



Pertanika Journal of  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES  
& HUMANITIES**

JSSH

**VOL. 23 (S) AUG. 2015**

*A special issue devoted to*  
**The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia**

Guest Editors

**Hairuzila Idrus, Ahmad Murad M. Noor Merican,  
Abdur-Rahman Mohamed Amin & Sumathi Renganathan**



**PERTANIKA**  
JOURNALS

A scientific journal published by Universiti Putra Malaysia Press

## *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*

### About the Journal

#### Overview

Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (JSSH) is the official journal of Universiti Putra Malaysia published by UPM Press. It is an open-access online scientific journal which is free of charge. It publishes the scientific outputs. It neither accepts nor commissions third party content.

Recognized internationally as the leading peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of original papers, it serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities.

JSSH is a **quarterly** (*March, June, September and December*) periodical that considers for publication original articles as per its scope. The journal publishes in **English** and it is open to authors around the world regardless of the nationality.

The Journal is available world-wide.

#### Aims and scope

Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities aims to develop as a pioneer journal for the social sciences with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities.

Areas relevant to the scope of the journal include Social Sciences—Accounting, anthropology, Archaeology and history, Architecture and habitat, Consumer and family economics, Economics, Education, Finance, Geography, Law, Management studies, Media and communication studies, Political sciences and public policy, Population studies, Psychology, Sociology, Technology management, Tourism; Humanities—Arts and culture, Dance, Historical and civilisation studies, Language and Linguistics, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Religious studies, Sports.

#### History

Pertanika was founded in 1978. A decision was made in 1992 to streamline Pertanika into three journals as Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science, Journal of Science & Technology, and **Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities** to meet the need for specialised journals in areas of study aligned with the interdisciplinary strengths of the university.

After almost 25 years, as an interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities, the revamped journal focuses on research in social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities, particularly in the Asia Pacific region.

#### Goal of *Pertanika*

Our goal is to bring the highest quality research to the widest possible audience.

#### Quality

We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing. Submissions are guaranteed to receive a decision within 14 weeks. The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 5-6 months.

#### Abstracting and indexing of *Pertanika*

Pertanika is almost 40 years old; this accumulated knowledge has resulted in Pertanika JSSH being abstracted and indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier), Thomson (ISI) Web of Knowledge [BIOSIS & CAB Abstracts], EBSCO & EBSCOhost, DOAJ, Cabell's Directories, Google Scholar, MyAIS, ISC & Rubriq (Journal Guide).

### Future vision

We are continuously improving access to our journal archives, content, and research services. We have the drive to realise exciting new horizons that will benefit not only the academic community, but society itself.

### Citing journal articles

The abbreviation for *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities* is *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. Hum.*

### Publication policy

Pertanika policy prohibits an author from submitting the same manuscript for concurrent consideration by two or more publications. It prohibits as well publication of any manuscript that has already been published either in whole or substantial part elsewhere. It also does not permit publication of manuscript that has been published in full in Proceedings.

### Code of Ethics

The Pertanika Journals and Universiti Putra Malaysia takes seriously the responsibility of all of its journal publications to reflect the highest in publication ethics. Thus all journals and journal editors are expected to abide by the Journal's codes of ethics. Refer to Pertanika's **Code of Ethics** for full details, or visit the Journal's web link at [http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/code\\_of\\_ethics.php](http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/code_of_ethics.php)

### International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)

An ISSN is an 8-digit code used to identify periodicals such as journals of all kinds and on all media—print and electronic. All Pertanika journals have ISSN as well as an e-ISSN.

Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities: ISSN 0128-7702 (*Print*); ISSN 2231-8534 (*Online*).

### Lag time

A decision on acceptance or rejection of a manuscript is reached in 3 to 4 months (average 14 weeks). The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 5-6 months.

### Authorship

Authors are not permitted to add or remove any names from the authorship provided at the time of initial submission without the consent of the Journal's Chief Executive Editor.

### Manuscript preparation

Refer to Pertanika's **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS** at the back of this journal.

Most scientific papers are prepared according to a format called IMRAD. The term represents the first letters of the words **I**ntroduction, **M**aterials and **M**ethods, **R**esults, **A**nd, **D**iscussion. IMRAD is simply a more 'defined' version of the "IBC" [Introduction, Body, Conclusion] format used for all academic writing. IMRAD indicates a pattern or format rather than a complete list of headings or components of research papers; the missing parts of a paper are: *Title, Authors, Keywords, Abstract, Conclusions, and References*. Additionally, some papers include Acknowledgments and Appendices.

The *Introduction* explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject; the *Materials and Methods* describes how the study was conducted; the *Results* section reports what was found in the study; and the *Discussion* section explains meaning and significance of the results and provides suggestions for future directions of research. The manuscript must be prepared according to the Journal's **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS**.

### Editorial process

Authors are notified with an acknowledgement containing a *Manuscript ID* on receipt of a manuscript, and upon the editorial decision regarding publication.

Pertanika follows a **double-blind peer-review** process. Manuscripts deemed suitable for publication are usually sent to reviewers. Authors are encouraged to suggest names of at least three potential reviewers at the time of submission of their manuscript to Pertanika, but the editors will make the final choice. The editors are not, however, bound by these suggestions.

Notification of the editorial decision is usually provided within ten to fourteen weeks from the receipt of manuscript. Publication of solicited manuscripts is not guaranteed. In most cases, manuscripts are accepted conditionally, pending an author's revision of the material.

As articles are double-blind reviewed, material that might identify authorship of the paper should be placed only on page 2 as described in the first-4 page format in Pertanika's **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS** given at the back of this journal.

### **The Journal's peer-review**

In the peer-review process, three referees independently evaluate the scientific quality of the submitted manuscripts.

Peer reviewers are experts chosen by journal editors to provide written assessment of the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of written research, with the aim of improving the reporting of research and identifying the most appropriate and highest quality material for the journal.

### **Operating and review process**

What happens to a manuscript once it is submitted to *Pertanika*? Typically, there are seven steps to the editorial review process:

1. The Journal's chief executive editor and the editorial board examine the paper to determine whether it is appropriate for the journal and should be reviewed. If not appropriate, the manuscript is rejected outright and the author is informed.
2. The chief executive editor sends the article-identifying information having been removed, to three reviewers. Typically, one of these is from the Journal's editorial board. Others are specialists in the subject matter represented by the article. The chief executive editor asks them to complete the review in three weeks.

Comments to authors are about the appropriateness and adequacy of the theoretical or conceptual framework, literature review, method, results and discussion, and conclusions. Reviewers often include suggestions for strengthening of the manuscript. Comments to the editor are in the nature of the significance of the work and its potential contribution to the literature.

3. The chief executive editor, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, examines the reviews and decides whether to reject the manuscript, invite the author(s) to revise and resubmit the manuscript, or seek additional reviews. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editor-in-Chief, who reserves the right to refuse any material for publication. In rare instances, the manuscript is accepted with almost no revision. Almost without exception, reviewers' comments (to the author) are forwarded to the author. If a revision is indicated, the editor provides guidelines for attending to the reviewers' suggestions and perhaps additional advice about revising the manuscript.
4. The authors decide whether and how to address the reviewers' comments and criticisms and the editor's concerns. The authors return a revised version of the paper to the chief executive editor along with specific information describing how they have answered the concerns of the reviewers and the editor, usually in a tabular form. The author(s) may also submit a rebuttal if there is a need especially when the author disagrees with certain comments provided by reviewer(s).

5. The chief executive editor sends the revised paper out for re-review. Typically, at least one of the original reviewers will be asked to examine the article.
6. When the reviewers have completed their work, the chief executive editor in consultation with the editorial board and the editor-in-chief examine their comments and decide whether the paper is ready to be published, needs another round of revisions, or should be rejected.
7. If the decision is to accept, an acceptance letter is sent to all the author(s), the paper is sent to the Press. The article should appear in print in approximately three months.

The Publisher ensures that the paper adheres to the correct style (in-text citations, the reference list, and tables are typical areas of concern, clarity, and grammar). The authors are asked to respond to any minor queries by the Publisher. Following these corrections, page proofs are mailed to the corresponding authors for their final approval. At this point, **only essential changes are accepted**. Finally, the article appears in the pages of the Journal and is posted on-line.



Pertanika Journal of  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES  
& HUMANITIES**

*A special issue devoted to*  
The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia

**Vol. 23 (S) Aug. 2015**  
(Special Edition)

Guest Editors  
Hairuzila Idrus, Ahmad Murad M. Noor Merican,  
Abdur-Rahman Mohamed Amin & Sumathi Renganathan

A scientific journal published by Universiti Putra Malaysia Press





## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Mohd. Shahwahid Hj. Othman**  
*Economics, Natural Resource & Environmental Economics, Economics Valuation*

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE EDITOR

**Nayan Deep S. Kanwal**  
*Environmental Issues – Landscape Plant Modelling Applications*

## UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

**Mohd Azmi Mohd Lila, Chair**

## EDITORIAL STAFF

### Journal Officers:

**Kwan Lee Yin, ScholarOne**  
**Kanagamalar Silvarajoo, ScholarOne**  
**Lim Ee Leen, ScholarOne**

### Editorial Assistants:

**Siti Juridah Mat Arip**  
**Zulinaardawati Kamarudin**  
**Norhafizah Abd Rani**

### COPY EDITORS

**Doreen Dillah**  
**Crecentia Morais**

### PRODUCTION STAFF

**Pre-press Officers:**  
**Nik Khairul Azizi Nik Ibrahim**  
**Kanagamalar Silvarajoo**

### Layout & Typeset:

**Sarwani Padzil**  
**Noor Sholihah Mohd Daud**

### WEBMASTER

**Mohd Nazri Othman**

### PUBLICITY & PRESS RELEASE

**Magdalene Pokar (ResearchSEA)**

### EDITORIAL OFFICE

**JOURNAL DIVISION**  
Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (R&I)  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, IDEA Tower II  
UPM-MTDC Technology Centre  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
43400 Serdang, Selangor Malaysia.  
Gen Enq.: +603 8947 1622 | 1619 | 1616  
E-mail: [executive\\_editor.pertanika@upm.my](mailto:executive_editor.pertanika@upm.my)  
URL: [www.journals-ld.upm.edu.my](http://www.journals-ld.upm.edu.my)

### PUBLISHER

**Kamariah Mohd Saidin**  
UPM Press  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
43400 UPM, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia.  
Tel: +603 8946 8855, 8946 8854  
Fax: +603 8941 6172  
E-mail: [penerbit@upm.edu.my](mailto:penerbit@upm.edu.my)  
URL: <http://penerbit.upm.edu.my>



## EDITORIAL BOARD

### 2015-2017

**Abdul Mansur M. Masih**  
*Economics, Econometrics, Finance, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, Saudi Arabia.*

**Alan Maley**  
*English Language Studies, Teaching of English Language and Literature, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK.*

**Ali Reza Kaldi**  
*Medical Sociology, Sociology of Development Ageing, Gerontology, University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation, Tehran, Iran.*

**Aminah Ahmad**  
*Sociology, Gender and Development, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Bee-Hoon Tan**  
*English Language Studies and Applied Linguistics, with Special Research Interest in e-learning and Learning Support, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Brian Tomlinson**  
*English Language Studies, The Evaluation, Adaptation and Development, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK.*

**Deanna L. Sharpe**  
*Economics, Consumer and Family Economics, Personal Finance, The University of Missouri, Columbia, USA.*

**Dessy Irawati**  
*International Business Management, Strategic Management, Economic Geography, Globalization and Development Studies, Industrial Dynamics and Knowledge Transfer, Radboud University, the Netherlands and EduPRIME the consulting, the Netherlands.*

**Elias @ Ilias Salleh**  
*Architectural Science, Sustainable Tropical Design, Thermal Comfort, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Gong-Soog Hong**  
*Economics, Consumer and Family Sciences, The Ohio State University, USA.*

**Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan**  
*Music, Ethnomusicology, Borneo and Papua New Guinea Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia.*

**James R. Stock**  
*Management Studies, Marketing, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Quantitative Method, University of South Florida, USA.*

**Jayakaran Mukundan**  
*English Language Studies, Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), English Language Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Jayum A. Jawan**  
*Sociology, Politics and Government, Civilization Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Jonathan Newton**  
*Classroom-based Second Language Acquisition, Language Teaching Methodology, the Interface of Culture and Language in Language Teaching and Learning, and Language/Communication Training and Material Design for the Multicultural Workplace, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.*

**Marcus Bion GRIFFIN**  
*Human Ecology, Anthropology, Tropical Agriculture, Fisheries, Cultural Learning Solutions, USA.*

**Mary Susan Philip**  
*English Language Theatre in Malaysia and Singapore; Postcolonial Theatre, University of Malaya, Malaysia.*

**Muzafar Shah Habibullah**  
*Economics, Monetary Economics, Banking, Macroeconomics, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Patricia Matusky**  
*Music, Ethnomusicology, Malay and Indonesian language, Literature and Culture, Grand Valley State University, USA.*

**Rohany Nasir**  
*Psychology-Career counseling, Counseling for Adolescents and Adults, Marriage and Family counseling, Counseling Industry and Organization, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Samsinar Md.Sidin**  
*Management Studies, Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Shameem Rafik-Galea**  
*English Language Studies, Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Language and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Shamsher Mohamad Ramadili Mohd**  
*Finance, Corporate Governance, The Global University of Islamic Finance (INCEIF) Malaysia.*

**Stephen J. Hall**  
*English Language Studies, Linguistics, Teacher Educator, TESOL, Sunway University College, Malaysia.*

**Stephen J. Thoma**  
*Psychology, Educational Psychology, The University of Alabama, USA.*

**Swee-Heng Chan**  
*English Language Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Turiman Suandi**  
*Psychology, Youth Development and Volunteerism, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.*

**Victor T. King**  
*Anthropology / Southeast Asian Studies White Rose East Asia Centre, University of Leeds, UK.*

## INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

### 2013-2016

**Barbara Wejnert**  
*Political Sociologist: Gender Studies, Macro Political and Social Changes, University at Buffalo, SUNY, USA.*

**Carolyn Graham**  
*Music, Jazz Chants, Harvard University, USA.*

**David Nunan**  
*Vice-President: Academic, Anaheim University, California, English Language Studies, Linguist, TESOL, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.*

**Faith Trent AM FACE**  
*Education: Curriculum development, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia.*

**Gary N. Mclean**  
*Executive Director, International Human Resource Development Programs, EAHR, Human Resource Development for National, Community and Social Development, International Human Resource Development, Organizational Development, Texas A&M University, USA.*

**Graham Thurgood**  
*English Language Studies, General Linguistics, Discourse and Syntax, California State University, Chico., USA.*

**Handoyo Puji Widodo**  
*English Language Studies, ESP, Language Curriculum-Materials Design and Development, and Language Methodology, Politeknik Negeri Jember, East Java-Indonesia.*

**John R. Schermerhorn Jr.**  
*Management Studies, Management and Organizational Behaviour, International Business, Ohio University, USA.*

**Kent Matthews**  
*Economics, Banking and Finance, Modelling and Forecasting the Macro Economy, Cardiff Business School, UK.*

**Lehman B. Fletcher**  
*Economics, Agricultural Development, Policy Analysis and Planning, Iowa State University, USA.*

**Mark P. Orbe**  
*Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Communication and Diversity, Intercultural Communication, Western Michigan University, USA.*

**Mohamed ARIFF**  
*Economics, Finance, Capital Market, Islamic Finance, Fiscal Policy, Bond University, Australia.*

**Pal Ahluwalia**  
*Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), African Studies, Social and Cultural Theory, Post-colonial Theory, Division of Education, Arts & Social Sciences, University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom.*

**Phillip Jones**  
*Architectural Science, Sustainability in the Built Environment, Welsh School of Architecture, Cardiff University, UK.*

**Rance P. L. Lee**  
*Sociology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.*

**Royal D. Colle**  
*Communication, Cornell University, USA.*

**Shonda Buchanan**  
*Interim Chair, American Literature, Hampton University, USA.*

**Vijay K. Bhatia**  
*Education: Genre Analysis and Professional Communication, City University of Hong Kong*

## ABSTRACTING/INDEXING

*Pertanika* is now over 35 years old; this accumulated knowledge has resulted the journals being indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier), Thomson (ISI) Web of Knowledge [BIOSIS & CAB Abstracts], EBSCO, DOAJ, Google Scholar, AGRICOLA, ISC, Citefactor, Rubriq and MyAIS.

The publisher of *Pertanika* will not be responsible for the statements made by the authors in any articles published in the journal. Under no circumstances will the publisher of this publication be liable for any loss or damage caused by your reliance on the advice, opinion or information obtained either explicitly or implied through the contents of this publication.

All rights of reproduction are reserved in respect of all papers, articles, illustrations, etc., published in *Pertanika*. *Pertanika* provides free access to the full text of research articles for anyone, web-wide. It does not charge either its authors or author-institution for refereeing/publishing outgoing articles or user-institution for accessing incoming articles.

No material published in *Pertanika* may be reproduced or stored on microfilm or in electronic, optical or magnetic form without the written authorization of the Publisher.

Copyright © 2015-16 Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. All Rights Reserved.



## Preface

This special edition of *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (JSSH)* contains 13 selected papers presented at the Inaugural International Conference for the Humanities and Social Sciences, or ICHSS@ESTCON 2014, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The conference was held from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2014 at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and was organised by the Humanities and Language Units of the Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS.

The theme of the conference was 'The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia', which brought together scholars and students of Malaysia and South East Asia to reflect upon the region and its place in the wider world. The papers presented at the ICHSS 2014 were somewhat holistic, encompassing interdisciplinary study, yet remaining allegiant to the geo-historical conditions of Southeast Asia, and Malaysia's role in the region's past, present and future. The conference managed to attract presenters who discussed on issues and developments in the region, examined existing thought pattern and institutions, and explored the impacts these have upon the network of relationships within South East Asian countries.

The 13 papers selected for this special issue had gone through several series of review and revision before they were finally accepted for publication. These papers cover a number of various topics related to the ICHSS 2014 theme. We hope that you will enjoy reading them, just as much as we have had the pleasure of reviewing, editing and compiling these papers for this special issue.

We thank the authors and reviewers for their hard work in making the contents possible for this special issue. We are also grateful to our Vice Chancellor, Datuk Ir. (Dr) Abdul Rahim Hashim, for his support for the ICHSS 2014. Last but not least, this issue is a concerted effort made possible with the help of Dr. Nayan Kanwal, the Chief Executive Editor, and his dedicated *Pertanika* team at the Journal Division, UPM, who rendered us their generous guidance and commitment in bringing this edition to print.

### **Guest Editors,**

Hairuzila Idrus (*Dr.*)

Ahmad Murad M. Noor Merican (*Prof. Dato' Dr.*)

Abdur-Rahman Mohamed Amin

Sumathi Renganathan (*Dr.*)

August 2015



**Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities**  
**Vol. 23 (S) Aug. 2015**

**Contents**

**The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia**

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| The Principle of Responsibility to Protect: The Case of Rohingya in Myanmar<br><i>Hariati Ibrahim and Rohaida Nordin</i>  | 1   |
| Migration and Statelessness: Turning the Spotlight on Malaysia<br><i>Rodziana Mohamed Razali, Rohaida Nordin and Tamara Joan Duraisingam</i>  | 19  |
| Identifying Genuine Whistleblowers from Chicken Little in Government Agencies<br><i>Aizatul Marsitah Ibrahim, Azila Ayob, Nurulaini Zamhury and Rugayah Hashim</i>                          | 37  |
| The Non-Admissibility of the Principle of Therapeutic Privilege in Clinical Trials<br><i>Yuhanif, Y., Anisah, C. N. and Md Rejab, M. D.</i>   | 47  |
| Perception of Undergraduates on Their Language Competence Based on English Language National Examination Results<br><i>Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah, Saedah Siraj and Lim Li Yean</i> | 55  |
| Internationalisation of Higher Education: Proposed Framework on International Students' Satisfaction<br><i>Pui-Yee, Chong</i>   | 73  |
| The Islamic Epistemological Element of Al-Yaqin in Critical Thinking<br><i>Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut and Nur Arfah A. S.</i>  | 91  |
| A Preliminary Case Study on Improving Engineering Students' Competency through Industrial Training in a Private University<br><i>Chong Foon Yee and Yeap Kim Ho</i>                         | 103 |
| Research Article Writing: A Review of a Complete Rhetorical Organisation<br><i>Nurul Farahin Musa and Noorli Khamis</i>   | 111 |
| What Do Students and Engineers Have to Say about Communicative Competence in Technical Oral Presentations?<br><i>Bhattacharyya, E. and Zainal, A. Z.</i>                                    | 123 |

Importance of Correct Pronunciation in Spoken English: Dimension of Second Language Learners' Perspective <i>Zulqarnain Abu Bakar and Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah</i>	143
A Preliminary Study of the Needs for the Development of Competency Measurement Instrument for Malaysian Chefs <i>Nornazira, S., Aede Hatib, M., Nor Fadila, M. A. and Noor Khairul Anuar, J.</i>	159
Re-examining the Determinants of Malaysia's Outward FDI <i>Teo, Y. N., Tham, S. Y. and Kam, A. J. Y.</i>	173



## **The Principle of Responsibility to Protect: The Case of Rohingya in Myanmar**

**Hariati Ibrahim<sup>1\*</sup> and Rohaida Nordin<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Department of Legal Studies, Centre for Foundation Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia, Jalan Universiti, 46350 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia*

*<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

This article discusses the plight of the Rohingya, an ethnic group in Myanmar who has been suffering an institutionalised persecution and discrimination since the administration of military junta. The paper argues that the Rohingya is facing a serious threat of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, while the government of Myanmar has failed in its primary duty to protect them. Due to such failure, the responsibility to protect them falls on the international community to prevent the occurrence of mass atrocities under the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The objectives of this article are twofold. First is to provide an understanding of the plight of the Rohingya and second is to analyse the application of R2P as a solution to the crisis. This article provides recommendations to the government of Myanmar, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations (UN) on the role to be played through tri-partite action for the application of the principle of R2P in Rohingya crisis. To do this, the researchers conducted a qualitative analysis of plethora of literatures and official reports on Rohingya crisis and R2P.

*Keywords:* Responsibility to Protect, Rohingya, ASEAN, United Nations

### **INTRODUCTION**

Under the principle of R2P, the government of Myanmar and the international

community has the responsibility to protect the Rohingya who are on the verge of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The series of violence on the Rohingya has been roundly condemned in statement, and many international government, regional bodies, human rights organisations and individuals, all call for immediate interference by the

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

hariati@iium.edu.my (Hariati Ibrahim),

rohaidanordin@ukm.edu.my (Rohaida Nordin)

\* Corresponding author

international community to stop the above threats against the Rohingya. In spite of the call, the government of Myanmar has persistently taken the issue of Rohingya as a communal strife between the Rohingya and Arakanese and urged the international community to stay away from its internal affairs. Although there are some efforts done by the government of Myanmar to manage the crisis, they are insufficient and only provide short-term solutions. From that account, the article argues that the government has not taken sufficient efforts to stop the violations of human rights of the Rohingya and failed in its duty to protect them; these leave the vacuum of protection to be fulfilled by the international community. In the discussion that follows, the article examines the Rohingya case through the prism of R2P and explores the way forward for tri-partite cooperation between the government of Myanmar, Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations (UN) as a solution to protect the Rohingya.

## **R2P: EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION**

R2P emerged due to the alleged failure of the world community to respond accordingly to civil conflicts and humanitarian crises prevalent in the 1990s. After NATO's controversial intervention in Kosovo, which began on 24 March 1999 (Cassese, 1999), the UN was divided between those who strongly hold to the traditional notion of state sovereignty and those who insisted on the right of humanitarian intervention (Chandler,

2010). At the Millennium Summit 2000, the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan challenged the international community to reconcile the issue of sovereignty and protection (Annan, 2000)<sup>1</sup>. In response to the challenge, the Canadian government offered willingness to discuss and propose a new framework for humanitarian intervention aimed at reconciling the conflicts between the State sovereignty and protection of human rights. The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty was established and it produced its report in 2001. The report remarks the history of R2P, and according to Stahn (2007), offers the most comprehensive explanation on the concept of R2P. In Paragraph 203 of the Report of the United Nations Secretary General on High-Level panel meeting on threats, challenges and change (HLP Report, 2004), R2P is referred as an 'emerging norm.'

The most remarkable development of R2P happened in 2005, whereby R2P was unanimously endorsed by 191 Head of States in the World Summit 2005 (United Nations, 2005). Paragraph 138 of the World Summit Outcome Document 2005 states that individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic

---

<sup>1</sup>In his speech during the Millennium Summit 2000, Annan posed a question "how should we respond to a Rwanda, to a Srebrenica...to the gross and systematic violations of human rights that affect every precept of our humanity?" (p. 48). This question was the impetus for the establishment of International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS)



cleansing and crimes against humanity, and the international community should encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility. Paragraph 139 lays down the international community's responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the UN Charter, to help to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from the four specific crimes of mass atrocities, the international community are prepared to take collective action through the Security Council (SC) in a timely and decisive manner. R2P also includes responsibility to prevent, in situation where it is not bravely conscience shocking but has the possibility of reaching it and responsibility to rebuild the society damaged by the mass atrocities (ICISS Report, 2001).

R2P is being criticised as lacking of substance (Hehir, 2010), preserving the interest of certain powerful States, especially the Permanent Five (P5) (Ayoob, 2002) and eroding the principle of non-interference (Bellamy & Davies, 2009). Although it has not attained the status of legal norm, R2P has a substantial normative power and will be more significant in the future. Although R2P is received with mixed feelings, it does not mean that the principle itself is wrong. This article argues that despite the critics, in reality, R2P is still relevant that it has been

affirmed in various General Assembly and the Security Council's resolutions.<sup>2</sup> It was adopted by the consensus of UN members in one of its largest gathering of Head of States in history, the World Summit 2005. Thus, R2P will not be simply fading away, especially with numerous and continuous efforts in advancing R2P.<sup>3</sup>

## ROHINGYA IN MYANMAR

The Rohingya is one of the most persecuted and ignored minorities in the world (Hamling, 2014) and Myanmar is considered as one of the most at-risk countries that may experience genocide between 2011 and 2015 (Butcher, Goldsmith, Semonovich, & Sowmya, 2012). Rohingya is a controversial terminology in Myanmar. According to the majority Burmese society, Rohingya are 'illegal immigrants' from the neighbour country, Bangladesh (Al-Adawy, 2013). On the other hand, Rohingya activists claim that the Rohingya are descendants of the Muslims settlers who had settled in Arakan long before the British's annexation of Myanmar and Arakan (AFK Jilani, 1999;

<sup>2</sup>Among other; Res. 1674, Res. 1894, Res. 1706, Res. 1970, Res. 1973, Res. 1970, Res. 1975, Res. 1996, Res. 2014, Res. 2149 and Res. 2150.

<sup>3</sup>Jennifer Welsh was appointed the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General for the Responsibility to Protect on July 2013 replacing Edward C Luck. Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect and The Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect are among initiatives to promote R2P.

Htut, 2003), and which is supported by the historical document by Francis Buchanan in 1799, whereby 'Rooinga' (today's Rohingya) is referred as *Muhammedans*, the Muslim settlers in Arakan State (Buchanan, 1799, p. 55). Maung Zarni, a Burmese actively advocating the rights of the Rohingya, collected mounting evidences which include government-printed books, official radio broadcast, government-issued licenses and public statements, suggesting the recognition of Rohingya during the administration of U Nu and the early years of the military regime Ne Win's (Zarni, 2012). With the enforcement of Citizenship Act 1982, the Rohingya are excluded from 135 ethnics recognised in Burma, thus rendering them stateless (Kyaw, 2008). Unlike the majority of Burmese, the majority of Rohingya are Muslims who speak Bengali, and thus appear to be distinguished from the majority of Burmese population and are more similar to their neighbours, the Bangladeshi. However, this physical appearance does not make them less Burmese than others.

The Rohingya face a long history of persecution and are persistently denied various rights including the right of rights of citizenship which render them stateless.<sup>4</sup> They also suffer deprivation of the rights to education and health services (Childs Right Forum of Burma, 2011), property

<sup>4</sup>Under the Citizenship Act 1982, the Rohingya was not included among the 135 recognised ethnic groups.

and ownership, (Amnesty International, 2004) and even the right to marry and procreate (Lewa, 2012).

In a series of attacks beginning on June 2012, villages where the Rohingya reside were targeted by the Arakanese mobs (Atkinson & Richard, 2013). Due to the violence, thousands of Rohingya have been fleeing to other countries, especially to Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia. As of end of April 2104, a total of 144,300 Myanmar refugees and asylum seekers have been registered with UNHCR in Malaysia, with 36,290 of them are Rohingya (UNHCR Malaysia, 2014).

The first wave of violence erupted at the beginning of June 2012. Prior to the violence, pamphlets on allegation of a rape of an Arakanese woman by three Muslim men were publicly distributed (Burma Campaign UK, 2013). In retaliation to the alleged rape and murder, 10 Muslim men were murdered by Buddhists mob and riots broke out in Sittway, Maungdaw and Buthidaung (Human Rights Watch, 2012). The government reported that 77 people were killed and 109 were injured (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). In term of the number of casualties, the Rohingya were more affected than the Arakanese. In the June and October 2012 series of violence, 134 Rohingya were reportedly died while 117 suffered injuries (Inquiry Commission, 2013).

State of emergency was declared on 10 June 2012 and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement that the violence was not one-sided, not a pogrom or genocide

of Rohingya committed by the Arakanese. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Union of Myanmar, 2012); witnesses interviewed however said that the police officers were present in the vicinity of the area where the armed gangs massacred the unarmed Muslims and acted as mere spectators (Human Rights Watch, 2012; Atkinson & Richard, 2013). This statement suggested the involvement of State's agencies in the violence. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) released satellite images showing 35 acres area of destruction including hundreds of buildings and house-boats, all raged by fire showing the widespread attack targeting the areas with Rohingya population (HRW, 2012).

The violence that occurred in October 2012, March and June 2013 respectively were more organised and directed towards Muslims in general, not only the Rohingya. The October attacks resulted in 88 deaths, while 129 people were injured including children (Kipgen, 2013). The violence that broke out in June 2013 was sparked by a murder of a Buddhist woman at a gas station in Lashio, where mobs gathered demanded the assailant to be handed over to them. Upon refusal, the gang attacked the Muslims in Lashio (Inkey, 2013). In January 2014, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, received credible information of the killing of 48 Rohingya in two incidents on 9 and 13 January 2014 and demanded the government to investigate (UN News Centre, 2014). Earlier in 2012, Pillay expressed concerns over reports of human rights violations

committed by security forces in Arakan state against the Rohingya, and demanded a prompt and independent investigation and she also called upon national leaders to speak out against discrimination, the exclusion of minorities and racist attitudes (UN News Centre, 2012). The government of Myanmar established a panel to investigate the January 2014 incident and reported that there was no evidence to prove Pillay's claim. Burmese Rohingya Organisation United Kingdom (BROUK) however produced briefing paper in which its findings are consistent with the reports by Associated Press, The Irrawady, Arakan Project, Fortify Rights and Medicins Sans Frontier (BROUK, 2014).

The aid workers complained that there were wide spread animosity against them and the local aid workers were threatened with attack if they helped the Rohingya. In February 2014, the NGO, Doctors without Borders was banned from Myanmar (Hume, 2014), while in February 2014, Maltesar International was not allowed into Myanmar to resume aid operations (Bookbinder, 2014). On 27 and 28 March 2014, the Arakanese mobs attacked Maltesar International office, which forced the police to fire warning shots and evacuated the organisation's staff after their private residences were attacked (Armstrong, 2014).

