.001$ ) and There is a significant and negligible/very weak relationship between technical competence and MTL. People that their career Anchor is strongly placed in some technical area; they might be willing to lead others in their technical or functional area.

*Managerial.* Managerial competency is moderately related to MTL ( $r=0.48$ ,  $p=.001$ ). There is a significant positive relationship between this career anchor and MTL. The pattern of relationship suggests that those high

in managerial competency are most motivated to lead others for varying reason. Since these groups of people are responsible and accountable for total results of organization and they identify their own work with the success of the organization for which they work, they will lead others due to sense of duty.

*Entrepreneur.* There is a significant and positive relationship between this career anchor and MTL ( $r=0.28$ ,  $p=.001$ ). From the pattern of correlations, there is a low relationship between Entrepreneur and MTL. As could be expected individuals with such career interests like to lead and see themselves as leaders.

*Challenging.* Challenging is positively related with MTL ( $r=0.293$ ,  $p=.001$ ). From the pattern of correlations, there is a significant and low relationship between challenging and MTL. This is in line with the expectations about the career anchors of leaders and managers with global careers. So Individuals with such career orientation interests tend to lead and see themselves as leaders.

*Services.* Services is positively related with MTL ( $r=0.145$ ,  $p=.001$ ). There is a weak relationship between service career orientation and MTL. As could be expected people with this career orientation pursues work that achieves something of value and improving harmony among people tends to lead and see themselves as leaders.

However, in contrast there is no significant relationship was found between Independence and life style with MTL Table 2.

Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was applied to gain a better understanding of career anchors that influence or help to explain variation of motivation to lead Table 3. Based on the method used, only two predictor variables were found to be significant in explaining MTL. The three predictor were managerial ( $t = 11.751$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) and challenging ( $t = 4.847$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). To compare the strength of the coefficient for variable, it can be referred to the column of Beta coefficients as known as standardized regression coefficients. As illustrated in Table 3, the largest Beta coefficient is 0.438, which is for managerial competency. The Beta value for challenging 0.118 is the second highest.

Results showed that managerial competency is the biggest predictor of MTL among undergraduate students followed by pure challenge. In other words managerial competency makes the strongest unique contribution to MTL when the variance explained by all other predictors is controlled. Nevertheless the other five career anchors are not significant in explaining MTL. The findings suggest not all the career anchors influence MTL. The  $R^2$  value of 0.279 implies the career anchors explain about 27.9% of the variance/variation in the MTL. This might be due the possibility these career anchors are relatively less involved in MTL. For instance MTL is seldom emphasized for those seeking to develop technical skill or entrepreneur job. Similarly MTL is not important part of job for these seeking to balance and integrate their personal needs, family needs, and the requirements of their job. In other word, although the work-life balance is important for leaders or managers, but due to job requirements, the willingness has clearly decreased.

Table 2: Pearson correlations coefficient of the variables.

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
(1)Motivation to lead	1.00								
(2)Independence	.035	1.00							
(3)Security	.123**	.275**	1.00						
(4)Technical	.159**	.260**	.292**	1.00					
(5)Managerial	.487**	.231**	.175**	.313**	1.00				
(6)Entrepreneur	.280**	.219**	.159**	.315**	.443**	1.00			
(7)Service	.145**	.215**	.321**	.256**	.205**	.343**	1.00		
(8)Challenging	.293**	.150**	.327**	.320**	.277**	.295**	.464**	1.00	
(9)Lifestyle	.051	.332**	.437**	.254**	.100**	.180**	.443**	.361**	1.00

Table 3: Estimates of coefficients for the model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.476	.273		5.406	.000
Independence	-.115	.043	-.094	-2.646	.088
Security	.048	.050	.035	.954	.341
Technical	-.035	.042	-.030	-.819	.413
Managerial	.423	.036	.438	11.751	.000
Entrepreneur	.057	.031	.070	1.843	.066
Service	-.029	.052	-.022	-.548	.584
Challenging	.249	.051	.188	4.847	.000
Lifestyle	-.057	.056	-.040	-1.004	.316

Notes: R = .528; R<sup>2</sup> = .279; Adj. R<sup>2</sup> = .271



## 5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings showed that certain career orientation domains correlated with the MTL. Our study showed managerial competency and challenging job significantly influence MTL. The findings suggest that the certain career motives and values underlying the participants' career orientations significantly influence MTL. In other words, that those seeking for challenging job or managerial job are motivated to lead others. Individuals who have a strong managerial and challenge career anchor are often expected to behave as leader. This is in line with the finding of study conducted by Suutari and Taka (2004) that two dimension of career orientation namely; managerial competence and the pure challenge are the most common anchors among managers. Technical-functional career anchors, autonomy and independence, security and stability, and entrepreneurial creativity anchors were all rare among global managers. Ability to lead and motivate people is critical to success as a manager. The organization and staff count on manager to provide leadership and to direct the group through change, to make tough decisions, and focus efforts productively on the most important tasks. Motivation to lead is an equally important responsibility of management. It translates directly into productivity and team effectiveness. Overall, it can be concluded that the values and motives underlying the participants' career anchors with managerial competency and challenging, motivate them to lead others.

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# **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES (YWDS): BASED ON MALAYSIA EXPERIENCES**

MohamadFedderusAbdRazak  
Nor WahizaAbdWahat

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In the fervour to develop human capital and to strengthen development, various approaches have been taken to realize these goals. This rapture causes us to often feel proud and boast with the paved route towards development. Nevertheless there is evidence that small cluster of citizens or minorities are neglected in the glorified picture. According to Nor Wahiza (2011), diversity in Malaysian workforce is not only in terms of race, age, religion and gender. The diversity in Malaysia also comprises the minority group who are incapacitated due to some illness or perhaps accident. They are known as the people with disabilities (PWDs). The PWDs are under-explored assets in Malaysia. Compared with other countries, there is still a huge need to educate Malaysia citizens on multi-ethnic and multicultural citizenship, voice of rights and empowerment. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to develop a theoretical framework for measuring YWD's subjective career success based on the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). Suggested predictive potential two factors on PWD's subjective career success are work motivation and core self-evaluation. The YWDs job satisfaction is also as a mediator to explain the subjective career success of the YWDs.

## **2. DISABILITY AND IMPAIRMENT**

In order to understand PWDs, it is important to be clear as to what is meant by the word "disable" and its distinction from the term "impairment". Despite the on-going debate on the distinctions between the two terms, the more acceptable definition on disability was the schemes provided by the World Health Organization Classification of impairment, disability and handicap (ICIDH), developed by Wood (1980).

According to these schemes "impairment actually is in the context of health experience, like injury (i.e disturbances of a bodily system caused by social factors. It can include accidents, poverty, or pollution), illness (i.e disturbances of a bodily system caused by infection or disease or age), or congenital condition (i.e a state of being that has existed from birth, for example, restricted growth). Impairment also can be defined as any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure of function.

These schemes thus enlightened us about the difference between impairment and disability. Woos (1980) suggested that disability is about and involved health experiences, like loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in society on an equal level with others due to social and environmental barriers. These schemes also clarified disability as any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

Meanwhile, handicap is related to the context of health experiences. Handicap is a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from impairments or a disability that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal. It is depending on age, sex, social; and cultural factors for that individual. One of the models used to study the phenomenon of disabled people is the Social Model of Disability.

The Social Model of Disability viewed disability as a 'collection of socially created restrictions, which are discriminatory because they limit opportunity for full and equal participation' (Bickenbach

et al. 1999, p. 1176). The social model of disability (Oliver, 1983; Barnes and Mercer, 2005) which grew in importance in the 1970s and 1980s, argued that people are disabled by society, not by their functional limitation, and that disability is ‘something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society’ (UPIAS, 1976; Thomas, 2004).

The social model focused on the unique abilities and needs of each individual. Whereas the medical model treats each individual that falls under the same disability classification in the same manner (Shapiro 1994). According to UPIAS (Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation), disability is not as an impairment or deficit of body or brain. It is a relationship between people with impairment and a discriminatory society.

### 3. SCENARIO OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY (PWDS) IN MALAYSIA

In Asia, there are 370 million people with disabilities. The number includes the PWDS in Malaysia. In Malaysia there are 28 334 million of populations. And, 10% of Malaysia's populations are the PWDS (Bulletin of Statistics, 2011). According to the statistic by Malaysia Social Welfare Department, (2012) the number of registered PWDS has increased from the 359,203 in year 2011 to 445,006 in 2012.

The number of registered PWDS for 2012 was 44,956 cases and it will be increase every day. Nowadays the registered PWDS until March 2013 have recorded about 13,829 new cases. Malaysia has categorized the PWDS into the following categories of disability (a) visual, (b) hearing, (c) physical disabilities, (d) learning disabilities, (e) speech and (f) mental. Table 1 showed the registered PWDS by type of disability.

Type of Disability	2011	2012
Visual	31,924	40,510
Hearing	43,788	53,357
Physical disabilities	123,346	148,461
Learning disabilities	134,659	165,281
Speech	725	1,734
Mental	8,927	14,990
Other / various	15,834	21,668

Tables 1: The registered cases of PWDS according to the type of disability 2011-2012

Malaysian government has allocated 5.8% of jobs in public sector to people with disabilities (Service Circular. 10/1988). Until May 15, 2012, only 20.7% of registered PWDS successfully gained employment and received “*BantuanElaunPekerjaCacat(EPC)*” involving an allocation of RM 6.0 billion (Jessica, 2012). Hence the statistical evidence indicated the need to address the issues of PWD’s employment and career growth. Many efforts and plan has been designed to empower people with disabilities, but it appeared not to have any profound impact. Future opportunities for the PWDS still seemed limited in terms of career, family, social and community activities.

According to Sonali Shah (2005) who studied about disability people, some scholars argued that the examination of subjective perception of success is important for some groups in today’s society, especially the PWDS since it is unlikely for most of them to experience objective career success. It is essential to assess their intrinsic feeling about some achievement. According to Dries, Pepermans, and Carlier (2008), objective career success ‘is mostly concerned with observable, measurable and verifiable attainments such as pay, promotion and occupational status’ (p. 254). Meanwhile subjective

career success is much broader and refers to all aspects relevant concerning one's individual career satisfaction (Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990).

Subjective career success is an internal measure of understanding of the individual and the environment. Nevertheless, this chapter aims to discuss subjective career success and the two factors which may contribute to it, which are work motivation and core self-evaluation. In other words, the chapter intends to discuss the contribution of each of the factors to job satisfaction in order to achieve success in an intrinsic manner within the context of youths with disabilities in Malaysia. As pointed out by Sonali Shah (2005), subjective career success is more meaningful for those with disabilities compared to objective career success.

#### **4. CAREER SUCCESS**

Traditionally, career success was measured in terms of individual's progression in the organizational hierarchy on the basis of a long-term relationship with the company (Judge et al., 1995). It is the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point in a person's work experiences over time (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005). Career success has been correlated to satisfaction. However, potential predictors to explain differences in satisfaction still need to be determined.

#### **5. EXTRINSIC CAREER SUCCESS**

Career success may be defined in terms of objective and subjective dimensions (Judge and Bretz, 1994; Judge et al., 1995). Extrinsic career success or known as objective career success is observable and can be measured in terms of salary and promotions. It refers to outcomes that are both instrumental rewards from the job or occupation. The objective path of a person's career as described by a reference group serves as the reference point for the external perspective. Extrinsic career success represents the material rewards an individual accumulates over a sequence of jobs (Judge et al., 1995).

The objective face of career is mostly concerned with observable, measurable and verifiable attainments such as pay, promotion and occupational status, which have long been recognized as "the" hallmarks of career in many different societies (Nicholson, 2000). In pursuit of career success, the main question still arises about the actual satisfaction to be achieved by each individual for themselves (eg. what is the value of the work for me?). According to Korman, Wittig-Berman, and Lang (1981), they found that successful individuals often were not satisfied with their careers and did not feel successful or proud of their achievements.

#### **6. INTRINSIC CAREER SUCCESS**

Due to these demands, it is important to determine how a person perceives his or her level in a society or the organization hierarchy. Besides the objective career success, it is more challenging to explore in deep about subjective career success. Subjective career success refers to career satisfaction about all aspects of career relevant to a specific individual (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). It is measured in terms of an individual's perceptions of his or her own success, based on perceptions of personal career accomplishments and future prospects (Aryee et al., 1994, Judge et al., 1995, Melamed, 1996 and Nabi, 1999). Based on this definition, one subjective indicator of career success is the individual's self-report of career satisfaction, with facets including career advancement, salary growth, and professional development (Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley, 1990).

#### **7. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS FOR YWDS**

According to Sonali Shah (2005), a comparable argument could be made with respect to PWDs, especially high-achievers, whose subjective rather than objective career success is more likely to equal that of non-disable high-achievers. Sturges (1996) suggested that knowledge about subjective career success will provide organizations some indication of potential alternative foci for further

career development and human resource management initiatives. This is important for future implantation to provide service that will useful for human being.

As Gattiker and Larwood (1988) contend success criteria can maximize human resource specialists to achieve a fit between the employee’s career opportunity and needs. Researchers often refer to this type of career success as ‘objective success’ because it can be measured by objectively observable metrics such as income level and hierarchical position (Gattiker and Larwood, 1988; Judge and Bretz, 1994; Kotter, 1982). Gunz (1989) suggested the two facets of the career represent the process of personal and organizational development for the individuals. The authors added that career can be seen both as a means of personal development (sometimes called the subjective career success) and as a series of externally observable jobs (the objective career).

The requirement to become more familiar with the internal career perspective, which makes reference to an individual’s own preference for development in an occupation, has been emphasized by examinations such as conducted by Korman (1980). It is important to determine if people who achieved hierarchical success are satisfied with their own organizational advancement, because as Gattiker and Larwood (1986) pointed out, there is a difference between how individuals perceive their accomplishments and how these are perceived by others.

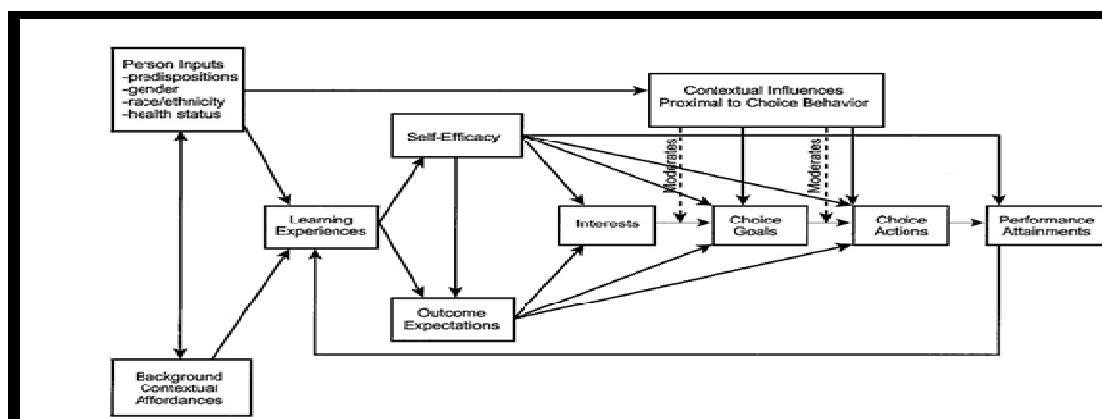
In other words, objective career success refers to what society considers as being successful. It is the judgment passed by other people on individual career achievements (Gattiker and Larwood, 1988; Judge and Bretz, 1994). Many studies have used objective criteria for success (Gould and Penley, 1984).

## 8. SOCIAL COGNITIVE CAREER THEORY (SCCT)

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) is applied to describe the phenomenon of YWDs’ subjective career success. Social cognitive career theory (SCCT; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994) represents a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding vocational interest formation, career choice, and academic/career performance. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 1. As illustrated in Figure 1, SCCT assume that person inputs (including predispositions such as personality traits) and background contextual affordances affect occupationally relevant self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations by shaping occupationally relevant learning experiences (performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion, and physiological states and emotional arousal).

Self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations, in turn, affect the formation of vocational interests, which subsequently influence occupational goals, choice actions, and performance attainments. In other words, social cognitive mechanisms (i.e., self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations) contribute proximally and directly to interest formation, whereas person inputs and background contextual affordances are distal to interest formation and affect interests indirectly via their influence on learning experiences and social cognitive mechanisms.

Figure 1. Social cognitive career theory (SCCT)



According to SCCT, person inputs are individual difference variables such as predispositions, gender, race or ethnicity, and disability or health status. SCCT posits that personality and other person inputs exert their influence on interests indirectly through their effect on learning experiences, self-efficacy beliefs, and outcome expectations.

According to SCCT, learning experiences are experiential sources of self-efficacy and outcome expectations that are shaped by person inputs and background contextual affordances. Thus, learning experiences is considered as an important intervening construct between person inputs and the social cognitive mechanisms that form interest formation, career choice, or career performance.

## **9. PREDICTOR'S OF PWDS' CAREER SUCCESS**

In developing the theoretical framework for career success of the YWDs, the author try to look into the compatibility of work motivation and core self-evaluation to YWDs job satisfaction as a mediator on explain the subjective career success of the YWDs by integrating Social cognitive career theory model.

## **10. THE ROLE OF CORE SELF-EVALUATION (CSE) IN SCCT**

In explaining the phenomenon of YWDs' subjective career success, it is proposed that Person Input element in the Social cognitive career theory model could probably be the core self-evaluation (CSE). In other words, it is suggested that CSE could contribute to job satisfaction as mediator to achieve YWDs subjective career success. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 2. Based on the literature, Core self-evaluations is a higher-order concept of an individual's self-evaluation personal characteristics, incorporating four core individual traits that are assumed to influence various work outcomes: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability (Judge et al., 1997; Judge, Erez, & Bono, 2002). Andrisani and Nestel (1976) and Garfield (1986) argued that successful individual have a primarily internal locus of control, thus holding the belief that success results from hard work and that failure is the individual's responsibility.

According to Cox and Cooper (1988) and White et al.'s (1992) in Sonali Shah 2006, a comparison between disable and non-disable high-flyers indicated that disable high-flyers had better internal locus of control. They were more self-controlled rather than being controlled by others. This means that they worked from internal reference points. Their action were mainly influenced by their own internal believe and value, not by external factors such as luck, fate or significant other. In other words core self-evaluation influence job satisfaction, in part, because positive individuals actually obtain more challenging jobs, and also because they perceive jobs of equal complexity as more intrinsically fulfilling. To understand PWDS' core self-evaluation on their subjective career success in this context, the author would like to propose the following hypothesis:

**H1:** Core self-evaluation has a significant positive relationship with PWDS' subjective career success.

## **11. THE ROLE OF WORK MOTIVATION IN SCCT**

In measuring YWD's subjective career success based on the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the author also suggested work motivation's role onto job satisfaction in measuring subjective career success. It is proposed that background contextual affordances in the Social cognitive career theory model could probably be work motivation. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 2. Work motivation is a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration (Pinder, 2008). Motivation is a psychological process resulting from the interaction between the individual and the environment. It is based on positively valued (rewarding) experiences that person get directly from their work task (Desi, 1975). These positive experiences serve to get an individual excited, involved, commitment and energized by their work (Thomas and Tymon, 1997).

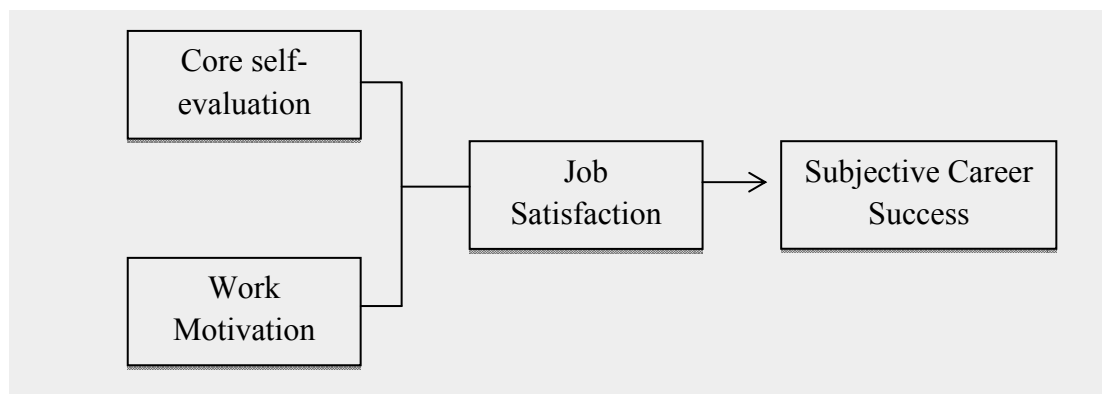
For people with disability motivation is simply not the main barrier to finding work (Barnes and Mercer 2005, pp. 528-533). These individuals are referred to as intrinsic motivated individuals as they seek to maximize their satisfaction through behaviours that serve to enhance feeling of competence and self-determination. Based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H2:** Work Motivation has significant positive relationship with the PWDs' subjective career success.

## 12. THE ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION IN SCCT

To describe the phenomenon of YWDs' subjective career success, it is proposed that job satisfaction could be the learning experiences element in the social cognitive career theory model. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 2. Understanding from the literature on job satisfaction by Judge and his colleagues (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998) it was found that key personality trait, core self-evaluation, correlates with (is statistically related to) employee job satisfaction. These various research findings indicate that there is possible relationship between disposition or personality and job satisfaction (Lise M. Saari, 2004). Locke and Lathan (1976) gave a comprehensive definition of job satisfaction as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important. In other words, it is suggested that Job Satisfaction could contribute to subjective career success on YWDs.

Figure 2. Theoretical framework for measuring PWDs' career success



## 13. CONCLUSION

The present framework suggests specific individual attribute, personality and perception can lead to better subjective career success. YWDs are one of the assets who are yet to be fully explored in Malaysia. There is an increasing concern to study the potential and uniqueness of YWDs. Are numerous studies conducted to study the performance and potential of normal individuals to achieve their career satisfaction in work field, but we could not blind towards them who are disable people. Writing these view and gather some of the advantages, privileges and uniqueness of YWDs toward their subjective career success. We need to be aware and need to recognize that in order to looking something that is a subjective or internal value which is unable be seen through the eyesight is through exposure of the study. Malaysia in general is still searching the solution on trying to empower these special human capital developments.

Exposure to society should be noted, particular to category of PWDs and from here the exposure to model of disability like social model of disability should be widely implemented regardless of the organization or in the legislature. This is important because we often to express equality of human rights on a global level, but we failed to provide justice to those who are people with disability. Better understanding of subjective career success, especially to the PWDs may lead to better treatment and provision of more opportunities that could enhance the PWDs' needs.



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# **LOAN SHARK: WHY/HOW YOUTH CHOSE LOAN SHARKING AS AN OCCUPATION?**

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## **Abstract**

Generally speaking, Loan Shark refers to those individuals or organizations that lend money at excessively and often illegally high rates of interest; and tend to use violent and harsh methods to collect debts. In Malaysia, there are on-going cases of helpless borrowers been beaten up and had their properties damaged or destroyed, and in some extreme cases victims that cannot afford to repay their debts have committed suicide. We believe that to tackle this loan sharking issue in Malaysia, it is necessary to understand the cause motives that drive young people to join such treacherous and immoral industry. By investigating factors that contribute to choose loan sharking as occupation and or career, we could find effective ways to reduce young people interest or participation in such risky occupation. After reviewing Krumboltz's, Holland's and Super's theory on career development; Super's theory seemed the best as framework for understanding occupation/career choices among youth. Hence, this conference paper will focus on the description of Super's career development theory as the framework to investigate the motives that drive young people in Malaysia to join such treacherous and immoral industry. The paper is a description of the research proposal for the study.

*Keywords: Archway Model, Career development, Entrepreneurship, Loan-sharking, Youth*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Loan shark refers to those individuals or organizations that lend money at excessively and often illegally high rates of interest (Loan Shark, 2007) and tend to use violent and harsh methods in collecting default debts (Chua, 2012). The term has been commonly used to describe the predatory nature of those who lend small sums at higher rates of charge than the law allows (Nugent, 1941). The fee charged for the use of money (interest) and the payment in excess of the rate allowed by law (usury), were used as synonymous in the past (Blackstone, 1769; Eubank, 1917) and once considered as immoral or unlawful. Lending at interest was first thought to be usurious and immoral by Aristotle where he viewed that money itself is not productive, money is barely a medium to ease exchange, and money would not have powers of generation in nature. He uses the metaphor of lending a person a vineyard, the vineyard produces fruits, and it is productive, and from these fruits the person can pay for the rent. But money merely a medium of exchange and it is barren. However, usury is viewed by Brook (2007) as:

*“A financial transaction in which person A lends person B a sum of money for a fixed period of time with the agreement that it will be returned with interest. The practice enables people without money and people with money to mutually benefit from the wealth of the latter. The borrower is able to use money that he would otherwise not be able to use, in exchange for paying the lender an agreed-upon premium in addition to the principal amount of the loan. Not only do both interested parties benefit from such an exchange, but countless people who are not involved in the trade often benefit too, by means of access to the goods and services*

*made possible by the exchange (...) However, money lending to certain extent is consider major vice and villains” (Brook, 2007).*

In many communities worldwide, the existence of Loan Sharks bring along many negative consequences. For instance, a report included in *The Politicians' Handbook* (1899) indicated that “*the system of money-lending by professional money-lenders at high rates of interest is productive of crime, bankruptcy, unfair advantage over other creditors of the borrower, extortion from the borrower's family and friends, and other serious injuries to the community.*”

In Malaysia, Loan Shark syndicates resulted plenty of on-going cases where helpless borrowers been beaten up and had their properties damaged and/or destroyed; and some extreme victims that cannot effort to repay their debts committed suicide (Anthony, 2007). According to Sim Chan Teck from Pasir Gudang MCA crime prevention squad in Malaysia, even professionals like engineers and bank officers nowadays ~~to~~ borrow money from Loan Sharks to settle their debts (The Star Online, 2010). Similarly, it has been reported that members of the Navy Commander had borrowed money from Loan Sharks (The Star Online, 2012); even BIG-TIME entrepreneurs have also become victims of Loan Sharks (Sim, 2011). There was recently a shocking case reported in the media; the Police found three men confined in a 7 feet x 5 feet dark room in Bukit Serdang, with their necks, arms and legs tied up with 4 inches iron chain and were fed only given 2 pieces of bread and pipe water daily, for 17 days to 2 months long (BERNAMA, 2009), this event led the local community to realized how dangerous Loan Sharks are and how far they can go to collect default debt. There are a number of non-academic articles about victims' traumatic experience and the reasons for people's decision to borrow money from Loan Sharks. However, to the authors' knowledge, there are not much media interest, let alone academic research in the possible factors that lead a person to become a Loan Shark.

Nonetheless, the authors believe that in order to take effective actions to overcome issues inherited from frantic Loan Sharking activities, it is necessary to first understand the cause motives that drive people join such treacherous and immoral industry, then only effective ways to prevent can be develop to hinder people from stepping into such industry in the future. Hence, the purpose of the study is to understand why and how youth nowadays chose Loan Sharking as an occupation.

### *1.1 Loan Sharking & Career choice theories*

Loan Sharking is a kind of money lending business with a dubious and debatable operating structure. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that people working as a Loan Shark consider it as a career choice or alternative. Why and how a young person embarks in such 'career' choice? The theories on career development might be helpful to investigate and perhaps to explain why and how people chose career decision making process and development; therefore the work of John Holland, Donald Super, and John Krumboltz were reviewed.

Holland's work (1985) emphasize on personality; he indicated that people can be categorize into several combination of personality traits such as realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional; he called it RIASEC. According to Holland (1973) the nature of work also falls into one of these six of RIASEC. People with similar combination are often prefer the same jobs; it is commonly accepted by theorist of career development that often people search for environments that allow them to exert their personality, attitudes, values, and skills and abilities. People that match their personality and nature of work are more likely to be successful and satisfied, and vice versa. However, it has been suggested that personality could change or be altered as result of new experiences; whether this or not the case it is beyond the scope of this paper. What Holland's work indicate is that there are more jobs available in the Realistic spectrum than in the Artistic one. In his work, Holland emphasized that matching the right person to the right jobs is the best formula for a promising career future

Krumboltz's work (1979) focuses on learning; to him learning is to expand one's available options, prepare for changing of work tasks, and enhance flexibility. He places great emphasis on the

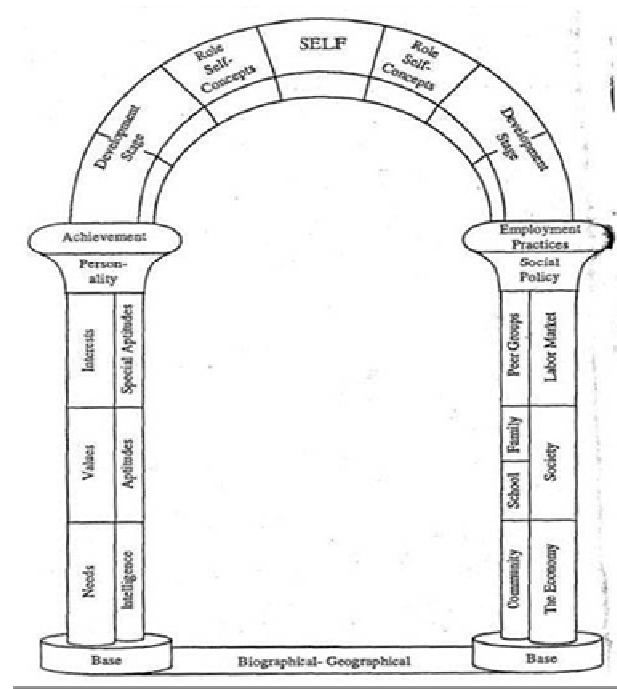
importance of promoting people's curiosity to learn; as well as to equip them to deal with obstacles, to be flexible for uncertainty, and to be optimistic; in doing so people can turn into benefits unplanned events. According to Krumboltz attributes are the product of interaction between genetic and the environment; from this interaction emerge 'self-view'. So, according to Krumboltz people's 'self-views' are what influence their actions and reactions. In line with Krumboltz work, there are four factors that can influence one's career development, (1) genetic endowment (e.g. race, gender, disabilities, talents, etc.); (2) environment conditions and events (e.g. physical and psychosocial environment); (3) learning methods and experiences (e.g. instrumental learning, associative learning, vicarious learning, etc.); and (4) the task approach skills (e.g. standards, work habits, mental sets and etc.). The combination of these 4 factors, according to Krumboltz's work would impact people's observation generalization (SOG-Self), their world view generalization (WVG); task approach skills (e.g. performance abilities and mental sets) and actions (e.g. job application, choice of major, and etc.). Nonetheless, his focus is not on career decision making process, but on the after-decision.

Donald Super sought to explain the life and career development through Archway Model (figure 1). According to Super's there are five developmental stages namely Growth, Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance, and Decline. And within each of these stages, there is a "maxi cycle" of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline as well, where there are several developmental tasks needed to be dealt in each maxi cycle. Central to this model is the development of Self-Concept which according to Super changes over time based on new experiences. Super described the Self-concept development process as a "picture of the self in some role, situation, or position, performing some set of functions, or in some web of relationships" (in Allison and Cossette, 2007). In his Archway Model, Super emphasizes the importance of factors like values and community in people's career decision making process. Super suggested that self-concept is developed through social, experiences, interactive learning and reflective of self-awareness. He also argues that occupational choice are attempts to 'match' one's self-concept, to our abilities, interests, values and choices as well as a way to position our life themes; thus it is an on-going process (Allison and Cossette, 2007). According to Super (1990):

*"Natural resources, the economy, and the family influence the development of aptitudes, values, and interest, as do their use in school and at work. The individual, using his or her abilities and seeking outlets for interests, acts on society in visible ways (for example, as a leader, as a protagonist in enacting equal rights legislation) and in ways that escape notice (for example, by quietly fitting into and helping a new and innovative organization to function)." (Super, 1990, p203)*

Hence, a young person's decision to join a Loan Sharking business might be related to their previous life experiences, and this study is attempted to reveal these reasons, events or incidents. Super's work suggests that people interact with their surrounding and these interactions unquestionable impact people's perception and interpretation of their environment and circumstances; the interaction would also decision processes and choices.

Figure 1: Super's Archway model



Source: Brown, D., & Associate (2002)

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the proposed study are to: (a) investigate the why people chose to become Loan Shark, (b) explore the developmental process of becoming Loan Shark, (c) identify the common in the developing process of becoming a loan shark, and (d) identify possible contributing factors for people to remain in the Loan Sharking business.

This research is based on the assumption that the participants in the study 'belong' to the same "organization", and share common job scope and nature and 'work ethic'. Thus, it is expected limited access to the information and knowledge related to Loan Shark; and therefore, this paper consider exploratory. This paper aimed to gain understanding about why and how people in developing their career as a Loan Shark (Ah Long in Malaysia)

A phenomenological method of inquiry it is proposed to elicit necessary information via one-to-one semi-structured interviews. By definition, phenomenological inquiry aimed to give respondents opportunity to express their lived experiences of a phenomenon and its meaning. In this study, the researcher will interview several informants and develop a composite a description of common themes. The description will consist of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it. It is important to understand several individual's shared experiences, because each of them might interpret partially and differently about the same phenomenon. To minimize biases, researchers will first "bracketing" himself by set aside his personal experience and perception towards the phenomenon of Ah Long to allow fresh perspective without prior judgments, as much as possible.

Informants will be recruited through snowballing method due to the nature of the participant which is hardly reachable. Potential informants in this study are reachable Ah Longs, which is illegal money lenders that lending without following Moneylenders Act 1951 (Incorporating all amendments up to 1 January 2006) as following criterion.

17. (1) Any money lending agreement made on or after the commencement of this Act, for the loan of money by a moneylender shall be illegal in so far as it provides, directly or indirectly, for the payment of compound interest, or for the rate or amount of interest to be increased by reason of any default in the payment of sums due under the money lending agreement:

*Provided that provision may be made in any such money lending agreement that if default is made in the payment upon the due date of any sum or instalment payable to the moneylender under the money lending agreement, whether in respect of principal or interest, the moneylender shall be entitled to charge simple interest on the unpaid sum or instalment which shall be calculated at the rate of eight per centum per annum from day to day from the date of default in payment of the sum or instalment until that sum or instalment is paid, and any interest so charged shall not be reckoned for the purposes of this Act as part of the interest charged in respect of the loan.*

(2) This section shall not apply to transactions known as Thavannai transactions, between one moneylender and another moneylender, provided that any such transaction is evidenced by a written document duly stamped.

Loan Sharking in Malaysia, although not greatly affected our community, their daring acts are worrying the whole population of Malaysia. Steps for prevention are necessary, but to tackle a problem, we must first understand it. Hence, this study is vitally important to be carried out.

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# THE POWER OF FACEBOOK IN EDUCATION

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## Abstract

Social Network sites have transformed the way we communicate and socialize by providing a multitude of mediated platforms in which individuals can communicate with other individuals and/or with groups of users. Facebook, the most popular social networking website provides a unique online environment in which students can construct meanings, communicate and share experiences of their lives. According to Selwyn (2007), Facebook has quickly become the social network site of choice by college students and an integral part of the “behind the scenes” college experience.

In this study, we explore how students/youth are appropriating the use of Facebook in their academic lives. Drawing on examples from the content of the Facebook pages of the students, we draw attention to the various uses of this tool among students and show how this tool can be integrated into their learning process. Data from this study comes from the Corpus of Electronic English in Malaysia Project (CEEMA Project).

*Keywords: Facebook, Youth, Social, Tool, Education*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Rapid development of information and communication technologies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought changes in our educational system. Various social network sites like Facebook, Twitter, MSN and blogs are available on the Internet for people to communicate with one another. Among the tools, Facebook is the most popular social media platform used by students and as many researches show among university students. According to Selwyn (2007), Facebook has quickly become the social network site of choice by college students and an integral part of the “behind the scenes” college experience. Prompted from the reading of his article, the writers have decided to investigate whether Facebook has the potential to be an educational tool in the context of Malaysian university education.

This paper discusses how students/youth are appropriating the use of Facebook in their academic lives. Drawing on examples from the content of the Facebook pages of the students, we draw attention to the various uses of this tool among students and show how this tool can be integrated into their learning process.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The use of Facebook in education has proliferated since the inception of Facebook in 2004. What started out as a social networking site, Facebook later expanded to different educational settings (not only institutions from the higher education sector) from other countries too, and then to the general public (Hew, 2011). In Malaysia, there are currently about 13.3 million Facebook users (<http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/malaysia>). Those aged between 18 and 24 were the highest users of Facebook (34.5%). Most people in this age group are usually pursuing their tertiary studies. This statistics shows that Facebook is an integral part of a university student's life and can be used as an educational tool.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The use of Facebook in education is still quite new in Malaysia. Although there are empirical evidence that these social networking sites are popular and that students are using social networking sites in their studies, there has not been many documented studies on it.

Some of the popular studies that have been done on Facebook is a study by Selwyn (2007) in which he states that Facebook is the social network site of choice by collegestudents and an integral part of the “behind the scenes” college experience. Students are found to be more participative in creating and sharing content through Facebook thus changing the way on how they interact with each other in their daily lives.

Studies done by Arrington (2005) and Thompson (2007) show that 85% of college students that have a college network within Facebook have adopted it. In another study on Facebook, Blattner and Fiori (2009) claim Facebook provides language learners opportunities to enhance the development of socio-pragmatic competence and the sense of community in language classrooms. In addition, they also point out that Facebook can be utilized for authentic language interaction, and can be used to increase motivation and improve the performance of English language learners. They argue that Facebook has “unique features that offer constructive educational experiences while maintaining privacy and safety” and that the potential of Facebook is “growing everyday with new applications” (p. 8) that are yet to be explored and examined. Earlier studies by Caruso and Salaway (2008) found that 49.7% of US students surveyed were using social networking sites to communicate with classmates about course-related topics and Ipsos MORI (2008) found that 37% of first-year UK students were using these sites to discuss coursework and 81% of these students found such activity useful for learning.

On the local front, study done by Kabilan et al. (2010) indicates that Facebook could be utilized as an online environment to facilitate the learning of English. They found that Facebook can contribute significantly to the quality of education in developing positive relationships among students and including students’ motivation and engagement. (Kabilan et al., 2010). Another study done by Lim (2010) on distance learning further supports the findings that Facebook does have the potential to engage learners in their studies.

### **4. DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

This study was carried out in University of Malaya. The data for this study comes from the Corpus of Electronic English in Malaysia Project (CEEMA Project). A corpus of 300,000 words were collected from Facebook. The participants in this study belonged to the 18-24 years old age group. The data was based on ten (10) months of observation of data posted on the Facebook walls of the participants.

### **5. ANALYSIS**

The data were analysed and categorised based on Neil Selwyn’ (2007) study on Facebook. Similar to Selwyn’s study, five (5) themes emerged from the data when the education-related postings were analysed. The five (5) themes were a) recounting and reflecting on the university experience, b) exchange of practical information, c) exchange of academic information, d) display of supplication and/or disengagement and e) banter.

#### **a) Recounting and reflecting on the university experience**

Students used Facebook walls to describe or deliberate on the most recent instances of university experience. Either they are talking about lecturers, homework, or their experiences as discussed here:

*FMn wrote at*

*7:06pm on November 4th, 2011*

*oievrybody, prof z... asked us to read up on what we learn during 2nd year for prosthetic, she'll be havin a test next time she's teaching us & also a questionnaire on why are we so blur all the time, hv a happy holiday....*

*JJ posted at*

*8:35pm on November 4th, 2011*

*questionnaire on why r v blur al d time?????joke o 4 serious???????*

*FMn wrote at*

*8:36pm on November 4th, 2011*

*that'swat she told me la... not sure if she joking or what....*

*VK wrote at*

*8:46pm on November 4th, 2011*

*i thought she asked us to throw away our red book??*

*AT wrote at*

*8:49pm on November 4th, 2011*

*yesterdayi arrange tooth for her to check, she said to me: i dun call tat red book as a book, i ad email class rep how to arrangethe tooth. ask class rep to email to u all.“*

*FMn wrote at*

*9:13pm on November 4th, 2011*

*mani miss Dr Nos, prosthetic seems so easy back in the good old days..*

*Hahawat to do*

The whole exchangess between the students centred around their Professor who had asked them to read up on what they had learned in their second year for a test and how the students had missed another lecturer who was more easy going.

b) Exchange of practical information

Students used Facebook walls to exchange information related to what Selwyn (2007) termed as the 'job' of being an undergraduate ( information concerning practical logistics of attending lectures , scheduling of classes, exams, assignments etc...) For some students who are uncertain or in the dark over certain information, Facebook is a useful means of last minute information seeking.

*HZ wrote at*

*5:55pm on April 4th, 2011*

*halo2attention3....tomorrow pharmacology class time change to 8-9am,at BUA..*

*HZ wrote at*

*5:55pm on April 4th, 2011*

*plz tell d other ek*

*COCT wrote at*

*6:05pm on April 4th, 2011*

*thenoptech change to clinic session ist?*

*HZ wrote at*

*7:09pm on April 4th, 2011*

*maybe..QFckap mcm tu*

*AT wrote at  
7:14pm on April 4th, 2011  
2moro group C at poly A ^^*

Students not only used Facebook as a channel to inform others but to also seek clarification from their peers.

c) Exchange of academic information

If in Selwyn's study (2007), the exchange of academic information was less frequent, this is not the case in this study. Messages posted on Facebook walls were frequent and academically related.

*JJ: wrote at  
6:31pm on April 23rd, 2011  
any1 can tel me wat came out 4 dm in 2.1 ah?????*

*AA:wrote at  
6:33pm on April 23rd, 2011  
dental cement, investment mat, dntl wax, porosity, 2 je ygakuingt..*

*AT: wrote at  
6:35pm on April 23rd, 2011  
partial denture component. metallurgy also gt one, but I forgtwat question ad*

*JJ: wrote at  
7:18pm on April 23rd, 2011  
wah so many ahhh came out??? 2.1 of our year lar!!!!*

*FMN: wrote at  
7:43pm on April 23rd, 2011  
of coz banyak la, there's 6 questions wat...*

The participants also used the Facebook walls to assist each other in their studies. Guidance and peer-assisted learning were quite frequent.

d) Display of supplication and/or disengagement

Students used Facebook to seek moral support with regards to their studies. They would portray themselves as helpless with the demand and pressure of university lives' and the expectation that their peers would then offer support and comfort.

*GA wrote at  
6:21pm on May 11th, 2011  
kwn2.syseorang je y kena viva border dm (=.=). wish me luck.*

*MC wrote at  
6:22pm on May 11th, 2011  
goodluck..all the best =)*

*AG wrote at  
6:22pm on May 11th, 2011  
u can do it zie*

*SA wrote at*

6:34pm on May 11th, 2011  
good luck zie:)

Besides supplication, some students used the Facebook walls to show defiant and disengagement from their studies.

*HCY wrote at*  
7:49pm on March 9th, 2011  
Hish... can push pp n mok for the lecture notes again ma??? tmr tutorial, no notes, feeling like dun wana attend.

#### e) Banter

Students exchange humorous and nonsense remarks among themselves. Some believe these 'nonsense' remarks written by students on the discussion boards can be seen as marking a transitory period whilst they acclimatise themselves with the online environment (e.g. Williams 2002). There are also cases of banter related to the teaching staff which at time can be heavily interlaced with irony and sarcasm.

*HCY: wrote at*  
7:17pm on March 11th, 2011  
for the Densoc T-shirt, igt a size L, large for me. Who having M wanaexchange with me?

*EY: wrote at*  
7:18pm on March 11th, 2011  
even XS oso big ady...why u order L? lol

*HCY: wrote at*  
7:19pm on March 11th, 2011  
last year L still ok, who knows tis year it gets bigger.

*FMn wrote at*  
9:17pm on November 4th, 2011  
haha true, but at least dr nos.. doesn't marah2 all the time

*EY wrote at*  
12:02pm on November 5th, 2011  
got la she got marah but ikut mood one. extreme mood fluctuation.

Beside the five (5) uses of Facebook among the University students, three (3) new findings on the use of Facebook were found in this study. First is the use of Facebook for political opinion. In line with the new media, students are using Facebook walls to voice their views and opinions on political issues.

*LRH wrote at*  
10:46pm on August 6th, 2011  
Malaysia deserves better. Do your part in the 13th GE.

Students are also using the Facebook walls to share and express their views on religion.

*JC wrote at*  
12:49pm on October 29th, 2011

*We choose to see the bright side of life not because the dark side does not exist, but because the future is as bright as the promises of God. =)*

Besideusing the Facebook walls to post educational-related matters, students are also creative in sharing interesting and humorous information among them.

## **Alphabet taught to kids nowadays**



## **6. CONCLUSION**

From the findings of this study, one may conclude that Facebook does have the potential to be used as an educational tool for teaching and learning. Based on the data observed, Facebook has evolved to become a platform in which students not only socialize but also served as a place for them to provide comments, to share knowledge, to share feelings and to share experiences with their peers.

Facebook has the technologies and features to engage learners in meaningful interaction among their peers. Facebook offers a relaxed, friendly and inviting atmosphere which encourages students' participation and engagement. It can be seen that students feel comfortable learning through Facebook because most of them use it every day. Thus, educators should capitalize on these features of Facebook and expand them for educational purposes.

At the same in the Malaysian context, Facebook provides a good language learning environment for students to gain confidence as they learn to communicate in a less intimidating setting where they are not judged or ridiculed for their lacked of proficiency. On Facebook, students are able to use English freely without worrying about linguistic rules and making language mistakes. Facebook can also promote collaboration and social interchange between participants. Students get engaged about their learning outside the classroom.Groups can be created, forums can be set up and activities can be planned to show the potential and power of this tool in education.

In conclusion, we must remember Facebook was initially created as a place for university students to keep in touch with their friends – to further enhance their existing relationship. It is important to understand, and use Facebook, as this new channel of communication comes naturally for students.

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# THE PATTERN OF THE INTERNET USAGE: A CASE STUDY AMONG YOUTH IN JOHOR

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## Abstract

This paper examines the Internet usage pattern of Malaysian Youth in Johor. Specifically, this study focused on gender, education and the urban/rural factors related to the Internet use of information seeking, social, economic and political purposes. The surveys were conducted among 196 youth between the ages of 18-40, and they were randomly selected to answer the questionnaire. The result found that female youth are more likely to use the Internet for social and political purposes. The additional analysis further discovered that the urban and small town youth also found to be the higher users as compared to the rural youth. However, education is not an important indicator for Internet usage as those with lower education level also use it for economic and political purposes. Further studies are needed to explain factors that influence youth Internet patterns, and the consequences of intense Internet use on the development of the society.

**Keywords:** *Youth, Internet, urban/rural factors.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Internet in Malaysia began in 1990s when the first Malaysian internet service provider (ISP), JARING (Joint Advanced Integrated Networking) was launched by MIMOS Berhad (Malaysian Institute of Microelectronic Systems). In the beginning, the Internet in Malaysia was intentionally set up for business matters, with the support from government through various policies. Several years later, with the growth of ISPs within the country, offering both dial-up and broadband connectivity makes the internet user grew rapidly in Malaysia. The first Malaysian Internet survey conducted from October to November 1995 by MIMOS and Beta Interactive Services reported that one out of every thousand Malaysians had access to the Internet, i.e. 20,000 Internet users out of a population of 20 million (Paynter & Lim, 2001). On the other hand, according to a report by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), the Internet penetration rate in the country has increased to 66.6% in the first quarter of 2013 (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2013). This indicates that more than half of the total population of 27 million has access to it. As the access to the Internet becoming more widely available and affordable, a growing number of Malaysians are accessing it from various places, such as home, office or school/college. Recently, with the latest mobile device offering in the market, such as smartphones and tablet PC, the trend in accessing via these devices are catering more than 50% (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2011).

There has been wide research on the use of the Internet. The review of literature indicated that the Internet has been used for information seeking, communication, socializing with others and so forth. One of the studies on Internet use reported that the main purpose of using it is to read newspaper and magazines, and to get information. In the survey conducted by Boz and Aksoy (2011) among the adults in Turkey, they found that chatting is not most commonly used by them. Contrary to Simsim (2011), email

access was the main purpose of Internet use in Saudi. He further added that the young use the Internet more frequently for chatting and entertainment than the adults.

Most of the research on gender differences in access to and use of the Internet revealed that the male has positive attitudes towards it compared to female. Li and Kirkup (2007) in their study of Chinese and British students found that male in both countries was found likely to use the Internet for communication and entertainment purposes, and they were more self-confident about the computer skills than female. Meanwhile, females were reported as greater in using the Internet for obtaining course information, seeking educational assistance, and research (Weiser, 2000). He further stressed that gender differences in specific uses of the Internet clearly appear to exist, but they seem to stem primarily from differences in the Internet experience.

Aslanidou and Menexes (2008) further added that male students make up the majority of the users, mainly for entertainment purposes. In their study of high school students Greek cities further found that the Internet is an indicator of social and economic stratification since most young people with access to it come from family environments with a higher educational and socioeconomic background, and live in urban and semi urban areas. A similar pattern was found in the study of Koc and Tamer (2011) where students with medium and higher socioeconomic level used the Internet more frequently. They further added that the male students also were found to be more frequent users than female ones.

A wide studies on the Internet use has led the researcher to create a typology of young people based on their usage. Eynon and Malmberg (2011) categorized the users into four: the peripherals, normatives, all-rounders and active participators, which were differentiated by individual characteristics and contextual features. In their study of young people in Britain , they found that there are differences in the ways young people are using the Internet, due to the skills, confidence, knowledge, support and access to it. Selwyn, Gorard and Furlong (2005) further created four categories, namely broad frequent users, narrow frequent users, occasional users and non-users. They observed that these four categories differed along the lines of age, socioeconomic status, educational and health background.

Teo, Lim and Lai (1999) focused on the motivation to use the Internet, i.e. intrinsic (i.e. perceived enjoyment) and extrinsic (i.e. perceived usefulness) motivation. From their webpage survey, the findings show that the local Internet users used the Internet mainly because they perceived the Internet to be more useful for their job tasks and because it is enjoyable and easy to use. The results showed that extrinsic motivation is generally stronger than intrinsic motivation, however it is important to realize that other factors may also play an important role in the usage, such as computer skills, access to it, etc. In another study conducted by Ilgar and Ilgar(2012), they found that the teacher candidates used the internet for individual development. They have used internet for doing homework, reading news and journals; and accessing information, i.e. to improve themselves rather than for fun.

Previous studies on the Internet have focused on various aspects of the Internet, such as attitudes towards the Internet and specific purposes of it. They varied in terms of target population. Therefore, this study differs from the others as this study focusing on youth. Studies have shown that youth has more interest in technology and are the most frequent users of the Internet, due to their development stage in which they look for and experience different identities, social and emotional relationships, academic and working careers, and entertainment outlets (Koc and Tamer, 2011). The youth in Malaysia is defined as those aged between 15 to 40. However, in terms of activities and implementation of policies, the focus is those aged between 18 to 25 (Kementerian Belia dan Sukan, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the youth aged between 18 to 40 were taken as the sample. Youth are the highest percentage users of the Internet in Malaysia with 68.7% (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2011). In addition to that, Johor is chosen due to the fact that it comprises the highest population in southern peninsular Malaysia. Out of its 3.4 million populations, 43% of them are the youth (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2013). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the pattern of the Internet usage among Malaysian youth. This is an adaptation of Koc and Tamer's study by examining the Internet pattern among youth in Johor. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the background profiles among youth in Johor
2. To discover the use of the Internet for information seeking, social, economic and political purpose
3. To compare between the background of the respondents and the various usage of the Internet

## 2. METHOD

This study used survey as a method of data gathering. A questionnaire was designed to measure the Internet use for various purposes. The sample consisted of 196 respondents, between the age of 18-40, stratified using gender, education and rural/urban area; and they were randomly selected in Johor. The data were analyzed using SPSS 16.0, presented in terms of frequencies, percentages, median and cross-tabulations. For the purpose of this study, the items were measured using a 5-point scale, where 1 indicates “strongly disagree and 5 “strongly agree”.

The use of the internet for information seeking was measured by an index of four items: (1) seeking political news, (2) seeking economic news, (3) seeking entertainment news, and (4) seeking sport news. For social purposes, it was measured by an index of seven items: (1) visiting/updating blogs, (2) contacting friends via social networking sites, (3) chatting via the chat room/’messenger’, (4) communicating using email, (5) discussions via online Forum, (6) entertainment, and (7) upload/download music. Meanwhile, the use of the internet for economic purposes was measured by an index of two items: (1) business, and (2) online banking; and finally, for political purposes, it was measured by an index of seven items: (1) visiting political website, (2) discussing/expressing political opinion via social networking sites, (3) commenting on political blogs, (4) chatting via the chat room/’messenger’ to discuss on political issues, (5) sending emails with political information, (6) discussing political issues via online Forum, and (7) watching political videos.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses on the findings of the study. Firstly, it will slightly look at the background of the respondents. Next, the various uses of the Internet will be discovered. Finally the relationship between the demographic background and the various purposes of the internet will be discussed in this section.

### *3.1 The Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

Out of the 196 respondents, half of them were living in the urban area (50%), while the remaining were from the small town (32.1%) and rural (17.9%). In terms of gender, this study consisted more male (52%) than female respondents (48%). Malay has shown to be the highest respondents (85.7%), while the rest were Chinese (5.6%), Indian (8.6%) and others (0.5%). In terms of age distribution, more than half of the respondents belong to the group of 15-24 years (51.5%), while the remaining belong to the group of 25-34 years (32.7%) and a group of 35-40 (15.8%). Looking at the education level, most of the respondents were SPM leavers (42.9%), followed by STPM leavers/Certificate/Diploma holders (33.2%) and Degree holders (14.8%). Only a small number of them were SRP/PMR leavers (6.6%) and having no formal education/primary school leavers (2.6%). Further, a majority of them are unemployed/students (42.9%), followed by working with the private sector (28.1%), self-employed (15.3%) and working with the government sector (13.8%). Finally, a majority of the respondents has no income (43.4%), followed by having an income between RM 1500 and below (36.2%), RM1501- RM 3000 (15.8%) RM 3001 and above (4.6%).

**Table 1.** Demography

Demography		Frequency (N=196)	Percent (%)
Area	Urban	98	50
	Small town	63	32.1
	Rural	35	17.9
Gender	Male	102	52
	Female	94	48
Race	Malay	168	85.7
	Chinese	11	5.6
	Indian	16	8.2
	Others	1	0.5
Age	15-24 years	101	51.5
	25-34 years	64	32.7
	35-40 years	31	15.8
Education	No formal education/ primary school	5	2.6
	SRP/PMR	13	6.6
	SPM	84	42.9
	STPM/Certificate/Diploma	65	33.2
	Degree and above	29	14.8
Occupation	Unemployment/student	84	42.9
	Government sector	27	13.8
	Private sector	55	28.1
	Self-employed/others	30	15.3
Income	No income	85	43.4
	RM 1500 and below	71	36.2
	RM 1501-RM 3000	31	15.8
	RM 3001 and above	9	4.6

### 3.2 The Internet Usage among Youth

The Internet usage was categorized into four, namely for information seeking, social, economic and political purposes. In seeking information, the result indicated that the respondents seeking all types of news; i.e. political, economics, entertainment and sport ( $Mdn = 4.00$ ) The report of the Household Internet Survey by MCMC stated that getting information is among the overwhelming purposes of the Internet usage among Malaysian.

**Table 2.**The Use of the Internet for Information Seeking

Use of the Internet for Information Seeking	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	More or Less Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Median
I am always seeking political news from the Internet	5.6	7.7	35.2	28.6	23	4.00
I am always seeking economic news from the Internet	3.1	7.7	24.5	36.7	28.1	4.00

I am always seeking entertainment news from the Internet	3.1	12.2	30.6	29.6	24.5	4.00
I am always seeking sport news from the Internet	3.6	8.7	28.6	35.2	28.6	4.00

For social purposes, the result shows that the respondents use the Internet for all reasons; i.e. visiting/updating blogs, contacting friends via social networking sites, chatting, email, entertainment and uploading/downloading music (*Mdn* = 4.00) than discussions via online Forum (*Mdn* = 3.00). This finding was contrary to the study conducted by Boz and Aksoy (2011) and Simsim (2011).

**Table 3.** The Use of the Internet for Social Purposes

Use of the Internet for Social Purposes	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	More or Less Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Median
I am always visiting/updating blogs	4.1	9.7	31.1	31.1	24	4.00
I am always contacting friends via social networking sites	2.6	5.6	21.9	26.5	43.4	4.00
I am always chatting via the chat room/'messenger'	6.1	15.3	27.6	26	25	4.00
I am always communicating using email	5.1	14.3	30.1	32.1	18.4	4.00
I am always having discussions via online Forum	6.6	20.4	30.1	27.6	15.3	3.00
I am always using the Internet for entertainment	4.1	10.7	24.5	32.7	28.1	4.00
I am always using the Internet to upload/download music	3.6	7.7	23	31.6	34.2	4.00

When asked about using the Internet for economic purposes, the result found that the usage was quite encouraging. It found that the respondents use the Internet for business and online banking (*Mdn* = 3.00).

**Table 4.** The Use of the Internet for Economic Purposes

<b>Use of the Internet for Economic Purposes</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>	<b>More or Less Agree (%)</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (%)</b>	<b>Median</b>
I am always using the Internet for business purposes	6.6	15.8	32.7	24	20.9	3.00
I am always using the Internet for online banking	9.2	17.3	28.1	23	22.4	3.00

For political purposes, the results show that the respondents use the internet more for visiting political website, discussing/expressing opinion via social networking sites, commenting on political blogs, chatting and watching political videos (*Mdn* = 3.00) than email (*Mdn* = 2.50) and online discussion (*Mdn* = 2.00). Studies by Baumgartner and Morris (2009) revealed that social networking sites are recognized by youth as a possible source of news as they receive some of the news from these sites, the types of news gathered, and it does inform them to a democratic discourse.

**Table 5.** The Use of the Internet for Political Purposes

<b>Use of the Internet for Political Purposes</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>	<b>More or Less Agree (%)</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (%)</b>	<b>Median</b>
I am always visiting political website	5.1	15.8	31.1	27.0	20.9	3.00
I am always discussing/expressing political opinion via social networking sites	8.7	19.9	29.1	23.5	18.9	3.00
I am always commenting on political blogs	8.2	23.0	31.1	22.4	15.3	3.00
I am always chatting via the chat room/ messenger to discuss about political issues	12.2	28.6	26.5	21.9	10.7	3.00
I am always sending emails with political information	18.4	31.6	27.0	15.8	7.1	2.50
I am always discussing political issues via online Forum	17.3	35.2	23.5	16.3	7.7	2.00
I am always watching political videos	14.3	21.9	23.5	25.5	14.3	3.00

### 3.3 The Internet Usage by Gender

The Internet usage among respondents was analyzed according to gender. A Mann-Whitney test was conducted to compare the different usage of the Internet for males and females. Generally, female respondents found to be frequent users of the Internet for all purposes than male respondents. However, female were likely to use the Internet for social and political purposes than male respondents. This finding was consistent with Selwyn et al. (2005) studies that ‘women use the Internet more for social reasons’.

**Table 6.** Mean Rank Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Gender

	<b>Information Seeking</b>		<b>Social</b>		<b>Economic</b>		<b>Politics</b>	
	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank
Male	102	93.6	102	90.4	102	96.8	102	93.5
Female	94	104	94	107	94	100	94	104
TOTAL	196		196		196		196	

**Table 7.** Mann-Whitney Test Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Gender

	<b>Total Info Seeking</b>	<b>Total Social</b>	<b>Total Economic</b>	<b>Total Politics</b>
Mann-Whitney U	4290	3971	4616	4280
Z	-1.28	-2.08	-.45	-1.30
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.20	.04	.65	.20

As presented in Table 7, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the Internet use for social purposes of males and females ( $U = 3971, p = 0.04$ ). However, the result found that there is no statistical difference between the Internet use of information seeking ( $U = 4290, p = 0.20$ ), economic ( $U = 4616, p = 0.65$ ) and political purposes ( $U = 4280, p = 0.20$ ) of both males and females.

### 3.4 The Internet Usage by Area of Residence

The Internet use has also been analyzed according to the area of residence. It was divided into three categories: urban, small town and rural. A Kruskal-Wallis Test was conducted to compare the effect of residential area on the Internet usage for all purposes. The Mean Rank results further shows which groups were significantly different from which other groups, since these categorical variables had more than two groups.

**Table 8.** Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Area of Residence

	<b>Information Seeking</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Politics</b>
Chi-Square	4.49	5.98	7.13	1.62
Df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.11	.050	.028	.45



**Table 9.** Mean Rank Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Area of Residence

	<b>Information Seeking</b>		<b>Social</b>		<b>Economic</b>		<b>Politics</b>	
	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank
Urban	98	97.9	98	101	98	103	98	104
Small town	63	108	63	106	63	104	63	94.3
Rural	35	83.0	35	77.8	35	75.6	35	91.9
TOTAL	196		196		196		196	

For economic use, the results of the analysis indicate that there is a significant difference across the different residential area,  $\chi^2 (2, N = 196) = 7.13, p = .028$ . An inspection of the mean ranks for the groups suggest that those who are residing in the small town are the high Internet user for economic purposes, while those residing in the rural area reporting the lowest. However, there was no significant effect of the residential area of the Internet use for information seeking, social and political purposes.

### 3.5 The Internet Usage by Educational Level

Further, the Internet use is analyzed according to educational level. Previous research found that the higher the education level one possesses, the higher the likelihood that people use the Internet. A Kruskal-Wallis test also was conducted. Educational level was divided into five categories: no formal education/primary school, SRP/PMR, SPM, STPM/Certificate/Diploma; and Degree and above.

**Table 10.** Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Educational Level

	<b>Information Seeking</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Politics</b>
Chi-Square	8.78	7.88	7.70	6.12
Df	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.067	.096	.10	.19

**Table 11.** Mean Rank Results for the Comparison of Different Usage of the Internet by Educational Level

	<b>Information Seeking</b>		<b>Social</b>		<b>Economic</b>		<b>Politics</b>	
	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank	N	Mean Rank
No formal education/ primary school	5	42.8	5	75.7	5	132	5	145
SRP/PMR	13	71.4	13	61.6	13	70.6	13	96.5
SPM	84	100	84	105	84	96.0	84	91.4
STPM/Certificate /Diploma	65	104	65	96.5	65	97.5	65	98.8
Degree and above	29	105	29	104	29	115	29	111
TOTAL	196		196		196		196	

A Kruskal Wallis test revealed that there is no significant effect of education level on the Internet use for all purposes: information seeking,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 196) = 8.78, p = .067$ ; social purposes,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 196) = 7.88, p = .096$ ; economic purposes,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 196) = 7.70, p = .10$ ; and political purposes,  $\chi^2 (4, N = 196) = 6.12, p = .19$ . Therefore, the results of the test suggest that education level does not have an effect on the Internet use. For instance, those with lower educational level reported as the high Internet use for economic and political purposes; i.e. those with no formal education or attained education as at primary school. However, those with higher educational level was the highest Internet use of information seeking as compared to those with lower levels. Further analysis discovered that those with SPM level are the highest group for social purposes.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The present analysis has explored on the Internet use of various activities among the youth in Johor. This cross-sectional study examines the relationships between youth Internet use and demographics. The respondents consist of 52% of males and 48% of females. Most of them are living in the urban area (50%), followed by small town (32.1%) and rural area (17.9%). As for the educational level, most of them were attained at SPM level (42.9%), followed by STPM (33.2%) and Degree (14.8%). The remaining are SRP/PMR (6.6%) and no formal education/primary school (2.6%). The Internet use in this study was categorized into four: information seeking, social, economic and social purposes. For information seeking, the respondents found to use the Internet more for all news, i.e. seeking political, economic news, entertainment and sport news. Discussions via online Forum is the trifling activity found among the respondents in social purposes as most of them prefer to use the Internet for other reasons. For political purposes, the median shows that they use the Internet more for visiting political website, discussing/expressing opinion via social networking sites, commenting on political blogs, chatting and watching political videos than email and online discussion. As for the economic purposes, they usage for business and online banking is quite encouraging. The in-depth analysis of this study found that female respondents found to be frequent users of the Internet for all purposes than male respondents. Specifically, they were likely to use the Internet for social and political purposes. This finding was consistent with prior research in revealing the gender gap. The rural youth found less likely to use the Internet for all purposes as compared to the urban and small town youth. The urban and rural youth also found likely to use the Internet for political purposes than the others. However, education is not an important indicator for Internet usage as those with lower education level also use it for economic and political purposes. This finding is not consistent with the previous research mentioning that the higher the education level one possesses, the higher the likelihood that people use the Internet. To sum up, this preliminary analysis showed that the frequency of the Internet use differed by gender, residential area and educational level across all purposes. Further, this study suffers from several limitations. The small size of sample could be the primary reason. Therefore, subsequent studies are needed to explain the other factors that draw youth Internet patterns, and the consequences of intense Internet use on the development of the society.

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# **SCHOOL BASED COMMUNITY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER: A SUSTAINABLE MODEL FOR MASS DEVELOPMENT IN UNDER PRIVILEGED AREAS**

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## **Abstract**

School based “Community Information Technology Center” is an idea which is initiated with a view to solving major problems of the rural as well as underprivileged areas of the third world countries. We consider the schools’ of rural and underprivileged areas of getting unexpectedly little computer and IT education than the urban schools as problem one. Another problem is regarding the limited access of the rural and suburban people in the world of information technology. Besides the community information technology center is a model that is initiated through the local schools since it can create a nexus between the schools and the local communities. Recently, the Governments of different developing countries like Bangladesh and India have made technology education compulsory for the high school students and already implemented a curriculum on information technology and try to equip the schools with proper teaching equipment and facilities. In spite of these initiatives minimum facilities and opportunities cannot be managed for the rural and suburban students comparing with the urban students. That is why a different model is designed to expand the information technology and computer education among mass people, especially among the rural people of the developing countries. This center will also play an important role to make information technology popular and interesting among the rural high school students through which it will get a dimension of fostering spontaneous development. This center will be considered as a learning and support center for students free of cost and for the local people on a limited payment. This is a role model for a sustainable economic and mass development with a nonprofit vision.

**Keyword:** *CITC, High School, Information Technology, Rural Development, ICT Education.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

After passing 42 years from independence, the need for faster technology is increasingly felt in Bangladesh for future development. Development plans of Bangladesh have emphasized science & technology research to develop technologies through adoption of imported technology as well as development of indigenous technologies. Linkage between population and development is important to maintain a positive balance between the socio-economic and population growth and technological development is closely associated with this. Technological development means not only the development of technological facilities, but also the development of human resource in case of technical skills. Though

the high school students are the future manpower of our nation and high schools play an important role in the rural area, that's why it can be a good option for us to involve the high schools in our local development initiatives. In this paper we introduce a model technology sector where local secondary schools are involved. This sustainable model of development where not only the school kids but also all local people can get themselves involved to build a better Bangladesh with a decentralized base of economy.

## **2. BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES OF PLANNING**

Bangladesh is a tiny country with a territory of 56000 square miles and 160 million people. In this densely populated country stands over 62 thousands villages, which are based on agriculture and deprived from all sorts of development. About 70% of our population lives in the rural and suburban regions. But our all opportunities and facilities, even the basic needs only exist in some cities only. When Bangladesh has got its independence, 90% of its revenue was generated from agriculture. Even now 30% of its economy depends on agriculture and sector plays most vital role in our economy. Because of such vital role of agriculture service sector companies also introduce some services for agriculture related activities (i.e. cell bazar, banglalinkkrishibazar etc.). Most of our agricultural activities are based in the rural areas and obviously they should be benefited those services. But unfortunately, these cannot be used in optimum scale. Though mobile-phone have been reach in the end far end of the country, its use is mostly confined within personal communication. That's why proper application of information technology is not possible up to now. Beside this the use of internet is beyond the imagination of the rural people.

There is no confusion regarding the poor education facilities in the rural & remote areas. Recently, Bangladesh government makes ICT education compulsory for every high school students. A curriculum have already implemented for each classes of high school with proper ICT devices. Estimated numbers of computer and other devices have already been sent in many high schools in both urban and rural areas of the country. But it is astonishing that most of those devices remain unused, especially in the rural schools. Though the ICT education is a practical and real life related education, the rural students are taught it as like as other theoretical subjects. As a result, this may not create any positive effect for their development. Another factor is that, most of the rural students have personal computer which is a major obstacle for their skill development. It is always true that technology education will not be fruitful without personal interests and individual efforts. Though some rural students get limited computer access in their school labs, they can't be able to skill themselves properly only for the lack of exercise. To get a real outcome of ICT education this is necessary to provide spontaneous development opportunities for every high school students. Now the third and most vulnerable factor related to this planning is common for both the students and the local people. The rural people are still ignorant regarding the power of information and the frauds always control their life and business by syndicate activities. For the lack of information they have not use any opportunity which can change their lot. In a village a farmer sells his potatoes 2 taka per kg, while in city markets those potatoes are sold 15-20 taka per kg. If they got proper information regarding the market price of their goods, they would not face losses in selling price. For the lack of proper information the rural students fail to utilize their talent up to the optimum level. Therefore, ICT can be a way for their economic and social freedom in this situation we hope.

### *2.1 Objectives of establishing CITC & Research Questions*

There are two major purposes to establish the Community Information Center (CITC) in rural schools. Firstly, CITC is an idea which is generated with a view to training up the school children of the underprivileged areas and provides some opportunities for club activities and spontaneous development of themselves. These centers are both used as the school labs and computer and IT club for the school kids. They can meet their academic demands and personal interest through this centers none of them have to pay any extra fees for this.

Secondly, CITC is a hub of information & modern communication for the local people. These centers will give them an easy access to the world of information technology, especially through internet. They have every access to use internet in these centers with a limited payment. The regions where internet is not available for the common people, these centers are going to open the door of information technology by bringing internet in front of their door. Beside these two task, there are some other purposes which can make CITC as the part and parcel for the under privileged people's daily life. This will be a good media center for them and it will also arrange workshops, competition other necessary public and development events for the local people. After all the ultimate goal of CITC is to create a massive economic development in each and every corner of the developing and underdeveloped countries.

Some research questions:

1. What is CICT?
2. Who are the rural & underprivileged people?
3. Why rural schools are chosen for implementing this plan?
4. How information technology can do a sustainable planning for a developing & developed country?

Now go through the questions to be cleared about the objectives and purposes of CITC.

### *2.2 CITC in brief*

Community Information Technology Center is a model to keep people closer to the information and communication technology especially in the rural areas of the developing and under developed countries. In many developing countries like Bangladesh, ICT education has been made compulsory for every high school students. That's why in many schools of the rural areas have been equipped with computers also. But mostly, these computers are not used properly. However, through CITC we are trying to make a sustainable model, by which these labs will be used effectively and efficiently by both school kids and the local people. The rural high schools are the important place for the village in the developing countries and I have already told that many of those schools are equipped with computers. Some schools also have internet connections, which is mostly used for official purposes. The students use the labs only for their academic works (only for ICT study sessional works) in limited level. CITC is actually designed for them as a new model. They will use this for their regular lab works and also for some club activities will be introduced for them through CITC. Along with the regular academic curriculum they can use it spontaneously as their interest. And this must be free for them. Beside this, these centers will be used as a low cost cyber café for the local people, which make internet available for them with a limited payment. Beside this, different workshop and training session will be run by CITC. Though CITC is under the school management and the local schools are governed by community leaders, the center will be really a community based program. That's why it is named as Community Information Technology Center (CITC).

### *2.3 The rural and under privileged people*

According to our planning, the people who are living outside the territory of municipality, metropolitan and district headquarters are considered as rural and under privileged people. And these areas are known as under privileged regions. Though some places especially in the eastern Bangladesh is much developed outside the following regions mentioned above, most of the region in the country is in same condition.

Cause for choosing rural schools for implementing this plan:

Rural schools are chosen for implementing this plan because these schools lack facilities and opportunities to aware the students about technology. Moreover the urban schools get all around opportunities because of their presence in cities or towns. Most of the government projects are effectively implemented in urban schools leaving the rural schools in dark. Another reason is the financial imbalance.