Rakhine Inquiry Commission was established on August 2012 to violent incidents and released its report in July 2013 (Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State, 2013). The

Asian Legal Resource Centre in its written submission to the Human Rights Council expressed doubt on the reliability of the Commission's report on the conflict (Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2013). On 28 March 2013, President Thein Sein declared that he would begin using force to stop religious conflicts and rioting in Myanmar (The Associated Press, 2013) but the situation was getting worse with almost one million Rohingya living in apartheid-like conditions (Reynolds, 2014). The government also established temporary camps with access to clean water and sanitation, food, health and education services but Nicholas Kristof, in his documentary tells a different story and calls the shelter as 'concentration camp' (Kristof, 2014). The HRW in its 2014 report expressed disappointment with the government's response to violence by the Buddhist extremists and the lack of initiative to bring the perpetrators to justice (HRW, 2014).

The government of Myanmar holds responsibility to protect its population from the four crimes of mass atrocity but the government treatment for the Rohingya is far from meeting the international standard. Thus, the above evidences draw a conclusion that despite the government promise to control the crisis, violence and discrimination against the Rohingya still increase. This article argues that the government's efforts are insufficient to provide long-term solution to protect the Rohingya.

## MASS ATROCITIES IN MYANMAR

In order to invoke R2P in Myanmar, it is crucial to prove two elements that there occur or likely to occur all or any one of the four atrocities, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide, and the government of Myanmar has manifestly failed or is unwilling to protect its population from such mass atrocities. Since the Arakan State is not in a situation of armed conflict, war crimes are clearly not an issue.

Genocide is defined in Article 2 (a) to (e) of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide 1948.<sup>5</sup> Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) conducted a field research in March, April and May 2013 to analyse and assess the patterns of extreme violence from various sites in Myanmar and reported the government's failure to manage the Rohingya crisis (Gittleman *et al.*, 2013). PHR also concluded that the dissemination of hate speech, impunity for most perpetrators and the government's inaction pose a serious threat of genocide (Gittleman *et al.*, August 2013). The Rohingya are regularly called '*kalar*' (a derogatory term means black skinned) and

<sup>5</sup>any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such; killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

dog when they walked down the streets (Gittleman *et al.*, August 2013). Genocide Watch in its 2012 report categorised Myanmar as one of the countries that is at extremely high risk of genocide as violence and other crimes committed against the Rohingya are widespread and systematic, and thus, she called for genocide emergency to be declared in Myanmar (The Sentinel Project, 2013). Zarni and Cowley (2014) described the human rights abuses of the Rohingya as a 'slow-burning genocide', the process which has taken place since 1978 that includes assault on Rohingya's identity.

Burma Campaign UK has collected evidences including pamphlets inciting anti-Muslim sentiment in Myanmar; among others, alleging Muslims agenda to wipe out the Burmese nationality and religion (Burma Campaign UK, 2013). The 969 movement, led by an ultra-nationalist monk, U Wirathu carried out a campaign of hate speech inciting the Buddhists to oust the Rohingya. Wirathu travelled across Myanmar delivering hate speeches and circulate its recording to the public. The Time magazine in its July 2013 edition ran a cover story of Wirathu entitled, 'The Face of Buddhist Terror' (Beech, 2013). Some of Wirathu's sermon included; "[Muslims] are breeding so fast, and they are stealing our women, raping them...they would like to occupy our country, but I won't let them. We must keep Burma Buddhist" (Beech, 2013).

William Schabas, an international law expert, warned against the possibility of

genocide of the Rohingya. In Al Jazeera's documentary entitled, "The Hidden Genocide" (Jazeera, 2012), Schabas commented that it is not frivolous to use the term genocide to refer to the government's treatment of the Rohingya. Schabas's opinion is consistent with his prior findings in 2010 which suggested that crimes against humanity are being committed against the Rohingya (Schabas *et al.*, 2010).

Welsh and Sharma (2009) elaborated that the preventive strategies of R2P aimed at attacks directed at any population, committed in a widespread and by a systematic manner in furtherance of a state or organisational policy, irrespective the existence of discriminatory intent. The genocidal intention is necessary in case of prosecution for genocide but not in the case of R2P. The requirement of proof of discriminatory intent will make it impossible to prove genocide, especially one that involves the State such as the case of Rohingya. Moreover, R2P also includes responsibility to prevent which suggest that it covers situation where there is likelihood for the crimes of mass atrocities to occur.

The government denied that it was engaged in genocide (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014) but the characters of genocide stipulated by international law are present in the government's treatment of the Rohingya. Violent attacks, biased state's security forces and army, hate groups spreading hate speeches, religious extremists and inefficient government's response are all present. In Rwanda, the killings were so widespread and cost

the life of almost 800,000 of Tutsis and Hutus (Scheffer, 2004); in Myanmar, the government seems to allow genocide to happen slowly to avoid international condemnation and international prosecution. However, there is increasing number of institutions calling for international community's intervention in the Rohingya crisis. In London, organisations and global individuals call for the end of genocide in Myanmar including the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana, who personally stressed on the need to discuss the possibility of genocide with respect to the Rohingya (London School of Economics, 2014).

Crimes against humanity occur when the offences listed in Art. 7 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court (Rome Statute)<sup>6</sup> are committed in a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian

---

<sup>6</sup> i.e.; murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation or forcible transfer of population, imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, torture, rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilisation, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity, persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender, as defined in paragraph 3, or in other grounds that are universally recognised as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or any crime within the jurisdiction of the court, enforced disappearance of person, the crime of apartheid, other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.

population. Widespread refers to the number of incidences that take place or the scale of the acts while systematic means a pattern or methodical plan. For example, when rape is used as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population, then it is a crime against humanity under the jurisdiction of the international criminal law.

The Irish Centre of Human Rights (ICHR) conducted an investigation on the situation of the Rohingya and concluded that they are victims of crimes against humanity (Schabas *et al.*, 2010). Based on the interviews conducted by ICHR with refugees in the refugee camps in Bangladesh, some of the Rohingya women were found to have been raped so many times by State officials and the soldiers. The statement is corroborated by other refugees and testimonies saying that they are direct witnesses of rape. Some of the victims were brutally beaten for resisting rape and died, while survivors suffered psychological oppression. Due to their lack of status, they are unable to seek redress, thus rendering the perpetrators free from criminal liability. The investigation concluded that the crimes of rape were not committed randomly but rather there were common similarities between all the acts reported. The research further indicated that unsafe abortions are regularly performed in Arakan following the incidences of rape (Schabas *et al.*, 2010).

The United Nations Commission of Experts, in its report to the Security Council, defines ethnic cleansing as

'rendering an area ethnically homogenous by using force or intimidation to remove persons of given groups from the area' (Security Council, 1994). The HRW, in its in-depth 2013 (Human Rights Watch, 2013) and 2014 (Human Rights Watch, 2014) reports, accused the government of carrying out a campaign of ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. This claim was supported by evidences of killings, mass arrest and tortures of detainees, destruction of houses, mosques and Islamic schools, large scale of forcible displacement; all believe to be systematically structured by the State-sponsored security forces. Prior to the attacks, leaflets were distributed demonising the Rohingya and calling for their removal from the Myanmar (Burma Campaign UK, 2013). In similar vein, the Sentinel Project concluded that the conflicts between the Arakanese and Rohingya are part of a state-sponsored campaign of ethnic cleansing with the government being apathetic to the cause of Rohingya and actively involved in efforts to ethnically cleanse Myanmar of Muslims (Sentinel Project, 2013). Based on the evidences of participation of government's agencies, late prevention of violence and the restriction of humanitarian aids to the Rohingya indirectly suggest the government's role in the event.

The Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement claiming that the series of violence was a clash between two communities of different faiths and warned against any efforts to politically regionalising or internationalising the

matter (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). Nonetheless, the Rakhine Inquiry Commission Report does not mention of discrimination against the Rohingya (Rakhine Inquiry Commission, 2012), which contradicts with extensive reports on Human Rights by HRW alleging crime against humanity supported with extensive evidence of the involvement of monks, political parties and government forces in the violence against the Rohingya (HRW, 2013). The anti-Rohingya and biased stand of the government of Myanmar is not new but it is a process that has taken place during the administration of military junta. Zarni and Cowley (2014), in their seminal piece on the genocide of Rohingya, concluded that the government of Myanmar has subjected the Rohingya to persecution and discrimination as a matter of state policy. Rohingya refugees related that even though they sometimes do not feel safe in the refugee camp in Bangladesh, it is safer than Myanmar (Medecins Sans Frontiers, 2002).

Many institutions warned against a serious threat of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity committed by the government (Schabas *et al.*, 2010; HRW, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2014) and called for the immediate interference by the international community. Despite the government's rejection of genocide, all crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, well-documented reports, testimony based on investigation and research by numerous institutions concluded that the threat of

mass atrocities in Myanmar is real. It is not sufficient for the government to deny the claims through its media without presenting cogent evidence to rebut the findings and reports by various international institutions. Even further, President Thein Sein defended the armed forces and Buddhist extremists such as U Wirathu and praised him as 'a son of Buddha' and a 'noble person' (Hindstrom, 2013). Due to such response from the government, it is very critical for the international community to interfere timely and appropriately to prevent more serious threat to humanity.

#### **APPLICATION OF R2P IN THE CASE OF ROHINGYA**

The above discussion draws a conclusion that the Rohingya crisis is one situation relevant to R2P. The next crucial issue is to decide who are the appropriate actors to act?

The WS 2005 Outcome Document implies that UN action is privileged over unilateralism and peaceful means are privileged over violent means. An individual State or any regional or sub-regional mechanism must explore all avenues through the UN before acting unilaterally. R2P emphasises on the important role of the UN partners, the regional arrangements. UN must not act alone and should move with regional organisation (ASEAN) and the private actors within the UN system. It must be a tri-partite action involving the government of Myanmar, ASEAN and UN.

According to the principle of R2P, the government of Myanmar carries the primary responsibility to provide security to each and everyone in the country, and disregard their creed, ethnicity or religion. Despite the government's stern policy denying the Rohingya with the right of citizenship, they are living within territorial jurisdiction of Myanmar, thus entitles them for protection from mass atrocities. The government must uphold the rule of law and hold accountable those who incite and complicit in the violence, identify the precursors of mass killing and prevent it from ever occurring.

As part of the establishment of rule of law, an independent inquiry must be held to identify and bring perpetrators to justice. The mobs should not be allowed to take law at their own hand. The security forces involved directly and indirectly in the violence must be brought to justice. In the context of Myanmar, as a country moving towards democracy, it should embrace the rule of law as the most fundamental principle. The government must work on independent and properly functioning judiciary which is a prerequisite of rule of law. The United Nations' Development Programme identified four keys areas crucial for the establishment of rule of law in crises-affected and fragile situations. They are: (i) dealing with a legacy of violence, (ii) increasing safety and security for all, (iii) building confidence through accessible and effective justice and security institutions, and (iv) improving the delivery of justice and security for women (United



Nations Development Programme, 2014). The government must embrace the multi-ethnic character of the country and should seriously develop plan of reforms towards national reconciliation and democracy.

The most pivotal step is for the government to review some provisions in the Citizenship Act 1982, which are discriminatory against the Rohingya and contrary to the standard of international human rights law. The Rohingya has a significant historical and legal nexus with the country and should be accorded with rights due to them - the most important of all is the right of citizenship.

Smith deliberates the advantages of the working of regional mechanism as it involves fewer States, thus the political consensus is easier to be achieved. Besides, States in the same region are relatively close with respect to tradition and culture (Smith, 2012). ASEAN is in the perfect position to act critically on Myanmar; however, it has so far failed to take a strong political stand in the Rohingya crisis. R2P is being adopted by ASEAN member States but its application in the case of Rohingya has not been seriously considered. The doctrine of non-intervention in domestic affairs is the practical consequences of the principle of State sovereignty and it is considered by Keling *et al.* (2011) as the original core foundation that shapes the regional relations between the ASEAN member-states.

Jones however claimed that ASEAN's strict adherence to the principle of non-interference is not true (Jones, 2009).

In support of his view, he studied three cases that he considered as ASEAN's act of intervention, such as: (i) Thailand sponsored insurgencies within Myanmar, after the Cold-War; (ii) Indonesia annexed the Democratic Republic of East Timor in 1975, which ASEAN endorsed and even justified in the UN, (iii) in 1978, ASEAN entered in de facto alliance with China to rebuild Khmer Rouge remnants in Thailand and keep the civil Cambodian war running, helped arm a coalition government in exile, lobbied for the UN to retain Cambodia seat, and initiated peace plan which brought UN state-building mission to Cambodia.

Goh made comparison between the conflict management by Organisation of United States in the Haitian conflict and ASEAN's in the Vietnam's conflict and stated that the 'ASEAN Way' means more than just non-interference but is a viable strategy in global conflict resolution (Goh, 2003). Goh further emphasised that ASEAN Way is a set of working guidelines that set out procedures by which a conflict would be managed by the region (Goh, 2003). This set of norms describes the means of carrying out action, not the end. ASEAN should work on finding harmony between the ASEAN Way and the principle of R2P to exert diplomatic pressure on Myanmar so as to manage the conflict according to the standard of international law. The Rohingya crisis affects Myanmar's transition to democracy and also creates problem to Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, which have to cater for the flooding of Rohingya

refugees over their borders, and hence require ASEAN's involvement more than ever.

The newly formed ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) provides a regional forum through which ASEAN can increase pressure on the government of Myanmar and it is expected to provide tangible steps for the resolution of cases of human rights violations in Myanmar. However, AICHR does not have any significant effect in upholding human rights because it does not have a means of support for human rights and the power to punish violators of human rights in ASEAN. Despite this weakness, the establishment of AICHR signals that human rights considerations are legitimate for ASEAN members. Even though its application in various countries may be different and far from meeting the standard, it nevertheless has been accepted in principle. ASEAN should seriously work on building strong collaboration with the AICHR to create a right boundary between the ASEAN Way and the principle of non-intervention and human rights.

Myanmar has continuously undermined ASEAN's credibility and competency as a dynamic regional body, and unless ASEAN acknowledges its responsibility, Myanmar will continue to drag down its ability to work for regional security and prosperity. ASEAN must draw international attention to the issue of Rohingya and strongly condemn the blocking of humanitarian aids and the rampant violations of human rights

committed by the police, army, security forces, monks and the laymen.

ASEAN's former Secretary-General, Surin Pitsuwan criticised the government of Myanmar's refusal to issue citizenship to Rohingya, saying that this issue is one that requires international concern and warned of the possibility of the crisis to destabilise the entire region (Sittamparam & Arbee, 2012). Rohingya refugees have produced conflict, dilemma and insecurity to Bangladesh (Rahman, 2010). Indonesian anti-terror policed shot dead seven men and arrested another 13 for suspected involvement in a plot to bomb Burmese Embassy in Jakarta due to the government's bad treatment of the Rohingya (Coates, 2013).

Medecins Sans Frontiers at present there exist a few mechanisms linked with protection of human right in South East Asian region; one which includes the newly formed ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). AICHR provides a new regional forum through which ASEAN can increase pressure on the government of Myanmar. AICHR is expected to provide tangible steps for the resolution of cases of human rights violations in Myanmar. However, AICHR does not have a significant effect in upholding human rights because it does not have a means of support for human rights and power to punish violators of human rights in ASEAN. Despite this weakness, the establishment of AICHR signals that human rights considerations are legitimate for ASEAN members. Even

though its application in various countries may be different and far from meeting the standard, it has been accepted in principle. ASEAN should seriously work on building strong collaboration with AICHR to create a right boundary between the ASEAN Way and the principle of non-intervention and human rights. It is very important for the ASEAN members to draw a boundary that where there are violations of human rights, the 'non-interference in other's domestic affairs' should not remain. The duty to uphold the protection of human rights enshrined in the UN Charter and in this issue, ASEAN is not an exception. Non-interference can no longer be used as an excuse for inaction on Myanmar. Myanmar has continually undermined ASEAN's credibility and competency as a dynamic regional body, and unless ASEAN acknowledges its responsibility, Myanmar will continue to drag down its ability to work for regional security and prosperity. ASEAN must draw international attention to the issue of Rohingya and strongly condemn the blocking of humanitarian aids and the rampant violations and abuses of human rights committed by the police, army, security forces, monks and the laymen.

Above all, the most crucial step is that members-States must be able to discuss sensitive issues more openly during the ASEAN summit meetings. The government of Myanmar has clearly shown its unwillingness to discuss the Rohingya issue, emphasising that the conflict is purely an internal affairs of the State. According

to the spokesman for Myanmar President, the Bengali [Rohingya] issue is Myanmar's internal affairs and it will not be discussed in the ASEAN meetings even if member countries ask for it (Deusthce Presse Agentur, 2014). Meanwhile, Thein Sein expressed the government's willingness to take advice on the issue from other countries (PRESSTV, 2014), but how far this is true is highly questionable.

It can be concluded that in South East Asia, there are norms that may be considered as having linked with R2P, which has not been accepted as language by ASEAN. ASEAN already has mechanisms promoting the protection of human rights which should be effectively utilised to promote R2P. Rather than expressing concern and appeal for the government of Myanmar to take necessary measures to handle the conflict, ASEAN must take one bold step forward, i.e., to bring the issue to the UN General Assembly. Reference to R2P made at international level will increase pressure on the government to become more responsive to international concern. At the same time, ASEAN members must discuss the issue openly at ASEAN forum since the effect of Rohingya issue has spilled out to other neighbouring countries, which is a strong indication that the case is not solely a domestic affair of Myanmar.

ASEAN member States must realise they need each other and have to stand united. The civil societies in South East Asia countries in particular must continuously highlight the plight of Rohingya and

pressure their government take lead on the issue. ASEAN should review its way in managing conflict, form using indirect means, delivering nice statements to a solid and strong action. They should solve the Rohingya issue with cooperation from the international community, to be specific the UN. Nordin Sopiie reminded ASEAN to be idealistic; “we have to be idealistic to live in this imperfect world. ASEAN and United Nations are all we’ve got. We must make the best of them” (Khoo, 1992).

The UN has been pursuing engagement approach in Myanmar for many years. The UN Secretary-General appointed Vijay Nambiar as the Special Adviser on Myanmar to mainly focus on the progress towards democracy, whereas Tomàs Ojea Quintana as a Special Rapporteur on human rights. Quintana addressed concern over the claims of government’s failure to take action against State officials in connection with the violence (2013). Quintana calls for an independent investigation into the allegations of human rights abuses and excessive use of force by security and police. On April 2014, Quintana and two other experts on minority issues and internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani and Rita Izsak, released a statement expressing deep concerns over continuing inter-communal violence in Arakan State and reminding the government of its obligation to protect those affected by the violence (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2014).

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his speech to diplomats urged

the government of Myanmar to address the issue of Rohingya including the citizenship demands (UN News Centre, 2013). It is crucial that there must be partnership between UN and ASEAN human right machinery to work with the government to build-up the State capacity and provide humanitarian assistance. In conflict prevention, UN and ASEAN must find avenue to open up opportunities for interfaith and inter communal dialogues. The most critical and challenging task is to promote tolerance and respect in this most ethnically diverse country. Elimination of prejudice and nurturing respects to each other is an arduous work that requires long-term commitment. ASEAN and UN must collaborate with the NGOs and private institutions within Myanmar to build state capacity, manage resentments among the public and establish the rule of law.

## CONCLUSION

The Rohingya have suffered egregious violation of human rights and are in dire need of immediate attention and assistance by the international community. Despite the government’s persistent denial of threats of genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, evidences available strongly indicate that the prospect of atrocity is high and the government has failed in its duty to protect the population, a duty it has acknowledged and accepted in the World Summit 2005 and in the General Assembly Interactive Dialogue in 2009. The Rohingya have been subjected to discriminatory treatments by the previous

military reign and the situation does not seem to improve with the current quasi-military democratic administration. Due to the government's failure and lack of capacity, the responsibility to protect the Rohingya falls on the international community to assist the government to fulfil such duty to prevent the escalation of conflict into mass atrocity. Thus, it is crucial that ASEAN reacts on the issue and it has in some occasions in the past interfered with other members' internal affairs. The effects of the Rohingya crisis transcend beyond borders and have caused problems to other countries; hence, it requires the involvement of ASEAN more than ever. It is time for the government to seriously treat its population in accordance with the standard of international human rights law and prove its commitment to move forward for better Myanmar. A long-term resolution of the Rohingya crisis can be achieved with the combined efforts of the government of Myanmar, ASEAN and the UN.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Adawy, H. (2013). Persecution of the Rohingya -The Dark Side of Development in Myanmar. *SPOTLIGHT on Regional Studies*, 32(10), 43-65.
- Amnesty International. (2004, May). Myanmar, The Rohingya Mnority: Fundamental Rights Denied. *Amnesty International*. United Kingdom, UK: London.
- Armstrong, P. (2014). *Concern as Buddhist mobs target foreign aid groups in Myanmar*. Retrieved March 25, 2014, from <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/03/28/world/asia/myanmar-rakhine-ngos-violence/>
- Asian Legal Resource Centre. (2013). Myanmar: Official Report on Rakhine State Conflict Gravely Flawed. *Asian Human Rights Commission*. Retrieved May 18, 2014, from <http://www.humanrights.asia/news/alrc-news/human-rights-council/hrc23/ALRC-CWS-23-06-2013>
- Atkinson, H., & Richard, S. (2013, May 26). Massacre in Central Burma: Muslim Students Terrorized and Killed in Meiktila. *Physicians for Human Rights*.
- Ayoob, M. (2002) Humanitarian Intervention and State Sovereignty. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 6(1), 81-102.
- Beech, H. (2013, July). The Face of Buddhist Terror: When Buddhists Go Bad. *TIME, July 2013 Edition*.
- Bellamy, A. J., & Davies, S. E. (2009) The Responsibility to Protect in the Asia-Pacific Region. *Security Dialogue*, 40(6), 547-574.
- Bookbinder, A. (2014). *Aid workers negotiate terms in Arakan*. Retrieved from <https://www.dvb.no/news/aid-return-arakan-burma-myanmar/40259>.
- Buchanan, F. (1799). A Comparative Vocabulary of some of the Languages Spoken in Burma Empire. *Asiatic Researchers*, 5(0), 219-240.
- Burma Campaign UK. (2013). Examples of Anti-Muslim Propaganda. *Burma Briefing* (21st Ed.). Burma Campaign UK.
- Butcher, C. R., Goldsmith, B. E., Semonovich, D., & Sowmya, A. (2012). *Understanding and Forecasting Political Instability, Mass Atrocities and Genocide: Combining Social Science and Machine Learning Approaches*. Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.
- Cassese, A. (1999). Ex Inuria Ius Oritur: Are We Moving towards International Legitimation of Forcible Humanitarian Countermeasures in the World Community? *European Journal of International Relations*, 10(1), 23-30.

- Childs Rights Forum of Burma. (April 29, 2011). *CRC Shadow Report Burma: The Plight of Children under Military Rule in Burma*. Childs Rights Forum, United Nations Human Rights Council, Universal Periodic Review.
- Coates, E. (2013). *Inter-religious violence in Myanmar: A Security Threat to Southeast Asia*. Nanyang Technological University. Retrieved November 20, 2014 from <http://dr.ntu.edu.sg/handle/10220/20070>
- Deusthce Presse Agentur. (2014). *Rohingya Topic off limits for ASEAN Talk*. Retrived from <https://www.dvb.no/uncategorized/myanmar-keeps-rohingya-issue-off-the-agenda-for-regional-meeting-burma-myanmar/36118>
- Gittleman, A., Brodney, M., & Atkinson, H. (2013, August). Patterns of Anti-Muslim Violence in Burma: A Call for Accountability and Prevention. *Physicians for Human Rights*. United States of America, USA: Washington.
- Goh, G. (2003). The 'ASEAN Way'. *Stanford Journal of International Affairs*, 3(1), 113-118.
- Hamling, A. (2014). *Rohingya: The Most Persecuted Refugees in the World*. Amnesty Australia.
- Hehir, A. (2010). The Responsibility to Protect: 'Sound and Fury Signifying Nothing'? *International Relations*, 24(2), 218-239.
- Hindstorm, H. (2013). *Burma President Backs Anti-Muslims 'hate Preacher' Wirathu*. Retrieved November 28, 2013, from <http://www.dvb.no/news/politics-news/burma-president-backs-anti-muslim>
- Htut, Z. M. (2003). *Human Rights Abuses and Discriminations on Rohingya*. Tokyo: Burmese Rohingya Japan Association.
- Human Rights Watch. (2012). *Burma: Satellites Images Show Widespread Attacks on Rohingya*. Retrieved December 26, 2013, 2014, from <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/11/17/burma-satellite-images-show-widespread-attacks-rohingya>.
- Human Rights Watch. (2013). *All You Can Do is Pray: Crimes against Humanity and Ethnic Cleansing of the Rohingya Muslims in Burma's Arakan State*. United States of America: Human Rights Watch.
- Human Righst Watch. (2012, August 1). *The Government Could Have Stopped This. Sectarian Violence and Ensuing Abuses in Burma's Arakan State*. Human Righst Watch, Bangladesh, Myanmar.
- Human Rights Watch. (2013). *Burma: Ethnic Cleansing in Arakan State*. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from [www.hrw.org/features/burma-ethnic-cleansing-arakan-state](http://www.hrw.org/features/burma-ethnic-cleansing-arakan-state).
- Human Rights Watch. (2014). *World Report 2014 Events of 2013*. United States of America: Human Rights Watch.
- Hume, T. (2014). *Medecins Sans Frontieres banned in Myanmar state for alleged 'Rohingya bias*. Retrieved April 18, 2014, from <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/03/03/world/asia/myanmar-rakhine-doctors-without-borders>
- Inkey, M. (2014, January 1). 2003: A year of religious intolerance in Burma. *Asian Correspondent. Asia's leading independent news*. Retrieved from <http://asiancorrespondent.com/117816/2013-a-year-of-religious-intolerance-in-burma/>
- Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State. (2013). *Final Report of Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State*. Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Yangon: Inquiry Commission on Sectarian Violence in Rakhine State.
- Jazeera, A. (2013). *The Hidden Genocide*. Al Jazeera Investigates. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/aljazeerainvestigates/2012/12/2012125122215836351.html>.
- Jilani, A. F. K. (1999). *The Rohingya of Arakan: Their Quest for Jutsice*. The University Press: Dhaka, Bangladesh.

- Jones, L. (2009). *ASEAN and the Norm of non-interference in Southeast Asia: A Quest for Social Order*. Nuffield College Politics Group Working Paper Retrieved from, <http://www.nuffield.ox.ac.uk/politics/papers/2009/Jones.March2009.pdf>
- Keling, M. F., Som, H. M., Saludin, M. N., Shuib, M. S., & Ajis, M. N. E. (2011). The Development of ASEAN from Strategic Approach. *Asian Social Science*, 7(7), 169-189.
- Khoo, R. (1992, February 6). Asean Way to New World Order. *New Straits Times*. Retrieved from <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1309&dat=19920206&id=h1kmAAAAIBAJ&sjid=e5ADAAAAIBAJ&pg=5999,1226929&hl=en>
- Kristof, N. (2014). 21st Century Concentration Camps. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://wn.com/21st\\_century\\_concentration\\_camps\\_%7C\\_nicholas\\_kristof\\_%7C\\_the\\_new\\_york\\_times](http://wn.com/21st_century_concentration_camps_%7C_nicholas_kristof_%7C_the_new_york_times)
- Kyaw, N. N. (2008). Myanmar's Forgotten People. *Forced Migration Review*, 30.
- Lewa, C. (2012). *The Arakan Project: Issues to be Raised Concerning the Situation of Stateless Rohingya Children in Myanmar (Burma)*. Geneva.
- London School of Economics. (2014). *London School of Economics Conference on Decades of State-sponsored Destruction of Myanmar's Rohingya*. London School of Economics.
- Medecins Sans Frontiers. (2002). 10 Years for the Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future. *Medecins Sans Frontiers-Holland*.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2012). *Summary of list of destruction during the violence in Rakhine State as of 26 July 2012*. Yangon: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Union of the Republic of Myanmar.
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2014). *Myanmar: UN expert raises alarm on Rakhine State*. Retrieved May 18, 2014, from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx>.
- PRESSTV. (2014). *Myanmar not to include Rohingya issue in ASEAN confab 2014*. Retrieved May 23, 2014, from <http://www.presstv.com/detail/2014/01/16/345913/myanmar-keeps-ignoring-rohingya-issue/>
- Quintana, T. O. (2013). Situations of Human Rights Situation In Myanmar Note by the Secretary General. In *Sixty-Eighth Session Agenda item 69(c)*. New York: General Assembly.
- Rahman, U. (2010) The Rohingya Refugee: A Security Dilemma for Bangladesh. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 8(2), 233-239.
- Schabas, W. A., Prudhomme, N., & Powderly, J. (2010). *Crimes against Humanity in Western Burma: The situation of the Rohingyas*. Dublin: Irish Centre for Human Rights.
- Scheffer, D. (2004). Lessons from the Rwandan Genocide. *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, 5(3).
- Security Council. (1994, May 27). *Letter Dated 24 May 1994 From The Secretary-General to The President of The Security Council*. New York: UN.
- Smith, R. K. M. (2012). *Textbook on International Human Rights* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Taw, N. P. (2012). *The incidents in the Rakhine State are sectarian conflicts which are purely internal affairs of a sovereign State: They are not relating to any kind of religious persecution or religious discrimination*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Union of Myanmar.
- The Sentinel Project. (2013). *The Sentinel Project for the Prevention of Genocide - Burma*. Canada: The Sentinel Project.

- UN News Centre. (2012, July 27). *Myanmar: UN official concerned over rights violations in Rakhine State*. Retrieved January 18, 2014, from <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42575#.VILTqnYrKUK>
- UN News Centre. (2013). *Continued support vital as Myanmar proceeds with transition process, says Ban*. Retrieved March 25, 2014, from <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story>.
- UN News Centre. (2014). *Top UN officials call for probe into latest violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state*. Retrieved March 15, 2014, from <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story>.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2014). *Strengthening The Rule of Law in Crisis-Affected and Fragile Institutions UNDP Global Programme Annual Report 2013. UNDP Global Programme Annual Report*. New York: United Nations.
- United Nations General Assembly. (2005). *2005 World Summit Outcome Document*. Resolution A/RES/60/1.
- Welsh, J., & Sharma, S.K. (2009). *Policy Brief: Operationalizing the Responsibility to Prevent*. UK: Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict.
- Zarni, M. (2012). The official evidence of the Rohingya ethnic ID and citizenship which the Burmese ethno- and genocidists don't want you to see. Retrieved from <http://www.rohingyablogger.com/2013/05/the-official-evidence-of-rohingya.html>
- Zarni, M., & Cowley, A. (2014). The Slow-Burning Genocide of Myanmar's Rohingya. *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal*, 23(3).
- Zawacki, Benjamin. Defining Myanmar "Rohingya Problem." (2012-2013) *Human Rights Brief*, 20(18)



## **Migration and Statelessness: Turning the Spotlight on Malaysia**

**Rodziana Mohamed Razali<sup>1\*</sup>, Rohaida Nordin<sup>2</sup> and Tamara Joan Duraisingam<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Syariah and Law, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, 71800 BB Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

### **ABSTRACT**

Migration has been a socio-political hallmark in Southeast Asia, more so in recent times as the region advances towards an ASEAN community by 2015. With its steady economic growth and internal political stability, Malaysia receives the most number of migrants aside from Thailand and Singapore. Statelessness and its risk look set to continue in the long run both as a cause and implication of cross-border movement of persons. A considerable number of such migrants share one striking attribute, i.e. their irregular status in the host country, and hence, the lack of protections of their basic rights both from the source and host countries. Going on the premise that there is a strong underexplored nexus between migration and statelessness, this article unravels the interconnections between these two scenarios. Beginning with the crucial introduction of the term ‘statelessness’ and its causes and consequences, this article subsequently embarks on exploring the manner in which modern patterns of migration expose several groups of vulnerable persons of a migratory background to the risk and limbo of statelessness in Malaysia. Central to the analysis are how the identified groups of persons are impacted by both concepts of *de jure* and *de facto* statelessness, the unique interplay between migration and statelessness, the many facets of disenfranchisement of rights saddled upon them by their irregular status, and the underlying challenges behind such anomaly. The article adopts international law as the main framework to guide the overall discussion.