Mostly, the students of urban schools come of financially strong families and they get every facility both the school and family results their good knowledge about technology. Another reason is environment. The students in urban areas get a congenial environment in schools to share their ideas on technology which keeps the balance of their knowledge they know among themselves. On the other hand the rural schools neither get environment nor the facilities provided by the government. As a result they remain unknown about technology. The financial limitation is another reason for which they can't possess personal instruments at their own remaining them incapable of exploring themselves in technology and sharing ideas. The rural are basically taken into account to ensure their minimum technological knowledge as well as to make a balanced society so that the latent talents of the rural schools are not nipped in bud and get the opportunity to flourish themselves, to prove themselves, to change their community with their ideas and thoughts and to encourage others to come on. These rural schools are also the hub of rural education and thinking. These schools can play an important role to connect local people to make a better change. If new ideas can be implemented in the local schools then it will be accepted by the local people within very short time achieving in a easy way.

#### *2.4 Information technology in a sustainable planning for a developing & developed country*

Bangladesh is an agriculture based country and recently service sector are playing an important role in our today's economy. Cell-phone connects the far end of the country through telecommunication. Though the telecommunication is mostly used in personal communication or some official communication purposes, it has introduces some services open the door of internet accessibility of limited use. Although this mobile internet is used in urban areas mainly and used regarding social networking, it is possible to turn this for mass use and for the rural development initiatives. Information technology can create opportunity for personal development and socio-economic development by itself and by developing other sectors also. Information technology can create business by itself by creating jobs for people and can generate revenue for economy. Besides it can support and promote other business and services by which our economy will be benefitted. Therefore information technology has multipurpose ability to contribute the development of country. Excepting some controversial facts, information technology can create a revolution in a sustainable planning, especially for developed and developing countries.

#### *2.5 Secondary Education systems & high schools in Bangladesh*

In Bangladesh high schools' education is treated as secondary education aging from about 12 to 17 years relating with class range from class six to class ten. In class five the students have to appear a qualifying test named PSC to be promoted in class six. From class six they are treated as high school students giving them assistance by the teachers in a broader and dynamic way. In class six and class seven they start acquiring ideas about higher studies related to math, physics, chemistry, biology, social science and about religious issues. Therefore the students in this age become ambitious and inspired by themselves to think about their destiny and prospect. So this is the important stage where the students come in close contact with their higher thinking. The students come to understand their capability and eligibility to do something for the society. Some sorts for responsibility are grown among themselves. In class eight they first appear their major public exam named JSC. Afterward they are promoted to class nine with new syllabus of study, dividing them in different groups named science, arts and commerce. Some students also go to some vocational schools under technical education board of Bangladesh. The education policy of our country has been changed again and again to ensure best possible way to build them self-dependent. But after all these still the students of Bangladesh are grown up as dependent because of some other factors. But for the development of any country a self-dependent conscious citizen is mandatory. Although our country is going through a so called creative education policy, it is not unquestionable. The students are allotted certain number of classes to attend in IT labs, but it depends particularly on school authority.

Number of Secondary Schools in Bangladesh, 2003:

Types of School	No. of Institutions	No. of Teachers	Enrollment
High School (General)	16562	186949	8162134
Madrasa	5536	70247	2168441
Technical/ Vocational School	1562	8623	134016
Total	23660	265819	10464591

\*Source: *BANBEIS Report, 2003*

After about one decade we got some changes in our education prospect, which is not satisfactory at all.

Types of School	No. of Institutions	No. of Teachers	Enrollment
High School (General)	18500	232929	7398552
Madrasa	6685	98123	2236025
Technical/ Vocational School	2404	13631	175393
Total	27589	344683	9809970

\*Source: *Annual Report 2012; Ministry of Education, The People's Republic of Bangladesh.*

Besides general education in our country there is educational institutions established basing on religious belief being diversified in two separate systems. The Government of Bangladesh has formulated a curriculum to teach the students in a religious way emphasizing the Islamic subjects keeping general subjects side by side. But it is a matter of regret that neither of the systems has got any effective method of teaching or developing the students in technological fields nor the government has taken any step to keep them updated with science and technology. So the students studying particularly in religious institutions are remaining aside of the touch and light of technology. It is proved and clear that the students from these institutions suffer from serious computer illiteracy in such competitive world thereby missing good scope of proving themselves.

High schools in Bangladesh have got variety in education facilities, standard, number of teachers, lab facilities considering the location whether the schools are situated in towns or village areas. In our country we have got a good number of high schools in urban areas run by the government. In addition to this we also have good number of English medium schools and other private schools with satisfactory standard, but in rural areas we find only a few. Even though they are found the facilities, standard and the number of teachers they supposed to be provided with are questionable. The students of schools in rural areas suffer from accommodation facilities along with knowledge they should be delivered on that particular age. Visiting some of high schools we have got an authentic pen picture on the condition and state of facilities the rural high school get. Some of the schools have a few computers provided with the government for the students to acquire IT knowledge. But among them a proportion is used by authority for administrative activities. The rest are given the students to go through, but the maintenance overlook is very weak results various technical problems in the instruments. So after a few days the instruments lose their efficiency. In some other cases we found the IT instruments are uninstalled although they are instructed to do so as the way to provide the students with IT education. In some case we find the



authority's lack of operational knowledge on IT strategies. In addition to this weak willingness and corruption by the supreme persons on the chair are the barriers in the way of acquiring knowledge or coming in touch with IT. The most important thing is that sufficient time is required to be flourished with IT whereas the rural high school students get a little financial facility. These options are easy for the students studying in urban areas.

We have launched a study on high schools from urban and rural areas. From this study a clear picture can be found about the difference between the rural and urban schools facilities.

Objectives	RajukUttara Model College	Harinagar High School
Students	2200	136
Total Teachers	140	17
Computer Teacher	5	1
Computer Lab	2	1
No. of Computers	70	7
Internet Lab	1	No

\*Source: *Field study and Project Report of Progoti71 Development Program.*

In some cases it is seen the general students who are studying on arts and commerce faculty are deprived of computer facilities provided by the school authority. It is thought that only the science students need computer skills and they are given maximum preference. For this why the students other than science faculty lose their eagerness to develop themselves with computer literacy. But all of we know that students from every faculty need computer skills and literacy to make them fit for further competitive future. So awareness is to be developed among the concerned people to understand the matter and to take necessary steps.

## 2.6 Information Technology in Bangladesh & Networked readiness

“The performance of our university students in international programming contests clearly indicates that Bangladesh has world-class IT skills.”

Computer Science, Professor of Bangladesh

“There is very little cooperation between the government and the private sector in formulating national IT strategies. It seems that we always have to fight to get the government attention.”

Executive of Bangladeshi IT Company.

These two statements clearly show a controversial figure of our IT sector. In recent years Bangladesh has achieved success in programming and IT contests, no doubt about this. But IT sector can't play an important role in our economy. Our universities provide IT and engineering graduates, but unable to provide proper professionals. We have five public engineering universities, which are known as the hub of creating engineers in our country. The topper students of high schools and colleges get them admitted into these. Most of those students are interested in teaching and go abroad for a luxurious life. Most of engineering teachers also motivate us for going abroad or choosing teaching as a profession. A few students have an intention to do something exceptional or to create something for our national IT and other engineering industries. Beside this in Bangladesh, Networked readiness, like overall social and economic development is hampered by massive over population, a low literacy rate, corruption, bureaucratic complexity and frequent natural disasters. The nation ranks seventy-third in overall networked readiness. Now see a statistics:

<b>Networked Readiness index</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Enabling factors components index</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Network Access</b>	<b>75</b>
Information infrastructure	72
Hardware, Software & support	74
<b>Network Policy</b>	<b>75</b>
Business & Economy Environment	75
ICT Policy	75
<b>Networked society</b>	<b>74</b>
Networked learning	73
ICT opportunities	75
Social Capital	75
<b>Networked Economy</b>	<b>72</b>
E-commerce	69
E-governance	73
General Infrastructure	73

\*Source: *The global Information Technology Report 2001-2002*

Whatever the statistics shows, all these are based on some major cities. Except those cities the condition of information technology is too poor. Several cell-phone operators come with some new packages of IT solutions for the mass people, but that can't create any major revolution. This report is submitted more than one decade ago, but still now our success in this sector is confined within small classes of people. And they bring more success only for their personal interest. But their presence is a part of our population is out of concern. Though we can't make a greater change our education policy, that's why we have only one option for the skill development in IT sector and that is that the spontaneous development of the high school students by making them interested in this.

Now see some key facts of Bangladesh within the time period 1999-2002:

Population: 137,000,000
Rural Population(% of total population),1999:76.04%
GDP per capita(PPP): US\$ 1,561
Global Competitiveness index ranking,2001-2002 : 71
UNDP Human Development index Ranking, 2001(adjusted to GTR sample): 73
Main telephone lines per 100 inhabitants: 0.34
Telephone faults per 100 main telephone lines: 17.32
Internet hosts per 10,000 inhabitants: 0.25
Personal computer per 100 inhabitants: 0.09
Piracy rate: NA
Percent of PCs connected to internet: 2.31%
Internet users per hosts: 16.67
Internet users per 100 inhabitants: 0.04
Cell phone subscribers per 100 inhabitants:

0.14

Average monthly cost for 20 hours of internet access: US\$ 25.46

\*Source: *The global Information Technology Report 2001-2002*

### 3. CITC DETAIL PLANNING

Community Information Technology Center is actually an extra attachment of the local high school. This is a plan to rebuild and upgrade the school computer lab as a multi-purpose public center, where both school kids and the local people. All of the villagers have access to use the center. Here school students can get access without any payment but others will have access with a limited payment. This type of public center can help the total area's sustainable and long term development. Now come to the proper discussion regarding the detail plan of the CITC.

It has been already told that CITC is based in the local school. In many rural school there are limited number of computer devices and sometimes inter modules are also present in a limited number of schools. In each and every high school a post for computer teacher is appointed. So this is very easy for us to build a tiny computer or IT center. From a study on some rural or suburban schools, we have seen that in most of the schools have 7-10 computers and in some school that use internet mostly use for official purposes. There approximately zero access for students in school internet. Bangladesh government has taken step to send at least a single internet device in every school. If every school will be equipped with proper internet modules there is a problem with internet connection. Without internet connection a well-equipped school will not reach to its desired success. In this new model we are trying to make a revolutionary change in our schools' computer labs. We have made our focus to the local schools because this plan can be easily implemented there without any bureaucratic problem. In local schools the governing body is formed with local elites, public representatives, teachers and some other officials. So by convincing them this plan can easily implemented in those schools.

According to this planning in the local high schools every computer and other modules will be endorsed in CITC. In the time of school periods this devices will be used for school's academic and administrative purposes. When this devices will be used for public purposes that can be settled by the school administration. In school time all the academic lab works will continue as usual in CITC, administrative work will continue as they need and students will use this center as their personal interest in their free time within this time. After this period or within this peak our general people of the locality will get permission to use this center by a limited payments. This payment may be as like as monthly basis as the public library membership basis or as like as cyber café system. This purpose must be treated as the second importance and after meeting the demand of internal and school kids demand. By this second system CITC can generate limited level revenue which will help them to run the handling cost of the center. A person must be appointed as the in charge of the center that will be appointed by the governing body and work under school administration. A monthly meeting will be taken place of the body to run the center in proper way. In every year Annual general meeting of CITC must be arranged where not only the management of CITC will be present but also the school governing body, local other people of reputation

and others will remain present for the regular routine management meeting and for its further development of the center. This center is not only confined within its club and cyber cafe activities, but also it will have some other development, training and public activities. This center will arrange workshop, open discussion sessions and competition in every month including some sorts of training & awareness program as much as possible from their side.

In all programs the school students must get most priority and then the others will be included in the program of CITC. In every program of CITC student will attend without any kind of extra payment, but other participants will have to pay for participation. This payment must be within the ability of the local people as all the people can attend in the program. There is no doubt about this that CITC is just a non-profit model of sustainable local development with a very limited amount monetary factor to run its operation by itself. We have make a statistics from where we can estimate if it can be possible to operate the cyber café activities only 4 hours in a day and 7 days in a week, a CITC can earn about 80-100 \$ beside it's school activities, which is enough to run the center. Other activities of CITC can create an additional revenue generation which can make a successful development for CITC as well as the people. Therefore this is really a self-dependent sustainable model of development specially for the developing & under developed countries.

Instruments, logistics & personnel for the CITC:

1. Computer
2. Broad Band Internet Connection
3. Self and computer table
4. Communication module for internet connection
5. Office logistics.
6. Computer instructor & Office assistant.
7. Accommodation for the Center setup
8. Learning Materials (books, kits and tutorials)

Services & events of CITC:

1. Cyber café
2. Lab & club activities (only for the school students)
3. Office activities (only for the school's work)
4. Training on computer & IT
5. Workshop on Information Technology, entrepreneurship, skill development & Several awareness program.
6. Local socio-economic development initiatives.

#### **4. CHALLENGES**

Early marriage of the girls, school dropout these are the common challenges for our education, especially for the high school of Bangladesh. Beside these some notable challenges we have to face for the implementation of this project. First of all we may face the bureaucratic problems and we have already faced it in the time of our pilot program. In most cases we have found that the school students and teachers are very much interested to do something which can help them by developing their skills and increase their quality. But most of the local schools are governed by some so called local elites. They try to stop these type of activities, since they think that if it is happened they may unable to dominate the local people or they may lost their control over local business. Sometimes they create barrier to earn some illegal money or facilities from the project. Sometime they threaten those people who honestly work for executing the project. Second challenge lies in the funding regarding this project. Though this is a project which is designed to run by its own, it will need some initial installment cost. For that purposes some

fund is needed here. Local elite even local businessmen will not be interested to donate here because they think there is no direct interest here. They always try to discourage this type of project. That's why we will have to depend on foreign aid which is not so easy for the local schools. Lack of leadership quality, open minded thinking, self-dependency of the rural students also will be a great challenge for the project. If we can implement this project then some time will be needed to motivate the school kids and to make them interested on this sector. But we hope this will not be a long term problem and we can easily overcome this within six month to one year. Another problem is laid here and that is the school switching. If any student will do well in any school he try to switch to a better school and this is a threat for the school's development. It may discourage the school teachers to concentrate on the students. It can also be noticed as a minor challenge that how much the school teachers will be dedicated to the programs. Most of cases it is true that the school teachers are low paid in our country. So why will they spend extra time in school for the development program? But it depends on the motivation or extra payment process and it will depend on the authority's willing or on the social condition there. Cost of internet or discontinuity of power supply may harm the project, but that is also a minor cause we guess.

## **5. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION**

Some major and minor challenges are involved in this project. Except these this is really a unique model for local development initiative. If this project can be started initially it will have to struggle for some bureaucratic and economic problems, but it will be overcome within a few days with its success. CITC can create jobs by its initiatives locally and by the freelancing globally. No doubt about this that CITC can broaden the opportunities for freelancing for the under privileged people by skill development programs and low cost internet service. It will also support the local business and agriculture by promoting, marketing, sharing opportunities and numerous ways. This CITC can enlarge the activities of school labs which are now in hibernation. When we work with our pilot project on IT in some rural schools in Bangladesh, we have found that both the school teachers and students have interests to learn something new. We have got their wonderful response in our programs. Most of the schools kids took part in our selection process and almost all selected participants were present in the program spontaneously. They have some lack in thinking and leadership quality, but their spontaneous participation and interest and the teacher's co-operation will make CITC a more successful plan forever. For some legal problems in our country it is difficult to work in the government schools with this plan now. If this plan achieves success in the local schools, we can easily introduce it in government schools and even primary schools. CITC will not anything out of the school campus. It will be a part and parcel of the local people. This project can create a lot of opportunities for the rural and underprivileged people for economic, educational, social development and a base of decentralized economy can be introduced by this in the far end of the country's territory which can stop the excessive flow of people to the major cities. This can ensure the enormous success in the harmonious development in a developing or under developed country.

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# GENDER AND BEHAVIOR IN ICT USE AMONG MALAYSIAN YOUTH

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## Abstract

Youth nowadays are exposed to information and communication technology (ICT) at a young age. This situation has raised concerns among parents and teachers on their attitude and behavior towards technology. Therefore, the aim of this research is to investigate the gender and behavior of school students' relate to the ethical use of ICT. This research employed the quantitative approach and the survey questionnaire method is used for data collection. A total of 186 responses were collected from students of a Malaysian primary school aged between ten to twelve years old. Twenty-nine scenarios of ethical issues ICT were used in the survey. The ethical scenarios included four ethical issues: intellectual property, privacy, accuracy and accessibility. From the study, the results imply that there are significant gender differences between male and female students, with the females appearing to be more ethical. In order to assist students understand the ethical use in ICT, it is necessary for school administrators (i.e. school's top management and teachers) with the support of Ministry of Education to provide a systematic guidelines or rules of ICT use and computer ethics awareness programme in schools.

**Keywords:** *gender, behavior, use of ICT, ethical, PAPA model*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Research on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) has been examining on several variables such as age (Lucas & Mason, 2008), gender (Adam, 2000; Adam & Ofori-Amanfo, 2000; Kadujevic, 2000, Reabdarkolaei & Amuei, 2008; Turner, 2006), culture (Ess, 2001a; Ess, 2001b), religiosity (Abdallah, 2010) and computer experience. According to previous researches, there are gender differences in the ICT use (Bunderson & Christensen, 1995; Kay, 1992; Whitley, 1997; Sanders, 2006) and there are constant gender differences in computer attitudes (Comber et al., 1997). It is found that compared to the males, female students tend to have less computer experience and hold less favorable attitudes towards computer (Kadujevich, 2000; Shashaani, 1997). Others concluded in their research that female secondary students are less positive about computers because they have less interest in them (Robertson et al. 1995).

For over twenty years, the PAPA model introduced by Mason (1986) popularly remains as a theoretical social framework in dealing with major ICT issues. The four significant issues highlighted in the PAPA model are Privacy, Accuracy, Property and Accessibility. Property refers to the information about the self

where an individual is willing or forced to give up. Meanwhile accuracy represents the legitimacy, precision and authenticity in which information is rendered. Privacy examines ownership details, exchange fairness, and access characteristics, and accessibility is the right or privilege to obtain data or information from another source.

Previous researchers also suggested that the PAPA model is the most influential article on the ICT ethics (Ellis and Griffith, 2001). Privacy was identified as the most visible ethical issue on ICT use (Loch & Conger, 1996). Other researchers stated that the most controversial ethical issue is intellectual property (Kuzu, 2009) followed by accessibility (Alakurt et al., 2012). The aim of this research is to investigate the gender and behavior of school students' relate to the ethical use of ICT. Thus, the following research question is investigated in this research:

“Are there differences between the male and female students on the ethical use of ICT?”

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *2.1 Ethical use of ICT*

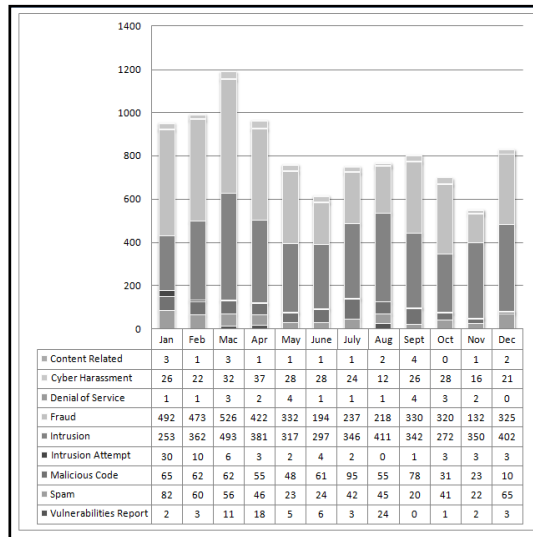
Ethics is about directing people's actions in making decisions which is derived from the differences between right and wrong or true or false. According to Spinello and Tavani (2003), cyber ethics is the field of implemented ethics that inspect the moral, legal, and social issues in the improvement and application of cyber technology. Thurairasa and Johnson (2003) pointed out the three most serious ethical issues that raised concern are theft of copyright material, privacy and access to undesirable material on the Internet. Whittier (2006) explained that in the context of application on the Internet, ethics are the ethical rules for the users of the computer world (Whittier, 2006). In an earlier research, ethical is referred as being computer ethical. Masrom, et al. (2010) described computer ethical as the research of ethics which is associated to computer use and the ethical perception which describes a moral IT domain or area. Other different terms used to describe ethics are computer ethics, information ethics and internet ethics.

Ethical issues occurred all around the world. Willard (2007) evaluated the harm of the internet to children such as sexual activities as they may be exposed to pornography or sexual materials, or become the victims of sex predators. Based on the Hull Daily Mail in the United Kingdom, the police are now dealing with numerous cyber-bullying issues among primary school children due to incidents of faking Facebook accounts and the spread of videos on bullying others (White, 2011).

Students were found to be too scared and terrified to go to school after abuses on websites for example, the Facebook account (Anonymous, 2011 & Charles, 2011). These incidents mainly occurred due to the fact that the bullies are shielded by avatars, alter egos and various online identities which allow them to be whoever and whatever they want (Gabriel, 2011). Plagiarism has also caused an alarm to the society. The students' copy and paste information from the web as if they are copying from a book and do not care or simply do not notice that their actions are right or wrong (Whella, 2011). Figure 1 illustrates the reported incidents based on the general incident classification statistics organized by the Malaysia Computer Emergency Response Team (MyCERT, 2012).



Figure 1. Reported incidents based on general incident classification statistics (MyCERT, 2012)



The statistics indicates that the reported incidents rose rapidly throughout the year 2012. These numbers are expected to grow rapidly due to the rapid growth of technologies in recent years.

### 2.2 Malaysian schools

The National Education System in Malaysia consists of three categories which are the pre-school education, primary education and secondary education. Currently, there are 7722 primary schools in Malaysia. Under the government education institution, the duration of primary school is six years. Nevertheless, the duration can also be completed between five to seven years. The primary schools in Malaysia are divided into national schools and national-type schools.

In 1996, the Smart School Project (SSP) was presented as one of the programs that integrated ICT in school as part of the seven flagship under the Malaysia Super Corridor (MSC) program to achieve the Vision 2020 (Rubijesmin and Sheard, 2009). Then, in July 1997, the Malaysian Smart School program was launched by the Prime Minister which aimed to capitalize on brand new technologies and quick deployment of the Multimedia Super Corridor's infrastructure (Hamzah *et al.* 2009). Chan (2002) stated that the Ministry of Education views the concept of ICT in education as a system that enables information gathering, management, manipulation, access and communication in various forms.

### 2.3 Gender and ethical use of ICT

Research on the use of ICT has examined on several variables especially relating to gender. In past researches, females were shown to perform the opposite of the males in ethical conditions (Ferrell & Skinner, 1988; Jones & Gautschi, 1988; Reiss & Mitra, 1998; Ruegger & King, 1992; Whipple and Swords, 1992). The females were reported to have more negative attitudes towards computers (Durdell & Thompson, 1997).

Gender differences were demonstrated to have involvement in the measurement of attitudes towards the use of computer (Morse & Daiute, 1992). The male predominance in ICT is considered a norm (Kramer & Lehman, 1990). Females were reported to be more cautious compared to males and more concerned on ethical issues in general (Collins, 2000). However, some researchers stated that the females' ability on

using ICT is growing and almost on par with the males (Pitkow & Kehoe, 1996). Ethics among females have challenged the previous theories in ethics, especially in their tendency to focus on moral theory (Adam, 2002). Wilson (2004) considered gender as a factor that involves differences, inequality and ability.

#### *2.4 Behavior towards ethical use in ICT*

Experimental studies have examined on the conditions under which young children will employ either an imitative or an emulative approach (Horner & Whiten, 2005). Furr (2009) explained behavior as statement or expressions of verbal or actions that are possibly available to careful observers using common sensory processes. When students are exposed to unrated materials from the Internet, they will be tempted to emulate the actions from materials which they saw or learnt. It will create negative impacts and severe psychological problems for the students.

Based on a survey research in Connecticut, one in every 25 teens has been identified to have “problematic internet use” (Liu *et al.*, 2011). They were reported to have inevitable desire to constantly be on the Internet and they felt stressed when they are not online and they even said that they have tried to quit or reduce their Internet usage. According to the survey, students who have problematic internet issues have a tendency to be depressed and would usually be involved in serious fights especially boys who have high tendency of smoking and drug use. Fundamental proof also proposes that problematic Internet usage shares common features with drug and alcohol abuse disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders and impulse-control disorders (Liu *et al.*, 2011).

### **3. METHOD**

#### *3.1 Sample and data collection*

This research employed quantitative approach, and purposive sampling for data collection is used to obtain a better understanding on the patterns of school students' behavior. Respondents aged between ten to twelve years old were selected as they are type of youth considered for this research. The primary smart school was chosen because this type of school normally provides computer facilities for students and conducts most of learning activities using ICT. The respondents were asked to complete a survey questionnaire during school time under the supervision of teachers.

#### *3.2 Instrument*

The instrument contained questions on the respondents profile such as gender, age, race, purpose of using internet, and students' opinion on attitude, behavior and intention when using ICT. The survey items or measures for ICT attitude were adopted from (Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) and Battacherjee (2000) while measures for ICT behavior were adopted from Ajzen (1991), Pederson (2001), Pedersen (2002), Pedersen (2005), Taylor and Todd (1995). For intention to use ICT, the measures were adopted from Wang *et al.* (2006), Ventakesh & Davis (2000), Ventakesh & Morris (2000) and measures for the four ethical issues: intellectual property, privacy, accuracy and accessibility were adopted from Mason (1986).

The survey items used in this research consisted of positive and negative statements such as 'I am very happy when using the internet' and 'I found that, using the internet is complicated and cumbersome'. The purpose of having these types of statement is to control response sets among the respondents. Students were instructed to indicate their answer by using a five-point Likert scale. The responses for the positive word items were recorded as strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, undecided = 3, disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. For negative statements, the scoring was reversed. Data were analyzed using the SPSS version 16.0 and the descriptive statistics analysis was observed.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Profile of respondents

A total of 186 survey questionnaires were collected. The respondents for this research consisted of 113 female and 73 male students aged between ten to twelve years old. They were from a primary smart school located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Table 1 presents the summary of the respondents' profile. There are 39.2% of male students and 60.8% of female students who participated in this research. 21.2% of the respondents were 10 years old, 39.7% were 11 years old while 39.1% were 12 years old. The results showed that most of the respondents use ICT to surf websites (88.2%), play games (61.8%) and chat with friends (60.2%).

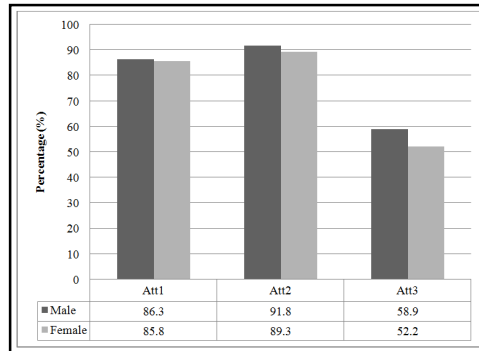
Table 1. Profile of respondents

Demographic characteristics	Items	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	73	39.2
	Female	113	60.8
Age	10 years old	39	21.2
	11 years old	73	39.7
	12 years old	72	39.1
Race	Malay	134	72.4
	Chinese	32	17.3
	India	16	8.6
	Indigenous	3	1.6
Purpose of using ICT	Play on-line games	115	61.8
	Watch a DVD or video	98	52.7
	Chatting with friends (e-mail or chat)	112	60.2
	Download files (songs, pictures, and video)	72	38.7
	Using software writing / drawing	54	29
	Surfing the websites	164	88.2
	Others	20	10.8

### 4.2 Attitude towards ICT

There are three scenarios on the ICT attitude with a 5-point Likert scale. Several scores in negative statement were reversed to maintain the unified direction on the scale. Figure 2 shows the results on attitude towards ICT.

Figure 2. Attitude towards ICT



*Note:*

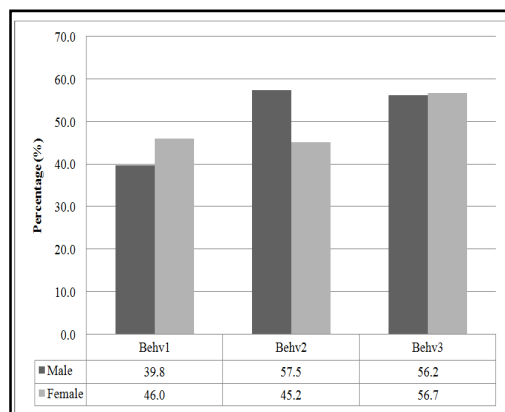
- Att1: I am very happy when using the internet.*
- Att2: I found that, using the internet is complicated and cumbersome.*
- Att3: I never get bored when using the internet.*

As shown in Figure 2, the male students’ indicated a slightly higher percentage in the attitude towards ICT compared to the female students in all items. 86.3% of male students and 85.8% of female students felt happy when using the internet. Majority of male students (91.8%) found that the internet is not complicated and cumbersome to use in comparison to the female students (89.3 %). The male (58.9%) and female students (52.2%) equally agreed that they never get bored when using the internet.

4.3 Behavior in ICT use

There are three scenarios on the behavior in ICT use with a 5-point Likert. Figure 3 shows the students’ responses on the behavior in ICT use.

Figure 3. ICT Behavior among Gender



*Note:*

- Behv1: I am free to use any computer facilities that I want.*
- Behv2: Using the internet and computer facilities are completely my choice*
- Behv3: I can choose any internet facilitiesand computer that I want.*

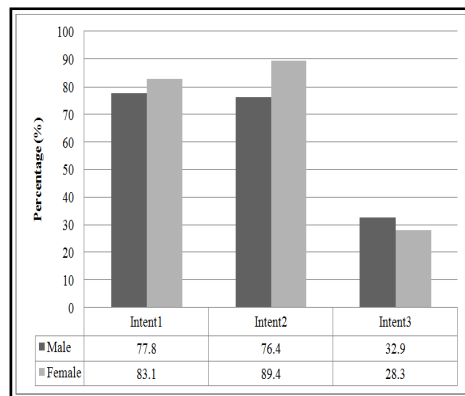
Figure 3 indicated that more female students (46.0%) agreed that they were free to use any computer facilities that they desired than male students (39.8%). More male students (57.5%) than male students

(45.2%) agreed that using the internet and computer facilities are completely their choice. Further, more female students (56.7%) agreed that they can choose any internet facilities and computer that they want compared to male students (56.2%).

#### 4.3 Intention to use ICT

There are three scenarios on the intention to use ICT with a 5-point Likert scale. Figure 4 shows the results on the intention to use ICT.

Figure 4. Intention to use ICT



*Note:*

*Intent1: I intend to use the internet and computers in the future*  
*Intent2: I will continue to use the internet and computers to complete school assignments*  
*Intent3: I will continue to use the internet and computers for entertainment and fun*

Figure 4 indicated that female students agreed that they intend to use the internet and computers in the future (83.1%) and will continue to use the internet and computers to complete school assignments (89.4%) compared to low percentages among male students (77.8% and 76.4%). However, more male students (32.9%) agreed to continue to use the internet and computers for entertainment and fun compared to female students (28.3%).

#### 4.5 Responses on ethical issues

Table 2 shows the ethical behavior related to intellectual property among students. There were 65.3% of male students and 65.5% of female students who disagreed that they often download files such as videos, movies, games and songs for free from the internet. 84.7% of the male students disagreed that they often share files (videos, songs, games and pictures) with others compared to 76.2% of female students. 82.2% of male students and 88.4% of female students disagreed that they did not seek for any permission before downloading any files (videos, songs, games and pictures) from the internet and distribute it to their friends. Both male (86.3%) and female students (85.9%) were found disagreed on using images obtained from the internet in their social sites. However, lower percentages were found in Q5 where 60.3% of male students and 59.8% of female student disagreed on uploading pictures of themselves with their friends on the internet without permission. Half of the students were found unaware that uploading images of other person without permission is unethical.

Table 2. Intellectual Property

Item	Statement	Gender	SD	D	U	A	SA
Q1	I often download files such as videos, movies, games and songs for free from the internet.	Male	N=26 36.1%	21 29.2%	17 23.6%	3 4.2%	5 6.9%
		Female	43 38.1%	31 27.4%	27 23.9%	12 10.6%	0 0%
Q2	I often share files (videos, songs, games and pictures) with others.	Male	45 62.5%	16 22.2%	6 8.3%	3 4.2%	2 2.8%
		Female	63 55.8%	23 20.4%	10 8.8%	9 8.0%	8 7.1%
Q3	I did not ask any permission before downloading any files (videos, songs, games and pictures) from the internet and distribute it to my friends	Male	29 39.7%	31 42.5%	12 16.4%	1 1.4%	0 0%
		Female	55 49.1%	44 39.3%	12 10.7%	1 0.9%	0 0%
Q4	I often put the images obtained from the internet to my social sites.	Male	48 65.8%	15 20.5%	7 9.6%	3 4.1%	3 4.1%
		Female	74 65.5%	23 20.4%	12 10.6%	2 1.8%	2 1.8%
Q5	I often upload my pictures and friends on the internet without their permission.	Male	24 32.9%	20 27.4%	17 23.3%	3 4.1%	9 12.3%
		Female	27 23.9%	40 35.9%	30 26.5%	6 5.3%	10 8.8%

Note:

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Uncertain, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Table 3 illustrated the percentages of students on the ethical behavior related to privacy in ICT. Both male (87.7%) and female students (88.5%) would never open email from unknown email addresses. There are huge differences between the male (74.0%, 86.3%) and female students (81.4%, 95.6%) for Q7 and Q8. There are more female students who would never disseminate personal information to unknown websites and download files from an unknown source compared to male students. In Q9, male (84.9%) and female students (83.2%) agreed that they would never give out personal information to other parties recently known on the internet. For Q10, there are more female students (91.2%) than male students (87.7%) who have never entered others' social networking accounts without authorization.

Table 3. Privacy

Item	Statement	Gender	SD	D	U	A	SA
Q6	I never open email from unknown email address.	Male	N=2 2.7%	1 1.4%	6 8.2%	27 37.0%	37 50.7%
		Female	1 0.9%	1 0.9%	11 9.7%	41 36.3%	59 52.2%
Q7	I never give out personal information to unknown websites.	Male	0 0%	4 5.5%	15 20.5%	11 15.1%	43 58.9%
		Female	0 0%	9 8.0%	12 10.6%	24 21.2%	68 60.2%
Q8	I never download files (pictures, songs, videos) from an unknown source.	Male	3 4.1%	3 4.1%	4 5.5%	14 19.2%	49 67.1%
		Female	2 1.8%	1 0.9%	2 1.8%	14 12.4%	94 83.2%
Q9	I never give out personal information to the new people on the internet.	Male	1 1.4%	6 8.2%	4 5.5%	19 26.0%	43 58.9%
		Female	5 4.4%	1 0.9%	13 11.5%	27 23.9%	67 59.3%
Q10	I never entered others' social networking site without authorization.	Male	1 1.4%	3 4.1%	5 6.8%	13 17.8%	51 69.9%
		Female	4 3.5%	1 0.9%	5 4.4%	23 20.4%	80 70.8%

Note:

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Uncertain, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Table 4 demonstrates the percentages of students in regards to accuracy issues. For Q11, only 73.9% of male students and 76.1% of female students found that they were able to understand information on the internet. However for Q12, more female students (87.6%) than male students (84.9%) indicate that they never get wrong information from the internet. For Q13, there were 90.3% of male students and 92.9% of female students who are able to find the required information very easily on the internet. For Q14, 87.7% of male students and 86.8% of female students strongly believed all the information available on the

internet. However for Q15, more female students (95.6%) than male students (87.5%) disagreed on discovering information that has not been currently updated

Table 4. Accuracy

Item	Statement	Gender	SD	D	U	A	SA
Q11	I find it hard to understand some information available on the internet.	Male	N=1 1.4%	4 5.5%	14 19.2%	29 39.7%	25 34.2%
		Female	3 2.7%	1 0.9%	23 20.4%	45 39.8%	41 36.3%
Q12	I often get the wrong information on the internet.	Male	1 1.4%	3 4.1%	7 9.6%	12 16.4%	50 68.5%
		Female	2 1.8%	2 1.8%	10 8.8%	18 15.9%	81 71.7%
Q13	I was able to find the required information very easily on the internet.	Male	1 1.4%	0 0%	6 8.3%	12 16.7%	53 73.6%
		Female	3 2.7%	0 0%	5 4.4%	13 11.5%	92 81.4%
Q14	I strongly believe all the information available on the internet.	Male	0 0%	1 1.4%	8 11.0%	20 27.4%	44 60.3%
		Female	2 1.8%	3 2.7%	10 8.8%	29 25.7%	69 61.1%
Q15	I found some information in the internet is not updated in accordance with the current time.	Male	1 1.4%	4 5.6%	4 5.6%	12 16.7%	51 70.8%
		Female	1 0.9%	0 0%	4 3.5%	21 18.6%	87 77.0%

Note:

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Uncertain, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Table 5 shows the results that relate to accessibility issues in ICT. More female students (87.6%) disagreed that they were free to access the internet without parental supervision or their teacher compared to male students (84.7%). There are more female students (97.3%) than male students (91.7%) who agreed that they will not enter the websites banned by their parents or teachers. Both male (66.7%) and female students (67.2%) have a time limit to surf the internet at home. Lower results were projected on activating computer virus barrier on the computer at school or home. There are 60.3% of male students and 59.3% of female students who activated the firewall. This shows that they did not realize the importance of firewall in computers. More female students (88.5%) agreed that they are allowed to use a personal computer in their room than male students (82.2%).

Table 5. Accessibility

Item	Statement	Gender	SD	D	U	A	SA
Q16	I am free to access the internet without parental supervision or my teacher.	Male	N=0 0%	1 1.4%	10 13.9%	16 22.2%	45 62.5%
		Female	3 2.7%	2 1.8%	9 8.0%	27 23.9%	72 63.7%
Q17	I will not enter the website banned by my parents or teachers.	Male	2 2.7%	1 1.4%	3 4.1%	15 20.5%	52 71.2%
		Female	2 1.8%	1 0.9%	0 0%	26 23.0%	84 74.3%
Q18	I do not have a time limit to surf the internet at home.	Male	1 1.4%	2 2.8%	21 29.2%	17 23.6%	31 43.1%
		Female	1 0.9%	2 1.8%	34 30.1%	32 28.3%	44 38.9%
Q19	I will not activate a computer virus barrier system (firewall) on the computer at school or home.	Male	7 9.6%	5 6.8%	17 23.3%	18 24.7%	26 35.6%
		Female	3 2.7%	6 5.3%	37 32.7%	38 33.6%	29 25.7%
Q20	I am allowed to use a personal computer in my room.	Male	3 4.1%	0 0%	10 13.7%	16 21.9%	44 60.3%
		Female	2 1.8%	2 1.8%	9 8.0%	29 25.7%	71 62.8%

Note:

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Uncertain, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

## 5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to investigate the gender and behavior differences towards ethical use in ICT among students. The results revealed that male students are better than female students in terms of their attitude towards ICT. However, in terms of behavior and intention to use ICT, male students indicated lower responses than female students who showed positive ICT behavior and intention compared to of male students. In terms of ICT ethical issues, female students showed that they are more ethical than male students in three areas such as accessibility, accuracy and privacy. Male students were found to be more ethical than female students in terms of intellectual property.

The results showed that female students display higher level of ethical judgment in ethical use in ICT than the male students. The result is similar to previous researches (Khazanchi, 1995; Mason & Mudrack, 1996; Morris, 1997). Mason & Mudrack (1996) found that there are significant gender differences between male and female students, with the females appearing to be more ethical. Morris (1997) found that the females score significantly higher than the males on a measure of ethical beliefs. In order to help students understand the ethics in ICT use, it is necessary for school administrator to provide a systematic guidelines or rules of ICT use and computer ethics awareness programme in schools. This research may be limited by several factors such as time constraints and the availability of resources, thereby the result may not be able to represent the entire population. In future, other primary and secondary schools will be included as samples for this research.

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# FACILITATING USE OF ICT IN CREATING KNOWLEDGEABLE YOUTH FISHERMEN

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## Abstract

The role of information and communication technology towards the society cannot be denied. ICT has played a vital role in the development particularly in different sector of the society such as agriculture, education, health, economic and fisheries. In agriculture sector, the fishing industry is playing an important role in the Malaysian economic development. Base on the scenario above the purpose of this study is to examine the level use of ICT tools among the youth fishermen in the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia. A quantitative approach was employed in this study by using a survey questionnaire to generate the primary data of the study. A total of 200 respondents, comprising of male and female fishermen from the Perak and Kedah states of Malaysia have been selected as the main respondents of the study. The results shows that the among ICT tools that frequently used by the youth fishermen is a mobile phone, followed by television and GPS. The purpose of using this technology is to get information pertaining to the fisheries industry such as weather, market, safety and others. Mobile phone communication help them in getting fast feedback, prompt action taken and thus help in enhancing their income generation, increase their knowledge and have a control on their daily fisheries industry task at a reasonable and lower cost. It is suggested that a mobile application communication platform pertaining to the fisheries being set-up, to enable the young fishermen to communicate, exchange information among themselves and thus helping to further enhance their knowledge, increase the income generation and to prepare the dynamic youth fishermen to enable them to compete with the world global fisheries industry at the international level.

**Keywords:** *Use of ICT, youth fishermen and fishing industries development*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the current scenario development based on information, knowledge is seen as the key to success in this modern world. Admitting this fact, the Malaysian government has come out with a number of initiatives to ensure that the process of knowledge sharing and dissemination is unceasing (Abu Hassan, 2011, Abu Hassan & Omar, 2009). As such, Information Communication Technology (ICT) plays an important role in various developments particularly in different sectors such as agriculture, education, health, economic and fisheries. In agriculture sector for example, the fishing industry contributes a large amount to the Malaysian economic development. The Malaysian government has introduced a number of modern technologies such as Geographical Positioning Systems (GPS), echo sounders, sonar, mobile phones, and GPS (Omar, et al., 2011), apart from using the traditional media such as the radio and television, to assist the fishermen in searching for information particularly pertaining to the fisheries industry and thus creating an

informative and knowledgeable fishermen particularly the youth fishermen (Abraham, 2007). Such tools are expected to enhance the fishermen socio-economic, by enabling them to get the right information, enhance business communication and transactions and, thus help to facilitate their daily fisheries activities (Shaffril et. Al., 2012)

Youth fishermen play an important role in the fishery industry. In Malaysian, youth are those age between 15-40 years old and they constitutes the largest portion of the total population. In 2010, slightly more than 12 million youth were recorded and it constituted more than 40% of the total population by that time. Majority of youth in Malaysia are employed and in the statistic revealed by Institute for Youth Development and Research (IPPBM) (2010), shows that, a total of 7.2 million youth in Malaysia are working in various sectors. A big number of them are employed in construction, business and services sectors.

Although majority of the Malaysian youth possess secondary school level of education, there is quite good numbers of them who managed to have tertiary level of education. Interestingly, numbers of those who managed to have such level of education are increasing year by year. In 2010, a total of 1.986 million youth, were recorded to have tertiary level of education compared to just 1.594 million in 2007. Doubtlessly, the increasing trends are the output of efforts placed by government in ensuring equal chances among youth in pursuing knowledge and education. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the level use of ICT tools among the youth fishermen in the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Basically, this research is an abstract of a larger research programme embarked by our laboratory in the Institute for Social Science Studies. In the larger research programme, the research is based on UTAUT theory as a basis of discussion. For this paper, we are looking at the level usage of ICT tools among the youth fishermen in northern part on the Peninsular Malaysia. A quantitative approach was employed in this study by using a survey questionnaire to generate the primary data of the study. A total of 200 respondents, comprising fishermen from Larut-Matang, Perak and Langkawi Island, Kedah, the northern states of the Peninsular Malaysia have been selected as the main respondents of the study. The respondents for this study were all registered fishermen and assistance from agencies officers in the fishery industry. This study is focusing on the use of ICT which is referring to GPS, sonar, echo sounders, wireless sets and mobile phones and the results might have differed if other ICT tools such as media traditional like radio and television have been included. A self-administered questionnaire were used in acquiring information on participant social characteristics, present and past behaviour, standards of behaviour or attitudes and their beliefs and reasons for action with the respect to the topic under investigation (Babbie, 2012). Data were later analysed using SPSS to get the descriptive frequency and level of ICT usage.

## **3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Looking at the demography of the respondents, result of study shows that fishery industry in Perak and Kedah area are still being dominated by male (97.5%) compare to female (Please refer to Table 1). Fishery industry was still operated by the older generation aged 41-60 years old (65%) compare to the youth 35%. In term of their education background, more than half of the fishermen attained primary school (56%) and only a few of them have secondary school qualifications (25%). This indicates that most of the fishermen have a low level of education background which may have an effect on the type of information sought and exchanged.

Table 1: Demographic Profile (n=200)

Profile	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	SD
Gender				
Male	195	97.5	1.02	.156
Female	5	2.5		
Race				
Malay	162	81.0		
Chinese	38	19.0		
Age				
< 30 years	24	12.0	46.1	12.5
31-40 years	46	23.0		
41-50 years	55	27.5		
51-60 years	45	22.5		
> 61 years	30	15.0		
Education level				
Non formal education	36	18.0	2.18	.860
Primary school	113	56.5		
SRP/PMR	32	16.0		
SPM/SPMV	17	8.5		
Skill certificate/STPM	2	1.0		
Income per month				
RM <500	52	26.0	901	541
RM 501-1000	100	50.0		
RM >1001	48	24.0		
Number of household				
< -2	8	4.0	5.51	2.27
3- 4	58	29.0		
5-6	78	39.0		
7-8	38	19.0		
9-10	15	7.5		
> 11	3	1.5		

In term of their income level, most of them (76%) have income less than RM1,000.00 (USD320.00) per month with the number of household between than 5-11 people. Moreover, majority of the fishermen live in joint family member that is together with their parents.

Attending training and seminar is one of the ways to increase the youth fishermen knowledge. However, due to time constrains, most of the youth fishermen (98%) could rarely attended any of the training and seminar courses (Please refer to Table 2). This is due to fact that of the irregular working hours that they have to spend their time at the sea. If there is any of the fishermen attended the training (2%), the courses that they had attended were more on GPS and computer courses that was organised by the Department of Fishery (DOF) and University Science Malaysia, last from one to two days of training.

Table 2: Trainings and seminar attended among youth fishermen (n=43)

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Course/training/seminar</b>	
No	98.0
Yes	2.0
<b>Name of Course</b>	
No	98.0
GPS	1.5
Computer	.5
<b>Computer course organizer</b>	
No	98.0
DOF	1.0
USM	1.0
<b>Days courses conducted</b>	
No	98.0
1-2 days	2.0

### 3.1 Level usage of ICT among fishermen

Based on various ICT tools that have been discussed earlier in this paper, result shows that majority of the youth fishermen (96%) use the mobile phone (Please refer to Table 3). This indicate that the use of mobile phone is very high (mean 2.89), compare to other media technologies. The purpose of using mobile phone to contact with their family members and friends when they are away at the sea, are to exchange information on fish marketing information such as negotiates for a good price for the fish, and also for safety reasons. This signifiesthat mobile phones play very vital role in rising business transactions and market proficiencies, where mobile technology made the information distribution faster and cheaper.

Apart from the mobile phone, the youth fishermen also use GPS (mean 1.22) to enable them to identify their location between ten to twenty kilometres away during fishing at the sea and also distance from the shore. They use GPS for reach at safe place and most of the fishermen use the sonar in sea for location the fish.

Table 3: Level use of ICT among fishermen at the sea

<b>Usage level of ICT</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>
Mobile phone	76.0	20.0	4.0	2.89	.372
GPS	10.0	2.5	87.5	1.22	.613
Wireless set	6.5	2.0	91.5	1.15	.508
Radar	3.0	1.5	95.5	1.07	.360
Sonar	2.0	1.5	96.5	1.05	.304
Echo sounder	1.0	.5	98.5	1.02	.211



In term of ICT usage at home, most of the youth fishermen use traditional media a lot compare to the use of the Internet. Television still the main ICT being used to access to information, obtaining current information on the weather, and other information pertaining to the fishery. This is followed by the use of radio, still the traditional media, in obtaining information on weather forecast, current and daily information. The use of the Internet although low compare to other media, but still in the process of adopting and adapting. Most of the Internet, according to the fishermen was used by their family member such as their children in assisting their learning education.

Table 4: Level use of ICT at home among the fishermen

Usage level of ICT	High	Moderate	Low	Mean	S.D
Television	58.0	31.5	10.5	2.47	.679
Radio	11.5	23.0	65.5	1.46	.693
Internet	1.5	3.5	95.0	1.06	.302

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results shows that the among ICT tools that frequently used by the youth fishermen is a mobile phone, followed by television and GPS. The purpose of using this technology is to get information pertaining to the fisheries industry such as weather, market, safety and others. Mobile phone communication help them in getting fast feedback, prompt action taken and thus help in enhancing their income generation, increase their knowledge and have a control on their daily fisheries industry task at a reasonable and lower cost. ICT has the capacity to facilitate double fishermen income, lessen the consumption of capital, energy and fuel, enhancing their safety aspects and widening their networks.

It is suggested that a mobile application communication platform pertaining to the fisheries being set-up, to facilitate and enable the young fishermen to communicate, exchange information among themselves and thus helping to further enhance their knowledge, increase the income generation and to prepare the dynamic youth fishermen to enable them to compete with the world global fisheries industry at the international level.

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# BULLYING IN TIMES OF ICT

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## Abstract

Bullying is detrimental for school climate and a threat to students & teachers' safety and a threat to positive youth development. The empirical data available indicates that bullying is a worldwide problem faced by many young people either inside or outside school grounds, at work and in their communities. According to the world health organization Bullying constitute an alarming public health and social issue that warrants attention from teachers, health care providers, policy makers, and families. Nonetheless, bullying remains neglected as a social and health issue in most developing countries. The available empirical data indicates that bullying and delinquency are positively associated. Bullying has also been linked to depression, anxiety, psychosomatic complaints, low self-esteem, and poor social functioning among children and adolescences. Likewise, bullying is associated to suicide and suicidal attempts among children and youth. An important and perhaps more detrimental form of bullying have emerged with the rapid development and easy access to information technology and mass media communication: Cyberbullying. This new type of bullying is done using the Internet, mobile devices and ICT in a negative way to indirectly or directly attack or harm another person. The invincibility and anonymity of cyber bullies have made it difficult to manage within the school system and opens the door for more youth to take part in this type of behavior. As the 'traditional' bullying, cyber bullying has serious and shocking consequences.

**Keywords:** *Bullying, Cyberbullying, ICT, SNS, MSM, Youth,*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying is a worldwide problem that takes place inside or outside school grounds, at work, and local communities. And according to the world health organization bullying has become an alarming public health issue that warrants attention from health care providers, policy makers, and families. Nonetheless, bullying is still a neglected public health issue in most developing countries.

Despite of the different theoretical framework used to investigate workplace bullying and school bullying, research show that bullying is a multifactorial and destructive phenomenon that takes place in any place where people interact with others (Einarsen, 2000; Olweus 1993). Because bullying can take place in any social context (e.g. School, places of worship, community, workplace, etc.), anyone is at risk of becoming a target of bullying.

Bullying takes place when a person or group are frequently exposed to repeated negative actions by others. Bullying has been operationalized as persistent and systematic negative actions directed towards one or more targets; it involves more than one single act of aggression and the targets end up unable to defend themselves (Rayner & Keashly, 2005; Sampson, 2002; Juvonen, Nishina & Graham,

2001; Einarsen, 2000, Pepler & Craig, 2000; Olweus, 1994; 1991). These negative actions may take the form of persistent and systematic physical threats and injuries, verbal and non-verbal offensive and abusive expressions, nasty teasing, rumor spreading, destruction of property, intimidation, exclusion and ostracism (Carlyle and Steinman, 2007; Selekman & Vessy, 2004; Sampson, 2002).

Bullying has a detrimental impact on those directly or indirectly involved (e.g. bullied, bullies, bystanders, (Gasa, 2005; Einarsen, 2000). For example, being a target of bullying has been found to diminish a person's ability to progress and perform well at school or at work; it also contributes towards a hostile social climate and it has a negative effects on social and individual wellbeing (Ripski & Gregory, 2009; MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009; Schwartz, Gorman, Nakamoto, & Toblin, 2005; Hawker & Boulton, 2000). The extensive research in school bullying and workplace bullying indicate that been bullied results in harmful and negatively impact on people's physical, mental and social wellbeing (Fleming & Jacobsen, 2009; Due, Merlo, Harel-Fisch, Damsgaard, et al., 2009).

## **2. BULLYING AND YOUTH**

School Bullying has been linked with poor or lower academic achievement and delinquency (Juvonen, Wang, and Espinoza, 2011; Nakamoto & Schwartz, 2011; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Lösel & Bliesener, 2003). Earlier studies have reported that both bullying and victimization are predictors of later engagement in criminal actions, antisocial behavior, gang membership and criminal conviction (Perren & Hornung, 2005; Holmes & Brandenburg-Ayres, 1998; Browne and Falshaw, 1998; Hämäläinen & Pulkkinen, 1995; Rigby, 1999; Batsche & Knoff, 1994; Olweus, 1994).

Bullying in children and adolescence has also been linked to depression, anxiety, psychosomatic complaints, low self-esteem, and poor social functioning among children and adolescences (Baldry, 2004; Fekkes, Pijpers, & Verloove-Vanhorick, 2004; Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpelae, & Rantanen, 2000; Srabstein, McCarter, Shao, & Huang, 2006; Hawker & Boulton, 2000; Schwartz, Gorman, Nakamoto, & Toblin, 2005) and with suicide and suicidal attempts among children and young people (Kim, Koh, & Leventhal, 2005; Klomek, Sourander, Niemela, Kumpulainen, Piha, Tamminen, Almqvist & Gould, 2009; Xing, Tao, Hao, Xu, Su P & Huang, 2009; Brunstein, Marrocco, Kleinman, Schonfeld & Gould, 2007). There is no doubt that bullying is detrimental for school climate and a threat to students' and teachers' safety; that is why bullying has become a great concern for parents, teachers, and social workers in many countries (Wong, 2004)

### *2.1 Cyberbullying*

With the rapid development and easy access to information technology (ICT), social networking sites (SNS) and mass media communication (MMS), a new and perhaps more detrimental form bullying have emerged: *Cyberbullying*.

Cyberbullying is termed coined by a Canadian educator Bill Belsey (2004); who defined it as:

“the use of information and communication technologies, such as e-mail, cell phones, pager text messages, instant messaging, and defamatory personal websites, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others” (in Bauman, 2007, p.2).

There is, however, a lack of consensus in the definition of Cyberbullying amongst researcher mainly due to the different theoretical framework used. Nonetheless authors have commonly describe Cyberbullying as the action of tormenting, threatening, harassing, or embarrassing others by sending or posting unwanted messages, offensive or threatening comments, offensive or embarrassing images by text, email, chat, or posting on websites or social networking sites (SNS) (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004; Görzig, & Frumkin, 2013).

## *2.2 Cyberbullying & ICT*

ICTs are part and parcel of everyday life for most people. Texting, chatting, emailing, blogging, Facebook, twitter, among many others have shaped the way people communicate and socialize with others whether that is at personal or professional level. It cannot be denied that ICT and SNS have brought many advantages to youth such as access to information, resources and knowledge sharing and learning networks; they have also contribute positively towards the development and maintenance of friendship, and have fostered youth creativity, self-development and empowerment. ICT & SNS have also provided outlets for youth civic engagement and community participation. However, there are great risks and concern related to the rapid increase and penetration of ICTs and SNS in children and young people's daily life such as the high incidence of cyberbullying among school children and its negative consequence.

Nowadays children and adolescent have access to internet using their mobile devices; but the way in which they use ICT, MSM and/or SNS has not yet been successfully controlled by neither parents nor teachers. This lack of monitoring in addition to poor digital and media literacy among parents and teacher make it easy for children and youth to engage in Cyberbullying.

## *2.3 Cyberbullying impact*

The psychological and emotional outcomes of cyber bullying are similar to those of traditional or face to face bullying. However it has been reported that Cyberbullying seems to exacerbate the already detrimental consequences associated with 'traditional' or face-face bullying (Gradinger, Strohmeier, & Spiel, 2009; Juvonen & Gross, 2008; Perren et al., 2010; Spears, Slee, Owens, & Johnson, 2009). In other words as victimization takes place online and via mobile devices the invincibility and covert nature reinforce the impact of the negative actions or victimization. The fact that the victimization takes place in the virtual space makes it difficult to monitor and manage Cyberbullying within the school and/or family context.

Like traditional forms of school bullying, cyberbullying impacts negatively students' concentration and cognitive process, increase absence from school, and contribute with poor school performance and low academic achievement (Ybarra, Diener-West & Leaf, 2007; Agatston, Kowalaski & Limber, 2012). Although cyberbullying takes place outside school grounds, it is normally related to existent conflicts and bullying incidents at school (Olweus, 2012). However, unlike traditional school bullying the impact of cyberbullying seems to be reliant on how the on-the-go or online negative actions are perceived. In turn, the perceived impact of cyberbullying depends on factors such as (1) personal experience; previous bullying and/or engagement in cyberbullying, (2) the type of victimization; (3) the nature of the material used (e.g. photos, videos, etc.), (4) the perceived intent of the actions (e.g. planned vs. spontaneous), (5) the size of the audience, anonymity and permanence (Cassidy, Faucher & Jackson, 2013; Dooley, Pyzalski & Cross, 2009; Smith, 2012b, Menesini & Nocentini, 2012).

The instant and constant nature of the online world and SNS can result in feelings of powerless and defeat making difficult to cope with the shame and humiliation associated to being target or victim of Cyberbullying. Therefore authors suggest that the impact of cyberbullying may have a long term effect in children and youth mental and emotional wellbeing. The impact of cyberbullying is associated to the seemingly 'anonymity' of the bully, the wide range of ways in which the negative actions can be carry out, and the instant and 'permanent' nature of the action in the online world. (Willard, 2007; Dooley, Cross, Hearn, & Treyvaud, 2009).

## **3. CONCLUSION**

The increase of Cyberbullying among children and young people has been attributed to the prevalent nature of information technologies (ICT) in children and youth daily lives. Cyberbullying has received attention only recently as result of media coverage of several cases of suicides of school

children. However, the detrimental effects of cyberbullying has raised alarm in most country as it is perceived as an imminent threat to school children's safety and well-being. Hence, in a very short time cyberbullying has become public health issue that concerns teachers, parents & policy makers. Nonetheless, the cyberbullying engagement and victimization among young people should not be attributed only to the emerging of new of ICT.

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# **FRIENDSHIP PATTERNS AND TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION BY YOUTH: PREFERENCES, SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT**

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## **Abstract**

The younger generations are experiencing a new wave of interpersonal communication. With the rise of online communities, communication has shifted away from traditional modes of interpersonal communication that have long been based on face-to-face models of interaction, to a digital approach to maintaining and establishing relationships. This research aims to investigate the motivation for the use of technology and the impact of this use on the friendship and behaviour of youths. Specifically, this research hopes to find out what type of exchanges takes place via these platforms and how these benefit youths in terms of creating and maintaining their social circle for all round development. Data was extracted from the questionnaire survey and interviews with selected youths. Findings suggest that these youths were highly motivated to use social networking sites to socialise, for academic purposes and to keep abreast with world events. The findings show some positive results. However the negative outcomes must also be monitored by the relevant parties in order to ensure Malaysian youths have a healthy social lifestyle that promotes their development. The study has identified the implications of this new digital wave on youths and recommends several measures to parents, school authorities and policy makers to monitor its use and behavior its benefits for the overall development of youths.

**Keywords:** *friendship, social networking, youths, development, behavior*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The net technology has paved ways in which youths look for friends through various social networking sites such as Friendster, Facebook, Twitter and MySpace to explore their identities, seek out, and create "virtual" communities. Research in countries such as India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, South Korea and Japan, (2012) show that youths tend to open up more easily and discuss freely when they are online. However, this also opens to misuse as youths can be vulnerable to bullying and abuse through this medium. At the same time, it cannot be denied that this technology has created pathways for interactive manner of acquiring knowledge and provided vast opportunities for youths to socialise.

Rosen, cited in Stone (2010), states that they (the current generation) want immediate responses to their queries or issues as they have grown up in an environment where technology facilitates this. So it is not wrong to say that today's generations are experiencing a new wave of interpersonal communication. With the rise of online communities, communication has shifted away from

traditional modes of interpersonal communication that have long been based on face-to-face models of interaction. This is an era of digital approach to maintaining and establishing relationships.

More than a third of young people in the United Kingdom believe that their online friends know more about them than their real life mates, with many believing it is easier to open up in cyberspace. A survey by MySpace in Britain found that 36 per cent of those polled between 14 and 21 found it easier to talk about themselves through modern technology, confessing that they shared more about themselves with online friends. Friendship refers to the quality or condition of being friends and maintaining a friendly relationship (cited in <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/friendship>). Based on these definitions, it is clear that friendship develops through interaction between two people over a period of time and this is mainly through intimate or face to face interaction (Chan and Cheng, 2004).

In the context of Malaysia, such phenomenon is evident and research on youth is timely. It would be interesting to investigate the different use of social media and their effects on young people's social networks. Hence it is necessary to expand our understanding of the characteristics of youths who use diverse combinations of social media. It is important to know what drives or motivates them and what are the developmental outcomes.

Hence the focus of this research is to investigate how friendship patterns are formed through online interactions, especially through social networking.

## **2. RELATED LITERATURE**

Dunbar's circles of acquaintanceship model illustrates the online friendship patterns in which it proposes that humans 'sit in the middle of a series of expanding circles that progressively include more individuals' (Dunbar et al. 2005: 97) ranging from 5 to 1500 individuals. Each circle represents a group of individuals that have their own traits (Dunbar et al. 2005).

The innermost circle of an individual's personal friendship network is known as the *support clique*, and contains approximately 5 individuals (Dunbar et al. 2005). The next circle is known as the *sympathy group* which contains 12-15 individuals. The sympathy group is essentially the core of one's social network, and is categorised by monthly contact, general support and advice, and social integration.

Following the sympathy group is the circle known as the *close network*, which contains about 35 individuals. This circle is categorised by less than monthly contact, a low level of support, including basic emotional support, and is known as the general network of friends (Dunbar 2004). The next circle is known as the *personal social network*, or the 'cognitive group', and contains about 150 individuals (Dunbar 2004). It is known as the 'cognitive group' as Dunbar (2008) proposes that this number is the maximum number of people that the brain is equipped to know at a certain level of emotional intensity at any given time. This group is categorised by an explicit and personal relationship that maintains a level of personal trust and has a history of past interactions (Dunbar et al. 2005).

This model reflects how youth involved in social networking expand their circle of friends and how this process develops friendship patterns among them.

A study conducted by Moorman and Bowker (2011) looked at the usage of online social networks and its impact on the quality of relationship and psychological adjustment. A total of 541 Canadian undergraduate students completed a questionnaire. The findings showed that females used these online platforms to build more intimate relationships compared to their male counterparts. However there was a positive affiliation between the quality of friendship and self-esteem among students with low Facebook usage. This study is relevant to this research in terms of its findings as it indicates the types of exchanges that take place via these platforms and how they benefit youths for their all round

development. In this case, the use of social networks portrayed a more negative development which is low self-esteem.

With regards to learning enhancements, interest based networks like Facebook which encourage peer-based sharing is an important instrument for informal learning (Ito 2010). This is again supported by Greenhow and Robelia (2009) when it was further clarified that informal learning has the ability to provide validation, appreciation, emotional support and task support around learning activities. Another study by Muhammad KamarulKabilanetal. (2010) investigated whether university students considered Facebook as a useful and meaningful platform to support, enhance and strengthen the learning of the English language. This study revealed that students believed Facebook could be used as an online platform to facilitate the learning of English. However, the researchers mentioned that language instructors and teachers still played a role in determining specific objectives and outcomes with such implementations in order to ensure a meaningful learning experience.

A study by Gross (2004) involving 261 in 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades in California revealed that these students use the online platform to connect with friends and to complete assignments. The data that was collected through a series of questionnaires, reports, log's and observation suggest that the use of such platforms prevent social isolation and depression as students are constantly connected to their peers. The results from this study shed new light on the type of exchanges that takes place via these platforms. The expected findings from this research also relates to the intended aim of this research.

Similar to the previous study, Mikami et al. (2010) revealed that online social networks are used by youths in order to connect with friends. It portrayed that these youths had a positive connection with their peers. Their peers also provided positive comments and encouragement on their profiles. The findings from this study can be linked to the all round development of youths which is part of the intended enquiry of this research.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This research employs a mix method of both quantitative and qualitative approaches of collecting data. For the quantitative data, a set of questionnaire developed based on the Pew Internet and American Life Project by Princeton Survey Research Associates International (2006) was distributed to 750 youths between the ages of 15 to 30. Part A consisted of questions required for demographic information. Part B consisted of 50 statements using a 4 point Likert scale with 1 being strongly disagree and 4 strongly agree. Part C consisted of an open-ended question for respondents to provide additional comments. Out of the 750 respondents, only 714 questionnaires were returned. As for the qualitative data, interviews were conducted with 10 youths selected at random from this age group.

The data was analysed using SPSS version 20. The 50 items in the questionnaire were categorised into five broad themes, namely usability, education and values, friends and social, self-development, parents, and others. The interviews were conducted individually by the researchers with the help of the research assistant. It was audio recorded, transcribed and analysed thematically.

### **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### *4.1 Quantitative Data*

In terms of usability, item 32 (*I use the SNS using the computer*) scored the highest mean score of 3.33. This is largely due to respondents' preference to use the computer rather than the mobile due to the connectivity and user friendliness of the features and the screen. This can be further confirmed with the findings for item 31 (*I access the SNS using my mobile phone*) where only 35.2% responded positively. Item 45 (*Having one SN account is enough*) shows 74.9% who responded positively. This findings also confirmed that majority of the respondents do not believe in having too many contacts online. Item 1 (*SN is part of my everyday activity*) with 68.9% responding negatively confirms that social networking may not appeal to everyone to be online daily. This is further supported with the

findings in item 34 (*I visit the SNS everyday*) with 59.9% of the respondents visiting the SNS daily and slightly more than (56.7%) at least twice a week. Half the respondents (51.3%) agreed that having SNS is a must. There is a high possibility that although these respondents are on SNS, they may not be regularly using it as 40.4% do not feel having SNS is a must. They (62.4 %) also do not see the necessity to update their SNS in terms of status, pictures, and comments in their page.

With regard to social networking and moral values, the mean score of 3.15 indicates a positive response from youths regarding the usage of SNS to get useful information. This is because social sites are easy to access daily through laptops or phone. Furthermore, students these days have access to such gadgets and connectivity all the time. There are also more spaces that are wired in public places. Therefore, they are able to reach out for information immediately.

The findings also showed that youths responded positively to item 4 (*I use SNS to find out about things going on in school, college / university or work*) with 81.4%. This means that majority of youths use SNSs to keep abreast with information updates. There are groups and friends that post about the activities and happenings. Hence, youths are able to access this information that is readily available online. It was also revealed that the respondents use SNS to obtain useful info especially in relation to school, college and university assignments. For item 39 (*My teachers/lecturers are on my SNS*) 64.2% responded positively and this clearly indicates that teachers and lecturers today are actively using these platforms to engage with students in teaching and learning. For instance, most educators especially at the tertiary level post assignments, Q & A sessions, forums and they even allow students to submit assignments through such online platforms. Due to this flexibility it is clear that findings for item 3 and 4 are equally high.

The findings can be supported by Gross (2004) who found the involvement of 7th and 10th graders using online platforms to connect with friends and to complete assignments. When youths are connected through SNS, they can discuss their assignments with classmates. They also use this method when they have unanswered questions. These findings can be an indicator to show that SNS provides them the academic support to some extent.

On the other hand, using SNS as a means of support to perform better and as a means to provide moral support did not show significant findings as only slightly more than 50% of the respondents responded positively to items 14, 21, and 22. This indicates that these youths still preferred face-to-face interaction for such support. This could also mean that cultural values play an important role for our youths' online behaviour.

The findings show that youths respond negatively to item 7 (*I use SNS to find people for dating*) with the mean score of only 1.78. Perhaps the culture here does not approve relationship development of such nature in cyberspace.

Youths agreed that they use SNS to meet new people. The mean score for item 8 (*I use SNS to meet new people*) shows 2.66 which is slightly higher from the average that youth meet new people by using SNS like Facebook and Twitter. This is in line with Haythornthwaite (2005) whereby it was stated that social network sites enable users to make their profiles visible to familiar people and that most of the time people on social networks interact with people they already know offline. Therefore, it is easy for youths to meet new people by using SNS with no boundaries.

Item 10 (*I use SNS to learn more about people*) shows a positive response with a mean of 2.89. SNSs like Facebook or Twitter provides a platform for youth to create a private profile, send and share images, messages, thoughts and posting on each others wall for everyone to view. This helps youths to understand more about the people they know by going through their profile.

Besides that, youths responded positively to item 11 (*I use SNS to keep in touch with old friends*) with 85.4 %. Back then, people used to revert to the phone or face-to-face interaction in order to keep in touch. But today, the development of technology helps people connect to each other faster and easier

without cost. Youths can access the recent updates on their old friends and as well as chat through the SNS.

The mean of 2.75 for item 12 (*My SN makes me unhappy if people send me negative messages/actions*) shows that youths agree that SN makes them unhappy if people send negative messages or actions. Most of the respondents felt sad as it is a normal reaction when faced with negative messages.

Based on items 24, 25 and 26, most of the respondents agreed that SN helps them to make new friends from the same state, different states, as well as from different countries. Based on the mean score of 2.88 (68.1%), 2.89 (68.6%) and 2.78 (61.2%) respectively, it is obvious that sites like Facebook or Twitter bridge gaps geographically and is able to bring people closer. Furthermore, sites like Facebook and Twitter provide a list of suggestions of friends on the profile to be added. Therefore, people with SN accounts and have similarities in terms of hobbies, their likes and dislikes will be matched with one another and will be suggested as a friend by the SNS itself. Hence, this encourages youths to befriend people from all around the world.

Furthermore, item 27 and 28 shows that SN helps youth to organise an event by creating a site about the particular event (e.g. birthdays/weddings) and SN helps youth to send invitations to friends for an event. The mean score is higher than the average with a 2.98 (72.9%) and 3.07 (77.8%) respectively. A few years ago, invitations for an event was done through cards or phone calls but with the extensive usage of SNS, people can create a page regarding a wedding or birthday party and send out invitations online. This method is faster, easier and not costly at all. The news of an event can be easily spread out to everyone including friends and family of the SNS users.

In addition, item 37 (*I share pictures with my friends on SNS*) with a mean score of 2.87(68.40%) indicates that youths use SNS to share pictures with their friends online. As SNS are user friendly the application and web surface created enables people to share anything with others on their profile. This in return allows people to connect with their friends and be updated with the happenings in their lives.

According to item 40 (*Communicating with friends online helps save money compared to calling or messaging through phones*), youths agree that communicating with friends online helps save money compared to calling or messaging through phones. This can be clearly seen with the mean score of 3.32 (81.2%). The mean score is higher because interactions between youths and their friends using SNS only require Internet connection which today can be found for free almost everywhere. Whereas calling and messaging are charged based on each usage and this can be costly.

Item 48 (*SN strengthens my friendship with people*) showed that youths generally agreed with the statement (697%). Social network is a place for people to socialise and get new friends. Thus when a person constantly checks updates about their friends, it helps them to know more about others. This indirectly bridges a continuous connection with friends which leads to a better friendship due to the good understanding they have with their friends through the Internet (Dunbar et al., 2007).

In terms to social networking and self development, item 15 (*My SN is important to enable me to communicate with others*) scored a mean of 3.16 (81.5%). This is in line with Haythornthwaite's (2005) findings that explains that social network sites enable users to communicate with others and that this communication can occur online and offline. Hence, the tendency or desire to communicate using SN is very high among youths as they are able to do it within their comfort zone without meeting them face-to-face. This is evident through the mean score of item 23 (*I feel free to communicate with others*) which is 3.08 (77.8%).