*Keywords:* Malaysia, migration, refugees, statelessness, trafficking, undocumented, UNHCR

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

rodziana@usim.edu.my (Rodziana Mohamed Razali),

rohaidanordin@yahoo.com (Rohaida Nordin),

tamarajoan.duraisingam.@gmail.com (Tamara Joan Duraisingam)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### *Definition*

Statelessness is essentially a concept being the reverse of that of nationality. Article 1 of the Convention relating to the Status

of Stateless Persons 1954 ('the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention') defines the 'stateless person' as "a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law". Those who meet this definition are commonly referred to as *de jure* stateless, i.e. the legally stateless persons, despite the absence of the term *de jure* itself in the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. This legal definition has also acquired the status of customary international law (International Law Commission [ILC], 2006).

While *de jure* statelessness generally coincides with refugees and State successions, another category of statelessness known as *de facto* statelessness emerged at a later stage. In essence, *de facto* stateless persons generally experience inability to prove their nationality or possess nationality that is ineffective. Series of irregular migration that take place around the globe have contributed to this latter category of statelessness (Lee, 2005, p. 7). A *de facto* stateless person is however neither defined in the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention nor the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Two key points constitute the fulcrum of the concept of *de facto* statelessness, namely, the unwillingness to avail oneself of protection of the country of nationality and being unable to avail oneself of such protection. As for the former, there must be valid reasons for one to refuse the protection of the country of their nationality (UNHCR, 2010a).

### *Causes and Consequences*

The first clear traditional cause of statelessness through law creation is conflict of nationality laws. A child may be born in a State that practices the *jus sanguinis* principle (i.e. nationality based on descent of parents), whereas the child's parents may originate from a State that practices the *jus soli* principle (i.e. nationality based on place of birth) (Brewer, 2014, p. 65). The problems that arise due to conflict of nationality rules would not surface if all States agree to practice the *jus soli* principle. Many countries in Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia subscribe to the *jus sanguinis* rather than the *jus soli* principle. In the context of Malaysia, persons born after Malaysia Day may acquire Malaysian citizenship at birth through operation of law, subject nonetheless to the status of their parents. For those born within the Federation, one of the parents is required to be a citizen or a permanent resident of Malaysia at the time of their birth [Federal Constitution of Malaysia 1957, Article 14 (1)(b), read together with Second Schedule, Part II, Section 1(a) to (e)].

Existing laws of a State may render certain quarters of community stateless. States that subscribe to the strict application of the *jus sanguinis* principle may cause children to inherit statelessness from their stateless parents or if the State does not allow the mother to pass on her nationality to her child, the child may then inherit the statelessness of the father (Simperingham, 2003, p. 4). Orphaned, abandoned or even

illegitimate children may also be prevented from attaining the nationality of the State of birth if the State subscribes to the *jus sanguinis* principle (UNHCR, 2012a, p.7).

Conflict of nationality issues also arise with regards to renunciation of nationality, where one State would only allow renunciation provided the person has acquired citizenship of the other State but the other State requires renunciation of the original citizenship before acquisition of new citizenship (Achiron, 2008, p. 28). The second traditional cause of statelessness would be laws that discriminate against gender, race, ethnicity and political opinion. Women who marry foreign men may lose their nationality in certain patriarchal societies. If they are unable to attain their husband's nationality or if the husband is stateless, it would render them stateless as well (UNHCR, 2014d, p. 1). Discriminatory laws against ethnic groups are prevalent in the African and Asian continents. The Rohingya Muslims of northern Rakhine State represent the devastating case of statelessness in that context. Discrimination against this ethnically, linguistically and religiously distinct minority by the Government of Myanmar since the country's independence has become more systematic when this minority was deliberately precluded from the 132 races entitled to full citizenship under the 1982 nationality law.

The third traditional cause of statelessness includes territorial changes such as mergers, absorption and dismemberment of States. Territorial

changes give rise to changes in the municipal law that renders certain people stateless. An example of dismemberment would be the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR). Some of the stateless persons of the former USSR included the 160,000 Russian-speaking individuals from Estonia (Lynch, 2005, p. 17).

More contemporary causes of statelessness prevalent within developing states include failure to register births and irregular migration (Conklin, 2014, p. 19). Asian States such as Nepal have numerous persons without citizenship certificates to confirm their identity. Closer to home, Thailand faces the problem of hill tribe minority ethnic groups living in the mountainous northern region without the relevant documentation to prove eligibility of citizenship simply because their births were not registered. In Malaysia, the problem of lack of birth certificates arises within the Indian community, as well as migrants of Philippine and Indonesian descent residing in East Malaysia. This inadvertently heralds the second contemporary cause of statelessness is the focus of this paper. Irregular migration is not entirely a new phenomenon in Malaysia. Part of the reasons why there still exist Indians who do not possess birth certificates is due to the fact that Indian migration into Malaysia was not adequately regulated.

Regardless of the manner in which a person is rendered stateless, the consequences of such a status are indeed

grave. The negative consequences of statelessness can be seen within the international, as well as the domestic spheres. Under international law, a stateless person has no recourse to diplomatic protection. In *Movrammatis Palestine Concession (Jurisdiction)* (1926), it was highlighted that when a State takes up a case for one of its subjects, the State is asserting its own right to ensure respect for the rules of international law. No State will take up a case of a non-national. Apart from that, the right of return to home country provided for in Article 13 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 12 (4) of the 1966 International Convention of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is not available to stateless persons.

Within the domestic sphere, basic human rights may be eschewed from stateless persons. First generation rights particularly freedom from non-discrimination, right to a fair trial and freedom of movement are often not available to stateless persons. Such deprivation extends to second generation rights including the rights to education, employment, housing and social security.

## **CONNECTING MIGRATION TO STATELESSNESS**

### *Initial Window to the Nexus*

In 2008, Southeast Asia recorded 4.3 million stateless individuals, out of a total of 6.6 million stateless population throughout the world. This made the region to have the highest number of stateless persons in the

world, with Thailand having the biggest share of around 3 million stateless people. Despite this magnitude, statelessness on the whole is still an ambivalent and barely understood subject among the Southeast Asian nations (Caballero-Anthony & Cook, 2013, p. 152). New sources of statelessness have considerably contributed to the size of the problem today. The intersections between statelessness and other subjects, inter alia, women, children, migration, trafficking and national security add another layer of complexity testifying to the nuances surrounding the concept (UNHCR, 2011b).

Statelessness may be created, and the risk of it may heighten when migrants move from the country of their nationality or habitual residence to a new destination country. Along this process, the value of their nationality is gradually weakened over time. Their movements are induced by different considerations predominantly forced displacement, economic migration, trafficking, smuggling and the increasingly dynamic interplay of one or more of the preceding motives, better known as the 'mixed migration' situation (Van Hear, Brubaker, & Bessa, 2009). Their legal status while they move into and reside in the new country largely decides how they are treated from the legal perspective.

Several basic ideas are helpful for one to understand the connection between irregular migrants and their susceptibility to statelessness. Among other is the tolerance of the host State towards their presence, i.e. immigration laws are not stringently put

into effect for humanitarian consideration such as the prohibition of non-*refoulement*. On top of that, destination countries often need them but simultaneously 'do not want' them. The incentive behind their tolerant acceptance boils down to the economic benefits accrued to the host State by having pools of inexpensive, imported and irregular labour force (Koser, 2005, p. 91). Nonetheless, the aspect of their human rights receives negligible attention both from their home countries and the host States. Above all, the majority of them are less likely to fulfil the main requirement of naturalisation, which is a required period of lawful residence (UNHCR, 2012b, para 16).

#### *Cross-border Migration and the Rise of Statelessness in Malaysia*

From the perspective of modern migration patterns, forced and irregular migrations largely explain the emergence of three categories of migrants who are extremely vulnerable to statelessness. They are irregular migrants, victims of trafficking and refugees, particularly in countries without asylum law who mutually share one prominent attribute, i.e. their breach of immigration regulations and policies, and hence, their irregular or unlawful status.

Together with them are accompanying family members including wives and children, and those children who are born in the new host State to such different categories of non-citizens. Their families inevitably expand. Generations of children born in the host State who live in irregularity

eventually find themselves trapped in the vicious cycle of statelessness through no fault of their own with an extremely uncertain future. Their increasingly large numbers and permanent presence also mean that the term 'irregular' is no longer sustainable (van Waas, 2007, p. 443).

**Refugees and statelessness.** Whether stateless or otherwise, to be refugees, asylum seekers must be able to satisfy the criteria of a 'refugee' under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees ('the 1951 Refugee Convention'). In substance, a refugee refers to a person outside her country who needs and deserves international protection because she reasonably believes that her civil or political status puts her at risk of serious harm in that country and that her own government cannot or will not protect her (Hathaway, 2014, p. 8). A refugee may be *de jure* or *de facto* stateless. As indicated in *A Study of Statelessness* (1949), refugees may be *de jure* stateless at the same time if they have been deprived of nationality by their country of origin or *de facto* stateless if they still hold their nationality but are unable to enjoy the protection and assistance of their country of nationality (United Nations, 1949). Interestingly, the situation of refugee flows may in effect relate to statelessness as both a cause and a consequence of forced migration.

Being *de jure* stateless, groups like the Rohingya have no country to call home and return to. For these stateless refugees, deprivation of their legal nationality triggers abject poverty. Their economic conditions,

together with the incentivised political and religious violence against them, are the combined spectres of their displacement beyond borders. Tens of thousands of Rohingyas continue to flee Myanmar for safer countries in the Middle East. Popular transit or destination countries in the region are Bangladesh, Malaysia and Thailand. Both stateless and undocumented, they are left with zero option other than to resort to perilous illegal migration routes including deadly journeys through sea, regularly falling victims to corrupt smugglers and traffickers (Refugee Studies Centre, 2010, p. 13).

Their admission in the destination country is at the latter's indulgence. Countries without a formal mechanism for refugee protection like Malaysia and Thailand are less willing to accept them. Their tolerated stay is merely on humanitarian grounds without altering the fact that they are irregular. In countries with a *jus sanguinis* nationality system, what ensue are second-generation migrants born to such asylum seekers or persons of concern<sup>1</sup>, who are prevented from birth registration and without any legal tie to both the countries of origin and destination and thus placing them at a disproportionate risk of statelessness.

The foregoing picture depicts how statelessness serves as a potential cause for forced migration and refugee situations as

<sup>1</sup>A 'person of concern' is an individual who receives assistance from the UNHCR typically in a State not party to the Refugee Convention who may have his refugee status determined or otherwise.

well as how the latter in turn creates and breeds further cases of statelessness. As part of the response, the annual meeting of the UNHCR Executive Committee (the 'ExCom') through its Conclusion 78 issued by the ExCom in 1995 underscores that 'the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons are important in the prevention of potential refugee situations'. In 2003, the ExCom through Conclusion 96 requires States to take positive actions to prevent cases of statelessness including pursuing measures that make possible the grant of a legal status to stateless persons (Darling, 2009, p. 750).

In Malaysia, the Filipino migrants' entry into East Malaysia also took effect within the milieu of forced or irregular migration (Idris, 2012, p. 40). Although there had been a steady flow of migrants from the Philippines into East Malaysia from the time of the Spanish conquest, the predominant cause of increased migration into East Malaysia was by virtue of the Mindanao insurgency in the Philippines under the authoritarian rule of President Marcos in the 1970s. Migrants coming into East Malaysia from the Philippines were of Suluk and Bajau origins. The distinctive quality of these migrants was the fact that they were considered to be refugees. These refugees settled in the townships of Sandakan, Tawau, Semporna and Lahad Datu (Commissioners of Commission of Enquiry on Immigrants in Sabah, 2014, pp. 235-236). Three decades later in 2004, the number of Filipino refugees in Sabah

was quoted to be approximately 65,889, assuming that the estimate is also based on IMM13 documents issued to them under Regulation 11(10), Immigration Regulations 1963 (Kassim & Imang, 2005, p. 91). The IMM13 document issued under the Regulations allows the holders to reside and work in Malaysia. Although reasons for claiming refugee status have long ended, the in-flow of migrants from the Philippines remains high.

The distinction between refugees in Peninsular Malaysia and refugees in East Malaysia lies in the fact that the refugees in Peninsular Malaysia are still categorised as refugees, thereby they are entitled to resettlement coordinated by the UNHCR. Conversely, the reasons for claiming refugee status for Filipino migrants ended by virtue of a Peace Treaty between the Philippines Government and the Moro Liberation Front way back in 1976 (Sadiq, 2005, p. 106; United States Institute of Peace, 2005, p. 4). The Filipino refugees have also been excluded from the UNHCR Kuala Lumpur Factsheet on Refugees mainly due to the closure of the UNHCR sub-office in Sabah in 1987, subsequent to the Government's decision to provide residency visas to the refugee population in Sabah (UNHCR, 2013, p. 1). Despite this development, certain actions affecting the refugee population such as their resettlement from one village to another by the State Government were to some extent referred to UNHCR, indicating the latter's indirect engagement in monitoring the welfare of such people (Kassim, 2009,

p. 61). However, in terms of the enjoyment of rights, the refugees in Sabah holding IMM13 enjoy a more secure status until today as compared to those refugees in the Peninsula for their ability to reside with their dependants, work legally and apply for a Permanent Resident (PR) status after residing between 15-19 years in Sabah (Commissioners of Enquiry on Immigrants in Sabah, 2014, p. 234). In short, there is a visible pathway for the holders of IMM13 to not only gain the PR status but also to avail themselves of the opportunity to apply for naturalisation according to the requirements set out in the Federal Constitution.

In terms of protection, historically, refugees and stateless persons were thought to be common beneficiaries to the refugee protection regime. Prior to and after the First World War, they shared the similar context on many levels particularly their numbers and condition. Subsequently, the two groups were set apart with refugees deserving recognition on the basis of their reasons of flight while statelessness if it existed, is perceived to be an incidental cause (Sen, 1999, p. 644). The 2010 Prato Conclusion underlines that a stateless person who is also a refugee according to the definition of Article 1(1) of the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention should receive the higher standard of protection, which in most cases will be the international refugee law, especially the protection from refoulement in Article 33 of the 1951 Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 2010a, p. 2). For those refugees who still

hold the nationality of their states of origin, statelessness may appear *de facto* due to their inability to effectively enjoy the State protections or unwillingness to avail such while in refuge. In practice somehow, experts have agreed that it is not useful for reference of *de facto stateless* to be directed to refugees who formally possess a nationality for the confusion that it may cause (UNHCR, 2010a, p. 6).

Notwithstanding the guaranteed protections on the international level, in Malaysia, stateless refugees will have to contend with the fact that the country has neither legal nor administrative framework in place to oversee their situation and provide legal protections. According to UNHCR, the law in Malaysia has to date ignored the need to differentiate refugees from undocumented migrants (UNHCR Malaysia, 2014a). This is exacerbated further by the massive number of migrants in the country. As of August 2014, UNHCR records 149,027 registered refugees with 137,788 coming from Myanmar, mostly of Chin and Rohingya ethnicities (UNHCR Malaysia, 2014b). Such figures do not include the unregistered asylum seekers and persons of concern in East Malaysia. They formed part of approximately 4 million migrants with almost half of them being undocumented. Their uncertain legal status means they are at risk of arrest, detention and deportation. Legal employment for them is restricted to the informal sector, usually involving the 3D (i.e., dirty, dangerous and difficult) jobs. Their condition makes them constant

victims of exploitation by employers who provide extremely meagre or at times no wages altogether. Meanwhile, the public healthcare facilities provided at 50% discount off the foreigner's rates are generally unaffordable given their poor economic status (UNHCR Malaysia, 2014a).

**Irregular labour migrants and statelessness.** At the global level, illegal migration has outgrown all the other types of international migrations in recent times (Migration Policy Institute, 2005). Such reflects the incapacities of states in their migration management policy and design. Within ASEAN, intraregional labour migration movements mainly take place through illegal channels concentrating on several countries in Southeast Asia and East Asia (Prasai, 1993). Episodes of irregular migration have highlighted the noteworthy category of *de facto* stateless persons who remain outside the purview of the 1954 Statelessness Convention yet equally experience vital issues of legal protections (Blitz & Lynch, 2011, pp. 4-6).

Although the fine distinction between economic migrants and refugees can hardly be sustained due to the overlapping motives of outflow and inflow of forced and economic migrations, the underlying criterion of the availability of state protection is still fundamental. In theory at least, this means that for economic migrants, they have the choice of returning home and/or availing state protections as opposed to refugees, who are not able to return home safely in the first instance (UNHCR Malaysia, 2014c).



Instances of *de facto* statelessness include inability to prove one's nationality and where a certain finding and declaration made by a State that a person is or is not its national may not be compatible with the finding by another State and subsequently result in the latter challenging the said determination. This situation of deadlock and uncertainty may leave the affected individual a *de facto* stateless (UNHCR, 2010b).

For a migrant who lacks identity documents and is unable to prove his or her nationality, unwillingness on the part of the alleged country of origin in verifying whether the person is his national may be seen amounting to refusal of protection that could potentially render them *de facto stateless*. Arguably when protection is unavailable from the country of origin, it would be inappropriate to conclude that the said individual has refused the protection and therefore is not *de facto* stateless (Gruberg, 2011, p. 537).

The lack of coherent definition of and ambiguity surrounding *de facto* statelessness has somehow muddied the actual determination of persons actually belonging to this category in accordance with international law. In certain cases, groups that are described as stateless at any particular time may actually befit the label of 'at risk of statelessness' for their various circumstances that render them vulnerable to statelessness (The Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion, 2014, p. 43). Efforts are indeed required to cautiously appraise their situations based on the

existing legal definition of a 'stateless person' in the 1954 Stateless Persons Convention, and through a mechanism of nationality verification in order to avoid jumping to the straight conclusion that they are stateless.

It is also worthy to highlight that paragraph 12(f) of Part II of the Prato Conclusions adopts the position that unsettled cases of *de facto* statelessness in particular beyond two or more generations may transform the *de facto* status into that of *de jure* (UNHCR, 2010a). Above all, protracted cases of statelessness amongst such individuals eventually result in their zero prospect of gaining access to an alternative nationality. The common State practice with regards to naturalisation worldwide is that the basic requirement of a minimum period of lawful residence is fixed in addition to other criteria. An irregular migrant who may have lost his nationality, unable to prove it or has been rendered stateless prior to his displacement is highly likely to stay in the state of this legal limbo indefinitely (van Waas, 2008, p. 168).

In the Malaysian context, while the colonial administration had inadvertently created stateless Indians within the Peninsular, post-colonial period has predominantly witnessed the emergence of statelessness in East Malaysia. Open borders between East Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia have facilitated cross-border movements into East Malaysia, especially Sabah. Early cross-border movements between the 1950s to the 1980s were

prevalent, albeit unnoticed, especially with regards to Indonesians who arrived since they were not in competition with the local population (Vijayakumari, 2007). Many of the Indonesians eventually acquired Malaysian citizenship. By the 1980s, attempts were made to regulate the inflow of migrant workers in East Malaysia from Indonesia via bilateral agreements. Although security operations commenced in the 1990s, they failed in curtailing illegal entry of migrants into East Malaysia since the demand for labour exceeded supply.

Kanapathy (2008) enumerates the main groups of persons who constitute irregular or undocumented migrants in Malaysia. They are: (i) persons who gained unauthorised entry and employment; (ii) persons who gained authorised entry but unauthorised employment; (iii) persons who gained authorised entry and employment but have invalidated work permits; (iv) refugees; and (v) children of undocumented migrants/ refugees born in Malaysia but whose births are not registered with the relevant authorities (p. 4).

The citizenship problem in Sabah is far more complex that it necessitates a totally separate debate and analysis. Foreign workers in Sabah, including those with irregular statuses, are mostly concentrated in timber mills and plantations aside from the construction, agriculture, transport and service sectors. The delicate on-the-ground issues of citizenship in Sabah are highly interwoven with the multiple ties and connections that migrant workers have with the State itself.

At the minimum, three factors trigger such complexity. The first being the porous borders between Sabah, Phillipines, and Indonesia that aid the unregulated inflow and outflow of migrants of both countries (Dambul, Omar, & Osman, 2010, p. 88). Secondly, the lack of systematic and proper regulation of citizenship amongst the native Sabahans renders a weak exercise of defining and controlling citizenship by the official authorities. This may be illustrated by the diversity of the legal statuses of the natives ranging from those who are completely documented and those who possess multiple documents issued by various state agencies such as a 'Permanent Resident' identity card and IMM13. The varied nature of such statuses further blurs the distinction between citizens and non-citizens and undermines the already tenuous monitoring and preservation of official standard rules and regulations by the State (Sadiq, 2005, pp. 113-114). Thirdly, the context of migrations that is most relevant in discussing the protracted issue of such populations at risk in Sabah is the refugee movements in the 1970s up until the 1980s from the southern Phillipines subsequently followed by the steady increase of the economic migrants and other family members who entered the State for family reunification.

**Children of refugees and labour migrants.** In Southeast Asia, two categories of children are particularly at a heightened risk of statelessness. They are firstly the children of migrants residing in countries of *jus sanguinis* that tie citizenship to

parentage, and secondly, the children of migrants who reside in states with poor or defective registration systems. The latter is particularly a major impediment for children to access birth registration, to have a record of birth and later to meet the documentary requirements for citizenship application (Paxton, 2012, p. 633). Birth registration may not only protect children from the risk of trafficking and other exploitations, it is also an important tool for family reunification as well as to prevent and reduce statelessness. Even if the child may not be eligible to obtain nationality, a birth certificate will serve as a significant supporting evidence for any claim to entitlement (European Network on Statelessness, 2014, p. 21).

Unlike the universal right to birth registration, the right to acquire a nationality including for a child is not universal when it is often subjected to the immigration status of the child and their parents, coupled with the duration of their stay. Many irregular migrant workers, including refugees, give birth to children outside their home State while at the same time lacking the legal status in the country they are currently residing in.

In Malaysia, children of the undocumented workers and refugees are automatically classified as undocumented by virtue of the irregular status of their parents (Kanapathy, 2008). One explanation behind this is 'an illegal person cannot produce a legal person'. This irregular or illegal status will be handed

down continuously from one generation to another leading to the situation called permanent illegality (van Waas, 2007, p. 446). *Jus sanguinis* countries generally provide for the children of their nationals born abroad to acquire their parents' nationality. However, the latest trend sees the introduction of certain restrictions by some countries such as the UK through its British Nationality Act 1981 that seeks to avoid the continuing conferral of nationality to persons who in fact have little or no genuine connection with the State (Aleinikoff & Klusmeyer, 2001, p. 25). In most cases, however, the majority of children born to parents from *jus sanguinis* countries should be able to claim for nationality *jus sanguinis*.

In Sabah, the children of the irregular Filipino and Indonesian migrants generally do not possess identity documents such as passports including those whose parents have been deported. In addition, these children are unable to trace their family ties in their parents' country. Procedural hurdles also constitute an enduring problem for the realisation of their birth registrations. Without a valid passport for each parent and a certificate of marriage, it is impossible for them to obtain a birth certificate. Other barriers include lack of knowledge on the part of parents about the registration procedures, the prohibitive hospital charges for foreigners and the fear of being reported and nabbed by the authorities (Voice of Children, 2013, pp. 1-2). Even though birth registration is possible for these children, their birth

certificates will be stamped 'orang asing' (foreigner) indicating the parents as being non-citizens.

For children born to irregular Indonesians and Filipinos in Sabah, the fundamental question is whether they will be considered a national by the governments of Indonesia and the Philippines. For the former, the issue is at least tackled by the presence of an Indonesian consulate in Kota Kinabalu responsible for issuing certificates and passports for the children of its nationals. The practical utility of the services is somehow compromised by its remote accessibility for those migrants residing in the interior Sabah. However, the scenario is much more complicated for the children and grandchildren of Filipino nationals. Apart from the non-availability of the Philippines' consulate in Sabah, the anti-Filipino sentiment built around the historical claim of the Philippines to Sabah is strong among the natives. The services of the mobile registration units organised occasionally in Sabah by the government of Philippines are regrettably not widely publicised amongst the populations at risk (Allerton, 2014, pp. 30-31). At the very minimum, such children appear clearly to be at a heightened risk of statelessness.

Another important observation regarding the impasse in terms of their legal status is the lack of desire amongst such children to apply for the Filipino citizenship. To them, the sense of attachment that they have to Malaysia is far stronger than that to the Philippines. Despite going through various difficulties,

such children, typically through the stories of violence in their homeland told to them by the parents and grandparents, believe that at least Sabah is a safer place for them (Allerton, 2014, p. 32).

Refugees giving birth and raising stateless children is also a problem that arises in Peninsular Malaysia. The communities with stateless children residing in Peninsular Malaysia include the Rohingya and the Palestinians. Although birth certificates are issued to children of refugees born in Malaysia, formal education is denied to them (Duraisingam & Nordin, 2013).

**Victims of trafficking.** Human trafficking is another inconspicuous dimension of cross-border migration that places men, women and children at a high risk of statelessness. In the ASEAN region, the most widespread forms of irregular migrations are irregular labour migration and trafficking, either for sexual and/or labour exploitation (International Organisation for Migration, 2012).

Malaysia is noted for being simultaneously a country of origin and a profitable destination and transit country for traffickers to transport trafficking victims. The statistics by the Secretariat of the Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants (MAPO) recorded a total of 591 reported cases of different types of exploitation from February 2008 to November 30, 2012, with 797 arrests of those involved in the crime. Within five years, 3,363 victims of trafficking were granted Interim Protection

Orders (IPO) and a number of 1,325 were entitled to protection orders (Ministry of Home Affairs [MOHA], 2012). These victims of sexual exploitation, forced labour and involuntary domestic servitude among others were taken to undisclosed shelter homes. It has been reported that from 2008 to 2010, 74 percent of the victims were children. Such percentage immensely outnumbered the figures of trafficked female and male adults (Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants [MAPO], 2011).

Despite stricter law enforcement and amendment made to the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 (Act 670), which is now known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants Act 2007, together with the implementation of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons (2010-2015), Malaysia remained on Tier 2 Watch List of the US State Department for four successive years until 2013, thanks partly to its written plan outlining efforts to comply with the minimum standards for the eradication of trafficking. According to the US State Department's 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report (TiP), the increasing effort to curb human trafficking by the government is still hampered by the lack of improvement to its victim protection system. The report also revealed that the authorities failed to identify victims of trafficking making them susceptible to detention and deportation. Victims are also not allowed to be hired while waiting to testify against alleged traffickers or smugglers. In Malaysia, the majority of these victims are also among

the approximately two million documented and another two million undocumented foreign workers (Su-Lyn, 2014). Recently, the continuous lack of significant efforts on the part of the Government to improve the various flaws in its victim protection regime, alongside with numerous reports involving a host of violation of rights of migrants, refugees and stateless victims by traffickers including passport confiscation, debt bondage, abuse, detention and forced labour finally saw the country being downgraded to Tier 3 in 2014, the lowest ranking in the annual TiP (U.S. Department of States, 2014).

Trafficking victims are frequently treated as irregular migrants with some enjoying interim status granted by the authority. As pointed out by Weissbrodt and Collins (2006, pp. 263-264), slavery and trafficking constitute a mechanism of *de facto* statelessness. Additionally, the victims' hazy status and the trouble of proving or establishing their identity and link to their state of origin highly expose them to the risk of being persons not recognised as a national by any state under its law. Conversely, the fact that a person is found to be stateless similarly increases his or her chances of being trafficked, due to their various circumstances of defenselessness, including their inability to employ valid methods of migration (UNHCR, 2010c, p. 10).

Such unique dilemma surrounding trafficking victims pose a distinctive challenge to the prevention of statelessness in this context. On the regional level, the

states in Southeast Asia have recorded their commitment to cooperate in the verification of identity and nationality of trafficking victims through the Bali Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (UNHCR, 2011a, p. 10).

### **UNDERLYING CHALLENGES**

A complete assessment of the relevant international standards on the subject may not be realistic here. Basically state's obligations beyond the domestic framework can be identified through largely three types of codifications, namely, treaties, conventions and declarations proclaimed by international and regional organisations. One unique aspect of most of these instruments is their universal application to all persons, not just citizens or persons with residency status. For migrants, refugees and stateless persons, this is important as the distinction between citizens and non-citizens is removed from the start (Gurowitz, 2000, p. 878). The enormous challenge here is the rather weak influence such international human rights norms have on the government policies in countries espousing strong Asian values like Malaysia (Nordin, 2010, pp. 32-33).

Malaysia has acceded to pertinent conventions that provide protection in part to stateless persons. These include the 1957 Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, the 1979 Convention

on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Conventions nevertheless 'articulate a combination of rules and standards that grant States and adjudicators varying degrees of discretion' (Banks, 2010, p. 1257). States are free to enter reservations to treaty provisions so long as the reservations are compatible with the object and purpose of the convention. In terms of Malaysian accession, reservations have been entered pertaining to provisions on nationality such as Article 9(2) of CEDAW and Article 7 of CRC.

Southeast Asia regrettably has a long standing history of avoiding international human rights law. In the area of refugee law, several reasons shape such evasive attitude among the States in this region. They include the Eurocentric nature of the refugee convention and the prevailing perception that refugees like the Indochinese are not genuine refugees but economic migrants. Thailand has also relied on the international refugee legal framework to justify their pushing back practices of the Rohingyas (Davies, 2008). These reasons partly nurture the similar resistance towards the acceptance of the international frameworks on refugee and statelessness in the country. Malaysia in particular is known to place its foremost priority on its economic interests, associations with other member States in ASEAN and ethnic stability. Rights and integration are sidelined from the government's official policy (Gurowitz, 2000, p. 865).

## CONCLUSION

Migration and statelessness prove to be closely associated with the latter, which is often a consequence and a cause of migration. The prominently dynamic interaction between *dejure* and the more recent idea of *defacto* statelessness, which are both created and have been prolonged by international migration deserves a greater and more serious attention from our policy makers, legislators and other stakeholders. Labels aside, the need for a change of mindset and stand on human rights issues highlighted would be in the interest of countries in Southeast Asia, especially when those arising from the nexus between migration and statelessness are mostly their shared concerns for over many decades. A more durable solution would necessitate addressing the enduring cycle of statelessness apart from the lack of protections mostly stemming from their irregular status that inhibits access to birth registration and their ability to acquire a nationality. The lukewarm approach and commitment to international human rights law development, often due to its potential conflicts with highly prioritised economic, political and security interests of the State, have been major long-term obstacles in the protection of stateless persons in Malaysia. Needless to say, as long as Malaysia is not willing to up its ante by refusing to look at the issues from the prism of human security and human rights, remaining cautious in its application of international law within its domestic framework, complete and consistent

provision of rights will never materialise to the benefit of stateless persons as well as other unprotected migrants residing in the country.