Based on item 49 (*Being on the SNS helps us learn more about life*), it was found that respondents agreed that being on SNS helps them to learn more about life and this is supported by a mean score of 2.83 (66.8%). Social networks have a wide range of information and knowledge to offer as it connects

people from various contingents. Hence, through these connections youths are able to learn and grow in terms of knowledge development.

There were only two items (29 and 30) that were related to parents. Half of the respondents (50.7%) claimed that they do not share their SN activities with their parents. Why so? Most parents do not question their children's involvement in SNS for reasons like they are ignorant on this issue or they do not have the time to monitor. This is something to be concerned about as many youths who are involved in social ills could have used the SNS for the wrong reasons.

To item 29 (*My parents approve my online friends*), about half the respondents say that their parents approve their friends on SNS while 41.3% of the respondents reported negatively on this statement. This could mean that parents have placed their trust on the children. However, the findings could indicate that parents are concerned about the misuse and social ills that are often reported in the media.

#### *4.2 Qualitative Data*

The following section reports the qualitative data obtained through interviews. Majority of the respondents stated that they were not avid users of social networking sites (SNS). They use these SNS but not on a daily basis. However, one respondent reported daily usage as she often used SNS to express her thoughts and emotions. In comparison to all the other respondents, this respondent also mentioned that she updated her status on these SNS on a daily basis. Most of the respondents reported on being on these sites on alternate days or alternate weeks. On the other hand, two respondents explained that they updated their status when they first started their account (three years ago) on a regular basis but they do not see the need to frequently update their status. This reflects that although SNS have become a rising trend today, there are also individuals who do not succumb to its temptation due to reasons.

The interview data revealed that youth these days who are connected to SNS used these platforms as an informative platform in order to keep abreast with the world. Some of the respondents mentioned that this was a sure method of immediately knowing happenings around the world. The example given by a respondent was the Tsunami tragedy in Japan whereby within minutes everyone on Facebook was giving their well wishes and prayers to the victims. One respondent mentioned that this is a clear example of how people put aside their differences when facing difficult times. This portrays their individual development in terms of gaining knowledge on world events and blending in with society as an individual.

Four respondents also added on by stating that the use of SNS has helped them enhance their language skills. The respondents mentioned that through these SNS they were able to build on their grammar and vocabulary and this is mainly done by reading their peers comments or postings online. It was found that when their peers used new vocabulary, some of the respondents actually took the initiative to look up some words. This reflects their self-development in terms of enhancing their grammar and vocabulary. As these respondents were also students and it was quite natural for them to share that they have benefitted in terms of their language improvement.

Although the respondents were able to develop themselves in the areas mentioned above, they all mentioned that being active on SNS does not necessarily boost one's confidence level. One respondent mentioned that he has come across individuals who have thousands of friends on their SNS, constantly post interesting comments and have amazing pictures uploaded. However, when she met an individual in person, the individual turned out to be a socially awkward person and he was unable to engage in a decent conversation. This shows that the virtual world need not speak the truth at all times.

Most of the respondents said they have 300 friends or more on their SNS. When questioned on how they select their friends, all the respondents explained that they would only befriend people that they know face to face. All the respondents also indicated that they would not befriend strangers as they

were aware of the negative consequences. In addition, one respondent commented on a recent rape case whereby a schoolgirl had befriended a stranger on Facebook a few days before the incident took place. This implies that, these respondents are well informed of the cyber crimes that could possibly take place by befriending strangers.

All the respondents indicated that they went into SNS in order to stay connected with their old and current friends. One respondent mentioned that the purpose she was connected to SNS is to be updated with current issues. Another respondent mentioned that she did it for leisure. Overall, the respondents used SNS to communicate with their peers and to be updated on world happenings. The findings also revealed that majority of the respondents received online support from their friends on these SNS. For instance, it was discovered that when the respondents posted emotional messages or comments, their online peers will provide words of encouragement and positive feedback. This kind of support is deemed to be essential as it helped these individuals to develop an online support platform. (Huang et al., 2010; Cauce et al., 1982; Hartup, 1989; Wentzel, 1994; Hanson 2006)

Besides receiving online support, a few of the respondents mentioned that they use these SNS to share pictures and videos. However, when questioned on their privacy settings in sharing these pictures with friends, all the respondents mentioned that they were aware of the privacy settings and they will always make sure that their pictures are only available to close friends and family members. One respondent was always aware of the social mishaps of sharing personal information and pictures online. She cited some incident where strangers created profiles using other users' pictures and they misused the users' names and pictures. In general, it is safe to say that the respondents were well educated on cyber safety.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents also mentioned that they were able to sustain a longer friendship on SNS. This is due to the flexibility and accessibility of SNS in preserving and maintaining old and current friendships. Most of the respondents revealed that they were able to keep in touch with their childhood friends even after so many years. When questioned on how often they kept in touch, one respondent mentioned that it did not matter as to how often you had a conversation online with these friends but what mattered the most is that you have acknowledged the existences of their friendship with you by accepting their friend request. This clearly shows how youths today build relationships or friendships and sustain through SNS.

Aside from using SNS to communicate with friends, it was discovered that most of the respondents also relied on such sites to complete their school work or collage/university assignments. The respondents mentioned that it was easier to communicate online to complete such work as they could share online materials and suggestions at any time of the day. One respondent mentioned that in this case he did not mind having his teachers on his friends list as he was able to communicate outside of the classroom. He also mentioned that he had the flexibility to work outside the classroom and he did not need to wait for the next day to meet his teacher as he could just chat or message her via the SNS for extra coaching or clarification on assignments.

In addition, another respondent who happened to be a teacher mentioned that she did not mind befriending her students online as she was able to provide them important announcements and questions to be discussed in class the next day. Through this she felt that she was able to complete more work in the classroom. This goes to show that due to SNS, teaching and learning is no longer confined to the classroom.

On the other hand, two respondents had an unexpected experience of befriending a teacher online as the teacher was constantly posting pictures of herself in different attires daily. Thus this came as a shock to the students as they would not expect a teacher to post such things. This findings show that youths had this perception that a teacher should post messages that are informative. From the teacher's perceptive, one respondent mentioned that among the problems of befriending students online include invasion of privacy. According to this respondent, students need to understand that their teachers are normal human beings who would like to share their own social life outside of the work place. However, teachers need to understand that it is vital to uphold their image as a teacher in



front of their students be it inside or outside the classroom. Hence, this respondent mentioned that everyone should know how to play around with their privacy settings in order to control the sharing of pictures or personal information. This will prevent such misunderstanding or mishaps from occurring. Eight out of the ten respondents mentioned that they found it out of the norm to actually befriend their parents on SNS. One respondent mentioned that although the youths today find it awkward, the younger generation condone to this virtual relationship as it is common for them to keep in contact with their parents through these SNS.

One respondent on the other hand stated that it is not so important to befriend your parents online but what is more important is that parents should be more aware of their children's activities on these SNS. Another respondent mentioned that she had a student on her friends list that posted revealing pictures of herself. Hence as a teacher she felt that the right thing to do was to advise the student to remove the inappropriate pictures. However, she realised that the student's mother was on her child's friends list. Therefore this respondent decided that if the parents could not care less about their child then as outsiders where do we stand in educating the child on such issues. The teacher felt that such education should start from home. This is a clear example as to how important it is for parents to acknowledge their children's online activities as this can prevent unforeseen circumstances.

Based on the responses received through the interviews, all the respondents agreed that being on SNS has more negative effects than positive ones. Firstly, one respondent shared that being on these SNS leaves us vulnerable to stalkers and sexual offenders. According to the respondent, if we are not careful with our security settings our, personal information and pictures will be readily available to the entire world. Another respondent mentioned that there is an application of Facebook called "Foursquare" where users are required to check in and this will send notifications to their online friends on their whereabouts. This can be harmful in many circumstances especially when you are alone.

In relation to bad mouthing people on these SNS, a few respondents mentioned that some comments posted on such sites can cause racial and political unrest within the country as it seems like the more advance technology gets the more people tend to misuse it and become insensitive. These are clear examples of the harms that SNS can bring to an individual and to a nation.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

The study reveals that friends, especially old friends, are considered very important to these youths and social networking is a good way of keeping their friendship going. Although they do not connect to SNS regularly, having them in their list of friends is considered important to them. Having online friends is a preferred mode as far as friendship is concerned. However, the respondents strongly believed that they needed to have face to face interaction with them from time to time. Social networking sites are also considered an important platform for them to keep abreast with happenings around the world. Some felt that being on SNS also helped them in their language development as they managed to improve their writing to some point. The findings also revealed that social networking was more for academic reasons and less in terms of moral support. There were also cases where SNS played an important role for social support among friends. Youths are aware of the cyber crimes that take place in the SNS and they are careful of the privacy matters especially being on SNS with people they respect like their teachers.

This research suggests that today's youths have become very dependent on social networking sites. Although these youth claim to spend long hours in SNS, it is not worrying as they seem to know their limits. On the contrary if they spend a great deal of time online without participating in other useful events or activities it can affect their all round development. This also limits their face-to-face interaction with people causing them to lack people skills and inter-personal skills. This pattern of keeping friends could contribute to the lack of social and community values. Although we have embraced a borderless world which is considered healthy in terms of knowledge sharing and collaborating, a world without privacy has its drawbacks and may not be healthy.

The findings also suggest that parents should spend more real time interaction and not virtual interaction. It may be interesting and fun for parents to be chatting with their children online but in the long run it can be disastrous as this will turn out to be an accepted lifestyle. Moreover, parents need to be more vigilant in monitoring their children's social networking activities. This is especially necessary with users in the younger age group tend to make many friends including strangers which lead them to danger.

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# CYBERLOAFING AT THE WORKPLACE: AGE AND GENDER DIFFERENCES

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## Abstract

Cyberloafing is a form of deviant workplace behavior which involves the use of organizations' internet access by employees during working hours for non-work purposes. Recently, there is an increasing interest among researchers on cyberloafing at the workplace among employees due to the negative consequences of this behavior. This paper presents a literature review of age and gender differences in cyberloafing by describing the pattern of involvement among younger and older employees as well as male and female employees. Implications for organizations in formulating prevention-intervention policies on internet abuse at the workplace is also presented.

**Keywords:** *cyberloafing, age, gender*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, there is a growing interest among researchers on the abuse of organization's Internet resources by employees. The "voluntary act of employees using their companies' Internet access during office hours to surf nonwork-related Web sites for nonwork purposes, and access (including receiving and sending) nonwork-related email" is termed cyberslacking or cyberloafing (Lim, Teo, & Loo, 2002, p. 67). Cyberloafing at the workplace has been generally conceptualized as a form of workplace production deviance (Weatherbee, 2009), which is under the larger category of counterproductive work behavior (Spector, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2005). This behavior is considered counterproductive because the cyberloafing activities (browsing and emailing) avert employees from completing tasks at the workplace (Lim & Chen, 2012).

Cyberloafing is a form of deviant workplace behavior (Blanchard & Henle, 2008). Deviant workplace behavior, according to Robinson and Bennett (1995), can be categorized into two dimensions, the minor or major (serious) dimension, and the interpersonally or organizationally focused dimension. As a form of production deviance which is organizationally focused, cyberloafing can be categorized into minor (e.g.,

visiting mainstream news, checking one's personal email) and serious (e.g., online gambling, downloading music illegally) deviance (Blanchard & Henle, 2008). Another taxonomy by Mastrangelo et al. (2006) describes nonproductive and counterproductive computer use. Nonproductive computer use occurs when an employee uses the computer at work for activities that are not beneficial, but are not potentially destructive to the organization such as chatting, gaming, shopping, emailing, and viewing online media. Counterproductive computer use exists when an employee engages in behavior that could be in conflict with the organization's goals such as downloading or distributing pornography, and generating computer viruses (Blanchard & Henle, 2008)

Employees cyberloaf by participating in activities and do so for several reasons (Lieberman et al., 2011; Vitak, Crouse, & LaRouse, 2011). Among them are pleasure seeking, boredom and avoidance of less rewarding tasks (Hills & Argyle, 2003; Lavoie & Pychyl, 2001; Stratton, 2010). Abuse behaviors can be explained through hedonism which is a pursuit or devotion to pleasure (Stephenson, Maggi, Lefever, & Morojele, 1995). Cognitive absorption online has been linked with the experience of satisfaction (Elmenzi & Gharbi, 2010). In situations where there exists organizational injustice employees tend to reinstate justice through cyberloafing (Lim, 2002). Workplace norms such as cyberloafing-supporting behavior of coworkers and supervisors (Blanchard & Henle, 2008; de Lara, 2006) and technology characteristics such as perceived usefulness of the Internet (Garrett & Danziger, 2008; Vitak et al., 2011) have also been explored as factors associated with cyberloafing.

Research findings suggest that cyberloafing can have positive implications on employees at the workplace by reducing stress (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2005) and adding variety to daily activities (Lim & Chen, 2009). Some employees use cyberloafing as a means to conduct personal development and career advancement, or achieve work-life balance (Anandarajan, Paravastu, Caiib, & Simmers, 2006). In some ways, cyberloafing offers employees temporary relief from work demands (Anandarajan & Simmers, 2005). Taking periodic breaks from work are essential since these breaks allow employees to revive their energy level which is crucial for improving work performance (e.g. Sonnentag, 2003). Although cyberloafing can help improve organizational and employees' effectiveness and efficiency, it may also lead to engagement in counterproductive work behaviors among employees (Jia, Jia, & Karau, 2013). Cyberloafing can result in threats such as productivity losses (Lim & Teo, 2006), computer viruses, bandwidth loss, legal liabilities (Lim, 2002), and reduced workplace involvement (Lieberman et al., 2011). Time spent on non-work related computing activities leads to lower job performance among employee (Bock & Ho, 2009). The engagement in cyberloafing has been an area of concern to many researchers due to the negative consequences of this behavior. This paper presents a literature review of age and gender differences in cyberloafing by describing the pattern of involvement and implications for organizations in formulating prevention-intervention policies on internet abuse at the workplace.

## **2. AGE DIFFERENCES IN CYBERLOAFING**

Previous studies have shown that there exist age differences in cyberloafing. Younger employees tend to loaf on the Internet more than older employees (Jia, Jia, & Karau, 2013) and they are more likely to use the internet at work for personal purposes (Everton, Mastrangelo, & Jolton, 2005). Vitak et al. (2011) found that being younger positively influence cyber-loafing frequency. Older workers are more likely to use the Internet in line with the expected norms of an organization (Morris & Venkatesh, 2000), while younger employees tend to violate the norms and use the Internet at work (Zhang, 2005). Younger workers prefer a wide range of technologies than older workers, meanwhile, older workers tend to perceive the technology as beneficial for work tasks instead of for personal use (Phillips & Reddie, 2007). A study by Ugrin and Pearson (2013) on employees in the United States revealed that age was correlated with cyberloafing in which the proportion of older employees perceived social networking as more abusive compared to younger employees. Younger age is associated with Internet abuse because younger people have increased

“skills”, which bring them closer to internet abuse while older users having greater control over their environment may not need to digitally abscond (Stavropoulos, Alexandraki, & Motti-Stefanidi, 2013). Younger individuals tend to accept and use the Internet more, and the acceptance and use of internet may become a habit at the workplace resulting in the likelihood of involvement in cyberloafing (Ugrin & Pearson, 2008). Younger users tend to engage in more serious Internet misuse behaviours (Mastrangelo et al., 2006).

Although research has shown that younger workers engage in cyberloafing more than older workers, a study by Restubog, et al. (2011) among tenured administrative university staff has shown contradictory results. They found that older staff were more likely to engage in cyber loafing. In a study conducted in Turkey, the results indicated that age did not show any significant difference in cyberloafing (Ozler & Polat, 2012). Overall, empirical evidence have shown that age differences in cyber loafing exists and more research tend to support the notion that younger workers engage in cyberloafing at work more than older workers.

### **3. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CYBERLOAFING**

Gender is an influential factor in understanding Internet usage behaviors such as cyberloafing. Gender is significantly related to cyberloafing whereby male workers were more likely to loaf on the Internet than female employees (Lim & Chen, 2012; Jia, Jia, & Karau, 2013). Gender differences exist in cyber-loafing whereby the variety and frequency of male engagement is greater than those of female Vitak et al. (2011). Additionally, males are more likely to use the Internet at work for personal purposes (Everton, Mastrangelo, & Jolton, 2005) and hence they are more likely to experience higher Internet abuse risk (Stavropoulos, Alexandraki, & Motti-Stefanidi, 2013).

Literature indicates that there are significant gender differences in attitudes toward technological abilities. Men are more confident in Internet usage and are more likely to engage in cyberloafing for entertainment and leisure purposes (Weiser, 2000; Jackson, Ervin, Gardner, & Schmitt, 2001; Hargittai & Shafer, 2006). On the other hand, women were less confident in navigating the web and have more negative attitudes towards Internet use and hence were less likely to use the Internet (e.g. Schumacher & Morahan-Martin, 2001; Broos, 2005; Hargittai & Shafer, 2006). Women’s self-assessed skills regarding their web-use are significantly lower than that of men which may affect their on-line behavior (Hargittai & Shafer, 2006). Women tend to view cyberloafing as an unproductive activity at the workplace because they possess greater anxiety and inability to gain advantage of useful information from the Internet (Lim & Chen, 2012) and hence they tend to engage less in cyberloafing than men. Men are more likely to report a positive impact of cyber-loafing at work than are women and therefore have greater tendency to cyberloaf (Lim & Chen, 2009).

Another factor that put men in higher risk to internet abuse is their higher web familiarity and preference for online games and pornographic websites (Tsai et al., 2009). Males are more significantly involved in both quantity and frequency of cyberloafing (Vitak et al, 2011) than females, with males being drawn to online games and females being attracted to online communication (Chak & Leung, 2004). Overall, the literature seems to support the notion that gender differences exists in cyberloafing among employees.

### **4. IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS**

Age and gender differences in cyberloafing have important implications for organizations since cyberloafing has become a pervasive problem for many organizations. The pattern of involvement in terms of age and gender may help organizations in formulating prevention-intervention policies on internet misuse at the workplace. A deterrence approach using policies for Internet-based applications

together with mechanisms designed to monitor employee Internet activities and detect illegal usage would be an effective way to lessen cyberloafing.

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# CAREER COUNSELING INSTITUTIONAL MODEL OF A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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## Abstract

Career Counseling (CC) plays a key role in the life of youth. Career Counseling at the right time changes the whole scenario of the student's career. A Career Counseling (CC) institutional model of a leading public sector university in Pakistan is analyzed in this paper. An institutionalized model of CC services for students has been developed strategically. University students are provided with employability skills information through individual career counseling sessions and career guidance programs i.e. workshops, seminars and conferences. Advantages of CC services to students and alumni towards their career and challenging factors towards implementation of CC services in Pakistan have been highlighted in the paper. CC services not being part of the educational system in many developing countries including Pakistan is due to the lack of awareness. Finding skilled career practitioners in the field is also a significant constraint. The paper findings identified challenges university students are facing in making career decision such as lack of self-awareness, organizational and career stereotypes and lack of career awareness. Qualitative case study method was employed in writing the paper. Senior Management of university played a key factor in enabling CC services in a public university possible in a developing country like Pakistan.

**Keywords :** *Career counseling, career guidance, challenging factors in career*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Career Counseling model is not new. In the medieval times the procedure was different to guide students for better and progressive futures. In the present scenario there are two main societies East and West. Western societies are improving education due to their strong commitment particularly basic and applied sciences have placed themselves strongly on the knowledge tree. The universities in the west follow a sustainable model of career counseling for their youth to develop a progressive society. However, in the Eastern society's inadequate research and development infrastructure has severely hampered the quality of the youth due to non-availability of sustainable model of CC in universities.

Continuous investment in human resources (HR) has ensured the progress of these nations, whereas inadequate research and development (R&D) infrastructure have severely hampered our growth.

Pakistan situated at the gateway of the Eastern world and having the greatest population of youth in its history is presented with the challenge to tap the potential of young people for the country's social and economic development. After thorough study and research work it is concluded that that the aspiration cannot be achieved without understanding the challenges young people face today and pondering over solutions to these problems. Based on the research analysis some of the challenges towards youth development include:

### *1.1 Lack of Career Direction*

The youth is confused in regards to career direction. Most of them do not have concrete career goals and are ambiguous as to which organization public or private they should start their careers from.

### *1.2 Lack of Self-Awareness*

The youth are not aware of their hidden potential. What are their strengths and weaknesses? Due to lack of self-awareness the youth experiences difficulties in expressing themselves in employment interviews and it limits their employment opportunities.

### *1.3 Lack of Temperament*

Though students are academically qualified however they lack in emotional maturity and professional work temperament due to which their career opportunities become limited. Students need to learn to absorb work pressures and increase their emotional quotient- EQ.

### *1.4 Lack of Corporate Grooming*

When students graduate from the respective universities they lack in corporate grooming. In today's knowledge economy; impression management and professional communication are key skills to make a great first impression to the prospective employers. The youth needs to conduct proper research of the respective organization that they are being interviewed at and also ensure their resumes are professionally developed that reflects their positive career attributes and skills.

To address the above mentioned challenges, career counseling centres are required at universities. Career Counseling provides as a bridge between students and employers to enhance youth employability. At a leading public university in Pakistan the Student Resource Centre management staff provides students with quality individual career counseling sessions and group career guidance programs.

The University recognizes that young people are society's assets. Neglecting to invest in youth increases their vulnerability and has an impact on the country's efficiency. Educational institutions have scarcity of career counseling and career guidance centres due to the lack of awareness and shortage of skilled career practitioners.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In relation to career, guidance is a process whereby practitioners' formal or informal direct interactions give some directions to the client, based on the information provided by the client (Borgen & Hiebert, 2006). According to Humphreys and Traxler (1992), the purpose of guidance is to help someone. However, the process could be 'formal or informal'. Informally, an individual seeks help from a friend, relative, guardian about his/her problems or difficulties. The process could become formal, if the person seeks support from professionals, where through a systematic procedure; they are supported in analyzing their problems, interpreting the relevant facts and pointing out the possible solutions. Furthermore, they assert that guidance is a lifelong process; it applies to all the stages of life from childhood to adulthood- which aims at helping individual. Quite often the terms guidance and counseling have been used interchangeably.

Counseling is also being used more seeking advice. Furthermore "it denotes a therapeutic intervention" (Debono et al., 2007, p 17). The counseling process is more focused on individuals, through which an individual can reflect on his/her thoughts, feelings and actions. Counseling in career has been considered as one of the tools, processes or methods for providing career guidance like interview and tests. (Humphreys & Traxler, 1992).

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In writing this paper, qualitative case study method was employed. Semi-structured professional interviews were used to find career challenges faced by students in deciding their career path. For the research group N=174, F= 112, M= 62 contained students from all disciplines of the public university. Age range 19-26 years who are either studying or are in their entry-level jobs participated in the study.

### **4. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

174 students were assessed for Career Counseling services. Of these 121 were studying towards their Bachelor's degree and 53 towards Master's degree, Students were enrolled in Bachelor's degree in the field of Engineering, Management Sciences, Social Sciences, and Professional Psychology. Based on students requirements, 7 professional individual career counseling services were offered to students namely, Career Counseling, Job Advice, Resume Writing, Mock Interview, Overseas Job Advice, Corporate Grooming, and others. 157 students marked the Career Counseling services as excellent, 16 good and 1 as average; and none marked it as unsatisfactory. Case studies of 174 students can be shared upon request.

The research identified challenges university students are facing in making career decision such as lack of self-awareness, organizational and career stereotypes and lack of career awareness. Career Counseling (CC) transforms the youth in positive career direction. It makes the youth transition from academia to work effective. Career Counseling enables students to understand the importance of their field of specialization which leads to prosperous and sustainable careers.

At this stage students have numerous challenges; however due to professional career counseling and career guidance they will conquer these problems effectively.

Career practitioners are difficult to find in the country. At higher secondary level career counseling centers are a must. Variability of careers is still not accepted in the general masses; most of the people still go for stereo-typed careers for their children.

### **5. CONCLUSION**

In this study an effort is made by observing the analysis result of one of the University in Pakistan where CC is implemented as part of policy. The implementation of CC in the education policy will affect positively in the development of progressive societies. The strength of theory lies in its potential to evolve and change easily as facts and anomalies are revealed.

Career practitioners should be appointed at educational institutions i.e Universities in Pakistan. Faculties at respective educational institutions should be especially trained for career counseling. Career Counseling should be policy of educational institutions in Pakistan and the global eastern region. The Senior Management of the University emerged as the significant factor enabling CC services in a university system possible in Pakistan.

### **6. SUGGESTIONS**

This paper is of significance to educational institutions i.e. Universities; career services, student affairs staff and faculty to design and develop institutional career counseling models in the Asian context to facilitate their respective students towards career counseling and career development.

It is recommended that a career counseling and career development course should be introduced at respective universities. The course should be mandatory for each undergraduate and graduate student. Through this strategy the student's employability skills shall rise and their professional short-comings would be removed before they enter the workforce.

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# THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN NGO BASED ANTI-CORRUPTION MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

Corruption is a global issue which has to be concerned by everyone in every country because it doesn't only threaten economic condition, but also every other sector. In current days, corruption has transformed into something so systemic in governance, especially in developing country like Indonesia. Anti-Corruption movement was born as a response to severe damage caused by corruption. This movement is supposed to become a culture which is populist for society, especially for youth. Anti-Corruption NGO which is driven by youth can be an additional force to help eradicating corruption. Those are reasons why authors make this paper to analyze the role of youth in Anti-Corruption movement which conducted by NGOs in Indonesia. The writers use literary studies as a method to understand and analyze the correlation between youth and Anti-Corruption movement by NGOs. At the end of research, writers found that there is a structured movement against corruption which conducted by NGOs in Indonesia called GeRAK and we saw that youth are properly fit with the research movement rather than other two, advocating movement and local movement because youth which is also student has pure perspective to conduct research toward corruption.

**Keywords :** *youth, NGO, corruption, GeRAK*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Corruption is a global vicious problem. Those who placed the responsibility for corruption mainly at the developing country is long gone. Corruption is especially present in developing country, but by no means only - corruption occurs in all type of countries, but on varying levels. In developing countries, corruption occurs both at grand and petty levels (Larmour, 2007). However not only developing countries who suffered in the scourge of corruption, several member countries of European Union also have regressed in economy. The economic crisis indicates that the control of corruption is difficult to build and hard to sustain, even in among the best governed countries in the world.

Economy is not only victim of corruption, corruption is also a barrier of positive change. It prevents the funding of healthcare, worthwhile housing, and educational projects. The developing country whose people lack in political and economic leverage is the most suffering victim. Because corruption also represents a direct attack on democratic institutions (Eigen, 2004). For developing country which government plays a dominant role in public and economic sectors, corrupt behavior will lead to increase the illusionment with leader's authority (Weber, 1968). Those evidences show that corruption will eventually damage many sectors in governance.

This paper will focus on spesific corruption case occur in Indonesia. As a developing country, Indonesia has long history about corruption. It has been ocured since the colonialism era. Then it flourished after its independence in the end of Soekarno's era and grew even worse when Suharto replaced him. The worst condition came about when the economic crisis hit Indonesia in 1998, which ended up Suharto's regime fell. The crisis was highly indicated as the impact of systemic

corruption in Soeharto's tenure. After the huge loss in national finance, Indonesia entered new era called "Reformasi", means that reformation of various governmental institutions.

Instead of combating the corruption, it even get worse in Habibie's tenure after Reformasi. Given fact that Habibie and the members of his government were part of Suharto's patronage system. Reformasi didn't work out with only system reformation. It also required reformation which entirely included its practitioners. Therefore, The Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission, or better known as KPK in Indonesia, was established in 2003, it is independent from the executive, legislative, judiciary and any other powers. It can prosecute every practitioners who committ corruption in Indonesia.

However, KPK is not the only corruption eradication machine in Indonesia. Movement to combating corruption has been flourished since late 1990's after the establishment of NGO combating corruption, Transparancy International (TI) in Germany. Then the anti-corruption movement which conducted by NGO grew and became more influential in both advocacy and research on corruption in Indonesia. Anti-corruption movement became more popular after the growth of movements which conducted by NGOs. Those NGOs have a structured movement called GeRAK that composed of three big groups ; advocacy, research, and local movements.

By considering the role of youth in national building, this paper examines the correlation of youth and Anti-corruption movement that conducted by NGOs. In spesific case in Indonesia's corruption, there are three big groups of NGOs' combating corruption. Which movement do youth properly fit in GeRAK is the main question of this paper. And what kind of contribution youth can contribute.

## **2. DEFINITION OF YOUTH**

Youth could simply be defined as the time when somebody is young. Youthis best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group.

However some countries define youth on age-group due to the requirement while the government make policy about youth. On age-group definition, youth is defined as including those persons 8 to 24 years of age for three reasons. First, this age span accounts for three major and transitional periods in the life of young people: middle childhood (ages 8 to 12), adolescence (ages 13 to 18) and young adulthood (ages 18 to 24).

By acknowledging the three stages, this definition allows for consideration of the age-dependent needs of young people and corresponding age-appropriate policy strategies.

## **3. DEFINITION OF NGO**

For many years the term "NGO", usually in its shortened acronym, rather than the full "non-governmental organization", was the only term used to describe those organizations outside the government and business worlds, which were involved in development. It was often used to mean only international relief and development organizations. NGOs, positioned inside Public Benefit Organizations, have singular governance and programmatic characteristics, and singular constraints that we need to examine.

In Indonesia, some NGOs' governance are NGOs formed not for profit; therefore they cannot distribute any surplus they generate as profit to owners or staff. Staff salaries are, however, part of running costs, NGOs result from a group of citizens' self-chosenand voluntary initiative to pursue a shared interest or concern – they are not a statutory body, and owe no allegiance to the State. They govern themselves within whatever legislation they choose to register themselves. They are formally instituted and accept that they are accountable to the aims and objectives oftheir originating documents and governing structures (Holloway, 2006). Many organisations canbe set up to meet these characteristics – this says nothing about what such an organisation actually does.



Our definition of an NGO has not been completed before we agree on their programmatic activities and values: they exist because certain citizens have identified poverty and injustice as being illegitimate activities that need to be combated, these beliefs are often underpinned by national constitutions or by international conventions and agreements, they may also be underpinned by religious or ideological beliefs, they act as intermediary organizations between those who support their work and those whom they directly target, and have the fiduciary responsibility to their donors to spend the funds that they attract on the programs that they have proclaimed, and they can work in different ways - through directly providing services to their target group, or through acting variously as a network, a federation of other NGOs, a research organization, or an advocate on behalf of the target group they have identified.

#### **4. DEFINITION OF CORRUPTION**

The term “corruption” comes from the Latin word *corruptio* which means “moral decay, wicked behaviour, putridity or rottenness”. The concept may have a physical reference, as in “the destruction or spoiling of anything, especially by disintegration or by decomposition with its attendant unwholesomeness and loathsomeness; putrefaction”; or moral significance, as in “moral deterioration or decay the perversion or destruction of integrity in the discharge of public duties by bribery or favour”

Definitions above may refer corruption to two common shortcomings: they define corruption in terms of bribery, or corruption in terms of general things. Definition of corruption is really important for society to distinguish what action could be considered as corruption and just stealing. United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) Policy then defined actions that related to corruption.

##### *Bribery*

May be defined as the promise, offer or gift, to a public official, or the solicitation or acceptance by a public official, directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage, for the official himself or another person or entity, in order that the official act or refrain from acting in the exercise of his official duties.

##### *Trading in influence*

May be defined as the promise, offering or giving to a public official or any other person, or the solicitation or acceptance by a public official or any other person, directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage in order that the public official or the person abuse his real or supposed influence with a view to obtaining from an administration or public authority an undue advantage for the original instigator of the act or for any other person.

##### *Abuse of functions or position*

May be defined as the performance of, or failure to perform, an act, in violation of the law, by a public official in the discharge of his or her functions, for the purpose of obtaining an undue advantage for himself or herself or for another person or entity.

##### *Illicit enrichment*

May be defined as a significant increase in the assets of a public official that he or she cannot reasonably explain in relation to his or her lawful income. This is a particularly controversial matter. Some argue that criminalisation on such grounds infringes the principle of presumption of innocence and reverses the burden of proof, while certain judicial decisions take a contrary view.

#### **5. NGO BASED ANTI-CORRUPTION MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA**

The downfall of Suharto and the start of the era reformasi had begun, as one of its main planks, the ending of corruption, collusion and nepotism – the Indonesian acronym KKN. The front line institutions who would eliminate corruption were determined by the (House of Representative) DPR to be the Courts, the Attorney General’s office, the Ombudsman, the BKP, the Police, the BPKP, the TPGTPK (which was set up as an interim organization to bring corruption cases to court), the Committee on State Officials Assets (KPKPN), and the planned Anti-Corruption

Commission (which was to take the place of the TPGTPK once it was established). Unfortunately, these institute cannot did their responsibility due to many political obstacles.

In this whole dark and depressing picture, the NGOs are the one ray of light in that they, in conjunction with now unfettered media, have exposed many cases of corruption, have kept the public alive to the expanding nature of corruption in Indonesia, and have not been closed down. The oldest of these organizations is the Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (LBH) which managed to stay in existence all through the Suharto era, and mainly targeted abuses of human rights. In June 1998, LBH midwived the first new anti-corruption organization, the Indonesian Corruption Watch (ICW).

Coordination is crucial matter, especially in fund raising sector, among NGOs corruption fighter, remembering corruption has been a systemic problem and has been rotten every single sector in every country. The coordination needed by NGOs corruption fighter is communication network. By the downfall of Suharto regime corruption fighter got freedom to build communication network called GeRAK (Gerakan Anti-Korupsi – Movement against Corruption). Generally, NGOs corruption fighter that incorporated in GeRAK organized well.

What GeRAK has to do is to synchronize the agenda. GeRAK itself has three big classifications of NGOs, such as advocacy, research and local movements. The kind of advocacy you can employ as an NGO is different from the kind of advocacy that big business or political parties can employ. The usual goal of advocacy is to influence the public policy process. It is inherently a political activity. It involves identifying the targets for the advocacy, identifying other stakeholders who may be allies or adversaries, and analyzing their stakes in the issue, deciding on a strategic series of actions and clarifying what success means for this issue. ICW as the oldest, largest and best established of the anticorruption NGOs has, to some extent, set the pattern for the others outside Jakarta. ICW focuses on investigation and advocacy concerning corruption cases which have attracted significant public attention. It has also recently conducted more research into patterns of corruption within government offices.

NGO based research has less contact with mass media than Advocacy based NGO and does not concern about arresting functionary who caught red-handed do corruption. It focuses on collecting data, considering the regulation and occupying knowledge gap about corruption among society. These kind of NGOs usually require members from any professionals in researches about corruption. TI (Transparency International ) was the pioneer of Research based NGO to combating corruption. The most popular research based NGO in Indonesia is MTI (Masyarakat Transparansi Indonesia).

Therefore Local NGO is a unification of Advocacy based NGO and Research based NGO. Usually, NGO local focuses on dispute about soil among government institutions or traditional society and corruption in administration territory. WALHI is one of Local NGO that concerns about environmental issues which develops into corruption.

## **6. YOUTH AND NATIONAL BUILDING : COMBATING CORRUPTION**

The term - nation building or national development, is usually used to refer to a constructive process of engaging all citizens in building social cohesion, economic prosperity and political stability in a nation in an inclusive and democratic way. According to the definition, national building has to be done by all citizens and youth play the biggest role. Indeed, youth here means the period of being young, especially the period between being a child and being fully grown or young men and women considered as a group. However, in our purpose youth can be defined as young adulthood stage (ages 18 to 24), considering of their biggest role in national building. And what the evidence of the statement “ the biggest role in national building” do youth have?

Youth or young people are growing massively on population in any country. By 2010, the teenage population will surpass the baby boomers’ peak of 33 million (Walker , 2000 ; Reddy, 2001). When young adults up to age 24 are included, the number rises to an estimated 38,7 million, nearly 7 million or 21 % higher than the 1995 population for this age group (Fogg, Mangum, and

Sum, 2000). By acknowledging it, government in any country should consider that potential due to their massive growth on population. Youth are the most potential human resources in any country.

Youth power is a recognized force in the world today. Youth are filled with tremendous energy and towering ambitions. Due to the definition that given above, youth whose status as university students are best knowing in any history of political upheaval in many countries. Special case in Indonesia, movements against authoritarian regimes in both Soekarno and Suharto eras was conducted by youth. Youth – mostly university students – also have long history in lots of protest movement criticizing government.

In recent days, youth movements criticizing government are not flourished at only in political upheaval agenda. There are many things to be criticized. Youth movement then became very responsive with any political issues and many others. Especially in anti-corruption agenda which has been evolved into a structured movement in Indonesia.

Related to national building, combating corruption is very important agenda that has to be solved. As corruption undermines national finance which obstructed national building, it was indeed an important issue to be considered by any stages on social communities of a nation. And to develop an integrated anti-corruption movement, youth contributions are required.

Since the anti-corruption was the government agenda to manage public administration, the movement which conducted by society is required as a supporting effort. Nonetheless what characteristics of movement are required? Grassroot based movement has an appropriate characteristic which is needed to support and popularize it. As the movement is formed by traditional power structures, it can solve the misinformation among society about anti-corruption agenda.

In case to contribute in the anti-corruption movement, youth are properly fit with grassroot based movement. As the movement do not require any professional skills, it grew so fast and became very populist. And mostly this kind of movement is conducted by NGOs, particularly those that intend in combating corruption. To sum up, in order to contribute in combating corruption, youth are properly fit in the movements are conducted by anti-corruption based NGOs.

## **7. YOUTH IN GERAK**

In Indonesia, anti-corruption NGOs have communication network that manage and incorporate three big groups of anti-corruption movements. This network is called GeRAK (Gerakan Anti Korupsi). Youth as an important actor in combating corruption can be the supporting participant in that network. Nowadays, youth acts mostly in social movement criticizing government policies. And their participation in NGOs' movement have been flourished since Reformasi era, in specific case of Indonesia. Hence, youth is a potential part to be included in anti-corruption movement which conducted by GeRAK.

GeRAK consisted of advocating, researching and local movements that conducted by anti-corruption NGOs. In our purpose, youth refers to university student, has spesific characteristics due to their occupation. University student is part of the intellectuals, consider to their intellectual capacity. By acknowledging their potentials, youth – i.e. university student - is a great human resource to including in combating corruption movement. Since they are not part of the professionals yet, youth cannot contribute in the advocating movement. The usual goal of advocacy is to influence the public policy process. It is inherently a political activity. Considering the requirement of any professional skills in advocating movement, youth doesn't fit to participate in Advocacy based NGOs.

Instead of advocating, the authors believe youth is properly fit for Research based NGOs, as youth is part of the intellectuals – i.e. university student – and has an ambitious desire in any academic purposes. Youth are an intiative and vigorous person, in this stage due to their occupation as students, researches in any spesific matter like corruption are their main concern.

Those evidences given show that youth can be a potential resource in Research based NGOs in combating corruption.

Furthermore, Local NGO is a grassroot based movement which considering about local corruption cases. It focus on dispute about land ownership among government institutions or traditional society and corruption in administration territory. According to its concerns, advocating skills are required to conduct this movement. The advocating movement mainly concern on local issue. Youth who contributing in this movement eventually take part on its supporting role since youth can popularize and raise public endorsement. However, youth are more potential to participate in research movement rather that advocating movement or local movement.

## 8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Corruption has been a public enemy that endangers not only economic sector but also almost every sector. To eradicate corruption, Indonesian government has made institution that fight corruption since Orde Lama. Unfortunately, the effort does not show the sign that corruption will be end. In this whole dark and depressing picture, the NGOs are the one ray of light. By the downfall of Suharto's regime NGOs show their improvement to combat corruption by made communication network called GeRAK. With this network, NGOs can combine their power to fight corruption. In the reality, NGOs based anti-corruption movement is an elite political movement so it is not a populist movement and conducted by any stages in society. However the participation to combat corruption are required from many stages of society and youth plays the biggest role. In this paper, the authors refer youth as university student. University student is part of the intellectual people in society. Being educated, university student has better understanding and knowledge than other stages in society. University student also is an initiative and vigorous person. It will be a great lost if nation does not take a benefit from it. Based on the education level and the characteristics, university student is properly fit for Research based NGOs. Nevertheless, university student strong passion will be a great resource to help the professionals that pledge into a Research activity. It will make a harmony to eradicate corruption.

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# THE FUNCTION OF MYC IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

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## Abstract

In Malaysia, youth is defined as anyone who is between 15 and 40 years old. From this age interval are significant in terms of numbers and if translated into a source of energy, youth give positive influence to the nation development in term of the political (the voters), social (cohesion) and economic (human capital) aspects. Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) is a recognized non-governmental organization that represents the voice of Malaysian youth. The objective of the establishment of youth organizations in Malaysia is to provide tools and opportunities for youth development, empowerment and engagement so that young people can contribute towards national building. MYC has three main functions: 1) to implement youth development, 2) to coordinate and organizes activity, service and advocacy, and 3) to serve as a platform for youth delegates in a variety of scope and level. Since the majority of Malaysian population is under 40 years old, the continuing youth development programs and initiatives should involve youth directly. The objective of the present study was to evaluate the effectiveness of MYC in youth development in Malaysia. The results indicate that the Malaysian youth Council (MYC) needs the support of community members and affiliates to be effective in achieving its goals.

**Keywords:** *Function, Malaysian National Youth Council, organizations*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Asnarulkhadi (2009) stated, in Malaysia, youth is defined as anyone who is between 15 and 40 years old; Nga and & King (2007) reported that in 2006, 42.4 % of the Malaysian population was between 15 and 40 years old. Furthermore, the current available data indicates that in 2010 the mean age of the Malaysian population was to 26.5 years old (CIA World Factbook, 2011). From this age interval are significant in terms of numbers and if translated into a source of energy, youth give positive influence to the nation development in term of the political (the voters), social (cohesion) and economic (human capital) aspects.

Youth forms the major portion of Malaysia's population. But, when we talk about youth, a lot of things will cross our thoughts. The good and bad things will be popped out from our thoughts and most of the times, the bad things. Why is it happens? Many teachers, law enforcement officers, social service workers, and other adults believe that today's youth are different from yesterday's youth. Young people are widely perceived to be less engaged, less motivated, and more likely to get into trouble. Nowadays, we can see that it seems that many problems in society are related to or involved youth. For example, gangsterism and random shooting. According to the news (Farik Zolkepl, 2013), police have detained

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more than 4,000 young people in the last two weeks, as result of the launch of special nationwide crackdown on crime (*Ops CantasKhas*)

Realizing the importance of youth as partner in nation building, the government is making efforts to unleash youth's invaluable potential (Azimi&Turiman, 1994); investing in Positive youth development is an investment for the development of each individual youth–It includes a form of self-leadership either in terms of thoughts, emotions and physical through the resources and the right approach. Hence, youth leadership qualities often is the topic to be discussed in the community ((Haslinda, Dzulhailmi, Azimi, Ismi, Ezhar, Abdul-Lateef, Sarjit, Nobaya&Turiman, 2012).

In Malaysia, the existence of the Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) to coordinate youth and student organizations reflect the importance and the interest in developing the quality of youth leadership. According to Azimi&Turiman (1994), the development of a secured youth movement is pertinent as nation building.

### *1.1 The Function of MYC in Youth Development*

According to Nga and & King (2007) after much struggle, in 1990's youth organizations finally were given the chance to play a role in planning, contributing ideas, strategies and organizing programs, in preparing the youth leaders to be national leaders. Furthermore, the Malaysian government gave formal platforms to youth organizations to address issues and matters concerning youth. Currently The Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) a non-governmental organization is the main body that coordinates youth and students organizations at the national level. The Malaysian Youth Council was created to promote a balanced development of youth in all areas of economic, social, mental, physical, moral and political<sup>2</sup> (Youth Societies and Youth Development Act 668 section 49 (1))<sup>3</sup>. In addition MYC also has as its objectives to (1) foster national feelings and enthusiasm among youth to work with full dedication to the interests of society and the country and (2) equip youth to live as citizens who are mature, creative, proactive and responsible.

As a recognized youth organizations MYC promotes a balanced progress of youth development and empowerment and its objectives are to:

Promote and encourage youth to play a positive and effective role to society and the nation.

Stimulate and create relationships, cooperation, mutual understanding and friendship between youth with youth or with international youth organizations.

Promote balanced development of youth societies in various fields.

Cultivate a sense of responsibility, patriotism and volunteerism among youth.

Organize and promote an interest in fertility spiritual, physical, economic and youth education among the bodies those have an interest in this matter.

Work closely with the bodies of those responsible for youth affairs in the interest of the youth movement.

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<sup>2</sup> Description provided by YouthMovements.org: <http://www.youthmovements.org/initiatives/malaysian-youth-council>

<sup>3</sup> Laws of Malaysia, Youth Societies and Youth Development (2007) Act 668 available online: [http://www.kbs.gov.my/dokumen/pekeling/akta\\_Belia\\_bi.pdf](http://www.kbs.gov.my/dokumen/pekeling/akta_Belia_bi.pdf)

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of MYC in youth development. Data was obtained from affiliates of the MYC organizations and the organizations under MYC; including the president, vice president, secretary, and their members. The sample was comprised of 800 youth leaders and ordinary members of the organization. The survey consisted of 13 items that accessed the respondents' level of agreement with the statement a six point Likert format (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree and 6= No Opinion). The statements addressed the function of MYC in youth development in Malaysia.

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1 Function of MYC in Youth Development

The results indicate that participants perceived Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) to be successful in carrying out its activities to cultivate a sense of responsible, patriotism and volunteerism among youth. Most of the items which were asked in the questionnaire showed the positive reactions. The main functions associated with this achievement were as follows:

### 3.2 MYC is a key reference association in addressing problems and issues related to youth development

The organization provides either guidance or facilitates discussion to address youth problems and issues. When comparing the responses from the different age groups (Table 1), we can see that most of the youth (26-35 years old) agreed that MYC is one of the reference association of youth problem which means when any problems or issues regarding youth occur, MYC can be a place to express concerns ( $p < 0.017$ ). In other words, MYC seems to be the place youth leader chose to discuss and find the solution to the problems.

Table 1: Youth Issues and Youth Development

MYC is a key reference association of youth problems and issues related to youth development.	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
LOW	13	27	19	21	19
	13.1%	27.3%	19.2%	21.2%	19.2%
	18.3%	18.9%	11.0%	11.0%	11.0%
MID	35	86	115	117	123
	7.4%	18.1%	24.2%	24.6%	25.8%
	49.3%	60.1%	66.9%	61.3%	71.5%
HIGH	23	30	38	53	30
	13.2%	17.2%	21.8%	30.5%	17.2%
	32.4%	21.0%	22.1%	27.7%	17.4%
Total	71	143	172	191	172
	9.5%	19.1%	23.0%	25.5%	23.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 18.639,  $p = 0.017^*$



### 3.3 There is opportunity for youth organizations to get involved in the programs organized by MYC

According to the results, MYC provides opportunities for other youth associations and affiliates to get involved in programs and activities organized (Table 2)-

Table 2: Opportunity for Youth Organizations

MYC gives opportunity for every youth organizations to get involved in programs which they organized	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
<b>LOW</b>	10	19	13	14	13
	14.5%	27.5%	18.8%	20.3%	18.8%
	14.1%	13.2%	7.5%	7.3%	7.5%
<b>MID</b>	36	100	116	126	128
	7.1%	19.8%	22.9%	24.9%	25.3%
	50.7%	69.4%	67.1%	65.6%	73.6%
<b>HIGH</b>	25	25	44	52	33
	14.0%	14.0%	24.6%	29.1%	18.4%
	35.2%	17.4%	25.4%	27.1%	19.0%
<b>Total</b>	71	144	173	192	174
	9.4%	19.1%	22.9%	25.5%	23.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 19.524,  $p = 0.012^*$

### 3.4 MYC has the ability to develop youth

MYC has organized activities and programs on youth positive development. One of MYC objectives is to promote balanced development of youth societies in various fields. The effective youth organizations will offer activities in ways that make the youth appropriate and inviting to youth with a diverse range talents, interest and skill levels. As presented in Table 3 indicate that most respondents agreed that MYC has provided opportunities for youth development.

Table 3: Youth Positive Development

MYC has the ability to develop youth	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
LOW	8	16	11	16	10
	13.1%	26.2%	18.0%	26.2%	16.4%
	11.3%	11.3%	6.4%	8.4%	5.8%
MID	31	90	119	123	125
	6.4%	18.4%	24.4%	25.2%	25.6%
	43.7%	63.4%	69.2%	64.7%	72.7%
HIGH	32	36	42	51	37
	16.2%	18.2%	21.2%	25.8%	18.7%
	45.1%	25.4%	24.4%	26.8%	21.5%
Total	71	142	172	190	172
	9.5%	19.0%	23.0%	25.4%	23.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 22.570,  $p = 0.004^{**}$

### 3.5 MYC successfully mobilize youth development programs in participatory

The findings indicate that MYC has successfully mobilized youth development programs in participatory to reduce the youth problems by creating an atmosphere of respect and tolerance (Table 4).

Table 4: Youth Development Programs in Participatory

MYC successfully mobilize youth development programs in participatory	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
LOW	6	23	16	19	11
	8.0%	30.7%	21.3%	25.3%	14.7%
	8.5%	16.1%	9.4%	9.9%	6.4%
MID	41	94	119	140	131
	7.8%	17.9%	22.7%	26.7%	25.0%
	57.7%	65.7%	69.6%	72.9%	76.2%
HIGH	24	26	36	33	30
	16.1%	17.4%	24.2%	22.1%	20.1%
	33.8%	18.2%	21.1%	17.2%	17.4%
Total	71	143	171	192	172
	9.5%	19.1%	22.8%	25.6%	23.0%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 19.278,  $p = 0.013^*$

### 3.6 MYC has clear future plans for youth development

The organization and all the affiliates are clear about their goals and mission. To enhance the activities and programs of the organization, MYC has clear future plans to accomplishing the objective of the activities agreed upon.

Table 5: Future Plans for Youth Development

MYC has clear future plans for youth development.	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
LOW	5	21	15	13	16
	7.1%	30.0%	21.4%	18.6%	22.9%
	7.0%	14.6%	8.7%	6.8%	9.3%
MID	41	89	119	122	125
	8.3%	17.9%	24.0%	24.6%	25.2%
	57.7%	61.8%	68.8%	63.9%	72.7%
HIGH	25	34	39	56	31
	13.5%	18.4%	21.1%	30.3%	16.8%
	35.2%	23.6%	22.5%	29.3%	18.0%
Total	71	144	173	191	172
	9.5%	19.2%	23.0%	25.4%	22.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 17.004,  $p = 0.030^*$

### 3.7 Youth development programs by MYC are giving many benefits to youth organizations

Respondents agreed that youth development programs by MYC are not giving many benefits to youth organizations. Almost half of the respondents gave the negative feedback with this statement (Table 6).

Table 6: MYC not giving benefit to youth development

Youth development programs by MYC are not giving many benefits to youth organizations.	Age Group				
	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
LOW	37	56	96	98	82
	10.0%	15.2%	26.0%	26.6%	22.2%
	52.1%	38.9%	55.5%	51.3%	47.1%
MID	23	68	60	68	79
	7.7%	22.8%	20.1%	22.8%	26.5%
	32.4%	47.2%	34.7%	35.6%	45.4%
HIGH	11	20	17	25	13
	12.8%	23.3%	19.8%	29.1%	15.1%
	15.5%	13.9%	9.8%	13.1%	7.5%
Total	71	144	173	191	174
	9.4%	19.1%	23.0%	25.4%	23.1%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Pearson Chi-Square = 16.345,  $p = 0.038^*$

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The establishments of youth organizations such as Malaysian Youth Council (MYC) shows that government and communities have started to realize the importance of youth organizations to empower youth. Less than 10 years from now, Vision 2020 will be tapped, youth have to be prepared, they are expected to be able to think in creative ways, being proactive and responsible so that they can contribute to the successful future of the country.

The results presented in this paper indicate that there is still room for improvement for MYC to effectively contribute towards Malaysian youth development.

However, MYC needs to partner with the communities and adults to achieve positive youth development opportunities, as well as to effect youth empowerment and participation. And also MYC and the local communities should contribute with the development and sustainability of the existent as well as the emerging youth organization

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# **RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY PREFERENCES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF SURIGAO CITY: DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to determine the recreational activity preferences and academic performance of selected high school students of Surigao City. By using a constructed questionnaire, the study attempts to determine the relationship between recreational activity preferences such as physical and mental preferences and academic performance. The results of the study are used to develop an Advocacy Program that could enhance and increase their academic performance. This study used a descriptive – comparative design to answer the research questions. Lastly, the respondents' heavy mental recreation especially computer gaming has resulted to their low IQ. Also the physical activity preference of the respondents had a little effect on their academic performance. Furthermore, the age and income of the respondents indicate less evidence for them to indulge mental recreational activities.

**Keywords:** *recreational activity preferences, academic performance*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Recreation is anything that is stimulating and rejuvenating for an individual. Some people enjoy nature hikes; others enjoy skiing, dancing, getting into sports and even watching TV show and movies. The idea behind these activities is to expand the mind and body in a positive, healthy way (Pan, 2008). Because recreational activities are important aspects in one's life, schools at present are incorporating more recreational activities the Physical Education subjects. It is believed that introducing students to lifetime activities either at an early age can help them develop good activity habits that will carry over into adulthood. Nowadays, most modern schools' goal is to provide students with knowledge, skills, capacities, values, and the enthusiasm to maintain a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. Activities included in the program are designed to promote physical fitness, to develop motor skills, to instill knowledge and understanding of rules, concepts, and strategies. Students also learn to either work as part of a team, or as individuals, in a wide variety of competitive activities. Moreover, some teachers have even begun to

incorporate stress-reduction techniques such as yoga and deep-breathing. Teaching non-traditional sports to students as activities also provide the necessary motivation for students to increase their activity, and can help students learn about different cultures.

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study attempts to determine the relationship between recreational activity preferences such as physical and mental preferences and academic performance, and intended to realize the following objectives:

1. To develop an advocacy program
2. To insure that the advocacy program must be implemented

## **3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### *3.1 Computer Games*

A computer game is a video game played electronically with the use of software in which a number of points must be garnered in order to receive rewards. This becomes so popular at present that children and adolescents nowadays spent most of their time playing video games in internet cafes. Computer gaming's role in the lives of the youth has led to increased public examination of its effects and potential harms to the youth. Unfortunately, the industries predisposition toward age-inappropriate imaging and marketing techniques has led to be concerned about its side effects, ranging from physical symptoms such as seizures and tendonitis to socially adoptive behavior such as increased short term aggressive and over use syndromes. In 2004, Anderson concluded from his recent work that a positive association exists between exposure to video game violence and aggression. In 2001, meta-analysis, Anderson and Bushman quantified the effects of exposure to violent video games on five variables namely; aggressive behavior, aggressive cognitive, pro-social behavior, aggressive affects and physiological arousal. In spite of the research on the relationship of video games exposure and aggressive behavior, there is a link between exposure to violent interactive computer games and serious violence or crime. However, the over balance of research from both sides, does support without controversy, the inference that exposure to violence increases aggressive cognition, affects behavior and decreases pro-social behavior in the short term. In addition to that, researchers such as Von Eenwyk, Bensley and Griffiths found that the most compelling evidence for a positive association between video games violence and aggressive behavior and youth occurs in children younger than age 10 year, but when older children were evaluated, the evidence was not strong. Internet addiction and video games addiction are perhaps the most widely recognized negative psychosocial terms associated with gaming. Although not actual Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM-IV) classification, the term internet addiction has been used to describe the phenomenon of internet and video games over use, or excessive time spent using this media. This term seems to have been coined in the 1990's when researchers attempted to describe the behavior observe in persons using the internet to the extent that it begun to cause other aspects of their lives to malfunction. DSM-IV disorder most similar to the pattern of behaviors observed with over use of video games is pathological gambling. Researchers at Nottingham University in the United Kingdom polled 7000 games and found an addiction rate of 12% by World Health Organization (WHO) criteria. Research in the United States has estimated that anywhere from a small minority to as much as 10% to 15% of players may be affected. However, as with finding long term aggression, there is an insufficient research that definitively concludes that video game over use is an

addiction. According to Peng, Wei (2004), as is always the case with the rise of any new mass medium, the popularity of computer games draws great attention and evokes mixed reactions. People are concerned about the possible effects, both negative and positive, of computer games on individuals and the society. Due to the development of technology, people are worried that the vivid graphics and the interactive nature of computer games will make the effects of violence more powerful. However, it has been acknowledged for a long time that educational computer games and simulations are effective assisting tools in the educational areas of management, medicine, science and etc. Even the commercially available entertainment computer games, such as SimCity, are regarded as beneficial in terms of strategic thinking development.

### *3.2 Online Games and Academic Performance*

There have been numerous studies conducted that show the adverse effects of computerized video games on children. These studies have shown that computer/video games played for an extended period, especially violent ones, have increased aggressive behavior. Additionally, video games have been found to foster social isolation as they are often played alone. The study as mentioned by Jorina (2010) stated that children who played computer video games extensively had a decline in school achievements. According to Raise Smart Kid, this may be because rather than studying, reading or doing homework, the child is spending her time playing video games. Additionally, these games are believed to not offer children the chance to think independently or creatively. As mentioned by, "The Y Factor Yearbook on the Filipino Youth", (n.d.) one venue by which teenagers are having so much fun is the use of technology. With this advancement, life becomes easier for them. Specifically, the use of computer gives them easy access to the world. However, it is computer gaming that caught the attention and interest of the youth today which caused low performance in academic especially when not properly guided by their parents. However, Slutsky (2010) asserted that there are studies indicate that playing video games has a negative effect on a child's academic performance. When children play video games, they are typically not reinforcing school activities or doing homework. He further found out that video game play during the week was harmful to a child's academic progress, but playing during the weekend did not adversely affect a student's performance.

### *3.3 Recreation Activity Preferences*

The interests of today's generation vary in many ways. Interests especially on recreational aspects are affected with their socio-economic status and intelligence. An individual, who has not much money for activities that require expenditures, will be forced to limit the range of his interest. This is especially true on the recreational interest (Toffle, 2001). Parallel to his idea is the belief of Joseph (2000), who pointed out that high school students placed less importance on clothes and appearance while preferences in recreational activities are now becoming dominant. Experience helps adolescents to evaluate their interest more critically and to know which are really important. As a result of this evaluation, older adolescents tend to stabilize their interests and carry them into adulthood. The study of Coplen (2003), on recreational activities of the youngsters in Greater Manila Areas (GMA) recommended that the government should provide varied recreational facilities for both large and small groups or for individuals such as sports and games, dances, parties, musical programs, plays and pageants. Furthermore, he opened that another means for social adjustment for adolescents is to devote their free time to hobbies like photography, collecting shells or stamps, construction of radios, planes, boats and other crafts. Others can form interest groups like reading, writing, or discussion, and debating clubs. They can also participate in community service. The research study of Frenchie (1999), revealed that adolescents of today's culture

have more leisure time than their parents or grandparents did. This is due partly to the shorter weekend and partly to mechanization which has made running a home less time- and energy-consuming than it formerly was. Furthermore, members of all social classes have more money to spend on recreation today than in the past. Likewise, he stressed that social interests of young people today are limited because of a little budget that will permit a little beyond the necessities of life.

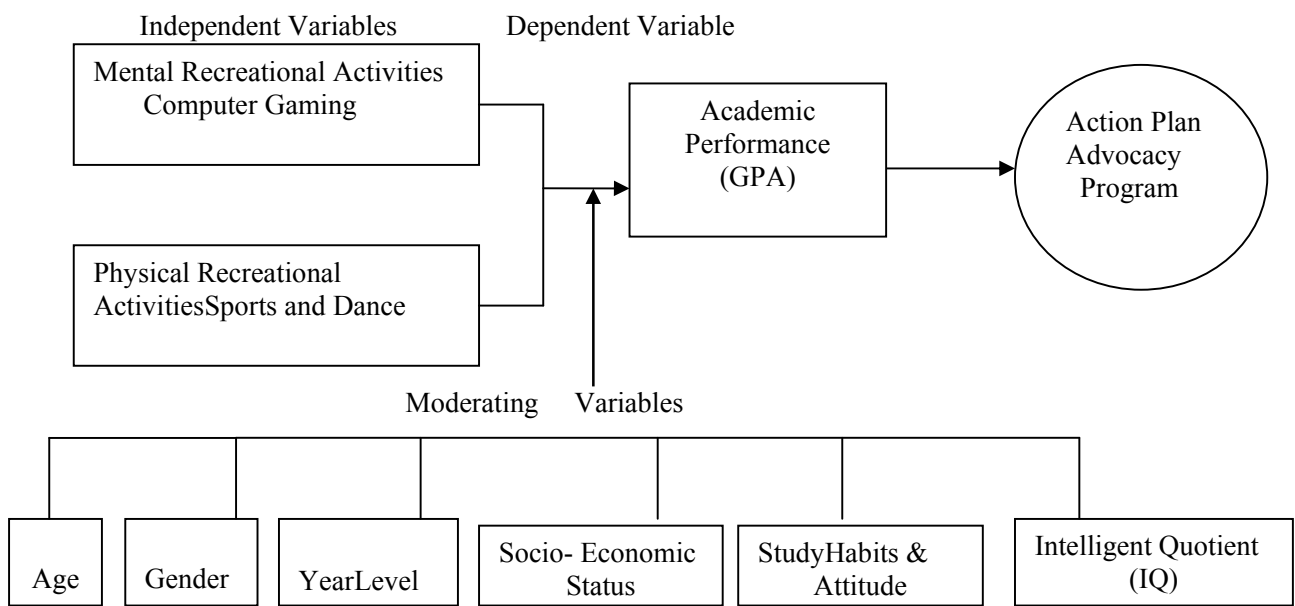
### *3.4 Factors to Determine IQ*

For the last 140 years, scholars have been preoccupied with identifying the exact factors that influence one's IQ. According to Roulinski (2007). The numerous studies on the subject have led most scientists nowadays to the belief that one's IQ is determined by a variety of both genetic and environmental factors, although there is contention about the exact weight of each. The majority of studies on intelligence have shown that environmental factors account for about 25% of the differences in people's IQ scores. The factors that have been of greatest interest to scholars include prenatal development, nutrition, birth order, home and family environment, and the effects of schooling. However, Slutsky (2010) asserted that there are studies indicate that playing video games has a negative effect on a child's academic performance. When children play video games, they are typically not reinforcing school activities or doing homework. He further found out that video game play during the week was harmful to a child's academic progress, but playing during the weekend did not adversely affect a student's performance.

## **4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study. It illustrates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables are believed to affect the dependent variables. These independent variables are categorized into mental recreational activities like computer gaming and physical recreational activities such as sports and dance. These independent variables are believed to have influenced the dependent variables which are the academic performance of the high school students of Surigao Education Center, and Saint Paul University Surigao reflected on their grade point average of the current school year. The paradigm also shows how the moderating variables such as I.Q., study habits and attitudes, gender, year level, socio-economic status interplay with the independent and dependent variables in the study. For a better understanding of the concepts presented, the schematic diagram is shown.





**Figure 1 – The Schematic Diagram of the Study**

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Research Design

This study made use of the descriptive - comparative design to answer the research questions. Specifically, it employed the survey method in identifying the recreational activity preferences of the respondents. A descriptive design was deemed appropriate because it describes systematically the area of preferences of the respondents. In Addition, the correlation method was used to find out if the recreational activity preferences of the respondents affected their academic performance. This method was further used in determining the relationship between the intervening variables and the recreational activity preferences.

### 5.2 The Samples and Sampling Procedures

The respondents of the study were the selected high school students of Surigao Education Center (SEC) and St. Paul University Surigao (SPUS) who were enrolled in the Academic Year 2009-2010. The sample size was determined using the simple random sampling. Further the researcher employed the percentage method by Gay and Sevilla (1998). Ten percent (10%) of the total number of respondents from each year level from first year to fourth year. in there are one hundred ten (110) numbers of respondents from the two identified private schools of Surigao City. The stratified random sampling, however, was used as well as the purposive sampling because after the number of respondents was determined from each school in every year level, the respondents were divided to compose two groups: into two groups: Group A-Computer Games and Group B-Sports and Dances. This was purposively done to assure the adequacy and appropriateness of sample.

Moreover, the respondents of the study were identified on the basis of the pre-survey conducted by the researcher.

Below is the list of respondents of the study.

Table 1.The Respondents of the Study

Year Level	Surigao Education Center (N)	Sample Size (n)		Saint Paul University Surigao (N)	Sample Size (n)	
		Computer Gamers	Sports and Dances		Computer Gamers	Sports and Dances
First	75	7	7	69	7	7
Second	62	7	7	65	7	7
Third	65	7	7	61	6	6
Fourth	72	7	7	75	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>

Total Respondents (n) = 110

### 5.3 The Research Instruments Used

The study made use of a researcher-made questionnaire as the main gathering tool of the necessary data needed for the study. The survey-questionnaire was composed of two parts. Part 1 was a set of questions asking for the personal profile of the respondents as to their sex, study habits and attitudes, gender, year level, socio-economic status and grade point average. Part 2 consisted of questions asking about their Physical Recreation Activities such as sports and dances and mental recreation

activities specifically playing computer games. The questionnaire for study habits and attitude was also incorporated where the items were all taken from the book entitled *Personality and Human Relations* by Sferra, Adam, and *OTIS SELF-Administering Tests of Mental Ability* by Arthur S. Otis for Intelligent Quotient. However, the enrichment, modification and personal contribution of the researcher were based from her class observations. After a set of questions had been formulated, it was tried out to total of 50 respondents to ascertain the validity of the test questions in the given indicators.

#### *5.4 Data Collection Procedures*

The main tool in obtaining the data needed in this study was through the use of a researcher-made survey questionnaire. However, before the gathering of the needed data, permission was sought first from the Principal through a letter duly noted and signed by the thesis adviser to allow the conduct and distribution of the questionnaires to the targeted respondents. Once the approval was sought, the distribution of the questionnaires immediately followed. Also to gather the reliable data, the researcher personally handed-in the survey-questionnaire to the respondents. This was to ensure that all instructions were clear to the respondents. After the retrieval of the answered questionnaires, the researcher immediately tally and tabulate the posted data.

#### *5.5 Statistical Treatment*

The data gathered in this study were analyzed and interpreted using statistical software which is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0. This statistical software was used because it is the most trusted and widely used data analysis program. The descriptive and nonparametric statistical analyses were run using the SPSS at 0.05 level of significance. To analyze the data gathered from this study, the following statistical tools were used:

1. Frequency Count and Percentage. This will be used to summarize the profile of the respondents.
2. Weighted Mean. This statistics was used to describe qualitative responses about the preferred recreation activities of the respondents.
3. Rank. This was used to find out and arrange the recreational activity preferences of the respondents.
4. T-test. This statistics was used to measure the significant difference between the mental recreational activities, physical recreational activities and academic performance (GPA).
5. Spearman's rho – This non-parametric test was used to measure statistical dependence between two variables.

With the following equivalent remarks:

If (p) is,

0.90 – 1.0	Very Highly Correlated
0.70 – 0.89	Highly Correlated
0.50 – 0.69	Moderately Correlated
0.03 – 0.49	Low Correlation
0.30 below	Very Low Correlation

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study are mostly expressed in percentages and means for the descriptive problems, however, problems which are hypothetical are expressed in inferential statistical tools.

### 6.1 Difference in Academic Performance

Table 2. Academic Performance of the Respondents Grouped According to Mental and Physical Activity Preference

Grade	Physical Activity Preference		Mental Activity Preference	
	F	%	F	%
89 – 95	8	23	14	19
82 – 88	13	37	33	44
75 – 81	14	40	28	37
Total	35	100	75	100
Mean Grade	84		83	
Sd	4.6		4.7	

performance of the respondents according to their mental and physical recreational activities. It can be seen from the table that the respondents who preferred physical activities for their recreational activity performed equally the same as that of the respondents who preferred mental recreational activities. This simply suggests that the respondents who preferred mental activities did not have any advantages over those who prefer physical activities in term of their academic performance.

### 6.2 Relationship Between Dependent and Independent Variables

Table 3. Relationship Between Mental and Physical Recreation Participation and Academic Performance

Relationship Between	Level of Significance ( $\alpha$ )	Spearman's rho Coefficient ( $\rho$ )	Remarks
Mental Recreation Participation and Academic Performance	0.05	-0.623*	Negative Moderate Correlation
Physical Recreation Participation and Academic Performance		0.033	Very Low Correlation

\* Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 3 revealed the relationship between the mental and physical recreation participation and academic performance of the respondents. The Spearman's rho Coefficient ( $\rho$ ) of -0.623 suggests that the mental recreation participation had negative moderate correlation with academic performance. Thus,  $H_0$  which states that there is no significant relationship between academic and mental recreation is not accepted. It can be concluded that there existed a significant relationship between academic performance

and mental recreation. This means further that as the respondents indulged more in mental recreation especially in computer gaming their academic performance was affected negatively.

### 6.3 Significant Difference of Academic Performance

Table 4. Difference of Academic Performance when Grouped According to Mental and Physical Recreational Activity Preferences

Difference between	Mean	Level of Significance ( $\square$ )	Df	Probability Value	t-value	Remarks
Physical Preference	84	0.05	108	0.753	-.333	Not Significant
Mental Preference	83					

\*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 4 illustrated the difference of academic performance when grouped according to mental and physical activity preference. Using the t-test, it can be seen from the table that the probability value between the difference of the academic performance when grouped according to physical and mental recreational activity preference is  $p$  – value = 0.753, thus, is not significant. Thus, HO3 which states that there exist no significant difference between physical preference and mental preference is accepted, which means that, there is no significant difference between the respondents' academic performance when grouped according to mental and physical recreation participation. The result further implies that there is not enough evidence that the academic performance of the respondents who preferred physical recreational activities was higher than that of the respondents who preferred mental recreational activities which could be seen through their mean academic performance.

### 6.4 Moderating Variables Interplay

Table 5. Relationship between Moderating Variables and Mental Recreation

Relationship Between	Level of Significance ( $\square$ )	Spearman's rho Coefficient ( $\rho$ )	Remarks
Mental Recreation and Age	0.05	0.036	Very Low Correlation
Mental Recreation and Gender		0.056	Very Low Correlation
Mental Recreation and Year Level		0.187	Very Low Correlation
Mental Recreation and Socio-Economic Status		-0.121	Negative Very Low Correlation
Mental Recreation and IQ		-0.285*	Negative Low Correlation

Table 5 shown the relationship between the moderating variables and computer gaming attitudes of the respondents. The Spearman's rho ( $\rho$ ) coefficients of mental recreation and age ( $\rho = 0.036$ ), mental recreation and gender ( $\rho = 0.056$ ), and mental recreation and year level ( $\rho = 0.187$ ) suggested that the mental recreation participation has very low correlation with age, gender and year level. Thus, there was

little evidence that the mental recreation participation of the respondents had been influenced by their ages, gender and year level. On the other hand, Spearman's rho ( $\rho$ ) coefficients of mental recreation and IQ ( $\rho = -0.285$ ) was significant, thus HO4 which states that there exists no significant relationship between mental recreation and IQ was not accepted. This means that there exists a significant negative correlation between mental recreation and IQ. The result suggested that the more time the respondents would spend in mental recreational activities, the poorer their academic performance would become.