## REFERENCES

- Achiron, M. (2008). *Nationality and Statelessness: A Handbook for Parliamentarians*. France: SADAG Imprimerie.
- Aleinikoff, T. A., & Klusmeyer, D. B. (Eds.). (2001). *Citizenship today: global perspectives and practices*. U.S.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Allerton, C. (2014). Statelessness and the lives of the children of migrants in Sabah, East Malaysia. *Tilburg Law Review*, 19(1-2), 26-34.
- Banks, A. (2010). The Trouble with Treaties: Immigration and Judicial Review. *Saint John's Law Review*, 84(4), 1219-1271.
- Batchelor, C. A. (1998). Statelessness and the problem of resolving nationality status. *Int'l J. Refugee L.*, 10, 156-183.
- Blitz, B. K., & Lynch, M. (Eds.). (2011). *Statelessness and citizenship: A comparative study on the benefits of nationality*. UK and USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Brewer, M. K. (2014). Beyond International Law: The Role of Multinational Corporations in Reducing the Number of Stateless Children. *Tilburg Law Review*, 19(1-2), 64-73.
- Caballero-Anthony, M., & Cook, A. D. B. (Eds.). (2013). *Non-traditional security in Asia: Issues, challenges and framework for action*. Singapore, Pasir Panjang: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Commissioners of Commission of Enquiry on Immigrants in Sabah. (2014). *Report of Enquiry of Immigrants in Sabah Presented to Seri Paduka Baginda Yang Di-Pertuan Agong* [hardcopy]

- Conklin, W.E. (2014). *Statelessness: The Enigma of the International Community*. Oxford: Hart Publishing.
- Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants (MAPO). (2011). *Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling* [Booklet].
- Dambul, R., Omar, M. A., & Osman, S. (2010). *Sabah Priority Issues. Setting the Course for Change*. Kota Kinabalu: Universiti Malaysia Sabah.
- Darling, K. (2009). Protection of stateless persons in international asylum and refugee Law. *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 21(4), 742-767.
- Davies, S. (2008). *Legitimising Rejection: International Refugee Law in Southeast Asia*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Duraisingam, T. J., & Nordin, R. (2013). Being Doubly Marginalised - The Plight of the Rohingya in Malaysia. *Current Law Journal On-line Series*, 1 LNS (A) Ixix.
- European Network on Statelessness (ENS). (2014). Childhood Statelessness in Europe. *Issues, Gaps and Good Practices*. Tilburg: ENS.
- Gruberg, S. (2011). De Facto Statelessness in Greece. *Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy*, 18(3), 533-535.
- Gurowitz, A. (2000). Migrant rights and activism in Malaysia: Opportunities and constraints. *Journal of Asian Studies-ANN ARBOR*, 59(4), 863-888.
- Hathaway, J. (2014, April). *The Law of Refugee Status*. Slides presented at the The Malaysian Bar Council, Kuala Lumpur, WP.
- ILC (2006). Draft Article on Diplomatic Protection with Commentaries. *Yearbook of The International Law Commission*, 2, 49.
- Idris, A. (2012). Malaysia and forced migration. *Intellectual Discourse*, 20(1), 31-54.
- International Organisation for Migration (IOM). (2012, December). *Migration dynamics in ASEAN: Trends, challenges and priorities*. Retrieved November 15, 2013, from [http://www.arc.mthailand.com/documents/documentcenter/1701\\_PPP%20Chua%20Conference\\_Claudia%2015%dec%2012.pdf](http://www.arc.mthailand.com/documents/documentcenter/1701_PPP%20Chua%20Conference_Claudia%2015%dec%2012.pdf)
- Kanapathy, V. (2008). *Controlling irregular migration: The Malaysian experience* (No. 413222). International Labour Organization.
- Kassim, A. (2012). *Dasar Pekerja Asing di Malaysia: Perlunya Anjakan Paradigma*. Policies on foreign workers in Malaysia: The need for a paradigm shift. Bangi: UKM Publisher.
- Kassim, A. (2009). Filipino Refugees in Sabah: State Response, Public Stereotypes and the Dilemma over Their Future. *Southeast Asian Studies*, 47(1), 52-88.
- Kassim, A., & Imang, U. (2005). Orang pelarian di Sabah: status dan prospek. In *Proceedings of seminar on state responses to the presence and employment of foreign workers in Sabah*. Kota Kinabalu, Sabah: Universiti Malaysia Sabah
- Koser, K. (2007). *International Migration: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lynch, M. (2005). Lives on Hold: The Human Cost of Statelessness. *25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Series*, 2, 1-51. Washington, DC: Refugees International. Retrieved from [http://www.refugeeinternational.org/files/5051\\_file\\_stateless\\_paper.pdf](http://www.refugeeinternational.org/files/5051_file_stateless_paper.pdf)
- Mavrommatis Palestine Concessions Case (Jurisdiction) (1926) PCIJ Ser. A No.2.
- Migration Policy Institute. (2005). *New concepts in regularisation: Earned legalisation*. Retrieved December 1, 2013, from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/newconcepts.php>



- Ministry of Home Affairs, Malaysia (MOHA). (2012). *Statistic cases of trafficking in persons from 28.02.2008 until 30.11.2011*. Retrieved April 20, 2014, from <http://www.moha.gov.my/index.php/en/sekretariat-statistik>.
- Nordin, R. (2010). Malaysian perspectives on human rights. *Jurnal Undang-Undang*, 14, 17-33
- Paxton, A. (2012). Finding a country to call home: A framework for evaluating legislation to reduce statelessness in Southeast Asia. *PAC. RIM L. & POLiYJ.*, 21, 623-653
- Refugee Studies Centre. (2010, April). No legal identity. Few rights. Hidden from society. Forgotten. *Stateless Forced Migration Review No. 32*. Retrieved February 15, 2014, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4c6cefb02.html>
- Sadiq, K. (2005). When States Prefer Non-Citizens Over Citizens: Conflict Over Illegal Immigration into Malaysia. *International Studies Quarterly*, 49(1), 101-122.
- Sen, S. (1999). Stateless refugees and the right to return: The Bihari refugees of South Asia Part 1. *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 11(4), 625-645.
- Simperingham, E. (2003). *The International Protection of Stateless Individuals: A Call for Change*. LL.B (Hons) Degree Dissertation. University of Auckland, New Zealand.
- Su-Lyn, B. (2014, March 19). Illegal immigrants may swarm Malaysia if trafficking victims hired, says deputy minister. *Malaymailonline*. Retrieved May 5, 2014, from <http://www.themalaymailonline.com/malaysia/article/illegal-immigrants-may-swarm-malaysia-if-trafficking-victims-hired-says-dep#sthash.IOJCwI1x.dpuf>
- The Institute of Statelessness and Inclusion. (Dec, 2014). *The World's Stateless*. Retrieved January 10, 2015, from <http://www.institutesi.org/worldsstateless.pdf>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2010a). *Expert meeting - The concept of stateless persons under international law ("Prato Conclusions")*. Retrieved March 20, 2014, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ca1ae002.html>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2010b). *UNHCR and de facto statelessness*. Retrieved January 16, 2013, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4bbf387d2.html>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2010c). *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: The 10-Point Plan in action*. Retrieved December 10, 2014 from <http://www.unhcr.org/50a4c2b09.pdf>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2011a). *Regional Expert Roundtable on Good Practices for the Identification, Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness and the Protection of Stateless Persons in South East Asia*. Retrieved March 3, 2014, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4d6e09932.html>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2011b). *Good practices: Addressing statelessness in South East Asia*. Retrieved April 15, 2014, from: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4d6e0a792.html>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2013). *Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees For the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report- Universal Periodic Review: Malaysia*. Retrieved November 13, 2014 from <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/513d9a0e2.pdf>
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Malaysia. (2014a). *Living as a refugee in Malaysia*. Retrieved May 4, 2014, from [www.unhcr.org/my/refugeeMsia.htm](http://www.unhcr.org/my/refugeeMsia.htm)

- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Malaysia. (2014b). *Figures at a Glance: Know Your Number Refugees*. Retrieved October 4, 2014, from [http://www.unhcr.org.my/About\\_Us-@-Figures\\_At\\_A\\_Glance.aspx](http://www.unhcr.org.my/About_Us-@-Figures_At_A_Glance.aspx)
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2014d). *Background Note on Gender Equality, Nationality Laws and Statelessness*. Retrieved December 5, 2014, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/532075964.html>
- UNHCR. (2012a). *Under the Radar and Under Protected: The Urgent Need to Address Stateless Children's Rights*. Retrieved July 14, 2014, from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/514acd3e2.html>
- UNHCR. (2012b). *UNHCR intervention at the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Paris*. Retrieved November, 12, 2014 from <http://www.refworld.org/docid/50f53c5d2.html>
- UNHCR Malaysia. (2014c). *Refugees and migrant- What is the difference?* Retrieved May 4, 2014, from [www.unhcr.org.my/refugeeMsia.htm](http://www.unhcr.org.my/refugeeMsia.htm)
- United Nations, Department of Social Affairs. (1949). *A study of statelessness*. Retrieved December 10, 2013, from [www.refworld.org/docid/4eef65da2.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/4eef65da2.html)
- United States Institute of Peace. (2005). *The Mindanao Peace Talks: Another Opportunity to Resolve the Moro Conflict in the Philippines*. Retrieved December 18, 2014, from <http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr131.pdf>
- U.S. Department of State. (2014). *Malaysia. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking In Persons. Tier 3*. Retrieved February 15, 2014, from <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2014/226770.htm>
- Vijayakumari, K. (2007). Controlling Irregular Migration: The Malaysian Experience. In *Regional Symposium on Managing Labour Migration in East Asia*. Singapore, 1-24.
- Van Hear, N., Brubaker, R., & Bessa, T. (2009). *Managing mobility for human development: The growing salience of mixed migration*. Retrieved February 10, 2014, from [http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/19202/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_19202.pdf](http://mpr.ub.uni-muenchen.de/19202/1/MPRA_paper_19202.pdf)
- Van Waas, L. E. (2008). *Nationality matters: Statelessness under international law*. Antwerp/Oxford/Portland: Intersentia.
- Van Waas, L. E. (2007). Children of irregular migrants: A stateless generation. *The Neth. Q. Hum. Rts.*, 25/3, 437-458.
- Voice of Children. (2013). *Birth Registration- Briefing Paper for UPR-Malaysia*. Retrieved September 3, 2014, from [http://wao.org.my/file/file/Child%20Rights%20Coalition%20Malaysia%20UPR/CRCM\\_UPR%20Topical%20Briefing\\_Birth%20registration.pdf](http://wao.org.my/file/file/Child%20Rights%20Coalition%20Malaysia%20UPR/CRCM_UPR%20Topical%20Briefing_Birth%20registration.pdf)
- Weissbrodt, D. S., & Collins, C. (2006). The human rights of stateless persons. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 28(1), 245-276.

## **Identifying Genuine Whistleblowers from Chicken Little in Government Agencies**

**Aizatul Marsitah Ibrahim<sup>1\*</sup>, Azila Ayob<sup>1</sup>, Nurulaini Zamhury<sup>1</sup> and Rugayah Hashim<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia*

<sup>2</sup>*Research Management Institute, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

Civil servants play important roles in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of public administration whilst executing exemplar leadership qualities within the boundaries of ethics, namely, accountability and integrity. Therefore, to have effective and efficient civil servants, other additional ethical aspects of moral and discipline should be emphasised. As a consequence of being proactive to the problem and weaknesses that arise, governmental financial management, administration, ethical cases management, corruption and fraud, and misuse of power which are prohibited by the rules, regulation and religion will be ameliorated. Unethical behaviour needs to be discouraged and to the extent, eradicated. One apparent method of accomplishing this is to encourage individuals to serve as monitors of corporate behaviour and whistle blow on conduct that we know can be highly destructive to the welfare of thousands of individuals. This paper provides preliminary insights meant to identify the genuine whistleblowers rather than chicken little among civil servants in selected government agencies. In order to find the genuine whistleblowers, the perception of civil servants towards whistleblowing itself and the factors that contribute to whistleblowing which are the organisational support and the organisational policy were focused on. Hence, by knowing the perceptions of civil servants and the factors that contribute to whistleblowing, genuine whistleblowers can be identified against the cowardly ones.

### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### *Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

#### *E-mail addresses:*

[aizatulibrahim@gmail.com](mailto:aizatulibrahim@gmail.com) (Aizatul Marsitah Ibrahim),

[azilaayob@salam.uitm.edu.my](mailto:azilaayob@salam.uitm.edu.my) (Azila Ayob),

[nurulaini@salam.uitm.edu.my](mailto:nurulaini@salam.uitm.edu.my) (Nurulaini Zamhury),

[hajahgy@gmail.com](mailto:hajahgy@gmail.com) (Rugayah Hashim)

\* Corresponding author

*Keywords:* Whistleblowing, leadership, civil servants, government agencies, integrity

### **INTRODUCTION**

Civil servants play important roles in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of public administration. In order to maximize

their responsibilities, the moral values of civil servants need to be reinforced because they always deal with conflict in the decision making process, and the interest of public (Abdul Noor, 2008). Therefore, to have a very effective and efficient civil servant, the aspects of moral, discipline, integrity and accountability should be emphasised. As a consequence of being proactive to the problems and weaknesses that arise, governmental financial management, administration, ethical cases management, corruption and fraud and misuse of power which are prohibited by the rules, regulation and religion will be ameliorated.

In the moral values and ethical code of conduct among civil servants, the staff are encouraged to develop a good attitude through good moral value because by having good moral values, good attitude can be shaped. Public employees also should be alert on any signs of corruption and have motto and moral philosophy so that they will uphold their moral or ethical principles in carrying out their responsibilities as the civil employees. The code of conduct among civil servants also emphasises on recognition and reward, where any ethical action or conduct should be recognised and rewarded rather than being punished to encourage public employees to act ethically. However, nowadays, it seems that a lot of public civil servant are caught due to misusing of power and breaching of trust such as in the case of corruption and sodomy of Anwar Ibrahim, the former deputy Prime Minister

(1993-1998). Anwar Ibrahim had not been proven guilty as the case was in the trial process; nonetheless as his case is one of the whistleblowing cases in Malaysia, the wrongdoings of political actor was brought forward.

In fact, corruption phenomenon has become serious these days. It is proven when the perception of corrupt practices has risen in recent years. Transparency international Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) is the survey which has been made as a direct response to citizens' concerns over the state of corruption in this country. In 2009, Malaysia's ranking in the global corruption benchmark Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (TI-CPI) dropped to 56 from 47 in 2008, demonstrating that the erosion in confidence in our institutions by the public and business community is detrimental to our nation's competitiveness (Economic Planning Unit, 2010).

Unethical behaviour needs to be discouraged, and to the extent possible, eradicated. One apparent method of accomplishing this is to encourage individuals to serve as monitors of corporate behaviour and whistleblow on conduct that we know can be highly destructive to the welfare of thousands of individuals (Reckers-Sauciuc & Lowe, 2010). Sweeney (2008) stated that one-third of deviant cases were discovered through information from whistleblowers and that information from whistleblowers is proven even more effective in revealing fraud than internal or external audits and

control (Nayir & Herzig, 2011). The reporting of incidents or whistleblowing occurs when a member of staff within an organisation discloses that an employee has acted in a way that is a cause for concern, and the person it is reported to has the ability to do something about it (Moore & McAuliffe, 2010). When employees do not blow the whistle, the management may miss opportunities to correct wrongdoing, in which, it is easily hidden from outsiders with legitimate interests, and wrongdoing may worsen (Miceli, Near, Rehg, & Scotter, 2012).

According to the circular of Prime Minister No.1 for 1968, the government came up with the idea of ethical code to emphasise on core values and supportive values, prevention aspect on conflict of interest, whistleblowing aspect, secrecy, skills and knowledge and the principles of accountability. Throughout this code of conduct, Whistleblowing committee in Public service was established.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Whistleblowing*

According to Mashera Ambares Khan (2009), there is no exact definition of whistleblowing. Whistleblowing however can be defined as “the disclosure by an organization’s member of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers to person that may able to affect action.”

According to Davis and Konishi (2007), whistleblowing is an ethical basis for the professional responsibility to

expose another’s wrongdoing so that in the context of public sector, it can protect the rights of the public. The whistle should be blown because of one’s duty or responsibility toward the organisation, and not for personal reason.

Whistleblowing is the mechanism of enforcing ethical values and integrity in an organisation (Davis, 2004). There are two types of whistleblowing; internal whistleblowing and external whistleblowing. Internal whistleblowing refers to any reports on misuse of power, corruption, fraud and unethical misconduct done within the organisation where the report is made to the higher authorities in that organisation, whereas external whistleblowing refers to any exposure of wrongdoings, misconduct or mismanagement in an organisation made to entities outside the organisation like media, government authorities or court. External whistleblowing occurs in a few situations, whether it has been informed to the organisational authorities or the disclosure has been done directly to the external entities.

### *Whistle blowers, personal interest or moral obligation?*

However, there are a number of questions arise in whistleblowing, i.e. whether whistleblower can be trusted? What are the intentions of the whistleblower? Does he blow the whistle because of the feeling of loyalty and responsible to the organisation, or is it because of other personal interest? In addition, the roles of whistleblower are

also important as it can prevent problems from getting worst and thus reduce the losses of one organisation as shown in a study by national whistleblower centre in 2007, whereby a whistleblower can save shareholders' billion dollars of money. It is also the mechanism of deterrent off unethical behaviour as the whistleblower willingly.

In Malaysia, section 174(8) of company act 1965 states auditors' obligation to report to the registrar, breaches, or company law. However, there is no protection for whistleblowers. In 2011, the Malaysian government enforced the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 in order to give protection for whistleblowers and encourage whistleblowing as a way to fight the corruption in the country. In the United States, the congress passed the Civil Service reform act (CSRA) to give protection to those who lodge a report on any misconduct, fraud, or abusing of power in federal agencies (Near & Miceli, 2008). Thus, it can encourage whistleblowers to come forward and report any unethical conducts in their organisation.

In Japan, the law on whistleblowers was established in 2006 to guarantee protection to whistleblowers; however, it comes with a condition that the whistleblowers need to make sure that they have the evidence of a criminal act or any statutory breach before making any disclosure to the authorities or media (Davis & Konishi, 2007). This shows that the issue of whistle-blowing concern the whistleblowers, and how authorities can ensure their safety, and the intentions

of the whistle-blowers, i.e. whether it is done for the organisation or for personal or group interest.

#### *Whistleblower Protection Act 2010*

As a result of the implementation of GTP, the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 was enforced in 2011, and represented a new piece of legislation protecting the rights and identities of individuals who report instances of corruption. The purpose is to create a secure environment in which potential whistleblowers can act without fear of recrimination. The Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 is a protection mechanism to provide protection to whistleblowers who voluntarily come forward to report or reveal information on corruption activities. The Act, passed by the Parliament in 2010, also serves to encourage the public from all sectors to disclose any corruption related activities (Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, 2012). In its fight against corruption, the Fighting Corruption NKRA reported a number of whistleblowers coming forward to report instances of corruption after the Whistleblower Protection Act 2010 that came into force in 2011. The government has, since the implementation of GTP, demonstrated an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability in the execution of its initiatives, and is committed to maintain this level of accountability in the coming years. In fact, citizens are encouraged to be as proactive as possible in voicing their concerns and criticisms

of the GTP, with the promise that every concern will be addressed (Department of Prime Minister, 2012).

#### *Factors of Whistleblowing*

In order to conduct this study, the perception towards whistleblowing and the factors influencing whistleblowing were selected as the variables to find real whistleblowers among the civil servants. Ahmad (2012), in his research, he states that:

*“Research on whistleblowing has largely focused on three general factors: (1) organisational factors, such as organisational ethical, size of organisation, and job level; (2) individual factors such as, ethical judgment, locus of control, and organisational commitment; and (3) situational factors, such as the seriousness of wrongdoing, and the status of wrongdoer. Miceli et al. (2008) in a comprehensive review of whistleblowing literature have suggested that these are the three general factors that influence the behaviour of reporting corporate wrongdoing by employees within organisation.”*

Hence, this study focused on the organisational support and policy as the factors of whistleblowing among civil servants. As for the perception of the civil servant on whistleblowing, this study focused on their mindset and the civil servants’ willingness to whistleblow.

#### **THEORIES**

Theories involved in this study are the Whistleblowing model and Theory of Reasoned Action.

#### *Whistleblowing Model*

Scholars like Greenberger, Gundlach, Douglas, Martinko and Miceli depict whistleblowing as taking place through a number of stages. Henik (2007) provided a summary of these stages. The first stage is marked by a trigger event whereby the observer must decide whether the activity observed is actually wrongful, that is, illegal, immoral or illegitimate. Observers are more likely to consider the activity as wrongful if it conflicts with their own values or those stated by the organisation and if the evidence concerning the activity is unambiguous. In Stage 2, the focal individual supposes the event problematic and engages in a decision-making process about what action to take. This stage includes communication between the individual and co-workers, supervisors, and possibly the wrongdoer (Greenberger et al., 1987; Gundlach et al., 2003), and often a cost-benefit analysis (Miceli et al., 2008). The individual’s action, i.e. whether to blow the whistle or remain silent, occurs in Stage 3. In the fourth stage, the accused organisation reacts to the report. Finally, in Stage 5, the whistle-blower assesses the organisation’s response and considers whether further action is warranted (Richardson, Wang, & Hall, 2012; Near & Miceli, 2013).

#### *Theory of Reasoned Action*

A number of studies have cited severity of the wrongdoing as significantly related to decisions to report unethical behaviour (Richardson et al., 2012). As cited by

Richardson *et al.* (2012), Ajzen & Fishbein (2012), the Theory of Reasoned Action proposes that behavioural intent is the most significant predictor of human behaviour which is formulated in a rational manner as the function of two factors: (a) one's personal attitude toward the behavior and (b) subjective norms. An individual's personal attitude toward a behaviour includes whether he or she perceives a specific behaviour as favourable or unfavourable (Kaptein, 2010). Moreover, one's attitude is influenced by his behavioural beliefs, or the probability that a particular behaviour will lead to particular outcomes, and evaluation of outcomes, an assessment of whether engaging in the behaviour will lead to positive or negative outcomes (Richardson *et al.*, 2012). Meanwhile, subjective norms explain how an individual believes relevant others will perceive the behaviour if performed by the individual. These are comprised of normative beliefs, individuals' perceptions of what relevant others think about them performing the behaviour and motivations to comply, and individuals' inclination to behave in a similar manner as their reference group (Richardson *et al.*, 2012). The Theory of Reasoned Action is recognised for its potential to identify particular targets of persuasion that can, in turn, influence a specific, wilful behaviour (Near & Miceli, 2013). Hence, the Theory of Reasoned Action is appropriate for examining the whistleblowing decision-making process (Richardson *et al.*, 2012).

In light of whistleblowing models, the Theory of Reasoned Action seems to be an especially suitable fit for examining whistle-blowing intentions. Many of the scholarly whistleblowing models directly or indirectly highlight interactions between the focal individual and relevant others, including co-workers, supervisors, and even the wrongdoer (Greenberger *et al.*, 1987; Gundlach *et al.*, 2003; Miceli *et al.*, 2008). Such interactions parallel TRA's focus on individuals' considerations of significant others' opinions about performing a particular behaviour. Individuals considering whether to blow the whistle do not make their decisions in a vacuum, whereby they talk to others who help the focal individuals make sense of the situation and weigh the impacts of blowing the whistle (Richardson *et al.*, 2012). Another factor that cuts across many whistle-blowing models is the cost-benefit analysis; a process by which potential whistleblowers assess the expected advantages of whistleblowing (Richardson *et al.*, 2012). This cost-benefit analysis relates closely to the theory's notions of behavioural beliefs and evaluation of outcomes. In this process, the individual weighs the positive and negative outcomes of engaging in a particular behaviour (Richardson *et al.*, 2012). Finally, the general purpose of the Theory of Reasoned Action is to explain an individual's conscious decisions rather than those that are impulsive or spontaneous (Loyens, 2012). Similarly, whistleblowing is traditionally conceptualised as a process



built upon deliberation, reflection and careful consideration (Near & Miceli, 2013). For these reasons, the Theory of Reasoned Action is expected to provide a sound, theoretical model for predicting whistleblowing behaviour.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

To conclude the concepts and presented theories, a conceptual framework for this study is proposed and summarised, as follows:

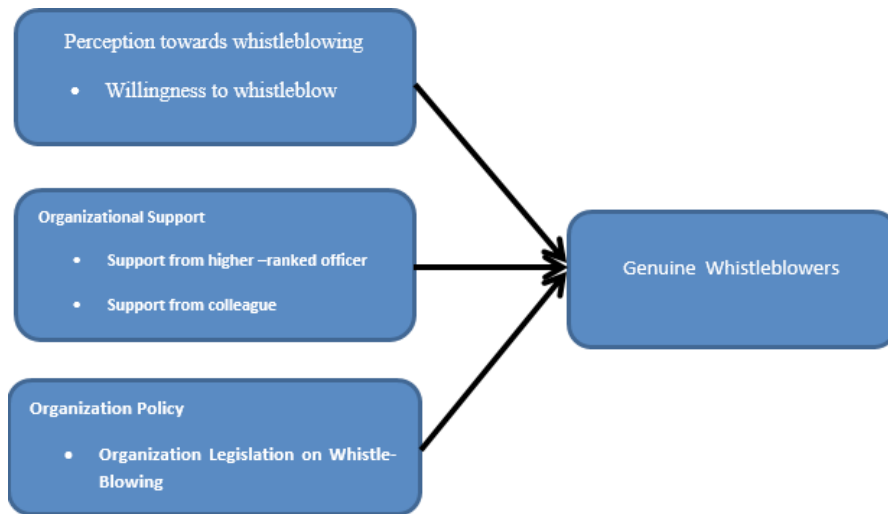


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework

Fig.1 shows the proposed conceptual framework of the study. From the framework, the independent variables are the perception towards whistleblowing, organisational support and the organisation's policy. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is the genuine whistleblowers.

For the independent variables, they were constructed according to the Theory of Reasoned Action. As for the first independent variable, which is the perception towards whistleblowing is derived from the first factor of the theory; the one's personal attitude towards the behaviour. It is about the perception

of an individual, i.e. the way he or she perceives whistleblowing as favourable or unfavourable. As a result, this attitude will lead to an outcome such as their willingness to whistleblow.

The second and third independent variables are derived from the second factor of the Theory of Reasoned Action, which is the subjective norm. The subjective norm is what individual perceives of what others think of his or her attitudes and also the motivation for the individual to comply with his or her behaviour. This study focused on the motivation for the individuals to whistleblow. These are organisational

support, which include the support from the higher ranked officer and also the support from the colleagues, i.e. whether or not they support the act of whistleblowing. Another independent variable is the organisational policy, i.e. whether the organisation has any legislation on whistleblowing or not. These two independent variables will determine the motivation of an individual to be or not to be a whistleblower.

Hence, by studying the three independent variables, the expected outcome is that the researcher could identify a genuine whistleblower, which is the dependent variable for the study.

## CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the role of whistleblowing especially in the government or public sector should be emphasised more because the public or government agencies are responsible in catering for the public welfare and it is important to gain the public trust as a whole. Since whistleblowing is one of the ways to combat corruption and wrongdoings within an organisation, it is therefore crucial to improve and increase the number of whistleblowers. Therefore, determining the perception and also the factors that contribute to whistleblowing can help the responsible ones to put more efforts in encouraging whistleblowing.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmad, S. A. (2011). *Internal Auditors and Internal Whistleblowing Intentions: A Study of Organisational, Individual, Situational and Demographic Factors*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). Edith Cowan University Western Australia.
- Bashir, S., & Hanif, A. (2010). Whistle-Blowing in Public Sector Organizations: Evidence from Pakistan. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 41(3), 285–296. doi: 10.1177/0275074010376818
- Cornock, M. (2011). Whistleblowing: a legal commentary. *Nursing Children and Young People*, 23(8), 20–1. doi:10.7748/ncyp2011.10.23.8.20.c8722
- Department of Prime Minister. (2012). *Government Transformation Report - Annual Report 2012*. Department of Prime Minister, Malaysia.
- Economic Planning Unit. (2010). Tenth Malaysia Plan. *Malaysia: Economic Planning Unit*.
- Evans, A. (2008). Civil Service and Administrative Reform: Thematic Paper. Background Paper to Public Sector Reform: What Works and Why? An IEG Evaluation of World Bank Support. *Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, Washington, DC*.
- Eason, G., Noble, B., & Sneddon, I. N. (1955). On certain integrals of Lipschitz-Hankel type involving products of Bessel functions. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*, 247(935), 529-551.
- Elissa, K. (2006). *Title of paper if known*. Unpublished.
- Hardoon, D., & Heinrich, F. (2013). Global Corruption Barometer. *Transparency International*. Retrieved from <http://www.transparency.org/gcb2013/report>

- Jacobs, I. S., & Bean, C. P. (1963). Fine particles, thin films and exchange anisotropy. In G. T. Rado & H. Suhl (Eds.), *Magnetism, III* (pp. 271-350). New York: Academic.
- Kaptein, M. (2010). From Inaction to External Whistleblowing: The Influence of the Ethical Culture of Organizations on Employee Responses to Observed Wrongdoing. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 98(3), 513–530. doi:10.1007/s10551-010-0591-1
- Khan, M. A. (2009). Auditors and the Whistleblowing Law. *Accountants Today*, 22, 12-14.
- Loyens, K. (2012). Towards a Custom-Made Whistleblowing Policy. Using Grid-Group Cultural Theory to Match Policy Measures to Different Styles of Peer Reporting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 114(2), 239–249. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1344-0
- MACC. (2012, September). *On the Road to a Corruption-Free Nation*. Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission. Retrieved from [http://www.sprm.gov.my/files/Initiatif\\_Book.pdf](http://www.sprm.gov.my/files/Initiatif_Book.pdf)
- Maxwell, J. C. (1892). *A Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), (Vol. 2, pp. 68-73). Oxford: Clarendon.
- Miceli, M. P., Near, J. P., Rehg, M. T., & Van Scotter, J. R. (2012). Predicting employee reactions to perceived organizational wrongdoing: Demoralization, justice, proactive personality, and whistle-blowing. *Human Relations*, 65(8), 923-954. doi:10.1177/0018726712447004
- Moore, L., & McAuliffe, E. (2010). Is inadequate response to whistleblowing perpetuating a culture of silence in hospitals? *Clinical Governance: An International Journal*, 15(3), 166–178. doi:10.1108/14777271011063805
- Nayir, D. Z., & Herzig, C. (2011). Value Orientations as Determinants of Preference for External and Anonymous Whistleblowing. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 107(2), 197–213. doi:10.1007/s10551-011-1033-4
- Near, J. P., & Miceli, M. P. (2013). Organizational Dissidence: The Case of Whistle-Blowing. In A. C. Michalos & D. C. Poff (Eds.), *Citation Classics from the Journal of Business Ethics* (pp. 153-172). Springer Science & Business Media. doi:10.1007/978-94-007-4126-3
- Nicole, R. (1987). Title of paper with only first word capitalized. *J. Name Stand. Abbrev*, 740-741.
- Office of Prime Minister. (2010). *Government Transformation Programme*. Office of Prime Minister, Malaysia.
- Reckers-Sauciuc, A. K., & Lowe, D. J. (2010). The influence of dispositional effect on whistleblowing. *Advances in Accounting*, 26(2), 259–269. doi:10.1016/j.adiac.2010.05.005
- Richardson, B. K., Wang, Z., & Hall, C. A. (2012). Blowing the Whistle Against Greek Hazing: The Theory of Reasoned Action as a Framework for Reporting Intentions. *Communication Studies*, 63(2), 172–193. doi:10.1080/10510974.2011.624396
- Rothschild, J. (2013). Rising in Defense of Nonprofit Organizations' Social Purposes: How do Whistle-Blowers Fare When They Expose Corruption in Nonprofits? *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 42(5), 886-901. doi:10.1177/0899764012472400
- Siong, H. C. (2006). Putrajaya–Administrative Centre of Malaysia. *Planning Concept and Implementation*, 1–20.
- Teo, H., & Caspersz, D. (2011). Dissenting Discourse: Exploring Alternatives to the Whistleblowing/Silence Dichotomy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 104(2), 237–249. doi:10.1007/s10551-011-0906-x
- Young, M. (1989). *The Technical Writer's Handbook*. Mill Valley, CA: University Science.
- Yorozu, Y., Hirano, M., Oka, M., & Tagawa, Y. (1987). Electron spectroscopy studies on magneto-optical media and plastic substrate interface. *IEEE Translation Journal on Magnetism in Japan*, 8(2), 740-741.





## **The Non-Admissibility of the Principle of Therapeutic Privilege in Clinical Trials**

**Yuhanif, Y.<sup>1\*</sup>, Anisah, C. N.<sup>2</sup> and Md Rejab, M. D.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*School of Law, Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010 Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia*

<sup>2</sup>*Faculty of Law, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this paper is to examine the issue of non-admissibility of the principle of therapeutic privilege in clinical trials. In medical treatment, doctors could decide not to disclose information for the best interest of the patients by adopting the principle of therapeutic privilege. This principle exempts doctors from disclosing risky information at his discretion especially if by doing so will cause harm or trauma to patients. However, this principle is not recognised in clinical trials. Instead, the need to obtain patient's consent by way of informed consent has been mandatorily imposed as a way to protect the patients. The doctor-investigator must disclose full information pertaining to the trial to the patient. This paper is a library based collating literature review data. Qualitative methodology and analysis were used in this paper. This paper revealed that despite the fact that the principle of therapeutic privilege has not been recognised in clinical trials, the attitude of patients that placed high hopes on doctor-investigator has indirectly encouraged the latter not to disclose information by adopting this principle. This paper implies that the doctor-investigator practices the principle of therapeutic privilege, an act of paternalism that has been brought into the process of consent taking in clinical trials. In conclusion, the Good Clinical Practice Training Curriculum by the Ministry of Health Malaysia is suggested to be improvised and further enhanced.

*Keywords:* Clinical trials, doctor-investigator, informed consent, the principle of therapeutic privilege, patient-subject

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

yuhanif@uum.edu.my (Yuhanif, Y.),

anisah@ukm.edu.my (Anisah, C. N.),

rejab@uum.edu.my (Md Rejab, M. D.)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

Clinical trials or medical research using human as subject is a patient-orientated research. It is a method by doctor-

investigator to find panacea for all ailments by finding better ways to prevent, diagnose or treat diseases and disorders, test new medicines or devices or to learn about health problem by using human subject (Jackson, 2006). Using human subject in clinical research cannot be avoided as not all medical problems could be overcome using animal as subject (Jackson, 2006).

In clinical trials, the pre-requisite need to obtain patient's consent by way of informed consent has been made compulsory to justify the patient's recruitment (Vollman & Winau, 1996). The doctor-investigator must disclose full information about the trial to the patient. In fact, a doctor-investigator is put on a high standard of duty to disclose information to patient (*Moore v. Regents of the University of California*, 1990). Invariably, this would mean that the doctor-investigator cannot hide behind the guise of the principle of therapeutic privilege, a practice seen in normal doctor-patient relationship, into the process of consent taking in clinical trials.

It has been exemplified that many studies have shown that the doctor-investigators had failed to disclose full information to patient-subjects. As mentioned by Rathor *et al.*, (2011) "*Participants [research—subjects] were not told the aim of the trial, its methodology, potential hazards or anticipated benefits of treatment*". Meanwhile, a study by Yuhanif *et al.*, (2014) who studied informed consent in clinical trials with reference to information disclosure to patient-subjects revealed that doctor-investigators in

Malaysia adopt the principle of therapeutic privilege which is not recognised in clinical trials. The doctor-investigators fail to disclose full information to patient-subjects. Instead, doctor-investigators only disclosed information which they thought were necessary for the patient-subjects to know. The study also showed that there were doctor-investigators who did not disclose information at all to the patient-subjects (Yuhanif *et al.*, 2014). Hence, the objective of this paper is to examine the non-admissibility of the principle of therapeutic privilege in clinical trials which are frequently being employed by doctors to dilute the exigency of procuring the patient consent which must be an informed one.

#### **THE REASONS FOR NON-ADMISSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF THERAPEUTIC PRIVILEGE IN CLINICAL TRIALS**

The principle of therapeutic privilege is an exception to the general requirement of informed consent. If a doctor feels that disclosure of certain information will lead to the harm or suffering of the patient, she or he is said to be free to withhold this information (Etchells *et al.*, 1996). In medical treatment, the doctors are excluded from disclosing information for the best interest of the patients by adopting this principle.

The principle of therapeutic privilege is in fact in conflict with the most fundamental portion of the Hippocratic Oath: "do no harm". According to the

oath, doctor is required to use his or her knowledge and skills for the patient's best interest. However, the fact that patients are vulnerable and doctors have greater medical knowledge indirectly causes the latter to decide what is the best for patient even though their actions supersede the capable patients' wishes. This is where the concept or doctor's paternalistic approach through the principle of therapeutic privilege applied for the patient best interest. For instance, the patient is too sick that it affects his ability to make decisions or is not capable of understanding the important information about the treatment so the doctor's paternalism has to take over (Thomasma, 2008). Doctors recommend treatment options based on the evaluation of benefits and risks but the patient may only assess from the point of sheer emotion. Therefore, sometimes the doctor will need to use the power of paternalism in order to over-rule the patient's autonomy for the patients' sake - just to protect them. This is where the concept or the approach of paternalism applies using the principles of therapeutic privilege, which is introduced in the interest of the patient. This principle exempts doctors from conveying risky information at his discretion especially if by doing so will cause any harm or unnecessary trauma to the patients. This means that any information to be communicated to the patient is at the discretion of the doctor.

The application of the principle of therapeutic privilege can be seen in the case of *Siddaway v Bethlem Royal Hospital Governors* ([1984] 1 ALL ER 1018).

Lord Scarman held that, "*This exception [therapeutic privilege] enables a doctor to withhold from his patient information as to risk if it can be shown that a reasonable medical assessment of the patient would have indicated to the doctor that disclosure would have posed a serious threat ...of physiological detriment to the patient*".

The judgment in *Siddaway's* case has been applied in Malaysia. The recognition to the principle of therapeutic privilege in medical treatment can be seen in the case of *Liew Sin Kiong v Dr Sharon M Pauraj* ([1996] 2 AMR 1403). Justice Ian Chin held that if a doctor was of the view that a patient was in need of an operation, then such benefit outweighs a remote risk as the doctor should be allowed the "therapeutic privilege" in deciding whether or not to disclose the risk.

Another case worth referring to is *Dr Ismail Abdullah v Poh Hui Lin (administrator for the estate of Tan Amoi @ Ong Ah Mauy, deceased)* ([2009] 2 MLJ 599). In this case, the respondent/plaintiff is the administrator of the deceased's estate. She brought a claim against the first and second appellants/defendants for medical negligence in, inter alia, failing to advise the deceased of the risks of acute pancreatitis and acute respiratory distress syndrome ('ARDS') prior to the operation by the first appellant on the deceased to remove kidney stones that were causing biliary obstruction. The first appellant stated, inter alia, that the deceased had been advised on and consented to the operation. The Sessions Court did not

hold the applicants liable for negligence when treating the deceased but held that they were liable for failing to advise the deceased of the risks.

In allowing the appeal with costs, Justice Azahar Mohamed held that the appellants were not liable as only material risks of injury needed to be disclosed, not minimal risks. On the effect of therapeutic privilege on non-disclosure of a material risk, the learned Judge went on to say:

*If there was in fact a material risk as a result of the operation, the first defendant's therapeutic privilege justified the non-disclosure of it because of her severe medical problems. This privilege says that such information can be withheld if the disclosure would cause serious harm to the patient's health. The deceased needed the operation to save her life. The first defendant's therapeutic privilege outweighed any duty to warn her of any material risk which would result in her refusing the life saving operation.*

Even though the two cases above did not specifically deal with the application of therapeutic privilege by doctor, the cases did show the recognition of this principle in medical treatment. The importance of the judgment is that the Court recognises medical paternalism vis-à-vis therapeutic privilege especially in cases of life and death significance. Here, the doctors are exercising their experts' opinion or clinical diagnosis in order to save the patient's life. If it is justifiable on the basis of clinical

judgment, the doctor is indeed privilege to proceed with the treatment without informing the patient. An analogy can be made in cases of emergency where informed consent is disregarded because of the need to save a patient's life (*Re F* [1990] 2 AC 1 HL).

In contrast, the application of the principle of therapeutic privilege is not recognised in clinical trials. In support of this view, a reference could be made to the points put forward by Kennedy and Grubb in their book entitled, *Medical Law* (Kennedy & Grubb, 2000). They stated that "Lord Scarman's recourse [in the case of *Siddaway*] to the 'therapeutic privilege' as justifying non-disclosure of information does not apply to information relating to the fact that the patient is in a clinical trial and what that entails." A similar view is shared by Redmon (1986) who stated that "The physician has some latitude (how much is a matter of great debate) in informing his patient of the risks and other factors in a therapeutic procedure, the researcher has none. One reason is that the physician is working on behalf of his patient and the researcher need not be. This, the type of paternalistic behavior we might allow in the physician is not permissible in the researcher ...." The objective of clinical trials being conducted is to offer benefits to future patients at the sacrificial expense of the patients themselves. This is because clinical trials focus on creating an overall knowledge for the benefits of future patients, a process requiring the doctor-investigator to conduct trial according to



a protocol and not according to what is individually best for the patient-subjects (Morreim, 2005). Moreover, the risks inherent in a trial cannot be discounted and averted by the patient. It may be a small one, but it is always there (Edelson *et al.*, 2001).

Instead, the need to obtain patient's consent by way of informed consent has been made obligatory to safeguard the patients. The doctor-investigator must fully disclose information about the trial to the patient. For example, the objective of the trial, purpose of the trial, procedures of the trial, alternative methods available, probable benefits and risks, the possibility of being randomised and that the patient's involvement is voluntary. Thus, it is equally vital to inform the patient that he can withdraw from the study whenever he wanted without jeopardising his current or future treatment. In support of this view, reference can also be made to Article 1 of the Nuremberg Code 1947 which states that:

*The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential. This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to give consent; should be so situated as to be able to exercise free power of choice, without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, over-reaching, or other ulterior form of constraint or coercion; and should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him to make an understanding and enlightened decision.*

The carnage and ravages of World War II had lent us a benign lesson in history. The wanton human subject experimentation and the aftermath atrocity perpetrated had rudely awakened world communities. The exposure of the research atrocities performed on prisoners of war by German doctors and scientists discovered after World War II were morbid and inhumane. The prisoners were forced to serve as subjects without their consent. The exposure to this dark episode had made the world community felt unease and being apprehensive on the aspect of subject's protection particularly to ensure the rights of subject are to be respected (McNeill & Pfeffer, 2001). The sequel to this incident had necessitated that informed consent be made as a condition to justify subject's participation in clinical trials (McNeill & Pfeffer, 2001). Hence, informed consent is introduced to protect patient from being abused as subject in order to accomplish the strong desire of doctor-investigator to acquire new scientific discovery. Nevertheless, the special doctor-patient relationship exists as a barrier that incapacitated the patient from making a free choice.

#### **THE DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP**

The word 'special relationship' is a tortuous concept used to determine when an individual is casted with a duty to protect the other person from risks that are not consequent act of that particular person himself. However, in the context of medical

treatment, a duty of care arises from this special relationship between doctor and patient when the patient sought a medical treatment from the doctor.

Generally, patients believe that doctors will always perform their duty with full commitment and dedication as it involves life and death of their patients. Furthermore, the fact that doctors having had greater medical knowledge also causes patients to rely on them to make decision. In fact, throughout history, doctors have put up a clarion advised that patients' needs are best served by following doctors' orders. As stated by Talcott Parsons, "[The physician's] competence and specific judgments and measure cannot be judged by layman. The latter must ... take these judgments and measures on 'authority.' The doctor-patient relationship has to be one involving an element of authority – we speak of 'doctor's orders'" (Kantz, 2003). The doctors have the knowledge that can relieve suffering or save patients' life. As such, it is better for the patient to accept the doctor's suggestion as one of gospel truth without question. Further, doctors are assumed to act for the best interest of their patients and have no reason whatsoever to have any spite and ill intentions towards them. They always try their level best to assist the patients. This kind of attitude is an altruist that is based on trust and confident that arises from the special relationship between the doctors and the patients.

The special relationship between patient and doctor-investigator is different to the normal doctor-patient relationship.

The reason is because the scope of disclosure required for informed consent for clinical trials is different compared to the informed consent for ordinary medical treatment (Agati, 2006). Consequently, the standard of disclosure put on the doctor-investigator is higher compared to the typical doctor. The patient is eligible to be informed of all risks, no matter how remote of an actual occurrence the risk is (*Whitlock v. Duke* (637 F. Supp. 1463 [(M.D.N.C. 1986), aff'd, 829 F.2d 1340 (4th Cir. 1987)]). In Malaysia, the lack of case law does not mean a higher standard of disclosure is not imposed on the doctor-investigators. Clause 1.5 of the Code of Professional Conduct 1987 provides that:

In any research on human beings, each potential subject must be adequately informed of the aims, methods, anticipated benefits and potential hazards of the study and the discomfort it may entails. He or she should be informed that he or she is at liberty to abstain.

This special doctor-patient relationship is established between the 'doctor' and the patient based on the fact that most of the patients are originally a patient to the 'doctor' before the latter involved in clinical trials. The existence of this relationship was the reason that strengthened patient-subjects' trust and confidence that 'doctors' will act in their interests and hence they accepted the doctors' invitation to participate in the trial (Corfield *et al.*, 2008; Pik Pin Goh, 2011). Hence, the existence of this relationship has indirectly hindered the patient to make a decision voluntarily.

A patient will mistakenly assume that he or she will be getting a treatment which the doctor trusts to be in the best interest by tolerant the doctors' offer to join in the trial. Furthermore, when a person is suffering from a disease, he would then agree to do whatever he thinks can provide relief or cure. In other words, the illness borne by the patient makes him vulnerable - who would have to rely on the doctor - thus leaving him exposed of exploitation by the doctor.

Nevertheless, the authors are of the view that the attitude of the patient that sets high expectations on doctor-investigator has indirectly encouraged the latter not to disclose information by subscribing to the principle of therapeutic privilege. The special relationship that exists between 'doctor' and patient has led the patient to believe and feel confident that the 'doctor' will act in their best interest. This comforting trust has muffled the patient from asking the 'doctor' for further information.

## CONCLUSION

The existence of doctor-patient relationship is real and clinical trial is something that cannot be avoided. Most of the patient-subjects are patients to the 'doctor' before the doctor 'change cap' and turn into a 'doctor-investigator' who immerses himself in clinical trials by recruiting them as patient-subjects. Nevertheless, they must always be vigilant and aware that they are no longer allowed to withhold information from the patients on the

pretext of therapeutic privilege even though this practice seems to be normal in ordinary doctor-patient relationship. They are responsible to disclose full information pertaining to the trials and particularly the risks to patient-subjects. Furthermore, the objective of clinical trials is to benefit future patients and not the patient-subjects who are the "experimentation objects" for the advancement of the medical sciences. As such, we suggest that the *Good Clinical Practice Training Curriculum*<sup>1</sup> by the Ministry of Health Malaysia is to be improvised by introducing a sub-topical subject additional to the same on the topic of doctor-patient relationship in clinical trials.

## REFERENCES

- Agati, A. (2006). Clinical research trials in the courtroom. In J. E. Steiner (Ed.), *Clinical Research Law and Compliance Handbook* (pp. 411-436). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Corfield, L., Granne, I., & Latimer-Sayer, W. (2008). *ABC of Medical Law*. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Dr. Ismail Abdullah v Poh Hui Lin (administrator for the estate of Tan Amoi @ Ong Ah Maury, deceased)* [2009] 2 MLJ 599.

---

<sup>1</sup>Doctors have to undergo a Good Clinical Practice Training to obtain a certificate in order to be qualified as doctor-investigators. The approval by the *National Committee for Clinical Research* (NCCR) is required to conduct the training and the content must adhere with the co-curriculum provides by the NCCR. See *Malaysian Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice* at <http://www.nccr.gov.my>.

- Edelson, J. (2001). Informed consent in human experimentation and the physicians' response. In L. Doyal & J. S. Tobias (Eds.), *Informed consent in Medical Research*. London: BMJ Publishing.
- Etchells, E., Sharpe, G., & Burgess, M. M. (1996). Bioethics for clinicians: 2 disclosure. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 155(4), 387–391.
- Jackson, E. (2006). *Medical law: Text, cases & materials*. Oxford University Press.
- Kantz, J. (2003). Human experimentation and human rights. *Saints Louis University Law Journal*, 38, 7-54.
- Kennedy, I., & Grubb, A. (2000). *Medical law* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). London, Edinburgh, Dublin: Butterworths.
- Liew Sin Kiong v Dr Sharon M Pauraj* [1996] 2 AMR 1403. Sweet and Maxwell Asia, Malaysia.
- McNeill, P., & Pfeffer, N. (2001). Learning from the unethical research. In L. Doyal & J. S. Tobias (Eds.), *Informed consent in medical research*. London: BMJ Publishing.
- Moore v. Regents of the University of California* (793. P.2d 479, 483-85 (Cal.1990).
- Morrein, E. H. (2005). The clinical investigator as fiduciary: Discarding a misguided idea. *Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics*, 33(3), 586–598.
- Rathor, M. Y., Rani, M. F., Shah, A. M., & Akter, S. F. (2011). Informed consent: A socio-legal study. *Medical Journal Malaysia*, 66(5), 423–422
- Redmon, R. B. (1986). How children can be respected as “ends” yet still be used as subjects in non-therapeutic research. *Journal of medical ethics*, 12(2), 77-82.
- Re F (Mental patient sterilisation)* [1990] 2 AC 1 HL.
- Siddaway v Bethlem Royal Hospital Governors* [1984] 1 All ER 1018
- Thomasma, D. C. (2008). Telling the truth to patients: A clinical ethics exploration. In T. L. Beauchamp (Ed), *Contemporary issues in bioethics*. USA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Vollman, J., & Winau, R. (1996). Informed consent in human experimentation before the Nuremberg Code. *British Medical Journal*, 313(7070), 1445–1447.
- Whitlock v. Duke* 637 F.Supp. 1463 (M.D.N.C. 1986), aff'd, 829 F.2d 1340 (4th Cir. 1987)
- Yusof, Y., Ngah, A. C., & Zaher, Z. M. M. (2014). Informed consent in clinical trials with reference to information disclosure to patient-subjects. *International Journal of Public Health Research*, 4(1), 384–390.



## **Perception of Undergraduates on Their Language Competence Based on English Language National Examination Results**

**Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah<sup>1\*</sup>, Saedah Siraj<sup>2</sup> and Lim Li Yean<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, 31750 Tronoh, Perak*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

<sup>3</sup>*SRJK(C) Hua Lian 1, Taiping, Perak, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate the perception of undergraduate students on their language competence in meeting the requirement to take English for Specific purpose course at tertiary level. The investigation was conducted using survey questionnaire on 250 undergraduate students to obtain their perception on their actual language competence based on the national language examination results as preparatory to register for Professional & Communication skills course (English for Specific Purpose subject). The findings indicated that despite obtaining excellent grade in English Language, a majority of them perceived lack in language competence to sit for the university language course. About 42.3% (n=92) of the respondents perceived that their results over rated their actual oral skills, while 48.2% (n=105) of the respondents perceived that their results matched their actual writing skills. The findings could implicate the reliability of the national examination to be used as benchmarking criteria in accepting students in universities. The findings could also motivate the Ministry of Education in improving the method of language assessment to give equivalent weightage to all language skills to not heavily focusing on reading or writing skills.

*Keywords:* Language competence, undergraduate perceptions, English for Specific purposes

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

[ridhuan\\_tony@petronas.com.my](mailto:ridhuan_tony@petronas.com.my)

(Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah),

[saedah@um.edu.my](mailto:saedah@um.edu.my) (Saedah Siraj),

[liyeanim@gmail.com](mailto:liyeanim@gmail.com) (Lim Li Yean)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

The lack of English Language proficiency has been identified as a major factor in graduate unemployment (Menon & Patel, 2012). Various studies have been conducted on whether English Language competency among graduates meets the

industry's needs but unfortunately, similar results across the studies have reported the lack of communication skills among them (Ambigaphaty & Aniswal, 2005; Roshid & Chowdhury, 2013). Other findings have lamented on poor English competency among graduates on productive skills which hinders them from presenting ideas in group discussions and meetings, report writing on project papers or proposals, or negotiation of ideas, especially in impromptu situations (Ambigapathy & Aniswal, 2005; Sirat *et al.*, 2008).

The language discipline is distinctive from other subjects in the curriculum as language learning involves integration and fluent application between the explicit learning of vocabulary and language rules with unconscious skills development (Milton, 2006). This implies that language learners need to master not only grammar knowledge but fluent language use, too. However, as it is usually more feasible to learn grammar in the formal classroom, it would be more difficult to acquire fluent language use or proficiency (Steve & Hiroshi, 2013). The factor of large class-size in a language classroom further limits individual students' contact hours with their lecturer which in turn affects learning (Carbone & Greenberg, 1998; Jones, 2007, p. 4). However, this does not mean that a reduction of class size alone will significantly increase students' grades (Kokkelenberg, Dhillon, & Christy, 2005; Cho, Glewwe, & Whitler, 2012).

Other factors that influence students' language learning, which need to be

considered also, rely on how the teacher chose to give his or her instructions. As suggested by Iran-Nejad *et al.*, (1990), suitable teaching methods play an important role in students' learning, thus method needs to vary according to class size, subject matter and students' level. However, in language teaching, most language instruction is still based on traditional drill and exercise principles on language structures, pronunciation and intonation, sometimes in separate learning units, either with artificial context or even worse, without context (Fang, Baptista, Nunes, & de Bruijn, 2012).

Besides the students' language skills, further aspects such as prior knowledge of the students and their attitude towards language learning also play important roles as these aspects are part of the building blocks of the development of the students' language competency and proficiency. Awang, Kasuma, and Akma, (2010), in their study on second language learners' perception of learning English Literature, found that students' who had higher prior knowledge of the literature texts showed a more positive attitude in learning.

In the research of language needs, most studies are largely based on classroom settings mainly to improve classroom tasks (Maros *et al.*, 2012). However, Zhu and Flaitz (2005) observed that experiences outside the classroom affect students' overall academic performances where their interactions in a larger institutional context influence their in-class performance. Thus, it is necessary

to investigate the needs of language skills required for the students to perform beyond the classroom settings.

In the area of English for Specific purposes, the literature has revealed at least two important aspects in the conduct of an effective language course or programme: 1) the language course or programme needs to accommodate not only the target needs but also the students' learning needs (Vifansi, 2002; Momtazur Rahman *et al.*, 2009). Target needs refer to the skills expected to be achieved as stated in the course outcomes and learning needs refer to students' difficulties in attaining the goals of the course or programme; and 2) the language course or programme ought to consider both skills needed by students to fulfil academic tasks and perform job related activities after graduation (Bacha, 2003).

In short, as students are end receivers of teaching and learning, their views and needs have to be considered in the design of a successful language course or programme. Instructors, policy makers or curriculum designers should not rely on the assumption that they have prior knowledge of students' perception and needs on learning. For instance, through needs analysis, Bacha and Bahous (2008), in their studies on writing needs and language proficiency levels of students in business studies at the tertiary level, revealed that students have higher satisfaction level on how they perceive their writing skills compared to their instructors' perception. In another needs analysis study on

undergraduate petroleum engineering students, Al-Tamimi and Munir Shuib (2010) found out that the students perceived that their current English course did not meet their needs and they could not use English effectively. They perceived that all language skills are important and they need continuous instruction and training to improve their proficiency. These studies indicate the importance of considering not only the institutional needs but the students' learning needs, as well in the conduct of an effective course or programme.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Based on past studies, students' language learning and language proficiency are affected by a number of factors as discussed in the previous section. At the tertiary level, this poses a problem especially among undergraduate students with low English Language proficiency who register for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses such as Business English, Academic writing, English for Tourism, English for Health Care, English for Engineering, Professional and Communicational Skills, and others. These courses are usually offered to students who choose to do their major in engineering, medicine, business, science, law, philosophy, psychology, and other non-language fields. The courses generally aimed for professional conduct of students to prepare for future job environment in their respective fields.

The main ESP skills would largely be focused on specific language skills based on learners' needs to conduct appropriately

in specific vocation. For example, an ESP course may emphasise on development of writing skills for news reporters or spoken skills for tourist guides. Undergraduate students are assumed to be proficient in the written and spoken language as the nature of ESP concentrates more on language in context although grammar and structures are occasionally instructed indirectly and integrated in their subject matter, unlike General English which focuses more on mechanics, language rules, pronunciation and structures (Friorito, 2005; Mihai *et al.*, 2012).

Thus, in Malaysia, to ensure that universities will not have to face students with low language competence to follow the language professional courses offered, students intakes, especially in public universities, are based on their achievements in national examinations such as Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (equivalent to Cambridge O' Level) or Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (equivalent to Cambridge A' level). Reputable public universities and some private universities traditionally prefer students who have achieved the highest grade in the examinations to be successfully enrolled in the institutions. Hence, generally, a university English language lecturer of these institutions should expect a majority of his or her fresh undergraduate students to possess exceptional level of language competence ranging from intermediate high to advanced levels in their competence (based on ACTFL proficiency guidelines). However, students' excellent achievements

in English Language in both national examinations may not necessarily reflect their actual practical language competence. Thus, an investigation is needed to verify whether undergraduates with excellent results in their national language assessment do have the equivalent language competency as reflected by the results. In other words, their language learning needs need to be assessed as it would implicate the success of the students to meet the tertiary level language course outcomes.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Based on the background of the study and statement of the problem, this study aimed to investigate the students' perceptions on their language competence to cope with the Professional and Communication Skills course. The specific objectives to aid the investigation are as follows:

1. To elicit the students' perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their actual language competence.
2. To elicit the students' perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their language output skills (oral and writing skills).
3. To elicit the students' perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their perceived language proficiency.
4. To elicit the students' perception on their language use.

Findings to these objectives become the basis of students' overall perception



on their language competence to cope with their English for Specific Course - Professional Communication Skills course.

### **LIMITATIONS**

In the scope of English Language learning, the study chose 'Professional and Communication Skills course' (an undergraduate English for Specific Purpose course) offered in a private higher institution as the focus of the study. Hence, the findings of the study are context specific (Richey, Klien, & Nelson, 2004; Driscoll & Burner, 2005; Wang & Hanafin, 2005), where it was investigated for a specific group of undergraduates of a specific tertiary institution for a specific language course subject.

In terms of the methodology, this study relied on the students' opinions in determining their perception on their language competence mapping against their SPM English Language results to seek readiness in taking their Professional and Communication Skills course.

### **METHOD**

The study was conducted via survey technique to assess the language competence among the undergraduates based on their views. This study involved 250 undergraduate students of a Malaysian private university who were undergoing an English communication course. Based on Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), a sample number of 30 and above are suitable for research study employing

statistical analysis. The students were either doing a major course in engineering or information technology field. The students were selected randomly from the whole population of students who took the course subject 'HAB 2033/HBB 2033 - Professional and Communication Skills Course' (PCS) an undergraduate English communication skills course of the private tertiary institution to accommodate soft skills to students to be more competitive in the job market. The participants of the study were given a set of survey questionnaires to respond to, in order to solicit their perception on their own language competence. The instrument used for this phase was a set of survey questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted 24 questions divided into two parts: 1) Students demographic details and their perceived level of language proficiency; 2) Students' perception on self-language competence. Reliability test was conducted on the survey questionnaire for all items, and a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.867 was registered.

The findings would indicate the general level of students' language competence and whether they found it inadequate to sit for the undergraduate language communication course (PCS) and whether their language competence poses a hindrance to them to cope with the course outcomes of the language course subject. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics via Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 software.

**FINDINGS**

The survey questionnaire was distributed to 250 students and received a high response rate of 220 out of the total number. The sample finally consisted of 146 male

students and 74 female students, whereby 194 were Malaysian students and the remaining 26 were international students (see Table 1).

TABLE 1  
Nationality of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Malaysian	194	88.2	88.2	88.2
Valid International	26	11.8	11.8	100.0
Total	220	100.0	100.0	

As for the main findings to suffice the aim of the study in investigating the students’ perceptions on their language competence to cope with the Professional and Communication Skills course, the findings are presented accordingly in response to the research objectives.

*Students’ Perception on their language competence*

**Question 1: To seek the students’ perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their overall language competence.**

Since the students’ individual needs differ from one another, it is necessary to investigate it through their perception towards their own language competence. To begin with the investigation, the students’ background academic

achievement in English language was required to form a better understanding on their perceptions later. Their academic English Language achievements were based on Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or its equivalent (for international students) results for English Language subject, and English 2, a pre-university preparatory language examination. Fig.1 shows the students’ Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or its equivalent (for international students) results for English Language subject. SPM is the national examination in Malaysia, which was generally used by the private higher institution in selecting students as entrance qualification and as English Language requirement to register in the undergraduate language courses (for example, PCS course subject).

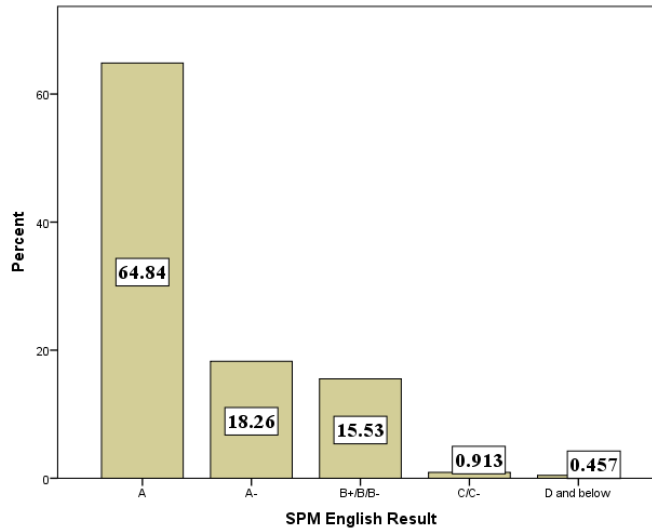


Fig.1: Students' SPM (or equivalent) Results for English Language

Fig.1 shows that overall, the students possess high achievement in English SPM or respective state English Language examination (for international students) with 83.1% (n=182) obtained A grades (A- to A). This was expected because the private higher institution, which offered the PCS course, only accepted students with excellent grades including the

English Language subject in the national examination as the entrance requirement. This is the university's policy and requirement partly because the medium of instruction is in English. A minority 15.5% (n=34) of the respondents obtained B grades (B+, B, and B-), 0.9% (n=2) obtained C grades (C and C-) and only one obtained D grade and below.