## **7. FINDINGS**

Based on the results of the study, the following findings were drawn:

1. Most of the respondents' families are middle class families.
2. The respondents preferred to play computers games rather than watching TV Shows for their mental recreation.
3. Majority of the respondents were into computer gaming as their form of mental activity. The too much exposure to mental activities like computer games contributed to the respondents' low IQ which relates to their poor academic performances.
4. The respondents had positive perception on the effects of good study habits to performance but failed to do so because most of their time had been allotted to something else. As the respondents spent more time in mental recreation especially in computer gaming, their academic performance was likely affected; thus, their grades decreased.
5. Majority of them preferred modern dance as their dance preference. The respondents preferred basketball, volleyball and badminton as their sports physical activities. The physical recreation participation of the respondents had little effect on their academic performance.
6. There was no significant difference with regards to the respondents' academic performance when grouped according to mental and physical recreation participation.
7. There was little evidence that the younger the age of the respondents, the more time they indulged themselves in mental recreational activity especially in computer gaming.
8. There was little evidence that the lower the income of the respondents, the more they indulged in mental recreational activities.
9. There was little evidence that the mental recreation participation of the respondents were affected by gender and year level.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The researcher concluded that the respondents' heavy mental recreation especially computer gaming has resulted to their low IQ. Meanwhile, the physical activity preference of the respondents had a little effect on their academic performance. Furthermore, the age and income of the respondents indicate less evidence for them to indulge mental recreational activities.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Recreational activities that would enhance the IQ of the respondents and which are equally interesting as computer gaming should be conducted in the classroom.
2. Teachers should design and integrate lessons that would stimulate students' interest and attention in the class discussion.
3. Parents and teachers alike should monitor, guide and follow-up their children's/students' activities during and after class hours to mitigate and help control their computer gaming activities and so as not to affect their studies.
4. The local government should implement consistently the city ordinances or applicable regulations about internet cafes' prohibiting students to play during class hours and even set curfews during

night time. However, an appropriate legal action to all violators of the said ordinances should be provided.

5. Awareness drive about the risks and disadvantages of too much playing computers games should be disseminated to the community.

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# FACTOR INFLUENCING CIVIC DEVELOPMENT AMONG PRESERVICE TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) CONTEXT

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## Abstract

Developing students as future citizens is the oldest educational goal for educators. Constructivism as a learner-centered educational approach is used for studying the development of civic outcome. The bringing civic mission of HE is needed for a responsible especially for future teachers as agents of change. Based on a receding civic mission of HE, it can be used to foster civic outcome. In this developmental view, students are able to expand their civic skills with active participation. Tools used in HE play a significant role in developing sense of citizenship among its students can vary from individual, personal and familial factors to curricular issues. This paper tries to confirm the relationship between important aspects HE and student personally traits to develop civic outcomes in a manner of constructive theories.

**Keywords:** *constructivism, higher education, civic development, preservice teachers, student traits*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of knowledge, learning skills and developing traits for students as potential leaders is essential. This paper examines the theoretical and conceptual debate about preservice teachers who specially socializing in HE if they have necessary opportunities to work collaboratively with others in addition to prior knowledge from past and formal (related civic courses) or informal (co-curricular activities, interaction with peers, rules, etc.) learning that can develop their civic culture in the shape of civil disposition, knowledge, and engagement for nation building. Future teachers can play an significant responsibility in preparing students for citizenship (Martin, 2008), they need to think of themselves as active citizens and It is a duty for them to make responsible citizens (K. J. Kennedy, 2005). Civic task of HE has declined in the past years (Nobbe, 2012). Although, there is a high need for growth in arising from developed urbanisation followed by the process of democratization with the development of civic culture. The question of citizenship has emerged as a major theme on the agenda of politicians. In emergent democracies, the attention has been on the promotion of a democratic society (Biesta, 2009). The growth of character and civic virtue in preservice teachers has become a growing worry of many people in our nation today (Weber, 1999).

## 2. THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Developing highly-qualified preservice teachers to improve education is vital (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), 2003). To meet future demand for effective teaching and active learning of character education, it is gradually challenged to provide an effective preservice education (Weber, 1999). They have been created for citizenship programs with teaching resources suitable for preservice teachers (Character Education Resources, 1998; Finding Common Ground, 1998). Civic development at a vital stage is the process through which preservice teachers better prepared to participate in civic life (Torney-Putra & Amadeo, 1999). Education can encourage civic responsibilities (Bajunid, 2008). Student teaching is a main factor of teacher preparation programs, but little is known about the interaction of particular student teaching experiences and student teachers' construction of pedagogical knowledge. Pedagogical knowledge includes knowledge of preservice teachers, curriculum, planning, instruction, and assessment (Jones & Vesilind, 1996).

### **3. CIVIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF HE**

The term "civic development" is described as one's —capacities connected to open inquiry (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003, p. 16), and refers to skills and competence as civic values, effective communication skills, and leadership skills needed in order to actively participate in a democratic society (Sax, 2000). A citizenry, informed by education, will benefit and preserve the standards of a democratic society. Research on political behavior showed the effect of education on civic and political engagement (Nie & Hillygus, 2001). "Civic responsibility must be learned, for it is neither natural nor effortless" (Bok, 2008, p. 172). What these kind of students study in class often affects the value of citizenship (Bok, 2008, p. 53). On the other hand, political scientists have long concluded that education is strongly related to propensity to vote (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980) and to engage in other forms of participation (Sidney Verba & Nie, 1972; S. Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1995). We mean by civic development as civic competence (Audigier, 2000; Hoskins, Villalba, Van Nijlen, & Barber, 2008; R. G. Niemi & C. Chapman, 1998; Veldhuis, 1997), civic engagement (Dudley & Gitelson, 2003; Ehrlich, 2000; Ginwright & James, 2002; S. Verba, et al., 1995), and civic disposition (Branson, 1999; Olafson, Schraw, Veldt, & Ponder, 2011; Patrick, 1997; Tor, 2010; Torney-Putra & Amadeo, 1999). Each above component of youth civic development will be achieved by both students' themselves activity (e.g. co-curricular activities and interaction) and formal citizenship education (e.g. civic and social science courses, classes and educational programs).

### **4. CONSTRUCTIVISM AND EDUCATION**

The gap between policy and practice can be at many levels, from national policy to practice within an individual institution (Kerr, 1999). Teachers represent the most crucial link in the civic education policy-to-practice chain: through their understanding and action (Antal, 2010) and meaningful practices (K. Kennedy, 1997). A gap can emerge where national policy is attempting to bring a significant change in teacher view in a relatively brief stage of time (Kerr, 1999). In contrast to traditional view of education (from up to down), constructivism is an epistemology that proposes a description of the core of knowledge. It suggests that students create their own new understandings through the interaction (Cannella & Reiff, 1994; Richardson, 1997, 2003) and knowledge is acquired through involvement (Kroll & LaBoskey, 1996). It includes a group of theories but all have in common the centrality of the student's activities in creating meaning

(Biggs, 1996). The constructivist educational process is based on a mixture of a subset of research within cognitive psychology. The basis is that a student shapes knowledge and skills within the new understanding (Huitt, 2003). The student chooses information, changes it, constructs hypotheses and makes decisions, relying on the cognitive sense (Brown, 2008). It is “a learner-centred educational theory that each teacher candidate must construct his or her own understanding by adding new information to previous experiences” (Henson, 2003, p. 12). Learning activities are characterized by active engagement, rather than a dispenser of knowledge (Abdal-Haq, 1998). According to Astin’s (I-E-O) theory “personality” refers to a multifaceted psychological structure (Jeffery J. Mondak, Hibbing, Canache, Seligson, & Anderson, 2010). Students of personality view traits as internal psychological structures that are relatively fixed and enduring, that are susceptible to observation, and that predict behavior (A. S. Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, & Ha, 2010; Jeffery J. Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Schoen & Schumann, 2007; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009).

Learning strategies have to be coordinated in a flexible manner (e.g. active learning), so that the student is cognitively engaged in the task in a self-regulated manner (Pintrich, 1989, pp. 118-119).

We shall apply a model of student development in HE that has described much recent multi-institutional research. In this model, the college can be seen as comprising three conceptually distinct components: student outputs, student inputs, and the educational environment (Astin, 1970). Preservice teachers’ outputs mention to those features of the student’s growth that the university either does influence or attempts to influence. Preservice teachers’ inputs are the abilities for development that the new preservice teachers bring to college (Astin, 1970). These democratic outcomes prepare preservice teachers for bringing meaningful participation and its values to future students (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, 2003) and they are also capability of using civic responsibilities for the future (Mitchell, 1999). For our purpose this study has been heavily influenced by Youniss & Yates (1997) conceptualization of factors that promote the development of a civic identity which explains the relationship between curricular policies and civic outcomes (Nobbe, 2012).

## **5. THE IMPORTANCE OF HE IN PRESERVICE TEACHERS’ CIVIC DEVELOPMENT**

As we know, nowadays the role of HE institutions decreased (Harkavy & Hartley, 2008). The usage of civic education and social studies let preservice teachers to gather a sense of where they are. These types of activities are to promote “characteristics and abilities central to student’s future roles as citizens and workers to behaving in cooperative ways with peers.” (Harris, 2012) The question in here is how and by what thing we can develop this group of future teachers civically? The importance of a quality undergraduate teaching is becoming increasingly clear (Steven C. Riggert, Mike Boyle, Joseph M. Petrosko, Daniel Ash, & Rude-Parkins, 2006). Knowledge improves the quantity and quality of civic participation (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Delli Carpini & Keeter S., 1996). The HE must be a main actor in the system of concerned people that are coalescing around a common sense of democracy (Chambers, 2005). One of the aims of HE must be to assist preservice teachers develop their abilities to “examine complicated situations in which civic values are often at stake” (Ehrlich, 2000, p. xxv). There are numerous of research is supporting the need for the integration of civic engagement in the college curriculum (Giles & Eyler, 1994). HE institutions have the tendency to modify students

or to design an environment to student change. What institutions are most interested in is whether they are optimally succeeding in changing students' academic competences (Bitzer, 2003b). Knox, Lindsay, and Knolb (1993) found that HE graduates were more likely than high-school graduates to vote and engage in civic activities (Kotori, 2008).

## **6. EDUCATION AS DEVELOPMENT**

Developmental studies tell us that there is substantial variability between individuals in prosocial behavior as well as stability over (Eisenberg, et al., 1999). Generally, the theoretical framework is constructed on the well-established I-E-O model used by Astin (1993) in his national studies of the impact of college on students (Zúñiga, Williams, & Berger, 2005) and Vygotsky's (1978) activity theory. These developmental approaches urge instructors to design learning settings to higher levels of intellectual development (Zhao & Kuh, 2004). Development is theorized as a process whereby students grow in response to dealing with novel situations (Baxter-Magolda, 1992; King & Kitchener, 1994; Perry, 1970) or induce disequilibrium (Piaget, 1964) into their routine ways of responding. Educational environments such as class and campus that provide a combination of challenge and support (A. W. Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Sanford, 1962) adapted to students' level of development to help preservice teachers in adapting to the challenges (Newman & Newman, 1998).

In addition, activity theory became a mediating instrument (Donnelly, 2001). It requires a framework that accounts for the social, cultural, and historical aspects of learning. The summary of activity theory demonstrates how Engeström (1999) uses the concept of the activity method to relate the historical, cultural, and social components that define learning contexts (Hendry, 2009). Learning occurs within social and cultural contexts, and community (Hendry, 2009). It is a socio-cultural lens through which designers can examine human activity systems. It focuses on the interaction of human activity and consciousness within environmental context (Jonassen & Rohrer-Murphy, 1999).

## **7. THE LEARNING OUTCOME VIEW**

Inputs-Environments-Outputs (I-E-O) presumes that student outcomes are affected by educational policies and practices in the institutional environment and precollege student input measures (Astin, 1991) with suitable teaching and learning resources to achieve civic outcomes (Ming & Muda, n.d.). Astin's (1975, 1991; Astin, 1993) I-E-O approach provides a theoretical framework to organize cause and effect, taking into consideration what happens between the input and the outcome of students' HE experience (HERI, 2001). The central of I-E-O approach (Astin 1993) is that true educational excellence lies in an institution's capability to affect its students' citizenship positively, to improve their intellectual and civic growth, and to make a progressive difference in their civic lives (Bitzer, 2003a).

Hurtado, Dey, Gurin, & Gurin (2003) suggested another approach to student engagement which describes how students' behaviours with other students and programs act as mediating environmental factors when predicting student outcomes. Preservice teachers' behavior can be formed by various parts of their environment, but in turn, educational outcomes are a result of that behavior. Students outcomes refer to those aspects of the student's development that the institution either does influence or attempts to influence through its educational programs (Astin,

1993). Educational researchers seek the antecedents to student approaches to learning that are vital for forecasting the approach to learning and the outcome of learning (Bhuvanewari Ravindran, Barbara A. Greene, & DeBacker, 2005). The idea of learning outcomes and outcome-based education is high on today's education agenda. It represents what is achieved at the conclusion of an educational program (Harden, 2002). According to Melton (1997) the term "learning outcome" is simply an alternative name for "objective".

The input variables related to novice preservice teachers which they bring to HE institutions include socio-economic factors (i.e. Family Background (R. Niemi & C. Chapman, 1998); Parental Education Level (Niemi & Junn, 1998; S. Verba, et al., 1995); Age (Nobbe, 2012); Gender (Bussey & Bandura, 1999), Ethnicity (Finlay & Flanagan, 2009)), Personally Traits (i.e. Openness to Change (A. S. Gerber, et al., 2010; Jeffery J. Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009); Conscientiousness (A. Gerber, Gregory A. Huber, Connor Raso, & Ha, 2009; Jeffery J. Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009); Extraversion (A. Gerber, et al., 2009; Jeffery J. Mondak & Halperin, 2008); Attitudes and Values (Marks & Jones, 2004; Ozorak, 2003; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2005); Motivation (Pintrich. & Schunk, 2002)), Pre-college Experience (i.e. academic preparation, ability and college-level skills, financial wherewithal, family education and support (Kuh, 2009)), Learning Style (i.e. Concrete experience, Observation and reflection, Formation of abstract concepts and generalisations, Testing of the implications of these concepts in new situations (Kolb, 1984)), Leadership Competency (i.e. peer interaction (M. Verba, 2010); Peer Environments (Cruce & Moore, 2007).

The college environment refers to those aspects of the HE institution that are capable of affecting the student (Astin, 1970). The Outcome of I-E-O model includes of civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills within the social studies curriculum sends a clear message about the role of the teacher: "the incorporation in social studies curricula of components aimed at political literacy, community involvement, and social and moral responsibility to others indicates that teachers are considered to have a responsibility to lay foundations for democratic citizenship" (Sunal, Kelley, & Sunal, 2009, p. 36).

## **8. PRESERVICE TEACHERS' IMPORTANCE**

Based on the idea of Torney-Purta, Richardson, & Barber (2005) civic education conducted in schools has a significant role in developing citizenship (Torney-Purta, et al., 2005). Wasburn (1986) recognizes teacher education as the obvious starting point for improving political socialization.

Some studies examined the role of teacher education in the process of promoting civic education and suggested that the focus of program content can influence students' notions of teaching if they overlap messages from other sources, and if the individual is receptive to change (Angell, 1998). In order to ensure the development of citizenship, HE institutions, at the initial certification would have to restructure their curricula and clinical programs to incorporate the civic dimensions (Karsten, Cogan, Grossman, Liu, & Pitiyanuwat, 2002).

## **9. ACTIVE LEARNING AS A FACILITATOR FOR A RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP**

To meet the civic outcomes mentioned in above, active learning has relied on intuitive understanding than a common definition. Analysis of the research literature (A.W. Chickering, Gamson, & Poulsen, 1987), however, proposes that preservice teachers should do more than just listen: they must read, write, discuss, or be engaged in collaborative activities. Most important, to be actively involved, students must engage in higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It is proposed that strategies promoting active learning be defined as instructional activities involving students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). “The best learning is active learning; hand-on experience makes civics come alive” (Janger, 2003). It is an operative means of learning about citizenship in preservice teachers (Middleton, 2012). The learning outcome of citizenship education as not only being an increased knowledge of civic rights and responsibilities but also ability to engage in lifelong learning (Annette, 2000), enhances student knowledge and empathy (Anderson & Adams, 2006; A.W. Chickering, et al., 1987; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998; McKeachie, 1986), and also assists preservice teachers develop networks of peer support that help them in the establishment of relationship in the social communities of their university and directly influences social integration and indirectly shapes subsequent institutional commitment (Tinto, 1997).

## **10. IMPLICATIONS**

It is recommended for having civically active and responsible preservice teachers as future ambassadors of civic values; educational faculties must involve and engage them in high-impact practices with following results:

1. They demand that students dedicate significant quantities of time to civically oriented tasks.
2. It puts them in conditions that basically demand they interact with university and classmates about essential matters.
3. Participate in these collaborative activities enlarge the likelihood that students will experience citizenship through contact with others.
4. They get frequent response about their performance.
5. Participate in these activities offers chances for them to see how what they are learning works in different settings, on and off the campus.
6. Doing one or more of these activities in the context of a coherent, academically challenging curriculum that appropriately infuses opportunities for active, collaborative learning increases the odds that students will be prepared to connect (Kuh, 2009).

## **11. CONCLUSION**

In concluding, this study examined the views of future teachers of social studies regarding significant global trends, required citizen characteristics, and crucial educational plans to develop the said features (Karsten, et al., 2002). Teacher quality is still the greatest school-related influence on children's academic performing (Barnes, 2006). The teacher education curriculum must frame the teaching and learning moments within each course by moving from an assignment driven to an objective driven approach (Zeichner, Melnick, & Gomez, 1996) in making civic responsible teachers for the next generation of youth.

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# ASSESSING DISABLED STUDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE IN MALAYSIAN HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

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## Abstract

The importance of Quality of Life (QOL) has been increasingly recognized in the field of social sciences. This study investigates the QOL and its association with four domains of QOL, namely, (a) physical health, (b) psychological health, (c) social relationships and (d) environment among Disabled Students currently pursuing their studies in Malaysian Higher learning institutions (HLIs). In this study, the subjective quality of life is explored where the QOL viewed as a subjective and multidimensional concept which emphasis on the self-perception of an individual's current state (WHOQOL, 1998). Analysis was carried out to identify differences between the four domains of QOL and selected demographic profiles (Gender, age, level of study, type of institutions, financial resources and living arrangement). Some interesting findings find that, compared to others type of disabilities, physically disabled students seem to be more satisfied with their social relationships compared to hearing impaired and visually impaired students. Mann-Whitney test find there exists a significant difference between age and social relationships domains but no significant difference exists between gender and four domains of QOL. In addition, results of the analyses via Kruskal-Wallis test also reveal, there is significant difference in social relationships as seen from the level of study, type of institutions, financial resources and living arrangement.

**Keywords:** *Quality of Life (QOL), Malaysian Higher Learning Institution (HLIs), Mann-Whitney, Kruskal-Wallis.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Quality of Life (QOL) has been recognized as an important construct in a number of social and medical sciences such as sociology, political science, economics, psychology, philosophy and others. However, each academic field has developed somewhat different approaches to investigate the construct of Quality of Life. Consequently, sociologists and political scientists are often interested in the quality of life at the societal or population level ("*state of the state*") while psychologists and medical scientists are interested in measurable aspects of individual and subjective experiences of a good life ("*state of the person*") (Rapley, 2003). QOL is presumably a difficult concept to define. Authors from different disciplines approach the concept from the perspective of their own research interests and objectives, and so the *subject* of QOL research also varies widely. For example, social indicators have been developed to assess the QOL of the general populations of cities, regions or nations, while social and psychological indicators have been developed to assess the QOL of individuals, or groups of individuals with common characteristics ((Felce & Perry, 1995). History of quality of life concept dates back to the time of Aristotle around 385 BC. Aristotle considered "good life" or "doing thing in the good way" as happiness. Yet, he examined concept of happiness from different perspectives and stated that happiness of an unhealthy person is not the same as that of a healthy person under different circumstances. However, at that time happiness or living a happy life was equivalent to what today is called quality of life (Chung, Killingworth, & Nolan, 1997).

This study proposes to use the WHOQOL-BREF to assess Quality of Life of Disabled Students. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has defined “Quality Of Life” as “*an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns*”. The WHOQOL-BREF is a well-established cross-cultural measurement, and it allows comparisons to be made between different cultures (Hasanah, Naing, & Rahman, 2003; Karimlou, Zayeri, & Salehi, 2011). Disability is a complex, dynamic and multidimensional construct. The transition from medical perspective to social perspective has been described as the shift from a “medical model” to a “social model” in which people are viewed as being disabled by society rather than by their bodies (Von Groote, Bickenbach, & Gutenbrunner, 2011). With the increasing number of Disabled Students seeking to access higher education, the Malaysian government is responsive to increase their Quality of Life (Ministry of Higher Education, 2009). In Malaysia, several studies on QOL has been conducted among different target groups and illness such as people with HIV+/AIDS (Hasanah, 2003), chronic schizophrenia patients (Mubarak et al., 2003), cancer patients (Wan Puteh et al., 2009) and asthma patients (S Sararaks, 2001) but not much research has been done on QOL of Disabled Students. The main purpose of this study is to assess the QOL of Disabled Students using WHOQOL-BREF instruments according to (physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment) wherein it is deduced physically disabled students tend to have better social relationships compared to other disabilities.

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1 Materials and Method

This study was undertaken through a survey designed to assess the QOL of Disabled students. It is based on a quantitative approach through the use of the instrument WHOQOL –BREF questionnaires. Previously, permission had been obtained from the Ministry of Higher Education and relevant authorized university administrator. QOL domain scores were computed using SPSS syntax. This transformation method converts QOL scores to range between 4 and 20. Higher score reflects better quality of life.

Table 1: WHOQOL-BREF Domains

Domains	Facets incorporated within domain
1. Physical health	☐ Pain and discomfort; Energy and fatigue; Sleep and rest; Dependence on medication; Mobility; Activities of daily living; Working capacity
2. Psychological	☐ Positive feelings; Self esteem; Thinking; learning; memory and concentration; Spirituality/religion; Negative feelings
3. Social relationships	☐ Personal relationships; Social support
4. Environment	☐ Financial resources; Information and skills; Recreation and leisure; Home environment; Access to health and social care; Physical safety and security; Physical environment; Transport

Source: The WHOQOL Group (1998)

### 2.2 Data Analysis

In data analysis descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used to evaluate demographic information of Disabled Students. Furthermore, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test was used to analyze whether there is a significant difference between QOL domains



(physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environment) and selected demographic profile.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1 Descriptive analysis

Data from this study was gathered from 300 of Disabled students (185 male and 115 female) from ten Public Universities, four Polytechnics, one Community College and four Private Universities. Our sample ranged in age from 19 to 37 years. Most of the participants in this survey reported their highest level of education as Bachelor's Degree (49.5%) followed by Diploma (40.9%). Majority of respondents were from Public universities (42.3%) followed by polytechnic (36.3%), private universities (10.0%) and community colleges (11.3%). Most of them are having hearing impaired (48.7%) followed by physical disabilities (35.7%), and visually impaired (15.7%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Demographic profiles of Disabled Students

Variables	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	185	61.7
	Female	115	38.3
Age group	Less than or equal 20	63	21.0
	>21	230	76.7
Level of Study	Certificate and diploma	151	50.3
	Undergraduate	147	49.0
	Postgraduate	2	.7
Type Of Institution	Public	127	42.3
	Private	30	10.0
	Polytechnic	109	36.3
	Community College	34	11.3
Type Of Disabilities	Hearing impaired	146	48.7
	Visual Impaired	47	15.7
	Physical impaired	107	35.7

The differences between the groups with regard to QOL domain (physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environment) score and gender were statistically analyzed with the Mann-Whitney tests. The results of the Mann-Whitney test are shown in Table 3. Findings of this survey show that there was no significance difference in gender and QOL domains; Physical health domain ( $U=9988.5$ ,  $p>.05$ ) psychological health= ( $U=10038.0$ ,  $p>.05$ ) , social relationships ( $U=9669.5$ ,  $p>.05$ ) or and environment ( $U=10511.55$ ,  $p>.05$ ). In contrast to earlier findings, a study by (Beham, Drobnič, Verwiebe, & Rodrigues, 2006) indicates that the traditional female gender role includes care-giving responsibilities (which are not part of the traditional male gender role), which encourage women to respond more emotionally than men. Table 8 shows there are significant differences between age and social relationships ( $U=5255.5$ ,  $p<.05$ ). This result may be explained by the fact that elder people are likely to be richer and may have better family support(Wiggins, Higgs, Hyde, & Blane, 2004).

Table 3: Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test of the Difference in the Mean QOL domain and gender

Variable	QOL DOMAIN			
	Physical health	Psychological Health	Social Relationships	Environment
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	15.47	16.67	11.11	15.85
Female	15.19	16.38	10.07	10.71
Mann-Whitney U	9988.5	10038.0	9669.5	10511.5
p-value	.373	.410	.171	.863
<b>Age</b>				
Less than or equal 20	15.52	16.83	8.10	16.14
>21	15.32	16.48	11.41	15.83
Mann-Whitney U	7082.5	6913.5	5255.5	7072
p-value	.530	.363	.0001	.519

The results of Kruskal-Wallis test on QOL domain and selected demographic profile is given in Table 4. Regarding socio-demographic characteristics, there were significant differences in social relationships domains according to (type of disabilities, level of study, type of institutions, financial resources and living arrangement). The difference was determined on the basis of personal relationships and social support among Disabled Students. However, the result of this survey through Kruskal-Wallis test shows that there is no difference in environment domain and selected demographic profile.

Table 4: Kruskal Wallis test between QOL domain and selected demographic (Type of disabilities, Level of study, type of institutions, financial resources, living arrangement)

Variable	QOL DOMAIN			
	Physical health	Psychological Health	Social Relationships	Environment
<b>Type of Disabilities</b>				
Hearing Impaired	15.48	16.61	<b>5.48</b>	15.75
Visually Impaired	14.81	16.17	<b>15.15</b>	15.54
Physical Disabilities	15.46	16.65	<b>15.91</b>	16.25
<b>Test statistics</b>	2.367	.995	199.413	4.468
<b>p-value</b>	.306	.608	.0001	.107
<b>Level of Study</b>				
Certificate	15.05	16.56	5.77	15.82
Undergraduate	15.69	16.54	<b>15.80</b>	15.98
Postgraduate	15.14	17.00	<b>10.00</b>	15.75
<b>Test statistics</b>	4.173	.051	188.330	1.247
<b>p-value</b>	.124	.975	.0001	.536
<b>Type of Institutions</b>				
Public	15.47	16.69	<b>15.91</b>	16.29
Private	16.32	15.89	<b>13.20</b>	14.48
Polytechnic	15.32	16.84	4.75	15.96

Community College	14.39	15.75	8.24	15.49
<b>Test Statistics</b>	9.834	11.213	194.791	17.55
<b>p-value</b>	.020	.011	.0001	.001
<b>Financial Resources</b>				
Self-finance	15.20	15.73	15.60	14.70
Parents	15.41	<b>16.56</b>	8.31	15.77
Scholarship	15.35	<b>16.63</b>	10.62	16.00
Loan	15.45	15.94	14.00	15.26
<b>Test Statistics</b>	.187	2.558	13.505	2.721
<b>p-value</b>	.980	.465	.004	.437
<b>Living arrangement</b>				
Living alone	16.00	17.90	13.04	16.81
Spouse	13.43	14.67	14.00	14.25
Friends	15.43	16.36	<b>11.35</b>	15.77
Parent	15.00	16.65	<b>8.03</b>	15.95
<b>Test Statistics</b>	7.756	12.251	17.659	7.957
<b>p-value</b>	.051	.007	.001	.047

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on our study, results show there are no significant differences in mean QOL scores in the (psychological health, physical health and environment) domains and gender. As far as the age is concerned, this study shows that there is a significant difference between age and social relationships domain. These findings confirm the results of other researchers as reported by (Orsmond, Krauss, & Seltzer, 2004) indicated that aged persons tend to develop better relationships than others. Regarding the selected demographic profile, there was a significant difference in Social relationships domains and (type of disabilities, level of study, Type of institutions, financial resources and living arrangement). This means that personal relationships and social supports are different among disable students. This study finds that those physically disabled students tend to get better chance to social networking compared to visually impaired students and hearing impaired students. These results support previous research by S Kef, Hox, & Habekothe (2000) who found that physically disabled person had many friends compared to visually impaired adolescent. This is due to the fact that this group did not have difficulties forming the relationships with others. This argument was also supported by Sabina Kef & Deković (2004), where his study found that visually impaired had less often dating experience than sighted adolescent. Similarly results with hearing impaired person, study by Dalton et al., (2003) revealed that hearing impairments were also associated with lower QOL. Findings also revealed that those studying at undergraduate level of study socialize more compared to those at certificate levels. The present findings seem to be consistent with Ross & Van Willigen (1997) which stated that compared to well educated persons, poorly educated persons have lower levels of enjoyment, hope, happiness, fitness, and energy. For those who studying in Public University higher of (psychological health, social relationships and environment) compare to those studying in Private University, College Community and Polytechnic. When comparing the categories, the financial resources stand out; such as those who receive scholarships from outside have high mean scores of psychological health compared to those who receive financial supports from their parents. Also, those who living with their friends high means score on social relationships compared to live with their parents. The findings is consistent with a previous study which reported that those persons who live a secluded life predicted lower psychological well-being (Lim & Kua, 2011). Study by (Sun, Lucas, & Meng, 2011) also reported that frequent social interaction with friends or colleague may increase their social networking.

Overall, the findings of this study have important implications to contributing to the intellectual enrichment in the body of knowledge in the Malaysian context by assessing the differences between selected demographic profile and QOL domains. More importantly, we need to really see the world through the eyes of disabled students to understand the differences between QOL domains and selected demographic profile. Considering the social relationships difference between (type of disabilities, level of study, type of institutions, financial resources and living arrangement), a systematic program pertinent to increased social supports can be organized as part of the curriculum and events among disabled students in university settings; these efforts also encourage them to take part in social activities of the university and college. Thus, the scope is restricted to Disabled Students which are currently studying in Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions which include public universities, private universities, community college and polytechnic. Repetition of the empirical study would also be valuable and may contribute to enlighten policy and practice initiative in improving QOL. Nevertheless, some limitations of the study have also been noted. First, this study focuses only on Disabled Students and, therefore, future research has to do with comparison method between Disabled and non-Disabled Students. Second, additional qualitative information would have been a considerable help in interpreting the survey findings.

## ABBREVIATIONS

QOL	Quality of life
WHOQOL-BREF	The World Health Organization Quality of Life Abbreviation

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# WORK VALUES OF UNDERGRADUATES IN MALAYSIA: A COMPARISON ACROSS VARIOUS PROGRAMS OF STUDY AND GENDER

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## Abstract

Recent university graduates have grown up in a more affluent and market-oriented economic environment, and consequently their work values are likely to be different from the earlier generations. A recent study has shown that the young generation tends to adopt more competitive and proactive attitudes toward work (Hirschi, 2010). Also, there are studies on the gender influence on work values. Many gender differences in work values are due to the influence of normative social expectations at home and in social context. People are socialized to behave in gender-appropriate manner at the work place, and they are exposed to multiple dimensions of work values which are gender-associated. Consequently, they develop their perceptions of appropriate work values associated with their own family background, peers, and other influential role models (Gottfredson 1981, Eagly 1987). Already a substantial amount of research has been done to identify sources of gender differences in work values (Chusmir & Parker 1991, Nieva & Gutek 1981). This article is an exploratory analysis of a study on the work values aspired by contemporary university undergraduates in various faculty programs of study, with gender as a chosen base factor of comparison.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Past research has addressed two basic issues concerning work values: determining the dimensionality of work values and identifying the factors that influence, or are influenced by, work values. With regard to dimensionality, several research has utilized a dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic work values (Gahan & Abeysekera, 2009; Hegney, Plank, & Parker, 2006; Hirschi, 2010; Vansteenkiste et al., 2007). For example Katz (1993), Hirschi (2010) developed five intrinsic work value items (variety at work, helping other people, independence at work, leadership and responsibility, and interesting work) and another five extrinsic work value items (high income, job security, fast and easy entry to job, leisure time besides work, and prestigious work). Hegney et al. (2006) classified sixteen items into these two work value dimensions. Hagstrom and Kjellberg (2007) considered six work value dimensions: social relations, self-realization, work condition, altruism, benefit/career, and influence. Hattrup, Mueller, and Aguirre (2007), referring to Hofstede (1980) identified seven categories of work values: job security, high income, advancement opportunity, interesting work, autonomy in work, helpfulness to other people, and usefulness to society. Van Ness, Melinsky, Buff, and Seifert (2010) proposed another seven dimensions of work values: self-reliance, morality/ethics, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, wasted time, and delay of gratification. Additionally, using Super's Work Values Inventory—Revised (2008), Busacca, Beebe, and Toman (2010) discerned twelve work values. Finally, Warr (2008) defined work centrality as the perceived importance of the work role and considered fifteen work values regarding job characteristics. Clearly, there is no consensus on the dimensionality of work values across different studies (Ueda, 2012).

Research on factors that affect work values are considerable. Demographic factors, such as gender, age, and educational level, have been found to influence work values (Cassar, 2008; Hagstrom & Kjellberg, 2007; Hirschi, 2010; Warr, 2008). The differences or similarities in work values across various countries with different national cultures have also been investigated (Choo, Hendrick, & Keng-Howe, 2009;

Elizuret al., 1991; Hattrup, Muller, & Aguirre, 2007; Hattrup et al., 2007; Latifi, 2006; Steyn&Kotze, 2004; Wang et al., 2010; Warr, 2008). Hirschi(2010) found that girls, and students with higher scholastic achievement score higher in career development variables and are also more likely to endorse intrinsic work values compared to boys and lower achieving students. Cassar (2008) found that work values were affected by students' university faculty. Busacca et al. (2010) and Van Ness et al. (2010) found that work value scores were significantly different between practicing workers and trainees or students. They conclude that work experience has some effect on work values.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

Many studies distinguish between different sets of work values and there is no single established classification. (Hirschi, 2010). Work values are defined as "what a person wants out of work in general and also what components of a job are important to his or her work satisfaction" (Duffy, 2010, p. 52). Early work e.g. by Wollack et al.(1971) defined work value as a person's attitudes toward work in general, rather than his feelings about a specific job. The concept of work values, referring to general attitudes regarding the meaning that an individual attaches to his work role, therefore, differs from that of job satisfaction (an attitude toward one's own job). Many empirical studies and theories (e.g.,Wollack 1971, Degenais, 1998; Ros, Schwartz, &Surkiss, 1999) have already distinguished between intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Extrinsic work values refer to values regarding the outcome or external factors of work whereas intrinsic work values refer to the actual content of work (George & Jones, 1997).Wollack et al. (1971) defined intrinsic values as Pride in Work, Activity Preference, and Job Involvement, while extrinsic variables included Attitude toward Earnings and Social Status of Job, and possibly Upward Striving, but the latter was a volatile factor. Because our study involved undergraduates whose mix included those with some work experience and some with none, we chose to examine undergraduates work values based on what they perceived as good work ethics. Our scale in this research was developed based on the work ethic scales developed by Wollack et al. (1971) although we did modifications, particularly on items for Upward Striving.

## **3. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the influence of gender and field of study specialization among undergraduate youths in Malaysia. Since work values are likely to vary by job category (Ueda,2012)and by socio-cultural differences (e.g., Hofstede, 1980) that exist not only at national or organizational levels, but also at the level of job category, we hypothesized that Malaysian students who are studying in specialized fields of study to prepare them for specific job categories and careers, would already have acquired formal knowledge and some degree of familiarity with aspects of the work in the expected job or career. We hypothesize that the field of study thus may influence the work values upheld by the undergraduates, and those work values might also have gender-associations. The results of the study would highlight how programs of study contribute to the varying essence of work values amongst undergraduates, and whether those work values are also gender-related.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### *4.1 Participants*

A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed in four Malaysian public universities. The four public universities were randomly chosen from the north, central, east and south zones of peninsular Malaysia. Lecturers in the universities were contacted directly by the researchers to ask for their permission to conduct the research during class time. During in-person administration of the surveys, the researchers

emphasized that all responses were anonymous and that the data were to be used for research only. In addition, respondents were urged to answer all questions in a manner accurately reflecting their beliefs and practices. These steps were taken in accordance with Gordon's (1987) findings on the role of survey administration on reducing the potential for social desirability in survey research.

764 questionnaires were returned (response rate 95.5%) but only 711 questionnaires or 88.87% were used for analysis, while the rest were discarded due to incompleteness. The mean age of the sample was 23- 24 years ( $SD = .51$ ). In terms of academic year, 32.6% were freshman in the first year, 5.9% were sophomores in the second year, 37.7% were juniors in the third year and 23.8% were seniors in their final year of study. According to academic program, 18.7% were students from the Applied Science cluster (Engineering, Medical and BioTechnology); 1.1% from Environmental Science (Marine and Geology); 23.6% from Business Economics and Management; 13.8% from Humanities cluster (Education, Languages and Public Policy & Administration); 9.3% from the IT Communication and Design Graphics cluster, and 33.5% from Science and Math cluster.