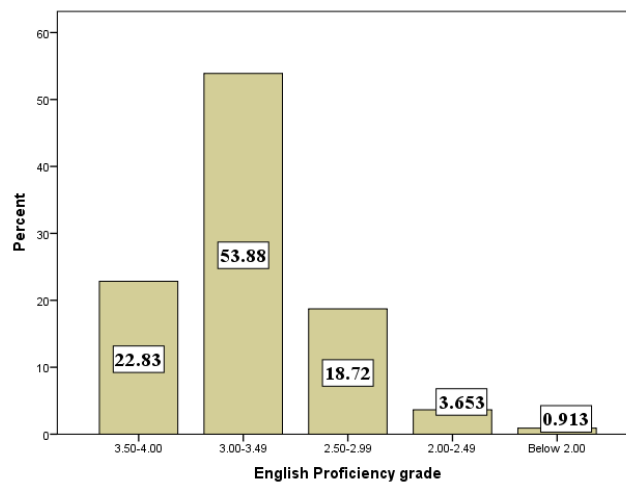


Fig.2: English 2 (English Language Proficiency Course) Results

In comparison, Fig.2 shows the students' results for English 2, which is an undergraduate English Language foundation course. The majority of the respondents (53.9%, n=118) achieved B- to B grades, and only 22.8% (n=50) of the respondents obtained A grades (A- to A). Around 22.4% (n=49) of the respondents achieved only D- to C+ grades, which indicated weak to highly moderate level of language competence among them. Two of them (0.9%) even failed the English Language preparatory course. When cross tabulated between students' achievement

in SPM (Fig.1) and their undergraduate English 2 results from Fig.2, Table 2 shows that only 46 students out of 182 students (25.3%) who had achieved A grades in SPM English subject or equivalent, obtained excellent grade of 3.50-4.00 in their English 2, which is equivalent of A- to A grade (for PCS). A majority of them or 96 students (52.7%) who had achieved A grades in SPM English obtained grade 3.00 and below, which is equivalent to B+ grade and below. A staggering 22% (n=40) SPM A grades students achieved only C+ (conditional passes) to F (fail grade).

TABLE 2  
Students' English 2 Results Plotted against SPM Grade

A	SPM GRADE					Total
	A-	B+/B/B-	C/C-	D and below		
3.50-4.00 (A- to A)	36	10	4	0	0	50
3.00-3.49 (B- to B)	73	23	22	0	0	118
CGPA 2.50-2.99 (C- to C+)	26	7	7	1	0	41
2.00-2.49 (D- to D+)	5	0	1	1	1	8
Below 2.00 (F)	2	0	0	0	0	2
Total	142	40	34	2	1	219

Note: A- to A= Good to Excellent; B- to B+ = Somewhat good to Fair; C/C- = Highly Moderate to Low moderate; D- to D= Weak; F= Fail.

**Question 2: To seek the students' perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their language output skills (oral and writing skills).**

As mentioned earlier in this section, students' perception on their actual language competence would aid in determining their language learning needs. Based on Fig.3, only 23.5% (n=51) of the

total number of the respondents agreed that their English Language SPM or equivalent results accurately reflected their actual language competence for both language output skills (oral and writing skills). This means that that the rest (76.5%; n=166) of the respondents perceived that their language national examination results did not equate to their actual language competence; this was either overrated or

down rated their actual language skills. If a student obtained an A grade in English Language SPM, by the standard, he would be assumed to be highly competent in all language skills. However, if the student was only competent in writing skills but

weak in oral skills, then the A grade had overrated the student's oral competence in the language. If the student obtained a C grade in the language examination but he perceived that he was competent in oral skills, the result would down rate this skill.

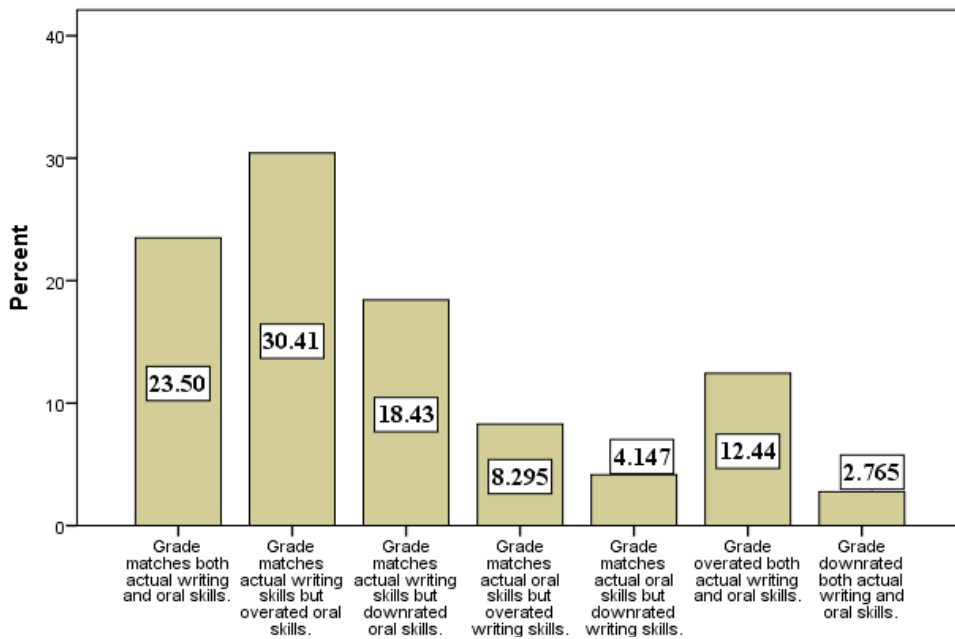


Fig.3: Students' Perception on their Actual Language Competence based on their SPM English Language results

Fig.3 also indicates that from the 76.5% respondents who perceived that the SPM result did not reflect accurately on their actual language skills, 30.4% (n=66) of the respondents perceived that their results matched their writing skills but over-rated their oral skills, whereas 18.4% (n=40) perceived that the results matched their actual writing skills but down-rated their oral skills, and 8.3% (n=18) perceived that their

results matched their actual oral skills but over-rated their writing skills. Meanwhile, 4.1% (n=9) of the students perceived that their results matched their actual oral skills but down-rated their writing skills, and a further 12.4% (n=27) perceived that their results over-rated both their writing and oral skills. Only 2.8% (n=6) of the respondents perceived that their grades down-rated both their actual writing and oral skills.

This means that 42.3% (n=92) of the respondents perceived that their results over-rated their actual oral skills and 48.2% (n=105) of the respondents perceived that their results matched their actual writing skills. This result is an effect due to the format of the English Language SPM examination which allots 100% marks for writing skills. Thus, the examination format may influence the students to place more importance in writing skills, and this explains the reason to why the respondents perceived that their results reflect most accurately in their writing skills as compared to oral skills. However, the study suggests that the results of assessment on students' writing skills do not necessarily reflect accurately their oral communication skills.

**Question 3: To seek the students' perception on how accurate their SPM English Language results reflect their perceived language proficiency.**

As further support to the above findings, when the data on students' perception of their English SPM result (from Fig.3) were cross tabulated against their SPM results (from Fig.1), 135 out of 183 respondents (73.8%) who had obtained A grades in English Language SPM perceived that their excellent results did not match their actual language competence especially in the oral communication skills or in both skills, as shown in Table 3. This is evident as 84 out of 183 (45.9%) 'A' grade respondents perceived that their results overrated their oral communication skills whether they matched or overrated their actual writing skills. Only 26.2% (n=47) of the respondents who had obtained A grades perceived that their results matched their actual language skills.

TABLE 3  
Students' SPM Grades and Students' Perception on their Actual Language Competence Cross tabulation Count

	GRADE PERCEPTION							Total
	Grade matched both actual writing and oral skills.	Grade matched actual writing skills but overrated oral skills.	Grade matched actual writing skills but down rated oral skills.	Grade matched actual oral skills but overrated writing skills.	Grade matched actual oral skills but down rated writing skills.	Grade overrated both actual writing and oral skills.	Grade down rated both actual writing and oral skills.	
A	37	49	25	10	3	16	2	142
A-	9	10	6	2	2	9	1	39
B+/B-	4	7	9	6	3	2	2	33
C/C-	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
D and below	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	51	66	40	18	9	27	6	217

Note: A- to A= Good to Excellent; B- to B+ = Somewhat good to Fair; C/C- = Highly Moderate to Low moderate; D- to D= Weak; F= Fail.

In short, these findings revealed that the students not only perceived the national assessment (English SPM) as not reflecting their actual language skills but

most of them perceived that they lack the competence in certain language skills such as oral communication skills. This finding is further supported by the data shown in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4  
Cross Tabulation Between SPM Grade And Perceived Language Proficiency

		LANG PROF					Total	
		B	E	INT	U.INT	ADV.		M.
SPM	A	0	5	54	61	18	3	141
GRADE	A-	2	1	23	9	5	0	40
	B+/B/B-	0	2	20	6	6	0	34
	C/C-	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
	D and below	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		2	10	97	77	29	3	218

Note: B- Beginner; E- Elementary; INT- Intermediate; U.INT-Upper Intermediate; ADV- Advanced; M-Mastery

For example, based on Table 4, 71.1% (n=155) of the total respondents felt that though they have A grades in SPM English Language subject, they perceived that their language proficiency as equivalent to beginner to upper intermediate level. Only 11.9% (n=23) of the respondents confidently perceived that they were at least advanced users. The majority of the respondents felt that they perceived their language proficiency at the intermediate (44.5%, n=97) and the upper intermediate level (35.3%, n=77). However, the requirement as stipulated in the PCS course pro-forma (refer to Appendix C) indicated that students should be at least at the advanced level of language competence. Thus, only 14.7% (n=32) of the students confidently perceived that they are at least at the advanced level of language use. A reference for the language proficiency levels is indicated in Table 4:

- (a) Beginner level – Students can use basic expression to introduce self, ask address, likes/dislikes, has/have. They can interact in a simple way if the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
- (b) Elementary level – Students can describe basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, jobs, etc.
- (c) Intermediate level – Students can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans especially familiar matters encountered in work, school, and leisure.
- (d) Upper intermediate level – Students interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity with native speakers. They can give clear viewpoint on a wide range of topical issues giving the advantages and disadvantages.

- (e) Advanced level – Students can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.
- (f) Mastery level – Students can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. They can express himself or herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.

(Professional Communication Skills – HCB 2033 course Pro-forma)

In short, the findings presented in Table 4 reveal that although most of the students possessed excellent grade in their English Language SPM national assessment, most

of them lacked the required competence to register for the PCS course though the private higher institution assumed that they had at least advanced level of language competence based on their results.

**Question 4: To seek the students’ perception on their language use.**

When probed further into their language use, majority (67.7%, n=149) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they used mostly grammatically incorrect spoken English Language especially in informal setting and among peers, as indicated in Fig.4. Only 11.8% (n=26) of the respondents claimed that they use grammatically correct English all the time with their peers, while 20.5% (n=45) of them were not sure whether their English Language use was grammatically correct or otherwise.

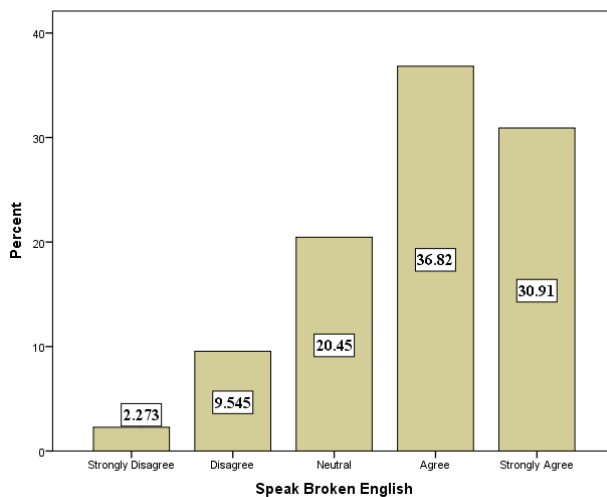


Fig.4: Speak grammatically incorrect English

However, majority of the respondents (65.9%, n=145 students) either agreed or strongly agreed that other people could

understand what they intend to say (as indicated in Fig.). However, in future professional conduct for example at



workplace, grammatically correct English is important in formal presentations to exert credibility. Out of the remaining 34.1% (n=75) respondents, 12.7% (n=28) either disagreed or strongly disagreed that other people could understand their English Language and 21.4% (n=47) of them were in actual fact not sure whether other people could understand them when they use English. In the use of language in formal settings, 66.7% (n=146) of the respondents

(as indicated in Fig.6) would form sentences in their mind before uttering their message aloud as doing so would help them to construct formal and grammatically correct sentences. This shows that the respondents have problems in impromptu construction of grammatically correct sentences especially in formal settings. Only 16.4% (n=36) of them could utter English words effortlessly and naturally while communicating with others orally in the language.

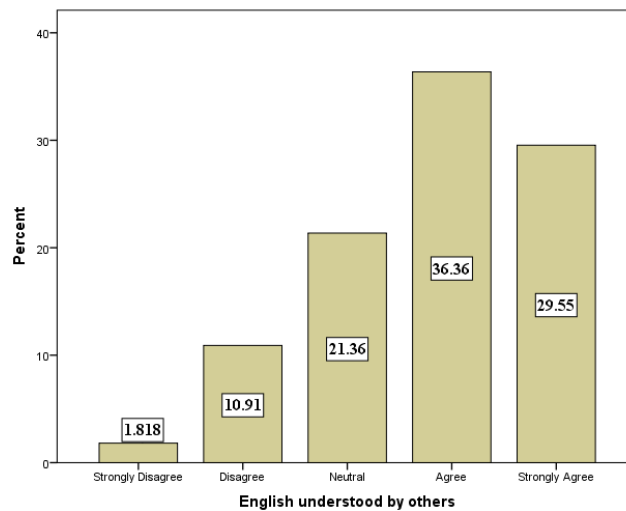


Fig.5: English understood by others

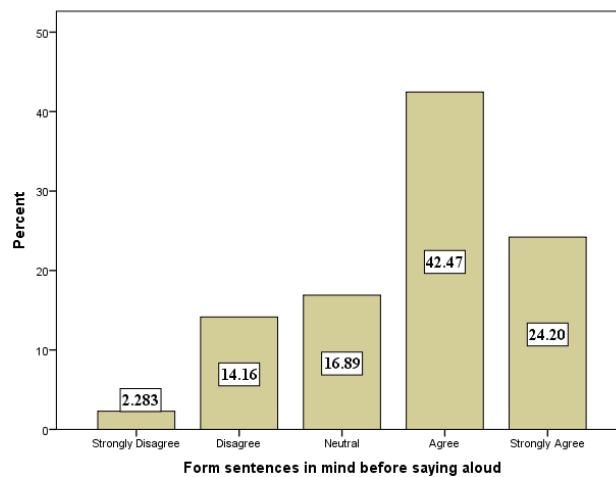


Fig.6: Form sentences in mind before saying them aloud

Majority of the respondents (65.9%, n=145) also indicated that they had the tendency to use short phrases and sentences when communicating in formal settings, as shown in Fig.7. Only 13.2% (n=29) of the

respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had the tendency to use short sentences or phrases in formal communication.

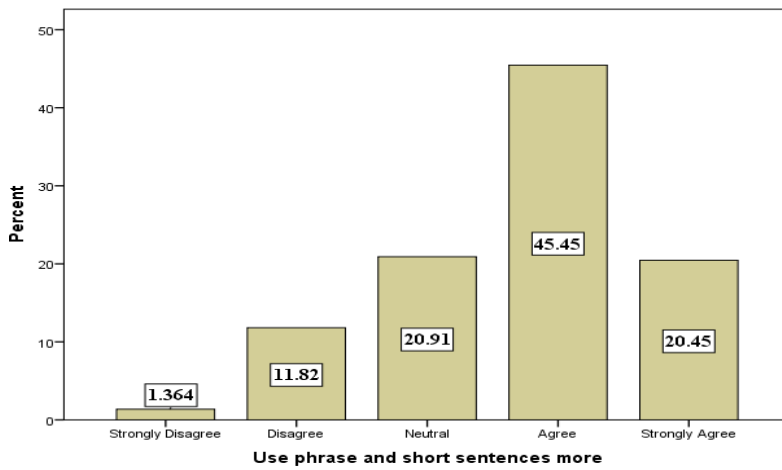


Fig.7: Tendency to use phrases and short sentences

In compensating their lack of competency, nearly half of the total respondents (45.9%, n=101) would resort to memorising speech in oral presentations,

as indicated in Fig.8. However, 35.5% (n=78) of them disagreed that they used memorised speech when delivering their presentations.

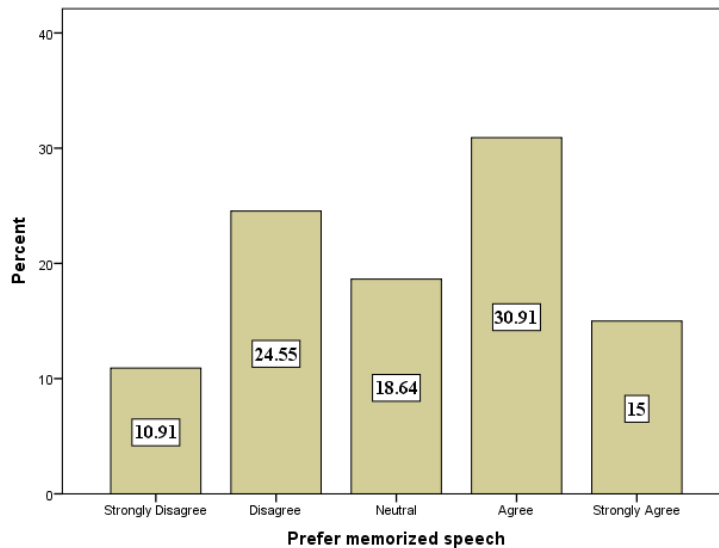


Fig.8: Prefer memorised speech

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings revealed the students' perception of their actual language competence, i.e. whether they had sufficient language competence to register and complete their undergraduate Professional and Communication Skills course. The overall findings indicated that majority of the students perceived that they lacked the required competency to follow the PCS undergraduate course despite achieving excellent results in the national language examination. For example, we could observe that the high grade achieved by the students in the national assessment (SPM) does not necessarily reflect their proportionate language competence when the result was plotted against the students' achievement for English 2. The university assumes that for PCS course, it is expected that students have reached a certain level of language competence to take the course based on their achievement in English SPM.

However, these findings contradicted the assumption. This could potentially become a language learning issue. The findings indicated that the students were still struggling to reach the certain minimum level of language competence while acquiring the skills aimed by PCS course although they had achieved the highest grade in their national examination for English subject (SPM). This claim is further supported by the students' non-confidence with the SPM English result in grading their actual language competence based on their own perception of SPM

English result plotted against their actual competence, as shown in Fig.3 and Table 6. About 42.3% (n=92) of the respondents perceived that their results overrated their actual oral skills and 48.2% (n=105) of the respondents perceived that their results matched their actual writing skills. This result is an effect may largely due to the format of the English Language SPM examination which allots 100% marks for writing skills.

Thus, the examination format could influence the students to place more importance on writing skills, which explains the reason the respondents perceived that their results reflect most accurately in their writing skills as compared to oral skills. The lack of competency among the students needs to be addressed prior or during their learning process in PCS course. Overall, this suggests that the high grade achieved by students in the national assessment (SPM) does not necessarily reflect the proportionate language competence and these finding supports the results of past studies (e.g., Wolf, Kao, Griffin, Herman, Bachman, Chang, & Farnsworth, 2008). Wolf *et al.* argued that some pertinent validity issues on the use of assessments remain unchecked and they proposed that a comprehensive set of validation criteria needed to be considered to evaluate the technical adequacy of assessment tools and assessment systems.

Another main finding of this study is that the compensation strategies used by the students in compensating their shortcomings in using English Language

in oral presentations and communications. For instance, based on the findings presented in Fig.7, majority of the respondents resorted to using phrases and short sentences, especially in formal setting. In formal oral presentations or assessments, nearly half of the respondents resorted to memorised speech to compensate their lack of proficiency to do so. Vidal (2012) argued that there is a correlation among the frequency uses of compensation strategy, types of the strategies and the context of tasks given demonstrated by the low competent language users.

The findings of this study could implicate the reliability of the national examination to be used as benchmarking criteria in accepting students in universities. The findings would also motivate the Ministry of Education to improve the method of language assessment to give equal weightage to all language skills and to not heavily focus on merely reading or writing skills. The findings could also inform language instructors or lecturers in opting additional screening exercise in assessing their students, especially at the beginning of their classes. Through the results of the screening, instructors could redesign their instructional strategies in aiding the students better in coping with the subject. The compensation strategies opted widely by students with low competency could also inform the instructors better in identifying students who are not competent in the English Language.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Future studies could be conducted on a wider scale of respondents of a wider geographical area at tertiary level in investigating the consistency of the outcome of this study. Studies could also be elaborated in the more valid and practical ways to assess students' language competency and proficiency. Research into teaching and learning strategies could also be conducted to aid students with low proficiency to improve their language command, as well as achieve the target goals of their ESP language subject, such as peer tutoring and learning via eLearning or mobile learning using social media.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Tamimi, A. S., & Shuib, M. (2010). Investigating the English language needs of petroleum engineering students at Hadramout University of Science and Technology. *Asian ESP Journal*, 6(1), 1-30.
- Ambigapathy, P., & Aniswal, A. G. (2005). University Curriculum: An evaluation on preparing graduates for employment. *Higher Education Research Monograph 5/2005*. University Sains Malaysia: National Higher Education Research
- Awang, Z., Kasuma, A., & Akma, S. (2010). A study on secondary school students' perceptions of their motivation and attitude towards learning the English Literature component. *A Study on Secondary School Students' Perceptions of Their Motivation and Attitude towards Learning the English Literature Component*, 1-8.
- Bacha, N., & Bahous, R (2008). Contrasting views of business students' writing needs in EFL environment. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27(1), 74-93. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2007.05.001>

- Carbone, E., & Greenberg, J. (1998). Teaching large classes: Unpacking the problem and responding creatively. In M. Kaplan (Ed.), *To improve the academy* (pp. 311–26). Stillwater, Okla.: New Forums Press and Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education.
- Cho, H., & Glewwe, W. M. (2012). Do reductions in class size raise students' test scores? Evidence from population variation in Minnesota's elementary schools. *Economics of Education Review*, 31(3), 77–99.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
- Driscoll, M. P., & Burner, K. J. (2005). The cognitive revolution and instructional design. *The impact of the cognitive revolution on educational psychology*, 199-229.
- Fang, L., Baptista Nunes, M. & de Bruijn, C. (2012). Drill-and-Practice is not Necessarily a Pejorative Approach: an Example of its Successful Application as a Self-learning Component of a Phonetics Blended Learning Environment. In *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications*, pp. 1655-1664.
- Friorito, L. (2005). Teaching English for Specific Purposes. *Using English.com*. [Online]. Retrieved from <http://www.usingenglish.com/articles/teaching-english-for-specific-purposes-esp.html>.
- Iran-Nejad, A., McKeachie, W. J., & Berliner, D. C. (1990). The Multi-source Nature of learning: An Introduction. *Review of Educational Research*, 60(4), 509-516.
- Jones, L. (2007). *The student-centered classroom*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Kokkelenberg, E. C., Dhillon, M., & Christy. (2005). *The Effects of Class Size on Students Achievement in Higher Education*. Working Papers. Retrieved January 13, 2013, from [http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/cheri/workingPapers/upload/cheri\\_wp67.pdf](http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/cheri/workingPapers/upload/cheri_wp67.pdf)
- Maros, M., Stapa, S. H., & Yasin, M. S. M. (2012). English Language Proficiency Levels and Needs of International Postgraduate Students: Implications and Recommendations. *Asian Social Science*, 8(13), 181.
- Menon, M. S., & Patel, M. N. (2012). Importance of English Language in Corporate World. *International Journal for Research in Management and Pharmacy*, 1(1), 42-55
- Mihai, M., Stan, R. S., Moanga, A. S., Adam, S. L., & Oroian, E. (2012). ESP-A Teaching Approach for Technical Universities. *Acta Technica Napocensis-Languages for Specific Purposes*, 3, 135-140.
- Milton, J. (2006). Literature review in languages, technology and learning. *Futurelab Series*. Retrieved November 28, 2011, from [http://archive.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/lit\\_reviews/Languages\\_Review.pdf](http://archive.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/lit_reviews/Languages_Review.pdf).
- Momtazur, R. M., Thang, S. M., Mohd, S. A. A., & Norizan, A. R. (2009). Needs analysis for developing an ESP course for foreign postgraduates in science and technology. *Asian ESP Journal*, 5(2), 34-59.
- Richey, R. C., Klein, J. D., & Nelson, W. A. (2004). Developmental research: Studies of instructional design and development. *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology*, 2, 1099-130.
- Roshid, M. M., & Chowdhury, R. (2013). English language proficiency and employment: A case study of Bangladeshi graduates in Australian employment market. *Mevlana International Journal of Education (MIJE)*, 3(1), 68-81. Retrieved February 28, 2013, from [http://mije.mevlana.edu.tr/archieve/issue\\_3\\_1/6.mije\\_13\\_06\\_volume\\_3\\_issue\\_1\\_page\\_68\\_81\\_PDF.pdf](http://mije.mevlana.edu.tr/archieve/issue_3_1/6.mije_13_06_volume_3_issue_1_page_68_81_PDF.pdf).

- Sirat, M., Pandian, A., Muniandy, B., Mohamed, F. M. S., Haroon, H. A., Kabilan, M. K., & Abdul Razak, R. R. (2008). The University Curriculum and the Employment of Graduates. In M. Y. A. Bakar, N. E. Mokhtar, R. Jani, A. M. Zubairi, N. Othman, & A. Gan (Eds.), *Enhancing the Quality of Higher Education through Research: Shaping Future Policy* (pp. 16-17). Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Higher Education.
- Steve, T. F., & Hiroshi, F. (2013). Time is of the essence: factors encouraging out-of-class study time. *ELT Journal*, 67(1), 31-40. Retrieved January 21, 2013, from <http://eltj.oxfordjournals.org/content/67/1/31.short>.
- Vidal, R. T. (2012). Is there a correlation between reported language learning strategy use, actual strategy use and achievement? *Revista Linguagem & Ensino*, 5(1), 43-73.
- Vifansi, E. (2002). *Academic writing needs: an exploratory study of writing needs of ESL students*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). Purdue University.
- Wang, F., & Hanafin, M. J. (2005). Design-based research and technology-enhanced learning environments. *Educational technology research and development*, 53(4), 5-23.
- Wolf, M. K., Kao, J., Griffin, N., Herman, J. L., Bachman, P. L., Chang, S. M., & Farnsworth, T. (2008). Issues in Assessing English Language Learners: English Language Proficiency Measures and Accommodation Uses. Practice Review (Part 2 of 3). CRESST Report 732. *National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST)*.
- Zhu, W., & Flaitz, J. (2005). Using focus group methodology to understand international students' academic language needs: A comparison of perspectives. *TESL-EJ*, 8(4), 1-11.



## **Internationalisation of Higher Education: Proposed Framework on International Students' Satisfaction**

**Pui-Yee, Chong**

*Department of Social Sciences, College of Foundation & General Studies, Universiti Tenaga Nasional, Jalan Ikram-Uniten, 43000 Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

There are many dimensions in the internationalisation of higher education. One of the dimensions is international students. This dimension has been given great emphasis by many institutions for diverse reasons such as economy, while others are reputation and ranking of the university. Universities around the globe undergo tremendous pressure due to stiff competition both in terms of student enrolment and securing fund. All these have posed a great challenge to universities to re-look into improving services and quality to attract international students. Hence, universities need to carefully analyse key factors contributing to international students' satisfaction by developing strategies accordingly. Institutions need to provide quality service and environment for international students to ensure that they are satisfied with the services received while pursuing their studies. Students who are satisfied will help to attract more potential students to the institutions through increased student loyalty, positive word of mouth (WOM) communication and image of the higher education institutions (Arambewela, 2003; Arambewela & Hall, 2006). Based on the literature review, this paper aims to present various factors contributing to international students' satisfaction. These factors are translated into variables to measure international students' satisfaction, which can be used as a guideline by higher education institutions.

*Keywords:* Internationalisation of higher education; international students' satisfaction, students' satisfaction, higher education marketing

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail address:*

[pychong@uniten.edu.my](mailto:pychong@uniten.edu.my) (Pui-Yee, Chong)

### **INTRODUCTION**

There are many dimensions in the internationalisation of higher education (De Wit, 2002; Elkin & Devjee, 2005; Knight, 2008; Taylor, 2010). The definition of internationalisation varies, so its dimension

also differs from one institution to another in different countries. Among the dimensions, the consistently similar dimensions include international students and staff, research collaboration and mobility of students and staff through exchange programmes, and cross-border programmes. The dimension on international students has been given much attention by many researchers because international education has shown rapid demand by many growing economies in Asian countries. Asia will remain the major growth region contributing to over 70% demand, with China and India emerging as two major sources of international students (Arambewela *et al.*, 2006; Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007). A forecast by the International Development Programmes in Australia estimates a fourfold increase in the global demand for international education with approximately 7.2 million students by 2025, representing a 5.8% compound growth rate during this period. Flow of international students will continue to increase and grow worldwide in the foreseeable future (Woodfield, 2010). Data suggest that the market is expanding. Hence, this dimension of internationalisation will continue to be seen as important by higher education institutions (HEIs) around the globe.

The export and import of education have become so intense since the past two decades. In their 2007 report, Observatory of Borderless Higher Education (OBHE) highlighted countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and China as the emerging

contenders in international education market. Malaysia, though a relatively small player with around 2% of the international students market, has shown significant growth in student enrolment (Tham, 2013).

This paper aims to propose a framework on factors influencing international students' satisfaction based on the review of literatures. The paper is presented in the following headings: internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia, trade and business in higher education services, customer satisfaction, international students' satisfaction, factors that influence international students' satisfaction and the proposed framework. It is hoped that the framework will be translated into variables to measure international students' satisfaction which are useful as a guideline by higher education institutions and policy makers.

#### **INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION (HE) IN MALAYSIA**

Malaysia aspires to be an international education hub. In order to achieve this, the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Malaysia, had put in place internationalisation of HE as one of the strategic trusts as stipulated in Malaysia National Strategic Plan of Higher Education (PSPTN) Phase 1 (2007-2010). The main objective of this strategic trust is to build world recognition, produce marketable graduates, attract international students and generate innovation through research and development (Ministry of



Higher Education Malaysia / Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia, 2007). This strategic trust will eventually help to build the brand and reputation of Malaysia as an international education provider. With that, MoHE has set the target to attract 150,000 international students by 2015 and 200,000 students by 2020, with an average consistent growth of 13.5 percent annually (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia / Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia, 2007).