#### *4.2 Measurement models for Variables*

##### *a) Measuring Work Values*

This study aimed to examine undergraduates' self perceived work values and whether those values were inclined to predict intrinsic or extrinsic work satisfaction in their future careers. The Work Values were adopted from Wollack Work Values (1971) inventory that contained six constructs: Activity Preference, Job Involvement, and Pride in Work (which Wollack identified as Intrinsic dimension of work values); while Social Status of Job, Attitude towards Earnings, and Upward Striving were identified as Extrinsic dimension of work values. Initially there were 9 items per construct, thus adding up to 54 items. The coefficient alpha reliabilities of Wollack's original work were mainly in the .60s, which were moderate. Wollack reported that the correlations among the intrinsic values variables were all substantial and positive in direction, as were the correlation between the extrinsic values variables.

In this research a modified version of Wollack's Work Values was used. It must be remembered that Wollack constructed his version of Work Values based on Christian Protestant Ethics, and given the different context in Malaysia, we examined the items in each of the Wollack's six constructs and selected only those which were more general in nature, but are still representative of the original constructs. The distribution of items for the intrinsic dimension of work values is as follows: Activity Preference (3 items); Job Involvement (3 items); Pride in Work (3 items) while for the Extrinsic dimension of Work values, Social Status of Job (3 items) and Attitude towards Earnings (3 items); and Upward Striving (3 items).

#### *4.3 Construct Validity of Perceived Work Values*

An exploratory principal components analysis using promax rotation was used to verify the factor structure of Work Values. The items data from all the above constructs were separately entered into SPSS using oblique (promax) rather than orthogonal rotation (varimax) to explore the inter-relatedness of the factors (De Jong, Faulkner and Warland, 1976). Oblique rotation allows one to overcome simple structure bias by using an unrestricted factor rotation that allows for the possibility of the items resulting in a general factor.

The results in Table 1 showed that although Wollack's Work Value inventory contained six constructs (3 intrinsic and 3 extrinsic work values constructs), exploratory principal component analysis by promax rotation reduced them to five constructs. Intrinsic work values was reduced to two constructs which we



renamed as Active Work Involvement and Pride in Work. The Active Work Involvement construct comprised a compilation of all items from two previous intrinsic work values “Activity Preference”(3 items) and “Job Involvement”(3 items), and now this new construct, contained a total of six items. Pride in work as the other intrinsic work values construct remained independent. The three other constructs for extrinsic work values also retained their individual components. *Active Work Involvement* construct explained 26.61% of the variance in work values; followed by Pride in Work which explained 12.20% of the variance. Next, extrinsic work values Social Status of Job explained 6.78% of the variance, Attitude towards Earning 6.48%; and Upward Striving 5.50%. The total sum of variance explained by all intrinsic and extrinsic work values was about 58%. In Table 2, the intrinsic work values alone explained about 53% of the total variance (*Active Work Involvement* (41%) and Pride in work (12%)).

The correlation of the Active Work Involvement and Pride in Work factors was .50, and the communalities of items were mostly moderately high, with one item only having communality of .28. The results indicated that the measurement for Intrinsic Work Values is reliable. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was .89 and Bartlett’s Tests of Sphericity ( $\chi^2 = 2134.82$ ,  $df = 45$ ,  $p < .001$ ) indicated that the sample size was adequate, and factor analysis was appropriate.

We next factorized Extrinsic Work Values comprising the Social Status of Job, Attitude towards Earning, and Upward Striving. Free factoring initially yielded four constructs which had unrelated logic, and so we forced three factors to be drawn. One item in Upward Striving however, was still problematic, and upon its removal, three factors became clearly defined. The item removed was “Promotions should be avoided because it brings on a lot of worries” was clearly contradictory to other items in the Upward Striving construct which propose the superiority of finding satisfaction in one’s work over having a promotion. In Table 3, the total variance explained by the three extrinsic factors was 66.50%, with Social Status of Job explaining 29.06% of the total variance, Attitude towards Earning 22.22%, and Upward Striving 15.21%. However, the factors had weak correlation with each other. The correlation between Social Status of Job and Attitude towards Earning was .23, and with Upward Striving .18. The correlation between Attitude towards Earning and Upward Striving was negative at -.07. The communalities were on the other hand mostly moderate to high, with only one item at .33. In Wollack’s (1971) work, it was reported that Upward Striving had also proven problematic on two counts: first, it behaved like a volatile factor, straddling between Intrinsic and Extrinsic Work Values; and secondly, it was negatively related with Intrinsic and with Extrinsic Work Values. In this present research, we retained Upward Striving as an extrinsic work value because not only did the initial factoring of all work values showed its independent latent existence, but after we discarded a weak item, the construct showed high and distinct factor loadings. Both Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett’s Tests of Sphericity showed the sampling was adequate, and that the factorized solutions were appropriate. The KMO was .63, and  $\chi^2 = 1239.91$ ,  $df = 28$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

The reliability of the sub-constructs of work values are: 1) *Active Work Involvement* ( $\alpha = .80$ , 6 items), 2) Pride in Work ( $\alpha = .68$ , 4 items); 3) Upward Striving ( $\alpha = .79$ , 2 items); 4) Social Status of job ( $\alpha = .72$ , 3 items); and 5) Attitude towards earning ( $\alpha = .61$ , 3 items). Overall, the entire reliability of Work Values was  $\alpha = .81$ , 18 items. Thus, it is proven that the measurements for Intrinsic and Extrinsic Work Values, and the composite entity of Work Values are reliable and quite acceptable.

Table 1 : Principal Component Analysis by Promax with Kaiser Normalization for Work Values

**Structure Matrix**

	Component				
	1Active Work Involvement	2Pride in Work	3Social Status	4Attitude toEarning	5Upward Striving
Val1	.770				
Val2	.710				
Val3	.758				
Org4	.788				
Org5	.583				
Org6	.585				
UpS7					.818
UpS8					.836
UpS9					.360
Soc10			.732		
Soc11			.810		
Soc12			.782		
Conv13		.663			
Conv14		.716			
Conv15		.490			
Conv16		.749			
Earn17				.807	
Earn18				.560	
Earn19				.822	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Table 2: Total Variance Explained for Intrinsic Work Values

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	
1Active Involvement in Work	4.097	40.969	40.969	4.097	40.969	40.969	3.782
2Pride in Work	1.173	11.727	52.696	1.173	11.727	52.696	2.859
3	.877	8.767	61.463				
4	.737	7.373	68.835				
5	.691	6.913	75.748				
6	.610	6.097	81.845				
7	.584	5.842	87.687				
8	.479	4.790	92.477				
9	.473	4.731	97.209				
10	.279	2.791	100.000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3: Total Variance Explained of Extrinsic Work Values

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings <sup>a</sup>
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1SocStatus	2.325	29.063	29.063	2.325	29.063	29.063	2.073
2Earning	1.778	22.224	51.286	1.778	22.224	51.286	1.823
3UpwardStriving	1.217	15.213	66.500	1.217	15.213	66.500	1.744
4	.845	10.567	77.067				
5	.585	7.315	84.382				
6	.492	6.150	90.533				
7	.429	5.367	95.900				
8	.328	4.100	100.000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1 Descriptive analysis of work values by gender

Table 4 shows the descriptive mean scores based on gender. The female undergraduates scored higher scores in comparison to their male counterparts in their belief for all the categories of intrinsic work values (Activity Preference, Job Involvement and Pride in Work, and Overall Intrinsic Work Values). Female mean scores were also higher than male in Extrinsic work values of Social Status of Job and Upward Striving in Job, but not in Attitude towards Earning. Male undergraduates scored Mean of 3.76 SD .79 for Attitude towards Earning while female undergraduates mean score was 3.57 SD.79.

Female undergraduates showed significantly higher interest and competitiveness in upward mobility (upward striving) in their jobs. Research has proven that females are becoming increasingly conscious of career success, and show higher willingness to work for successful upward mobility in their careers (Ueda, 2010). In some cultures where hard work is an honorable trait, women show higher concern to “keep good face” or in preserving their dignity through hard work (Zhang et al., 2007). In contrast, male undergraduates’ attitude showed more interest in the opportunity to earn more money within and outside of the job, rather than in upward mobility in their careers, which incidentally would have come with more added responsibility and commitment. The findings suggest that male undergraduates found it acceptable to reasonable to contribute to work as per required or status quo, without expending more or extra effort in becoming more involved in the various aspects of work in their job setting. Female undergraduates appeared to seek for “*recognition or status*” through their involvement and upward striving in their careers, while male undergraduates seemed to put higher value on opportunities for “*wealth creation or materialistic gain*”. In some cultures, males are frequently looked upon as the provider, and it could be argued that the push to earn more money have some association with this point of view (Zhang et al., 2007, Gahan and Abeysekera (2009).

Yet, descriptive mean scores showed that male and female undergraduates showed very similar mean and standard deviation scores (Male mean 3.97 SD.54, Female mean 3.98 SD.50) in Overall Extrinsic Values. In contrast, female undergraduates scored higher mean score for Overall Intrinsic Values (Female Mean 4.54 SD .46, Male mean 4.40 SD.49).

Table 4: Descriptive Mean of Work Values scores by gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Activity Preference	Male	147	4.43	.59
	Female	564	4.60	.61
Job Involvement	Male	147	4.36	.62
	Female	564	4.55	.57
Up Striving (78)	Male	147	4.14	.90
	Female	564	4.43	.68
Social Status	Male	147	4.06	.76
	Female	564	4.10	.74
Pride in Work	Male	147	4.40	.55
	Female	564	4.49	.53
Earning Attitude	Male	147	3.76	.79
	Female	564	3.57	.80
Active Work Involvement	Male	147	4.39	.56
	Female	564	4.58	.53
Intrinsic Values	Male	147	4.40	.49
	Female	564	4.54	.46
Extrinsic Values	Male	147	3.97	.54
	Female	564	3.98	.50

#### Independent Samples Mean Test of Work Values by Gender

However in comparing the mean of the two groups through independent samples T tests, the results were surprising. See Table 5. Regardless of their programs of study, t-tests indicated that the direction of the work values was significantly stronger from the male undergraduates in Preference for Activity in their jobs (Male Mean 4.43 SD.59, Female Mean 4.60 SD .61,  $t = -2.99$ ,  $df = 709, 233.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Involvement in their Jobs (Male Mean 4.36 SD.62, Female Mean 4.55 SD .59,  $t = -3.62$ ,  $df = 709, 215.62$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Tendency for Upwards Striving (Male Mean 4.14 SD.90, Female Mean 4.43 SD .68,  $t = -4.33$ ,  $df = 709, 192.04$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Attitude towards Earning (Male Mean 3.76 SD .79, Female Mean 3.57 SD.79  $t = 2.60$ ,  $df = 709, 229.99$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and in overall Intrinsic work values (Male Mean 4.40 SD.49, Female Mean 4.54 SD .46,  $t = -3.72$ ,  $df = 709, 219.82$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The genders were not significantly different in terms of Social Status of the job, Pride in Work, and Overall Extrinsic Values.

Table 5: Independent Samples T-test

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Std. Error Diff
Activity Preference	.64	.43	-2.99	709	.00	-.17	.06
			-3.05	233.98	.00		
Job Involvement	1.92	.17	-3.62	71	.00	-.20	.06
			-3.46	215.26	.00		
Upward Striving(78)	15.75	.00	-4.33	709	.00	-.29	.07
			-3.70	192.04	.00		
Social Status	.02	.89	-.63	709	.53	-.04	.07
			-.61	223.10	.54		
Pride in Work	.01	.91	-1.86	709	.06	-.09	.05
			-1.83	222.37	.07		

Earning Attitude	.16	.69	2.60	709	.01	.19	.07
			2.62	229.99	.01	.19	.07
ActiveWork Involvement	2.35	.13	-3.68	709	.00	-.18	.05
			-3.56	218.91	.00	-.18	.05
Intrinsic Values	.95	.33	-3.37	709	.00	-.15	
			-3.28	219.82	.00	-.15	.04
Extrinsic Values	.92	.34	-.33	709	.74	-.02	.05
			-.31	215.22	.75	-.02	.05

### Analysis of work value scores across programs of study.

Programs of study clearly was a factor that significantly contributed to group variations in work values of undergraduates. The five programs of study were Education, Management and Administration, Medical & Bio Medical/Tech sciences, and IT & Architectural/Industrial Designs and Engineering. Undergraduates enrolled in all the first four programs of study showed general consistence of having significantly higher mean score in mostly all intrinsic and extrinsic work values over those undergraduates enrolled in the Engineering program of study. The mean difference between the groups were mainly above .40 which was considerably big (only two mean differences was below .30). See Tables 6 and 7. Undergraduates enrolled in the Education and Management/Administration programs and in Medical/Bio-Med/ Bio Tech Sciences programs all placed significantly higher emphasis on all intrinsic work values (Activity Preference, Job Involvement, and Pride in Work) and on one extrinsic work value (Upwards Striving) over Engineering students. It was only in two other extrinsic values (Attitude to Earning and Social Status of job) that the students from Engineering program of study scored significantly higher mean score from the rest of the other groups. Although this finding is rather inconclusive because of the harmonic mean that the group comparisons were statistically based on, nevertheless it alerts us to the introvert and non-participatory kind of work value that may potentially emerge from the Engineering students.

Attitude towards Earning was *singularly* the only work value factor upheld by students in the Engineering program who scored higher mean in comparison to Education program (mean difference .36); Medical & Bio Medical/BioTech Sciences program (mean difference .57) and IT & Designs program (mean difference .42). Undergraduates in Management & Administration programs also showed higher attitude toward earning but only over those students enrolled in Medical and Bio-Medical/BioTech Sciences programs of study. Attitude towards Earning as we have earlier defined it is an extrinsic work value, referring to the importance one attaches to having the opportunity to make more earnings within one's job, and outside. It seems probable that Engineering and Management/Administration students are more conscious of 'earning power' as an attractive work value.

Interestingly, only undergraduates enrolled in the Medical and Bio-Medical/BioTech Sciences programs of study viewed other people's perception of the social status of their job as a significantly important work value, in comparison to Engineering group (mean difference .40) and Management/Administration (mean difference .27) programs of study. Apparently, social recognition is an appealing factor that makes medicine/bio-medical/bio-tech a choice program of study for these undergraduates.

Students enrolled in the IT and Design programs of study showed an interesting pattern of response. They placed more significant emphasis on all intrinsic work values (Activity Preference, Job Involvement and Pride in Work) in comparison to the Engineering students. Yet, these students showed no significance difference in the mean scores for extrinsic work values (Upwards Striving, Social Status of Job, and Earning Attitude) in comparison to all the students in the four other programs of study.

Group differences amongst programs of study in overall intrinsic work values showed significantly higher mean scores of students in every program over those in the Engineering program. There was no significant group differences in overall extrinsic work values, which suggests to us that the isolated significant differences in the extrinsic values found amongst some groups were only due to the dimensionality of the work value itself.

Table 6: ANOVA BETWEEN PROGRAMS OF STUDY

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
ActivityPreference	Between Groups	34.91	4	8.73	26.78	.00
	Within Groups	229.46	704	.33		
	Total	264.38	708			
Job Involvement	Between Groups	19.12	4	4.78	14.95	.00
	Within Groups	225.13	704	.32		
	Total	244.251	708			
UpwardStrive	Between Groups	10.07	4	2.52	4.72	.00
	Within Groups	375.87	704	.53		
	Total	385.94	708			
SocialStatus	Between Groups	7.94	4	1.99	3.63	.01
	Within Groups	385.25	704	.55		
	Total	393.19	708			
Pride in Work	Between Groups	14.13	4	3.53	13.01	.00
	Within Groups	191.10	704	.27		
	Total	205.23	708			
EarningAttitude	Between Groups	11.98	4	2.99	4.82	.00
	Within Groups	437.83	704	.62		
	Total	449.81	708			
ActiveWorkInvolve	Between Groups	26.26	4	6.57	25.86	.00
	Within Groups	178.74	704	.25		
	Total	205.01	708			
Intrinsic Values	Between Groups	20.77	4	5.19	26.73	.00
	Within Groups	136.71	704	.19		
	Total	157.53	708			
Extrinsic Values	Between Groups	.82	4	.20	.81	.52
	Within Groups	178.10	704	.25		
	Total	178.91	708			
	Within Groups	108.15	704	.15		
	Total	115.87	708			

Table 7: Multiple comparisons of PROGRAMS OF STUDY

WORK VALUES								
PROGRAM GROUPS	Activity Preference	Job Inv	Up Striving	Social Status	Pride in Work	Earning Attitude	Active Work Involvement	Intrinsic Work Values
Engineering						>Educ Sig.00 Mean Diff .36		
						>Medical Sig.00 MeanDiff f .57		
						> IT Design Sig.00 Mean Diff .42		
Education	>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .88	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .65	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .44		>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .54		> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff ..77	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .67
Mngement& Admin	>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .81	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .54	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .35		>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .54	>Medical & science Sig .00 Mean Diff .30	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff ..67	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .62
Medical/ Sciences	>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .96	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .69	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .51	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .40	>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .62		> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff ..82	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .74
				>Mngmn t Sig.00 Mean Diff ..27				
IT Design	>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .71	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .48			>Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .43		> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff ..59	> Engineer Sig.00 Mean Diff .53

## 6. DISCUSSION

Several research (e.g. Schulenberg et al. (1994), Beutel & Marini, (1995), and Wray-Lake et al. (2005) found males expressed greater support for extrinsic work values, whereas females reported more support than males for intrinsic work values. They fit with the broader values literature wherein females consistently show a stronger orientation towards intrinsic pursuits and care orientations and males are more extrinsically-oriented. Males continue to more highly value work centrality compared to females (see also Schulenberg et al., 1994). They also found that females placed more value on a job that people respect (an extrinsic work value), which may reflect a desire to move past the traditional association of women with lower status jobs. Our findings found a reverse pattern. Although descriptively females scored higher mean for almost all of the work values except Attitude to Earning, yet significantly, regardless of their programs of study, the direction of the differences in mean scores indicated that male undergraduates tended to have more preference for Activity in their jobs (Male Mean 4.43 SD .59, Female Mean 4.60 SD .61,  $t = -2.99$ ,  $df = 709, 233.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ), more Involvement in their Jobs (Male Mean 4.36 SD .62, Female Mean 4.55 SD .59,  $t = -3.62$ ,  $df = 709, 215.62$ ,  $p < .05$ ), more Active Involvement in work (Male mean 4.39 SD .49, Female mean 4.58 SD .53,  $t = -3.68$ ,  $df = 709, 218.91$ ,  $p < .05$ ), more tendency for Upwards Striving (Male Mean 4.14 SD .90, Female Mean 4.43 SD .68,  $t = -4.33$ ,  $df = 709, 192.04$ ,  $p < .05$ ), more interest in Earning Attitude (Male Mean 3.76 SD .79, Female Mean 4.40 SD .49,  $t = -2.60$ ,  $df = 709, 229.92$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and in overall Intrinsic work values (Male Mean 4.40 SD .49, Female Mean 4.54 SD .46,  $t = -3.72$ ,  $df = 709, 219.82$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The genders were not significantly different in terms of Social Status of the job, Pride in Work, and Overall Extrinsic Values. One explanation of the reverse direction of differences could be due to the lower range of variation in the response amongst the male respondents as compared to the female. Yet another explanation is cultural-biased and life experience. According to Ueda (2012), work values are related to life values and society's cultural values, all of which constantly change and exert long term effect on how the young generation socialize with contemporary work values. The pattern of our findings necessitate a wider qualitative inquiry about male work values in this decade.

People choose jobs that match their specific mixture of work values. Cassar (2008) found that work values were affected by students' university faculty. In fact, some studies have addressed the relationship between students' work values and their career selections (Ueda and Ohzono, 2012). For example, Carruthers (1968) investigated the relationship between work values and chosen careers in a sample of British students. Ueda and Ohzono (2012) found dimensions of work values were influenced by job category. Their study found male workers in different job categories such as service, production, clerical, technical, professional, management, and sales, had higher ratings of values related to challenging job and power and authority, while female workers emphasized self-actualization, extrinsic rewards, identification with the organization, and contribution to society. Our findings indicated that Engineering students were by far more oriented towards wealth creation opportunities in comparison to Education, Medical, and IT programs of study, but students in the Medicine program were more likely to place importance on the public's perception of the status of their job. This exploratory and preliminary finding confirms that cultural and norms embedded or associated in certain job categories do influence students' work values even in the undergraduate pre-service years.

Classifications of fields of study within broader programs of study used in this study might be too simplistic and might have overlooked embedded antecedents that might have had potential influence on work values of undergraduates. Future research will require closer scrutiny of the affinity of fields of study within programs.

Several conceptual issues have to be clarified. For example, although undergraduates with stronger intrinsic work values evaluated their work values as high, this would not necessarily mean that they actually have higher work commitment in their future jobs, even if those jobs fitted their aspirations.



Therefore, the way in which different work values produce objectively desirable or undesirable work outcomes at the work place should be examined. More importantly, this morphological polemic in the notion of work value as opposed to the actual manifestation of work value in jobs and at work need to be clarified in order for us to understand better the concept of work value in a pre-service and in-service context.

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# WOMEN YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN PERAK

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## Abstract

History has proven the contribution of youths long before the country achieved independence. The involvement of youth in order to nurture the spirit of nationalism is inevitable. However, some do not realize the importance of politics in the development of race, religion and the nation, while the others see this political involvement as a step in a new political formation. In politics nowadays, the ratio of involvement of women's youth is similar to the involvement of male's youth. Thus, support from all parties were highly required. In this paper, we elaborated in depth the involvement of women's youth from the most active and major parties in Perak; UMNO and PAS. The factors that influenced the participation and involvement of women's youth from both parties were discussed as well. This study focused on the challenges and problems faced by women's youth in politics. The results showed that the involvement of women's youth in politics from both of the parties were affected by the goals of the party, followed by self-interest. Other than that, traditional culture and time constraints were the problems affected by the respondents who were involved in politics.

**Keywords:** *politics, political participation, youth, women, empowerment*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The definition of youth according to the Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports in "Proposed National Youth Development Policy" (1995) was defined as those aged between 15 and 40 years old. It was the definition of the Malaysian Youth Council 1985 and was thought to be those who have reached a satisfactory standard of maturity and were able to receive maximum benefits from the structured programs. In addition, Azizan Bahari (1995) stated that the definition based on a range between 15 and 40 years old which was considered as 'a youth' is widely accepted. For the purpose of this study, youth was defined as those aged between 21 to 40 years old.

According to the statistics issued by the Department of Statistics in 2010, it showed that the population of young males in Perak stood at 445,154, while young women stood at 432,721. The total number of youth in Perak was around 877,874 people. The United Nation (UN) defines 'youth', as a person of between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions stated by the States Member. The younger generations are typically those who can generate creative ideas and wanted positive changes and reformation in the society to achieve perfect social conditions (Abdul Aziz, 1984). In the article "Youth Convention: Youth Involvement in New Politics" issued by the Division of Youth Development of the Selangor State Sports Council, recognition was given to youth as an important social component which contributed towards the present political condition in Malaysia.

Male youth are particularly associated with politics because of their political attitudes and independence. However, youth participation in women has now seen to have successfully developed

increasingly in areas previously dominated by men, such as politics, economy and development. Nowadays, women's youth are also seen as having a potential to bring changes to the community and the country, which is capable of leading the business. There are a few factors that influenced young women from UMNO and PAS to involve themselves in political participation, indirectly. For example, youth empowerment of women in politics helps to bring out their potential and improves the ability and level of leadership. It is the main goal of political parties to attract more youth, particularly women to actively involve in politics. Therefore, this paper aims to discuss the political participation of the women's youth from UMNO and PAS as active parties in Perak.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to see a comparison of youth political participation between young women of UMNO and PAS in Perak. The general objectives of this research are as follows:

1. Identify and compare the factors that influence the political participation of women's youth within UMNO and PAS in Perak.
2. Analyze the problems and challenges faced by the women's youth of UMNO and PAS regarding their involvement in the party.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research conducted was regarding on the comparison between the two dominant parties in the state, focusing on the young women of UMNO and PAS. There were a total of 130 respondents from the youth components of UMNO and PAS, where they were given questionnaires. The study centered on the involvement of women's youth in both dominant parties in Perak. Methodologically, the data was analyzed using quantitative and qualitative techniques. Preparation of questionnaires and open structured questionnaires were created to facilitate respondents to answer every question. The purposive sampling method was used to focus on young women of UMNO and PAS. In addition, the snowball sampling method was incorporated to introduce the members of the other party and the sample will be expanded and improved to meet the specified number of samples.

## 4. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULT

### 4.1 Respondents Profile

Table 1: Demographic of Respondents

Respondent's Demographic		Political Parties	
		UMNO	PAS
Age	21 to 30 years	15 (11.5)	18 (13.8)
	31 to 40 years	49 (37.7)	48 (37.0)
<b>Total</b>		<b>64 (49.2)</b>	<b>66 (50.7)</b>
Marriage	Single	12 (9.2)	15 (11.5)
	Married	50 (38.4)	53 (41.0)
<b>Total</b>		<b>62 (47.7)</b>	<b>68 (52.3)</b>
Education	SPM	20 (15.3)	20 (15.3)
	STPM / Diploma / Matriculation	34 (26.1)	29 (22.3)
	Graduate degree / Masters	12 (9.2)	13 (10.0)
<b>Total</b>		<b>66 (50.8)</b>	<b>62 (47.7)</b>
Employment	Public sector	14 (10.8)	11 (8.4)

	The private sector	16 (12.3)	12 (9.3)
	Self-employed	15 (11.5)	12 (9.2)
	NGOs	2 (1.5)	3 (2.3)
	Housewife	22 (16.7)	23 (17.7)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>69 (53.0)</b>	<b>61 (47.0)</b>

Table 1 shows the demographic of women's youth in UMNO and PAS. The criteria included in the selection of respondents were age, marriage, education and employment. The focus age of this study was women aged between 21 years to 40 years old.

The total respondents aged between 21 to 40 years were 130 respondents from both parties. 11.5% of the respondents aged between 21 to 30 years and 37.7% of them aged between 31 to 40 years old of the respondents from UMNO. Meanwhile, 37.0% of the respondents was around 31 to 40 years old and 13.8% of them between ages of 21 to 30 years old. A total of 52.3% respondents were married from PAS, followed by married respondents with a percentage of 41.0%. About 11.5% of them were found to be single. The married respondents from UMNO were about 38.4% and 9.2% of them were single.

Analysis showed that 50.8% of young women from UMNO and 47.7% respondents from PAS were educated youths. There were 15.3% respondents from UMNO and PAS whom were qualified with SPM. Meanwhile, the respondents who passed the Malaysian Higher School Certificate (STPM), Matriculation and Diploma with a total of 26.1% respondents from UMNO and 22.3% from PAS. PAS hold a percentage of 10.0% degree graduates, while 9.2% of the respondents from UMNO were degree graduates. This showed that education is important to ensure intellectual development for creating quality youths in the future.

The employment demographic analysis showed that a total of 53.0% of respondents were from UMNO and 47.0% were from PAS. The data of housewives showed that respondents from PAS were the highest with 17.7% respondents compared to 16.7% respondents from UMNO. The respondents who worked at the private sector were 12.3% from UMNO and 9.3% from PAS. There were 11.5% respondents UMNO and 9.2% respondents PAS who were self-employed. Around 10.8% of UMNO respondents and 8.4% of PAS respondents were working in the public sector. Meanwhile, 2.3% of the respondents were from PAS and 1.5% of the respondents from UMNO worked as non-government organization.

#### 4.2 Political position in parties

Table 2: Political Position

Position	Political Parties	
	UMNO	PAS
Ordinary members	52 (40.0)	55 (42.3)
UMNO committee members	8 (6.15)	-
Muslimat committee members	-	8 (6.15)
Head Division UMNO	5 (3.84)	-
Head Division PAS	-	2 (1.53)
<b>Total</b>	<b>65 (50.0)</b>	<b>65 (50.0)</b>

Table 2 showed that both of the parties had 50.0% of the respondents. PAS showed the highest number of ordinary members which were 42.3% respondents, while 40.0% of the respondents from UMNO. The position of UMNO committee members and the Muslimat PAS Committee members

were similar at 6.15%. The Head Division of UMNO gave a number of 3.84% from the respondents and only 1.53% from the PAS respondents secured the position of Head Division PAS.

#### 4.3 Influences Factor of Political Participation of Women's Youths between UMNO and PAS in Perak

Table 3: Influences Factors of Political Participation

Influences factor	Political Parties	Degree of Satisfaction (%)		
		Strongly disagree	More or less agree	Strongly agree
Party leadership	UMNO	(5) 3.80	(15) 11.5	(50) 38.5
	PAS	(2) 1.5	(13) 10.0	(45) 34.6
The objectives of a political party	UMNO	-	-	(55) 42.3
	PAS	-	-	(75) 57.7
Self interest	UMNO	-	-	(65) 50.0
	PAS	-	-	(65) 50.0
Family encouragement	UMNO	(4) 3.1	(9) 8.1	(58) 44.6
	PAS	(2) 1.5	(5) 3.8	(52) 40.0

Table 3 displayed that the main factor that influences the respondents within the women's youth section of PAS was the objectives of a political party. As for the UMNO women's youth, the main factor which seemed to be influencing them to participate was of self interest. Half of the respondents from UMNO and PAS considered their involvement in politics as self-interest. They acknowledged that their participation in politics was due to a deep interest in politics.

44.6% of respondents from UMNO were involved in political parties due to the encouragement and support from their families. The factor that had the least influence on women political participation was party leadership, as admitted by 38.5% of the respondents from UMNO and 34.6% respondents from PAS. For the factor of political participation with regards to party leadership, 38.5% of respondents from UMNO and 34.6% of the PAS respondents strongly agreed that they were engaging in politics because of a belief in party leadership.

Table 3 also showed that 44.6% of respondents from UMNO and 40.0% of respondents from PAS agreed strongly that their involvement in the political sphere was due to the encouragement and support from their families. There were 8.1% of the respondents from UMNO and 3.8% of respondents from PAS who were more or less in agreement that deny factors such as family support which may have influenced their political participation. Meanwhile, 3.1% and 1.5% respondents from UMNO and PAS respectively strongly disagree that political involvement was due to family encouragement.

The study found that respondents from both UMNO and PAS stated that they participate in politics primarily because of self-interest. According to a representative of UMNO respondents, interest in politics comes from one's consciousness nurtured from youth to ensure the interests of the Malays, especially in women.

These findings also showed that the involvement of women respondents was not motivated by family encouragement alone, but because of a party's goals and interests, through their awareness of political participation.

#### 4.4 The Challenges and Problems Faced by Women Youths in Politics

##### i. Family commitments with political parties

Table 4: Family commitments and Political Parties

Commitment and responsibility to family	Level of Satisfaction	Political Parties		Total
		UMNO	PAS	
	Strongly disagree	66.0	79.3	60.5
	More or less agree	17.3	14.7	13.3
	Strongly agree	16.7	6.0	11.3
	Total	100	100	300

Table 4 displayed a total of 60.5% of the respondents who strongly disagree with the notion of commitment to the family being a problem in political involvement, while 13.3% of respondents were more or less agreed and 11.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that family commitment was a problem in political involvement.

The analysis showed 79.3% of respondents from young women of PAS compared to 66.0% of respondents in UMNO strongly disagree that their commitment to politics was a problem to their families. According to respondents in PAS, the hassle duties of a housewife never made them neglect their involvement in politics.

The women's youth of UMNO with 17.3% of respondents compared to 14.7% of respondents from PAS were not fully agree that family commitments get in the way when getting involved in politics.

There were 16.7% of the UMNO respondents and 6.0% of the PAS respondents strongly agreed that family commitments was a problem to be active in politics. From the analysis on the respondents of UMNO and PAS, both respondents' parties admitted to some extent that the role and responsibilities in a family were a problem for them to be involved in politics.

##### ii. Family commitments as a barrier to engage in politics

Table 5: Position of respondents with a commitment to the family as a barrier to engage in politics

Position	Commitment to the family as a barrier to engage in political parties			Total
	Strongly disagree	More or less agree	Strongly agree	
Ordinary members	64.4	37.5	58.8	35.7
UMNO committee members	38.7	14.6	14.7	18.0
Muslimat committee members	70.6	27.1	11.7	31.7
Head Division UMNO	5.4	8.3	5.8	4.0
Head Division Muslimat	7.5	2.1	2.9	3.3



Table 5 above showed the level of commitment to the family being a problem when they involved in party politics. A total of 35.7% of the respondents were ordinary members that showed the highest percentage in their commitment to the family, followed by 31.7% who were PAS committee members, 18.0% among Wanita UMNO's committee members, 7.3% from the General and Head of the Muslimat Division. 4.0% from Puteri UMNO and 3.3% from the Head of the UMNO Division.

For the ordinary members, 64.4% of respondents strongly disagree, followed by 58.8% of respondents that strongly agreed versus 37.5% of respondents who did not agree wholly. There were 70.6% of the members of the committee strongly disagree, while the approximately 27.1% and 11.7% of respondents from the Muslimat committee agreed that family was not an obstacle to their political career. A total of 38.7% of respondents who joined the Women committee strongly disagree that commitment to the family was an obstacle to engage in politics. Meanwhile, 14.7% of respondents strongly agree and 14.6% more or less agree.

The youth women respondents of UMNO and PAS in this study did not support the fact that family commitments were barriers to engage in politics. The percentage of respondents who did not support this statement was by 72.7% of respondents, while only 11.3% of respondents agreed strongly.

This shows that although the women were given various positions and responsibilities in politics, the responsibility to their family was not an excuse for not being involved in politics. However, there were also respondents who agreed that the age and health factors were avoiding them from being active in politics. Some respondents of Muslimat PAS admitted that they faced a problem to balance between career and politics. Nevertheless, they insisted on the spirit of self-discipline and the importance of striking a balance between political, career and family. According to the UMNO respondents, they agreed with the opinion that women were intelligent enough to divide and adapt to political matters as well as responsibilities at home.

*iii. Career with family commitments are barriers to engage in political parties*

Table 6: Occupation respondents with a commitment to family is an obstacle to engage in political parties

Occupation	Commitment to family is an obstacle to engage in political parties			Total
	Strongly disagree	More or less agree	Strongly agree	
Public sector	35.0	54.1	47.0	39.3
Private sector	19.2	12.5	11.8	17.3
Self-employed	16.9	16.7	29.4	18.3
NGOs	9.6	2.1	0.0	7.3
Housewife	19.2	14.6	11.8	17.8
Total	218	48	34	300

The analysis based on Table 6 showed the type of occupation and level of commitment to the family is a problem in getting involved in politics. The results showed a total of 130 respondents from UMNO and PAS strongly disagreed to the statement while 48 respondents were more or less agreed as opposed to 34 respondents who strongly agreed that job was a barrier to engage in politics.

In the public sector, a total of 35.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed that job was a barrier to be active in politics, 54.1% of respondents disagreed and only 47.0% of respondents strongly agreed that responsibilities to the family were a problem to be involved in politics. A total 19.2% of respondents

from the private sector workers and housewives strongly disagreed, while 11.8% of respondents from the private sector workers and housewives strongly agree that commitment to the family was a problem being involved in politics. This clearly showed that the demands of work and family commitments do not simply become a barrier for an individual to engage in a political party.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Women's youth involvement in politics at the state and national levels is needed nowadays. It will gain awareness of women's youth with various interesting activities taking place in Malaysia. Apart from that, young women are able to contribute their ideas and creativity indirectly, which provides them the platform to showcase their talent and skills as leaders. Thus, women's youth especially young women from all walks of life should be strengthened and their political culture imbued with political socialization campaigns to become patriotic citizens in line with Vision 2020. Women's youth are the future leaders of our country. Participation in politics at an early stage can help them react to things quickly and effectively. Political involvement of women's youth is expected to contribute to thoughtful and fresh thinking instead of merely generating new energy, in order to strengthen the political agenda at the state and national level.

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