There is a tremendous growth in the number of international students studying in the public HEIs (PuHEIs) and private HEIs (PrHEIs) in Malaysia. It was recorded that there were 18,242 international

students in 2001, and in less than ten years, it grew to 86,919 international students, with about 16 percent growth per annum (MoHE, 2011). About 70 percent of the international students enrolled at PrHEIs. With that, the PrHEIs would therefore house approximately 142,500 international students or 95 percent of 150,000 by 2015. Table 1 shows the enrolment of international students at PuHEI and PrHEI for a period of nine years (MoHE' website). It shows drastic increment of enrolment dominantly at PrHEIs. About a third are from China and Indonesia, while the rest are mainly from MENA countries (Middle East and North Africa) and Western Asia (Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007).

TABLE 1  
Data of international student enrolment at Public and Private HEIs between 2001-2010

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Public HEI	4770	5045	5239	5735	6622	7941	14324	18486	22456	24214
Private HEI	13472	22827	25158	25939	33903	36449	33604	50679	58294	62705
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18242</b>	<b>27872</b>	<b>30397</b>	<b>31674</b>	<b>40525</b>	<b>44390</b>	<b>47928</b>	<b>69165</b>	<b>80750</b>	<b>86919</b>

(Source: MoHE, Malaysia)

**TRADE AND BUSINESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES**

Higher education industry has been given much attention because of its lucrative returns. International education has marked a major contribution on international trade or exports (Radulovich, 2008). The major exporters of higher education are the United State, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany and France (OECD, 2013). Education export was recorded over US\$28 billion in 2005, with United States alone accounting to an estimated US\$14.1 billion, followed

by United Kingdom with US\$6 billion and Australia recorded US\$5.5 billion (World Bank, 2007). The estimated value derived from UK education export to the UK economy was £14.1 billion in 2008/09. Out of this figure, higher education contributed around 55% of the overall education export (London Economic, 2011). Meanwhile, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that the total export income from education services was AUD\$16.3 billion in 2010-2011, where higher education recorded the highest contributor. The Australian

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has ranked education services as Australia's third largest single export earner (AEI, 2012). As for Malaysia, the income generated through education export was recorded at RM2.6 billion in the year 2010 (MoHE, 2011).

As such, education export or trade in education is a profitable business (Altbach & Knight, 2007). In this business, students assume the role of customers as they pay fees and have set certain expectations (Voss *et al.*, 2006) in receiving education services. Some scholars contested (Tilak, 2008) that education be treated as a business, where students assuming the role as customers. For the purpose of this research, the researcher used a marketing perspective which suggests that students are treated as customers (Guolla, 1999). When students are taking on the role as customers, they are given the opportunity to provide feedbacks and institutions may review these feedbacks seriously to further improve delivery of education services. This is particularly pertinent for PrHEIs because they are operating as a business entity in providing education services. In the context of Malaysia, private institutions have been identified as the catalyst, working and partnering with the government in achieving educational excellence by raising standards and widening access, with the objective to develop a first-world talent base (Prime Minister Department, Malaysia, 2010).

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction refers to customers' feelings and attitude after the purchase or consumption of products or services (Jamal & Naser, 2002). This reflects that prior to the purchase, customers have set certain expectations and after their purchase or consumption, they make an evaluation of the products or services. If the performance of the products or services met their expectations (Oliver, 1980, as cited in Jamal & Naser, 2002), the customer would feel satisfied. Hence, customer satisfaction measures how well customers' expectations are being met (Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007).

Customer satisfaction is generally recognised as critical determinants of long-term business success (Jamal & Naser, 2002; Busacca & Padula, 2005) and overall business performance to an organisation (Ranaweera & Prabhu, 2003, cited in LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999). The importance of customer satisfaction is derived from the commonly accepted philosophy that for a business to be successful and profitable, it must satisfy customers (Shin & Elliott, 2001, as cited in Clemes *et al.*, 2008). Customer satisfaction will impact market share, stronger competitive position, increase productivity, return of investment, profitability and quality of service (Athiyaman, 2000; Wong & Law, 2003; Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004; Arambewela & Hall 2006; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007; Clemes *et al.*, 2008; Bianchi & Drennan, 2012).

Satisfied customers will lead to many benefits to an organization as they will engage in favorable behavioral responses (Clemes *et al* 2008). These include positive word of mouth and recommendation (Halstead & Page, 1992; Harvir & Voyer, 2000; Andaleeb 2001; Jamal & Naser, 2002; Wong & Law, 2003; Hui *et al* 2007; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007; Clemes *et al.*, 2008; Kuo *et al.*, 2009; Bianchi *et al.*, 2012; Jiewanto *et al.*, 2012). Word of Mouth (WOM) represents the client's willingness to recommend the products and service to others in the near future (Athiyaman, 2000; Jiewanto *et al.*, 2012).

Organisations that are able to satisfy their customers will gain customer retention as customers will repeat purchase, increase their purchasing from the same provider, increase customer loyalty and brand loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Anderson *et al.*, 1994; Liljander & Strandvik, 1995; LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999; Harvir & Voger, 2000; Yu & Dean, 2001; Jamal & Naser, 2002; Wong & Law, 2003; Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004; Hui *et al.*, 2007; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007; Kuo *et al.*, 2009; Bianchi *et al.*, 2012; Jiewanto *et al.*, 2012).

On the other hand, dissatisfied customers will have increased tendency to stop repeat purchasing, give negative word of mouth (Fornell *et al.*, 1996 in Clemes *et al.*, 2008), increase merchandise return, raise more complaints (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988, as in Bianchi & Drennan, 2012) and switch behaviour (Rust & Zahorick, 1993, as in Clemes *et al.*, 2008).

Hence, for an organisation to sustain in a highly competitive environment (Patterson *et al.*, 1997, cited in Arambewela & Hall, 2006), it needs to give attention to its customer satisfaction. Therefore, delivering satisfaction is one of the major goals of enterprise (Andaleeb, 2001). Companies should listen to and satisfy their customers in order to stay competitive, as numerous studies have shown that the long-term success of a firm is closely related to its ability to adapt to customers' needs and changing preferences (Li *et al.*, 2006; Takala *et al.*, 2006, as cited in Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007).

A review of the above literatures revealed similar concepts in customer satisfaction measures, which include perceived value, perceived quality, customer expectations, customer satisfaction, customer complaints and customer loyalty (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004). These concepts can be divided into three key processes. The first key process is the causes or drivers of satisfaction that include customers' expectations, perceived value, perceived quality and image. The second is the attainment of satisfaction or dissatisfaction; some use the term disconfirmation (Oliver, 1980, as cited in Jamal & Naser, 2002). Finally, the third process is the results, outcomes or consequences of satisfaction which may lead to customer loyalty and complaint behaviour (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004). The concept of customer satisfaction illustrated in Fig.1 is adopted from Turkyilmaz and Ozkan (2007) and Grigoroudis and Siskos (2004).

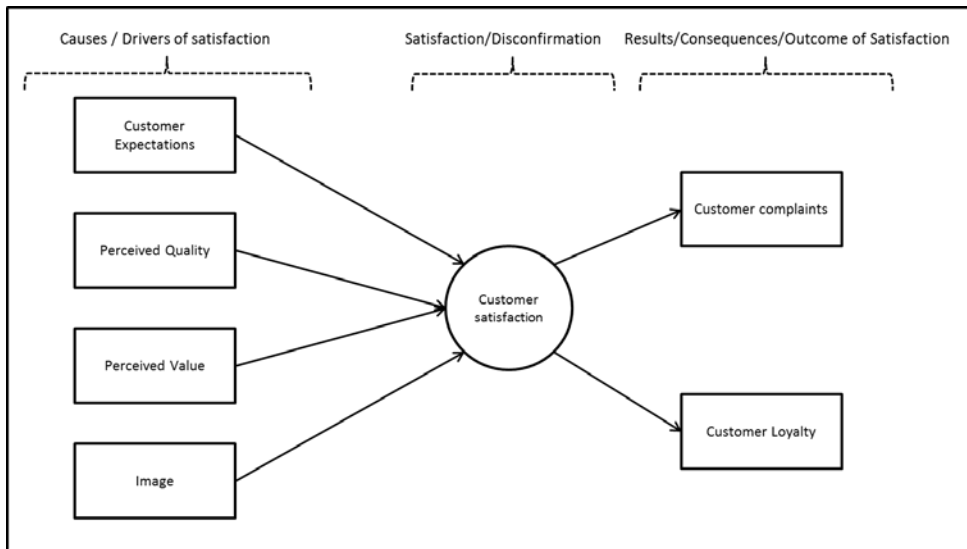


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework of Customer Satisfaction

The following paragraph provides a brief explanation of the conceptual framework of customer satisfaction. Customer expectation is related to prior anticipations or expectations of the product or company in the eyes of the individual customers. Such expectations were derived from customers' perceptions of the product and company, which may also be influenced by information given prior to the purchase through marketing, branding or product promotion by the company, as well as their previous experiences in using the products or services (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007). Perceived quality is the customer's evaluation of recent consumption experience. It evaluates the degree to which a product or a service meets a customer's requirements, or against the offering by the service providers (Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007). Customers are always conscious about the

sacrifice they make for the services received or "cost/benefit trade-off" relationships. Perceived value is a trade-off between what customers receive such as quality, benefits and utilities, and what they sacrifice such as price, opportunity cost, time and efforts (Cronin *et al.*, 1997, 2000; Keeney, 1999; Zeithaml, 1988, cited in Kuo *et al.*, 2009). As explained by Turkyilmaz and Ozkan (2007), perceived value is generated based on the product quality relative to the price paid by customers. Image refers to "the brand name and the kind of associations and perception of customers from the product or company" (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004, p. 345; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007). The associations include being reliable, professional, innovative, contributions to society and adding prestige to its user (Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007). According to Turkyilmaz and Ozkan (2007), image has a positive effect on customers' expectations,

as well as their satisfaction and loyalty. Customer satisfaction is a yardstick to indicate how satisfied customers are, and how well their expectations are met (Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2004; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007). Meanwhile, customer loyalty is built as a result of satisfied customers (Britner, 1990, as cited in Hui *et al.*, 2007). Studies have shown that loyal customers will demonstrate post-consumer behaviour like re-purchase, positive word of mouth and recommending to others (Andaleeb, 2001; Jamal & Naser, 2002; Hui *et al.*, 2007; Turkyilmaz & Ozkan, 2007; Clemes *et al.*, 2008). Another outcome of customer satisfaction, besides customer loyalty, is the reduced of customers' complaint behaviour. Customers who are satisfied will demonstrate less complaint behaviour (Cadotte & Turgeon, 1988, cited in Bianchi *et al.*, 2012).

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' SATISFACTION**

The concept of student as customer is not new (Douglas *et al.*, 2008). However, this supplier/customer relationship is not as clear cut as some other service relationships, given that students are also "partners" in the learning process (Yorke, 1999, cited in Douglas *et al.*, 2008). Service quality and customer satisfaction are important issues for universities competing at undergraduate and postgraduate levels for local and international students (Douglas *et al.*, 2008). Even though there are many debates about the role of students for example, they can be customers, clients, producers

and products (Guolla, 1999), researchers who have studied student satisfaction will take the role of students as customers. As it is more appropriate in measuring students' satisfaction (Arambewela, 2003).

Satisfied students will help to attract more potential students to the institutions through increased students' loyalty, positive word of mouth (WOM) communication and image of the higher education institutions (Arambewela, 2003; Arambewela & Hall, 2006; Slethaug & Manjula, 2012). With positive WOM, students will likely recommend family members and friends to pursue higher education at the particular university that they are satisfied with (Slethaug & Manjula, 2012). This will eventually improve students' retention and growth for the university and lead to better branding and reputation for the university (Arambewela 2003). Contrary to satisfied students are dissatisfied students whose negative WOM may tarnish the reputation and brand of university, and eventually cause the university to lose potential students (Hayes, 1977, cited in Shekarchizadeh *et al.*, 2011; Guallo, 1999, cited in Arambewela & Hall, 2006) and impact the bottom line of the institution (Slethaug & Manjula, 2012). Athiyaman (2000) confirmed that there is a significantly strong relationship between satisfied students with positive WOM and student retention. Hence, universities need to ensure that they have delivered their service well and that students as their customers are satisfied with their services. This will help to increase student enrolment, reduce student attrition and

enhance students' experience (Arambewela & Hall, 2011b). Therefore, students' satisfaction is a key strategic variable in maintaining the stiff competition in international higher education (Arambewela, 2003; Arambewela *et al.*, 2006).

Past literatures demonstrate that university faces tremendous challenges due to stiff competition in terms of student enrolment and securing fund, funding constraints from federal or state government and rising cost of higher education (LeBlanc & Nguyen, 1999; DeShields *et al.*, 2005; Butt & Rehman, 2010). All these have posed a great challenge to universities to re-look into improving services and quality so as to attract more students (DeShields *et al.*, 2005). For this reason, HEIs need to carefully analyse key factors contributing to students' satisfaction and therefore develop strategies accordingly.

Based on the service-recipient paradigm, students are treated as customers (Havarnek & Brodwin, 1998, cited in Arambewela *et al.*, 2006; Arambewela & Hall, 2006); thus, universities need to be highly student-oriented in their service delivery (Arambewela & Hall, 2006). Based on the theory of customer satisfaction by Oliver (1996, cited in Arambewela *et al.*, 2006), expectation becomes important in evaluating customer satisfaction. The evaluation of the quality and performance of a service, such as university education, can only be possible after experiencing or consuming because students have limited tangible pre-choice cues. The perceptions formed during this evaluation process are

key indicators of students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Halstead *et al.*, 1994, cited in Arambewela *et al.*, 2006).

International education has unique characteristics because international students consume education services in a foreign country. It is similar to other industries such as tourism and healthcare services, where companies provide their services to overseas customers in domestic market, a mode that is also known as inward service exporters. The satisfaction or dissatisfaction involves not only the service outcome such as a degree in the case of education but also service process, customer interaction with other people in a new context and the role of the customer in adding value to the final experience (Berry *et al.*, 2002; Prahalad & Venkatram, 2000; Walter *et al.*, 2010, cited in Bianchi *et al.*, 2012). As customers need to travel to another country to consume the services, they face more challenges which include government immigration policies, exchange rate fluctuations and potential intercultural service problems (Bianchi *et al.*, 2012). Hence, customer satisfaction will not only be affected by the outcome of the service but the overall experiences which involve living in a new country, interaction between customers and service providers of different cultural backgrounds, and interaction with other customers (Li & Guisinger, 1992; Reardon *et al.*, 1996; Zhang *et al.*, 2010, cited in Bianchi *et al.*, 2012). Overseas customers must travel to a new country that is usually unknown and culturally different from their own (Bianchi *et al.*, 2012). The

consumption of service in education takes a longer duration and students have to live and interact with the host environment for a long period of time. This suggests that drivers of satisfaction or dissatisfaction for overseas customers involve a wide range of elements that may differ from traditional service encounters held in the domestic country of the customers (Bianchi *et al.*, 2012).

International students coming from diverse countries have different cultural backgrounds, with different needs and wants that institutions need to satisfy (Arambewela & Hall, 2011a). In addition, international students face various difficulties in adjusting to a different economic and cultural environment and to different learning and teaching styles (Mavondo *et al.*, 2004). Although quality of education undoubtedly plays an important role in students' satisfaction and should be the prime concern of universities (Mavondo *et al.*, 2004), their needs and satisfaction are not limited to merely academic needs but the entire living and learning environment at host country.

## FACTORS IN MEASURING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' SATISFACTION

Researcher has conducted a review on primary and secondary literatures on international students and students' satisfaction. In the context of this study, the primary literatures are those written by the original authors, while the secondary literatures refer to ones that were reviewed by other authors. A total of forty two primary literatures and thirty two secondary literatures were reviewed. The findings of the review revealed that studies on international students can be categorised into five themes: (i) factors that influence the choice of study destination, (ii) international students' experience and expectations, (iii) challenges, problems and adjustment faced by international students, (iv) perspective on service quality, and (v) factors that influence satisfaction. The variables found from each theme are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
Variables of the Five Themes

(1) Choice of Study Destination	
1. Choice of University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• study programmes</li> <li>• courses</li> <li>• fees</li> <li>• facilities</li> <li>• support services</li> <li>• intellectual climate</li> <li>• teaching quality</li> <li>• teaching staff and methods</li> <li>• recognition of courses</li> <li>• image and prestige of the university</li> </ul>	2. Choice of country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safety</li> <li>• life-style</li> <li>• cost of living</li> <li>• transportation</li> <li>• racial discrimination</li> <li>• visas</li> <li>• immigration potential</li> <li>• friends</li> <li>• family</li> <li>• climate</li> <li>• culture</li> </ul>
(Mashkuri & Chong, 2011; Veloutsou <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Arambewela, 2003; Smith <i>et al.</i> , 2002; Townley, 2001; Geall, 2000; DETYA, 2000; Burke, 1986 in Arambewela & Hall, 2009; Lawley, 1998; Duan, 1997; International Development Programmes, 1995, cited in Arambewela & Hall, 2009).	

TABLE 2 (Continue)

<p><b>(2) International Students' Experience and Expectation</b></p>			
<p>1. Experiences of Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement and interaction with lecturers</li> <li>• teaching delivery</li> <li>• mentoring and tutoring assistance</li> <li>• counselling</li> <li>• club and society</li> <li>• socialisation</li> <li>• orientation.</li> </ul>	<p>2. Experiences of Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• friends from own country</li> <li>• proximity to home country</li> <li>• friendly people</li> <li>• safety and security</li> <li>• cost of living</li> <li>• employment</li> <li>• migration opportunity</li> </ul>	<p>3. Expectation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition of degree</li> <li>• reputation of the university</li> <li>• good teaching quality</li> <li>• friendly and caring lecturer</li> <li>• good support staff to support admission, registration, finance and visa matters.</li> <li>• friendly environment</li> <li>• safe place to live</li> <li>• employment and migration opportunity</li> </ul>	
<p>(Azmat <i>et al.</i>, 2013; Slethaug &amp; Manjula, 2012; Akiba, 2008)</p>			
<p><b>(3) Challenges, Problems and Adjustment</b></p>			
<p>1. Academic Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different methods of teaching &amp; learning</li> </ul>	<p>2. Non-Academic Challenges in the Campus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• healthcare</li> <li>• accommodation &amp; transportation.</li> <li>• loneliness</li> <li>• not being cared for or lack of sense of belongingness to the community in campus</li> </ul>	<p>3. Social challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food</li> <li>• discrimination</li> <li>• climate</li> <li>• religion</li> <li>• cost of living</li> <li>• difficulty in interacting with local</li> <li>• language</li> </ul>	<p>4. Adjustment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to new culture</li> <li>• lack of social support (example no friends or family members in host country).</li> </ul>
<p>(Zuria <i>et al.</i>, 2010)</p>	<p>(Zuria <i>et al.</i>, 2010).</p>	<p>(Roselind <i>et al.</i>, 2013; Suseela &amp; Poovaikarasi, 2011; Thavamalar &amp; Parvinder, 2010; Abdul Rahman, 2013)</p>	<p>(Yusliza, 2011 &amp; 2012; Yusliza <i>et al.</i>, 2010; Yusliza &amp; Abdul Kadir, 2011; Yusliza &amp; Shankar, 2010; Suseela &amp; Poovaikarasi, 2011; Thavamalar &amp; Parvinder, 2010).</p>
<p><b>(4) Perspective on Service Quality</b></p>			
<p>1. Quality of academic staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• engagement with students</li> <li>• helpful</li> <li>• effective delivery of teaching</li> <li>• advising</li> <li>• care and concern</li> <li>• English proficiency</li> </ul>		<p>2. Quality of support staff</p>	<p>3. Quality of facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computer lab</li> <li>• library</li> </ul>
<p>(Shekarchizadeh <i>et al.</i>, 2011; Azizah <i>et al.</i>, 2011)</p>			
<p><b>(5) Satisfaction of International Students</b></p>			
<p>1. Academic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high standard of teaching materials, meeting the objectives of the course and study outcome, academic workload, quality of lecturers, lecturers should engage, provide feedback, always available, friendly effective delivery of lessons, admission requirement.</li> <li>• modern and up-to-date facilities of laboratory, computing, classroom and library;</li> <li>• recognition of the qualification</li> <li>• reputation or prestige of the institution</li> <li>• fee</li> </ul>	<p>2. Non-Academic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easy access to information, standard of accommodation, counselling, international orientation programme, sense of belongingness, friendly environment efficient and friendly administrative staff especially those in international office, good condition of recreational and sport facilities, opportunity for socialisation in club and society, financial assistance</li> </ul>	<p>3. Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• friends and relatives, social distancing, discrimination and acceptance from community, safety and security, communication and language, employment opportunity, migration opportunity, legal framework e.g., visa</li> <li>• cost of living</li> </ul>	
<p>(Sam, 2001; Arambewela, 2003; Arambewela <i>et al.</i>, 2006; Arambewela &amp; Hall, 2006; Arambewela &amp; Hall, 2009; Arambewela &amp; Hall, 2011b; Lim, 2013; Hishamuddin <i>et al.</i>, 2008; Ikwuagwu, 2010; Lim, 2013; Chong &amp; Amlil Hazlin, 2013; Abdul Rahman, 2013)</p>			



Besides reviewing the themes on international students, literatures on student satisfaction were also included in the review of literature. As international students are in the same system as other local students, hence reviewing students' satisfaction will help to reveal factors that contribute to their satisfaction.

TABLE 3  
Variables for Student Satisfaction

<b>(6) Student Satisfaction</b>	
<p>1. Quality Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• course content</li> <li>• good organisation and relevant material</li> <li>• learning took place</li> <li>• equipped laboratories</li> <li>• computing facilities</li> <li>• library</li> <li>• conducive classrooms</li> </ul>	<p>2. Quality Lecturers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopt different approaches to teaching</li> <li>• have fair assessment</li> <li>• give appropriate workload</li> <li>• are enthusiastic and energetic</li> <li>• deliver lessons in an interesting manner</li> <li>• encourage dialogues, communication and feedback</li> <li>• accessible and available</li> <li>• approachable, friendly and helpful</li> <li>• engaging and giving consultation at all time</li> <li>• are experts and qualified in their respective field</li> </ul>
<p>(Anthony &amp; Shaheen, 2013; Butt &amp; Rehman, 2010; Temizer <i>et al.</i>, 2012; Brown &amp; Mazzarol, 2009; Clemes <i>et al.</i>, 2008; Sadiq &amp; Mohammad, 2003; Athiyaman, 2000; Guolla, 1999; LeBlanc &amp; Nguyen, 1999; Aldridge &amp; Rowley, 1998; Athiyaman, 1997).</p>	

Analysis carried out for the literatures presented in Table 2 and Table 3 reveals that the variables from each theme show similarity and consistency, while some are overlapping. As discussed earlier, all the five themes formed contributing factors to international students' satisfaction. These overlaps of variables are subsequently categorised into five domains that influence international students' satisfaction. The domains include: (1) Internal Environment-Academic, (2) Internal Environment Non-Academic, (3) External Environment, (4) Image, and (5) Perceived Value.

Therefore, the development of the proposed framework on the factors influencing international students' satisfaction in Fig.2 was derived from the literatures on international students, student satisfaction and adopted theory on customer satisfaction in Fig.1. The framework is

consistent with other studies (Aldridge & Rowley, 1998; Arambewela, 2003; Mavondo *et al.*, 2004; Ueltschya *et al.*, 2004, cited in Arambewela & Hall, 2011b) that categorised the factors into internal environment and external environment. In this framework, the researcher upgraded some variables into an independent domain. The tuition fee and cost of living variables were upgraded into a domain called Perceived Value, while the variable on recognition and prestige was categorised as Image. The researcher believes that the two domains deserved to be an independent domain instead of a variable of internal environment or external environment domains. This separation is consistent with the theory of customer satisfaction, where Image and Perceived Value are given the attention in the literatures discussed above and they contribute as drivers of satisfaction.

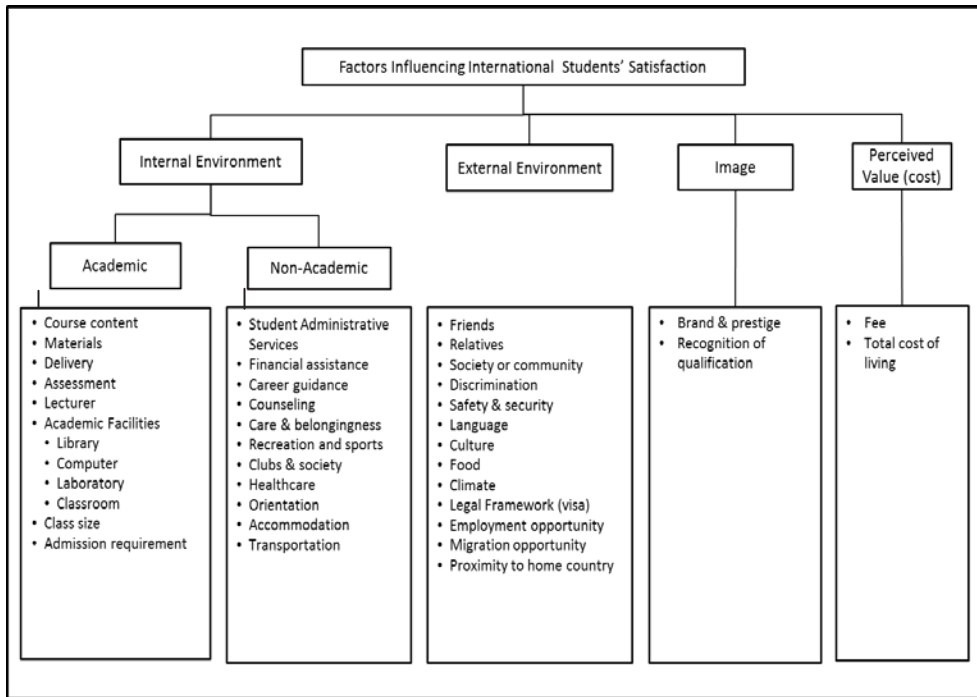


Fig.2: Proposed Framework on Factors Influencing International Students' Satisfaction

The following paragraph explains the five domains of the proposed framework. Internal Environment Academic domain covers all educational services, and it refers to teaching quality, study programme, teaching staff and method of instruction, engagement of teachers with students, academic performance of the students, industrial training and other services and facilities related to teaching and learning such as computer laboratory and library facilities (DeShields *et al.*, 2005; Arambewela, 2006; Douglas *et al.*, 2008; Bianchi & Drennan, 2012).

The Internal Environment Non-Academic domain includes other support services within the campus that are non-academic related such as accommodation,

security, student services, student clubs and society, orientation, transportation, gym and attractive campus with shops (Mavondo *et al.*, 2004; Arambewela, 2006; Douglas *et al.*, 2008; Bianchi & Drennan, 2012). The non-academic services form part of the overall students' satisfaction as they consume such services while on campus.

External environment includes the social and physical dimension outside of the university campus (Arambewela & Hall, 2011b). These include social relationships such as friendship patterns, discrimination, living arrangements, housing and accommodation, beautiful touristic attractions and good weather, receiving good support from home stay

family or friends, and well organised and safe city with good customer service, transportation and medical services, experiencing a new culture, food and language, feeling welcomed and accepted by local people (Bianchi & Drennan, 2012). All these contribute to the entire experiences and will impact the overall international students' satisfaction.

Image of an institution is a strong influence in determining student satisfaction. Image refers to the brand name that adds prestige to the students and the recognition of the degree at home country and other countries. Study by Temizer and Turkyilmaz (2012) found that image has a positive effect on students' satisfaction and loyalty.

Perceived Value is the "perceived level of service quality relative to the price paid by students" (Temizer & Turkyilmaz, 2012 p. 3804). Variables for this domain include tuition fee and total cost of living at the host country.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has reviewed numerous literatures on international students from various themes, student satisfaction and theory on customer satisfaction. Subsequently, it has proposed a framework on the factors influencing international students' satisfaction. It is hoped that these factors will be translated into variables to measure international students' satisfaction, which can be used as a guideline by higher education institutions, particularly as they aim to improve their service quality. The

framework reflects the many stakeholders including the HEIs, community and the country, as a whole in providing conducive environment for learning and living for international students. Therefore, a concerted effort by all stakeholders is required to build the brand and reputation of the country instead of the isolation effort by learning institutions. Thus, the entire ecosystem needs to be in place in making Malaysia an education hub and choice of study destination.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges the support from Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) in providing Seed Fund for this research and Prof. Tham Siew Yean and Dr. Andrew Kam from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) for their valuable advice. My appreciation also goes to Ms. Evelyn Yeap who helped in proofreading the article.

## REFERENCES

- Akiba, H. (2008). *The challenging face of transnational education in Malaysia: A case study of international offshore university programs*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). University of Minnesota.
- Alavi, M., & Mansor, S. M. S. (2011). Categories of Problems among international Students in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 1581-1587.
- Aldridge, S., & Rowley, J. (1998). Measuring customer satisfaction in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 6(4), 197-204.

- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3-4), 290-305.
- Andaleeb, S. S. (2001). Service quality perceptions and patient satisfaction: a study of hospitals in a developing country. *Social Science & Medicine*, 52(9), 1359-1370.
- Anthony, V., & Shaheen, M. (2013). Malaysian Private Education Quality : Application of SERVQUAL Model. *International Education Studies*, 6(4), 164-170.
- Arambewela, R. (2003). *Post-choice satisfaction of international postgraduate students from Asia studying in Victorian Universities*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). Victoria University of Technology.
- Arambewela, R., Hall, J., & Zuhair, S. (2006). Postgraduate International Students from Asia: Factors Influencing Satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 15(2), 105-127.
- Arambewela, R., & Hall, J. (2006). A Comparative Analysis of International Education Satisfaction Using SERVQUAL. *Journal of Services Research*, 6(Special Issue), 141-163.
- Arambewela, R., & Hall, J. (2009). An empirical model of international student satisfaction. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 21(4), 555-569.
- Arambewela, R., & Hall, J. (2011a). The role of personal values in enhancing student experience and satisfaction among international postgraduate students: an exploratory study. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 29, 1807-1815.
- Arambewela, R., & Hall, J. (2011b). The Interaction Effects of the Internal and external university environment and the influence of personal values, on satisfaction among international postgraduate students. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17.
- Athiyaman, A. (1997). Linking student satisfaction and service quality perceptions: the case of university education. *European Journal of Marketing*, 31(7), 528-540.
- Athiyaman, A. (2000). Perceived service quality in the higher education sector: An empirical analysis. In *Proceeding ANZMAC 2000 Visionary Marketing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century : Facing the Challenges*, pp. 50-55.
- Australia Education International. (2012). *International Education Snapshot*. Retrieved August 20, 2013, from <https://www.aei.gov.au/research/research-snapshots/pages/default.aspx>
- Azizah, R., Hamidah, A. R., & Roziana, S. (2011). The International Students' Perception Towards the Education Quality. *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanity Studies*, 3(2), 49-56.
- Azmat, F., Osborne, A., Le Rossignol, K., Jogulu, U., Rentschler, R., Robottom, I., & Malathy, V. (2013). Understanding aspirations and expectations of international students in Australian higher education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 33(1), 97-111.
- Bianchi, C., & Drennan, J. (2012). Drivers of satisfaction and dissatisfaction for overseas service consumers: a critical incident technique approach. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 20(1), 97-107.
- Brown, R. M., & Mazzarol, T. W. (2009). The importance of institutional image to student satisfaction and loyalty within higher education. *Higher Education*, 58(1), 81-95.
- Busacca, B., & Padula, G. (2005). Understanding the relationship between attribute performance and overall satisfaction: Theory, measurement and Implications. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 23(6), 543-561.

- Butt, B. Z., & Rehman, K. U. (2010). A study examining the students' satisfaction in higher education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 5446-5450.
- Clemes, M. D., Gan, C. E. C., & Kao, T. H. (2008). University Student Satisfaction: An Empirical Analysis. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 17(2), 292-325.
- Cronin, J. J., Brady, M. K., & Hult, G. T. M. (2000). Assessing the effects of Quality, Value and Customer Satisfaction on Consumer Behavioral Intentions in Service Environments. *Journal of Retailing*, 76(2), 193-218.
- De Wit, H. (2002). *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe: A historical, comparative and conceptual analysis*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- DeShields Jr, O. W., Kara, A., & Kaynak, E. (2005). Determinants of business student satisfaction and retention in higher education: Applying Herzberg's two-factor theory. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 19(2), 128-139.
- Douglas, J., McClelland, R., & Davies, J. (2008). The Development Of A Conceptual Model Of Student Satisfaction With Their Experience In Higher Education. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 16(1), 19-35.
- Elkin, G., Devjee, F., & Farnsworth, J. (2005). Visualising the internationalization of universities. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 19(4), 318-329.
- Faiz, N. S. M. (2011). From theory to practice: The learning challenges for international students to succeed in a Malaysian technical and vocational (TVE) higher education institution. *Proceeding The Third Asian conference on Education 2011*, pp. 496-505.
- Grigoroudis, E., & Siskos, Y. (2004). A survey of customer satisfaction barometers: Some results from the transportation-communications sector. *European Journal of Operational Research*, 152(2), 334-353.
- Guolla, M. (1999). Assessing the Teaching Quality to Student Satisfaction Relationship: Applied Customer Satisfaction Research in the Classroom. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 7(3), 87-97.
- Harvir, S. B., & Voyer, P. A. (2000). Word-of-Mouth within a Service Purchase Decision Context. *Journal of Service Research*, 3(2), 166-177.
- Hasan, H. F. A., Ilias, A., Rahman, R. A., & Razak, M. Z. A. (2008). Service Quality and Student Satisfaction : A Case Study at Private Higher Education Institutions. *International Business Research*, 1(3), 163-175.
- Hui, T. K., Wan, D. T. W., & Ho, A. (2007). Tourists' satisfaction, recommendation and revisiting Singapore. *Tourism Management*, 28(4), 965-975.
- Ikwuagwu, V. O. (2010). *International Student Satisfaction Levels with Student Support Services at Delaware State University*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). Delaware State University.
- Jamal, A., & Naser K. (2002). Customer satisfaction and retail banking : an assessment of some of the key antecedents of customer satisfaction in retail banking. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 20(4), 146-160.
- Jiewanto, A., Laurens, C., & Nelloh, L. (2012). Influence of Service Quality, University Image and Student Satisfaction toward WOWM Intention: A Case Study on Universitas Pelita Harapan Surabaya. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 40, 16-23.

- Knight, J. (2008). Internationalization of higher education in the 21st century: Concepts, rationales, strategies and issues. In K. Sarjit, M. Sirat, & A. Norzaini (Eds), *Globalisation and internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia, Pulau Pinang: Penerbit USM*, pp. 22-50.
- Kuo, Y. F., Wu, C. M., & Deng, W. J. (2009). The relationships among service quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction and post-purchase intention in mobile value-added services. *Computer in Human Behavior*, 25(4), 887-896.
- LeBlanc, G., & Nguyen, N. (1999). Listening to the customer's voice: examining perceived service value among business college students. *The International Journal of Educational Management*, 13(4), 187-198.
- Lim, K. S. E. (2013). A Qualitative Study of Factors Contributing to International Students' Satisfaction of Institutional Quality. *Asian Social Sciences* 9(3), 126-131.
- London Economics. (2011). *Estimating the Value to the UK of Education Exports*. Department of Business Innovation & Skills : BIS Research Paper Number 46.
- Malaysia Higher Education Statistics. (2011). *Malaysia Higher Education Statistics*. Ministry of Higher Education, Putrajaya, Malaysia.
- Mashkuri, Y., & Chong, P. Y. (2011). Understanding international student choices. *The Association of Commonwealth Universities: Bulletin No. 174*, pp. 12-14.
- Mavondo, F. T., Tsarenko, Y., & Gabbott, M. (2004). International and Local Student Satisfaction: Resources and Capabilities Perspective. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 14(1), 41-60.
- Mazzarol, T. (1998). Critical success factors for international education marketing. *International Journal of Education Management*, 12(4), 163-176.
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2007). *Pelan Strategik Pengajian Tinggi Negara Melangkaui 2020*. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2011). *Pelan Strategik Pengajian Tinggi Negara Melangkaui 2020 Fasa 2 (2011-2015)*. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2011). *Internationalisation Policy for Higher Education Malaysia*. Putrajaya, Malaysia. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2013). *Operational Framework for International Student Management*. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. (2013). *Higher Education Statistics*. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia. Retrieved September 12, 2013, from [http://www.mohe.gov.my/web\\_statistik/](http://www.mohe.gov.my/web_statistik/)
- National Higher Education Research Institute. (2009). *Kajian Pelajar Antarabangsa di Malaysia*. Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.
- OECD. (2013). *Education Indicators In Focus*. Retrieved May 25, 2015, from [http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/EDIF%202013--N%C2%B014%20\(eng\)-Final.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/EDIF%202013--N%C2%B014%20(eng)-Final.pdf)
- Oh, H. (1999). Service quality, customer satisfaction and customer value: a holistic perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 18(1), 67-82.
- Prime Minister Department Malaysia. (2010). *Economic Transformation Programme: A Roadmap for Malaysia*. Prime Minister Department Malaysia.

- Radulovich, L. P. (2008). *An empirical examination of the factors affecting the internationalization of professional services SMEs: The case of India*. (Doctotal thesis dissertation). Cleveland State University.
- Rahman, E. A. (2013). Ideas, Practices and Challenges of Internationalising Higher Education in Malaysia: Micro Perpectives. In T. S. Yean (Ed.), *Internationalizing higher education in Malaysia: Understanding, practices and challenges* (pp. 119-140). Singapore: ISEAS.
- Roselind, W., Shahrina, M. N., & Radzuan, R. (2013). International Students' Cultural Experiences: Exploring Socio-Cultural and Academic Adjustment in Malaysian Universities. *Recent Advances in Modern Educational Technologies*, 31-37.
- Sadiq, M. S., & Mohammad, S. (2003). Private Higher Education in Malaysia: Students' satisfaction level and strategic implications. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 25(2), 173-181.
- Sam, D. L. (2001). Satisfaction with Life Among International Students: An Exploratory Study. *Social Indicators Research*, 53(3), 315-337.
- Shekarchizadeh, A., Rasli, A., & Hon-Tat, H. (2011). SERVQUAL in Malaysian universities: Perspectives of international students. *Business Process Management Journal*, 17(1), 67-81.
- Slethaug, G., & Manjula, J. (2012). The Business of Education: Improving International Student Learning Experiences in Malaysia. *World Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(6), 179-199.
- Suseela, M., & Poovaikarasi, S. S. (2011). Adjustment problems among international students in Malaysian private higher education institutions. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 833-837.
- Taylor, J. (2010). The management of internationalization in higher education. In F. Maringe & N. Foskett (Eds.), *Globalization and internationalisation in higher education: Theoretical, strategic and management perspectives* (pp. 97-107). London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Temizer, L., & Turkyilmaz, A. (2012). Implementation of Student satisfaction index model in higher education institutions. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 3802-3806.
- Thavamalar, T., & Parvinder, K. H. S. (2010). A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach to Socio-Cultural and Academic Adjustment Experiences of International Students. *The Journal of the South East Asia Research Center for Communication and Humanities*, 2, 91-113.
- Turkyilmaz, A., & Ozkan, C. (2007). Development of a customer satisfaction index model: An application to the Turkish mobile phone sector. *Industrial Management & data Systems*, 107(5), 672-687.
- Verbik, L., & Lasanowski, V. (2007). International Student Mobility: Patterns and Trends. *The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education (OBHE) Report, September*. Retrieved September 10, 2013, from <http://www.obhe.ac.uk>.
- Voss, R., Gruber, T., & Szmigin, I. (2006). Service Quality in higher education: The role of student expectations. *Journal of Business Research*, 60(9), 949-959.
- Wong, J., & Law, R. (2003). Difference in shopping satisfaction levels: a study of tourist in Hong Kong. *Tourism Management*, 24(4), 401-410.
- Woodfield, S. (2010). Key trends and emerging issues in international student mobility (ISM). In F. Maringe & N. Foskett (Eds.), *Globalization and internationalisation in higher education: Theoretical, strategic and management perspectives* (pp. 97-107). London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

- World Bank. (2007). *Trends In International Trade in Higher Education : Implication and Options for Developing Countries*. The World Bank: Education Working Paper Series number 6.
- Yean, T. S. (Ed.). (2013). *Internationalizing Higher Education in Malaysia: Understanding, Practices and Challenges*. Singapore: ISEAS
- Yee, C. P., & Mokhtar, A. H. A. (2013). International Students' Learning Experiences at Private Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia. In *e-Proceeding the Global Summit on Education, Kuala Lumpur*, pp. 298-312.
- Yu, Y. T., & Dean, A. (2001). The contribution of emotional satisfaction to consumer loyalty. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 12(3), 234-250.
- Yusliza, M. Y., Junaimah, J., & Shankar, C. (2010). *Examining The Role of perceived Social Support on Psychological Adjustment of International Students in A Malaysian Public University*. Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- Yusliza, M. Y., & Shankar, C. (2010). Adjustment in International Students in Malaysian Public University. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 1(3), 275-278.
- Yusliza, M. Y. (2011). International Students' Adjustment in Higher Education: Relation between Social Support, Self-Efficacy and Socio-Cultural Adjustment. *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research*, 1(1), 1-15.
- Yusliza, M. Y. (2012). Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support and Psychological Adjustment in International Undergraduate Students in a Public Higher Education Institution in Malaysia. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 16(4), 353-371.
- Yusoff, Y. M., & Othman, A. K. (2011). An Early Study on Perceived Social Support and Psychological Adjustment among International Students: The Case Of A Higher Learning Institution In Malaysia. *International Journal of business and Society*, 12(2), 1-15.
- Zuria, M., Salleh, A., Saemah, R., & Noriah, M. I. (2010). Challenges for International Students in Malaysia: Culture, Climate and Care. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7(C), 289-293.



## **The Islamic Epistemological Element of Al-Yaqin in Critical Thinking**

**Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut\* and Nur Arfah A. S.**

*Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, 31750 Tronoh, Perak, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

To think, in Islam, is actually to perform an act of worship (‘ibādah) and it is the thinking that strongly induces one’s belief, faith and personality. The failure to engage critical thinking with Islamic Worldview could expose Muslim students to the misconception of the thinking as to perceive it peculiar from the Islamic teaching. This paper aims to explore and reveal the epistemological concept of al-yaqin as part of the Islamic essential elements of critical thinking. Library research method is employed in addressing the issues of critical thinking from the Islamic perspective, where Muslim prominent classical works were reviewed and analysed inductively in order to come out with essential Islamic epistemological elements of critical thinking. The exposition of the concept is illustrated from the theoretical and methodological context al-yaqin and its implicit relation to critical thinking. The study signifies two edges of epistemological nature of critical thinking; from the data verification process to the conclusion state of a belief, which distinguish firm factual knowledge from vague assumptions. The findings of this paper distinguish critical thinking from the Islamic worldview to be advocated among Muslim students as an alternative to the existing modern concept of critical thinking.

*Keywords:* Al-Yaqin, Epistemological concept of al-Yaqin, critical thinking

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

nuriend@petronas.com.my (Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut),

nurarfah.sabian@petronas.com.my (Nur Arfah A. S.)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

Critical thinking is essential in Muslim life since it is part and parcel of his/her motivation and reasoning process to accept Islam and reject any element of ignorance (jāhiliyyah). The Qur’ānic emphasis on critical thinking can be observed through its firm objection to blind imitation (Taqlīd)

which promotes uncritical adoption and unquestioning acceptance of a doctrine without any valid reasoning. When the Qur'ān (88: 17-20 and 3: 191) infers the sole lordship of Allah Ta'ala over the universe and asks man to serve his Lord, this is definitely derived from an analytical induction method built on a set of factual empirical premises that could critically be observed in verses that signify various evidences of God's creation and lordship over the universe.

Similarly, when arguing against those who insisted in worshiping gods other than Allah, the Qur'ān (21: 24 and 27: 64) requires them to bring out their convincing proof (*burhān*), derived from reliable and certain (*yaqīn*) premises. These are among the evidences that the Qur'ānic guidance and discussion are against any kind of blind imitation and ignorance. Furthermore, it has openly called for a 'critical' contemplation and urged people to willingly accept any of its teaching based on intellectual satisfaction and solid faith. This is the anthropocentric aspect of the Qur'ān, where the enlightenment and revealed wisdoms are blended with critical reasons and rationalism to reach the truth.

The difference between modern critical thinking and Islamic critical thinking, as stressed by Mumtaz Ali (2008), is not much at the operational level, but rather deeply involved in its conceptual underpinnings. A clear understanding of the Islamic perspective of critical thinking is distinctively important to provide accurate spiritual and epistemological

consciousness into the Muslim thinking process. However, it is quite unfortunate for the Muslims to disregard the Islamic epistemological framework as the foundation of its critical thinking considering the great achievements of its prominent scholars in the area.

The attempt to present critical thinking to the Muslim students beyond the Islamic worldview would not only lead to the misconception of the thinking but to the ignorance of the thinking as part Islamic ventures. Any element of thought and mindset should never be segregated from the doctrine of religious fundamental belief, particularly in Islam. Therefore, it is important to elucidate critical thinking form of the Islamic epistemological framework so as to formulate a proper conceptual definition of the thinking.

This study intends to explore and establish the epistemological element of *al-yaqīn* as an essential component of critical thinking from the Islamic perspective. It employs library research method, where data and information addressing the issues are collected from library resources that include books, journals, theses, on-line materials and others, particularly from the classical works of Muslim prominent scholars like al-Ghazzali and al-Farabi. These text materials and documentations were reviewed and analysed inductively in order to come out with the Islamic epistemological elements of critical thinking as its fundamental conceptual framework. The discussion of critical thinking from the Islamic perspective is

significantly important as it is a process of Islamisation of knowledge in which the modern critical thinking is to be perceived based on the holistic dimension of the Islamic worldview.

### THE QUR'ÂN AND CRITICAL THINKING

M. Nuri and Wan Suhaimi highlighted a few examples of the definition of critical thinking from western scholars. For instance, one of the comprehensive definitions proposed by American Philosophical Association defines critical thinking as:

*“a purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which the judgment is based.”*

This can be seen in line with Michael Scriven and Richard Paul definition whereas both of them defines critical thinking as:

*“the intellectually disciplined process of activity and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action”.*

From both of the definitions, the common characteristics of critical thinking proposed by them refer to active, purposeful and involves beliefs, observations, reasoning and argument.

The Qur'ân, from the anthropocentric part of its nature, strongly emphasises on the intellectual faculty of man. Wan Daud (1989) views this thinking faculty, apart from being an essential reality of man, as an indispensable feature for man's unique position in accepting the noble role of Allah's vicegerent on earth. In this sense, the faculty of thinking is the most superior feature that does not only distinguish man from other creatures, but also qualifies him to bear Allah's responsibility in sustaining mankind and building civilisation.

Notably, the Qur'ân demands the readers to utilise the thinking faculty in many different approaches and styles. The derivative forms of al-'aql or “intellect” alone, according to Ismail (1993), has been repeatedly used forty nine times in various chapters of the Qur'ân urging Muslims to exercise their intellect in pursuing good reasoning and drawing conclusions to discover truth guidance. In supporting those different approaches and styles, Badi and Tajdin (2005) indicated that the Qur'ân also uses other terms which carry different shades of intellectual emphasis such as tafakkur (contemplating), tadhakkur (taking to heart), tadabbur (pondering), tafaquh (comprehending), tabassur (understanding), tawassum (reflecting), (nazar (considering) and i'tibâr (taking a lesson). The fact that al-Razi (2000) for instance, while commentating on the aspect of knowledge in the Qur'ân, has come out with 30 synonyms for the term related to thinking indicates the great emphasis of the Qur'ân on thinking.

Although these Qur'ānic terms carry different meanings with various manners, contexts or levels of thinking, they could generally be categories in a larger concept of critical thinking. They basically advocate Muslims to observe, reflect, examine and evaluate what they see and face in their lives, of which all these exercises are the vital components of critical thinking. These Qur'ānic terms evidently imply the significance of critical thinking concept from the Islamic view and the critical role of human intellect in undertaking the task of Allah's vicegerency on earth.

Apart from the Qur'ānic emphasis on the specific intellectual terms in the assimilation of critical thinking, there are commandments and narrations from the sacred sources that implicitly promote the tradition of critical thinking, particularly in making a firm and fair judgment. The term *taqlid* (imitation) as opposed in a way to critical thinking, for example, although it is not mentioned in the Qur'ān, the rejection of the idea and concept is clearly indicated. The Qur'ān (43:22-23, 5:104, 7:28) has condemned the uncritical tradition of the pre-Islamic society (*jahiliyyah*) that tends to accept and recognise irrational beliefs inherited from their earlier generations. It also considers this attitude as neglecting the role of mind and being influenced by the evil desires. Moreover, this Qur'ānic condemnation of *taqlid* can be seen as a manifestation of its advocacy on the critical thinking tradition, particularly in examining the rational and logical aspect of any culture and belief prior to adoption.

The Qur'ān also alternatively advocates the critical thinking tradition to the Muslim society by demanding them to validate any claim with a firm reason and justification as part of the essential elements of critical thinking. The quest for reasoning in the Qur'ān has been articulated in different ways and terms which signify different meanings and contexts. The most relevant and frequent terms used to convey the quests are *bayyinat* (7:101, 40:22) (clear evidence), *sultan* (11:96, 51:38) (authority) and *burhan* (4:174, 28:32, 21:24) (definite proof). These Qur'ānic reasoning terms commonly refer to the Prophet's enormous strength in associating the message of Islam with concrete evidences to satisfy man's intellectual faculty in accepting Islam. On the other hand, the Qur'ān (27:64, 2:111) also challenges the non-believers to present evidences of their false claims to establish an intellectual climate of argument for one to make a critical decision in searching the ultimate truth of life.

In addition to the above implicit narration, there are many other narrations and stories that signify the tradition or spirit of critical thinking in Islam such as follows:

*The Muslim is urged in the Quran (49:6) to ascertain any news brought by a wicked person (fasiq). They are obliged to examine the sources of information and not merely to accept any information and to make judgment without investigating the credibility of its sources as part of the evaluation process.*

*The event where the Prophet Sulayman had demanded the Hoopoe bird to come with a clear reason for its absence in the birds gathering led by him (Q 27:20-22) illustrates the requisition for man to think and act based on unambiguous statements or evidences instead of emotions and prejudices. Another good example (Q 12:25-29) of this requisition is the event where the Great al-'Aziz of Egypt refused to accept the claim of his beloved wife, Zulaikha who had accused the Prophet Yusuf without having any concrete evidence. These Prophetic stories provide guidance and inspiration to Muslim to be more critical, analytical and objective in his decision far from any element of biasness and favouritism to whom he loved.*

*The warning to attach with the idea and tradition of the majority without having any critical and rational consideration (Q 6:116). In most cases, the common and widely practiced traditions were based on assumption and conjecture which need to be re-evaluated according to the teaching of Islam.*

Based on these Qur'anic narrations and stories, it is clear that all fundamental aspects of modern critical thinking concerning issues such as clarity, precision, relevance, sound evidence, depth and fairness have been inclusively, if not deeply, covered. Moreover, these cognitive and logical issues of critical

thinking have been approached within the context of the Islamic spirituality to provide special religious attributes to the discourse.

### **THE ELEMENT OF AL-YAQIN IN CRITICAL THINKING**

The element of Islamic critical thinking principally deals with the Islamic epistemology, which normally relates to the intellectual discourse on the sources, nature, method and limitation of knowledge. Ibnu Manzur (1990) defines al-yaqin or certainty as knowledge (al-'ilm), the removal of doubt (izahat al-shakk) or the affirmation of a state (tahqiq al-amr). Terminologically, al-Jurjani (2000) defines al-yaqin as 'a firm belief (I'tiqad) of a state of a matter with similar belief that it is unacceptable to have other than that state, which is in accordance to the fact and impossible to be dissolved'. Meanwhile, al-Fayyumi (1987), in his Misbah al-Munir, defines al-yaqin as 'knowledge generated from reflection and evidential derivation'.

Basically, this definition and concept of certainty or al-yaqin can be concisely conceived from two interrelated contexts; methodological and theoretical. The methodological context of al-yaqin embraces the procedural aspect of attaining certainty by realising its opposite values and upholding its logical propositions, as represented in one part of the above definitions. The theoretical context of certainty, on the other hand, signifies the assertions of those particular natures and elements that constitute al-yaqin state, as manifested from the other part of the above-mentioned definitions.

These two contexts of al-yaqin, in spite of their differences, hold a strong relation between them in complementing each other and signify a strong element with regard to Islamic critical thinking.

The significance of al-yaqin element, in connection with Islamic critical thinking, is closely related to these two contexts of certainty. The methodological context that focuses on the practical and logical aspect of al-yaqin naturally deals with the analytical process of knowledge verification and evaluation which is known to be an essential aspect of critical thinking. Typically, this context explores the epistemological discourse on the sources and method of knowledge in examining its strength and validity. Moreover, this methodological context, being a process, is also part of the logical premises for the theoretical context of certainty that deliberates on the comprehension of the elements and state of al-yaqin. As such, the theoretical context of certainty actually functions as the aimed objective of Islamic critical thinking. This context epistemologically relates to the nature of knowledge in which it ultimately confirms and upholds the definite logical affirmation of truth and spiritual tranquillity of soul.

In brief, the methodological context of al-yaqin is considered as a critical thinking process that engages the source and method of knowledge, whereas the theoretical context of al-yaqin is basically an aimed state of critical thinking with regard to the nature of knowledge. Thus, both contexts are essential and complementing to each,

other than making al-yaqin to be regarded as a point, initial in one respect and final in another, process in one aspect and outcome in another, which work together to compose an inclusive element of Islamic critical thinking. This concept is evidently exhibited in many illuminations of the Qur'an and has been deliberated by Muslim scholars in their intellectual discourse and tradition.

### **AL-YAQIN FROM THE QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE**

Indeed the Qur'anic assertion on the methodological context of al-yaqin is apparent from its affirmation of truth (al-haqq) which has always been associated with al-yaqin in the same way as falsehood (al-batil) is allied with doubt (al-shakk) and conjecture (al-zann). Thus the Qur'anic sacred transformation journey from al-batil to al-haqq continuously demands the elimination of doubt and conjecture as the method for its quest for the attainment of certainty as repeatedly prescribed in His saying:

*“Certainly, conjecture can be of no avail against the truth.” (10:36, 53:28, 4:157)*

Part of the methods of the quest for certainty has already been discussed earlier in the Qur'anic tradition of critical thinking with regard to the important function of revelational enlightenment in stimulating the pursuit for rational reasoning and critical judgment. The Qur'anic evidential terms such as burhan, sultan and bayyinat

are relatively very significant in the methodological context of certainty that illustrates how the proof is well structured to reach the yaqin cognitive state. In fact the Qur'anic evidential methods are not in the same standard in their strength and nature. Not all the Qur'anic evidential terms are definite and certain in the same way as *burhan* for there are some terms, such as *dalil* for example, (Q 24:14, 20:40) that show a rather weak justification. Thus, these differences explicitly show the variety of degrees in the practical context of certainty that is based on its evidential method.

The Qur'anic discourse on the theoretical context of al-yaqin, on the other hand, can be observed from the way how the Qur'an insists that certainty (al-yaqin) must be the aimed state of belief as opposed to the attitude of doubt (al-shakk) and conjecture (al-zann). The battle of this affirmation is apparent in many Qur'anic events such as its assertion on the false Christian belief about the crucifixion of Jesus:

*“And because of their saying (in boast), “We killed Messiah ‘Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary), the Messenger of Allâh” - but they killed Him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of ‘Isa (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed Him not [i.e. ‘Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary)]” (4:157)*

The above verse clearly describes the infirm faith of the Christians with regard to the crucifixion of Jesus, in which they themselves are not truly certain with the incident. Therefore, they could not consider it as their belief or faith because it is not certain knowledge but rather a pure conjecture.

Basically, the Qur'anic enlightenment of the theoretical context of al-yaqin is very significant in its remarks on the different states, natures and levels of knowledge including al-yaqin. In principle, al-'Edrus (1992) views that the Qur'anic epistemological conception of knowledge can be categorised into six groups: ambiguity/similarity (*tashabah*), doubt (*shakk*), fantasy (*rayb*), conjecture (*zann*), knowledge (*'ilm*) and certainty (*yaqin*). Each of these groups has its own system and position in the Qur'anic epistemology although some of them seem similar such as knowledge and certainty. However, one has to note that the Qur'an indicates two conceptions of knowledge (*'ilm*); knowledge that belongs to Allah where there is no question of conjecture (*zann*) and certainty (*yaqin*), and knowledge of man which progresses from *zann* to *yaqin*. Hence, al-yaqin is recognised in the Qur'an as the highest level of human cognition and the final cognitive aim of the thoughtful scrutiny as advocated in Islamic critical thinking.

The Qur'an (102:5-8) describes the theoretical context of certainty or al-yaqin in three apparent degrees: cognitive certainty (*'ilm al-yaqin*), certainty of sight (*'ayn al-*

yaqin) and (Q 69:51) absolute experienced or truth of assured certainty (haqq al-yaqin). The certainty of 'ilm al-yaqin, the lowest of its standard, is knowledge by pure reasoning or inference which satisfies the mind with its best theoretical certitude from man's power of judgment. This level of certainty may be raised to the second degree of 'ayn al-yaqin which refers to personal observation of empirical experiences like seeing things with one's own eyes. The certainty highest degree of haqq al-yaqin is the absolute truth with no possibility for error on judgment or sight, which refers to the knowledge revealed by God to the prophets. These degrees of Qur'anic certainty are basically the three avenues for affirmative knowledge in the Islamic epistemology. In short the Qur'an has managed to delicately reveal the various Islamic epistemological contexts of thinking which broadens the scope and nature of Islamic critical thinking, thus making it more significant and appealing.

Therefore, the issue of certainty is one of the essential elements and trademark of Islamic critical thinking as it determines the benchmark of its reasoning process as well as the outcome belief. Unlike the Islamic epistemology, to describe knowledge or even thinking as 'the acquisition of certainty' is immediately problematic from the western liberal perspective. Western-based education, according to Halstead, considers certainty as a matter of religious belief that, according to their understanding, excludes the possibility of subjecting these beliefs to rational knowledge and

critical investigation. This inaccurate perception essentially emerges from the long-established western dichotomy of knowledge and belief, which is not tenable within the Qur'anic epistemological framework. Islam, as a comprehensive and integrated creed, does not accept any segregation between religious and worldly dilemma, or devotional and ideological belief which all of that require a sound and firm evaluation in making a certain and right decision.

#### **MUSLIM SCHOLARS DISCUSSION ON AL-YAQIN**

Consequently the Islamic element of al-yaqin has been further deliberated and discussed by Muslim scholars, both from the methodological and theoretical contexts. An excellent illustration on the methodological discourse of al-yaqin can be observed from the work of al-Ghazzali in many of his works. In his famous quest for certainty, al-Ghazzali (1994) does not content himself with merely relying on doubtful, unreliable and incomplete knowledge. He carefully formulates the criteria of what he believes to be truly certain knowledge (ilm al-yaqin), which he defines as:

*That in which the thing known is made so manifest that no doubt clings to it, nor is it accompanied by the possibility of error and deception, nor can the mind even suppose such a possibility.*

Similar to his discussion on tafakkur, al-Ghazzali insists that al-yaqin should never come or even has any relation to doubt



(shakk) or hesitation, but should be derived from comparable cognition knowledge. His assertion of the cognition reproduction (tawalud al-ma'rifah), for example, in which he states that proper assortment of various cognitions gathered in the heart which lead to the formation of another new cognition; similarly, it indicates that al-yaqin can only be reproduced from its own genesis and should never be based on any less cognitive level.

In fact, in the introduction to his work, al-Mustasfa min 'Ilm al-Usul, al-Ghazzali (2000) further explained this methodological condition of constructing a yaqin cognitive knowledge. He stressed the importance of examining the sources of premises by analysing their strength and reliability before concluding any certain knowledge as the foundation of al-Ghazzali's syllogism of al-burhan. The premises, according to him, must be derived from reliable sources and have reached the certainty level before one can conclude 'ilm al-yaqin from them.

Al-Ghazzali's critical evaluation on al-yaqin is even more evident when he established severe conditions for the data that could form 'ilm al-yaqin. He initially outlined seven criteria or sources of data that are to be used as premises of a belief. These seven data are: al-awwaliyyat/al-badihiyyat (axiom or self-evident truth), al-mushahadat al-batinah (internal truth or knowledge from internal senses), al-mahsusat al-zahirah (truth or knowledge from outer sense), al-tajribiyyat (experimental data), al-

mutawatirat (transmitted data), wahmiyyah (imaginative data) and al-mashhurat (popular data). Out of these data, he then identified the first five as what he deemed as certainty data which could lead to 'ilm al-yaqin. In other words, the formation of yaqin knowledge, according to al-Ghazzali, must purely depend or be based on these five yaqin data. It is interesting to observe that, to some extent from the external context, al-Ghazzali's classification of the premises data for verifying the credibility of their conclusion is very much similar to the 'evaluation' method of modern critical thinking in its analytical examination of the grounding of a knowledge or belief.

Out of the five certain premises data as the condition of certainty, al-Ghazzali has special emphasis on al-mutawatirat data in order to gain 'ilm al-yaqin. Al-mutawatirat is a data source transmitted by a large number of narrators continuously in every stage of the narration, which leaves no room for doubts, as most of the narrators had been verified to be just, muttaqin (those who fear Allah) and trustworthy. This kind of data is perceived as significantly important in the nature of Islamic method not only because the transmission process had been meticulously investigated and the narrators' trustworthiness status verified as discussed earlier, but the data also become the foundation of Islamic scientific method for accepting the truth of the Qur'an and hadith of the Prophet pbuh, the primary sources in Islam. Thus, al-Ghazzali considers al-mutawatirat as a firm authorised data source which leads to 'ilm

yaqin, even more reliable than external sensory data (al-mahsusat al-zahirah) and experimental data.

Evidently, these methodological conditions of al-yaqin imply an explicit indication that does not only show the significance of the Islamic critical method in preserving its core revelational sources but constructively reveals a systematic and evaluative form of Islamic critical thinking, which has been applied in many areas of Islamic studies including Islamic jurisprudence. As such, the concept of al-yaqin is deemed to be significantly essential as the epistemological benchmark in the development of Islamic critical thinking tradition in its holistic manner which is worth to be re-explored and re-instilled into the present Muslim thinking culture.

As for the theoretical context of al-yaqin, this element of Islamic critical thinking has been justly discussed by the prominent Muslim scholar, al-Farabi (1987), particularly in his treaties of *Kitab al-Burhan* (Book on Demonstration) and *Sharait al-Yaqin* (Conditions of Certainty). In *Kitab al-Burhan*, al-Farabi divided certainty into two categories; necessary certainty (al-yaqin al-daruriyy) and non-necessary certainty (al-yaqin ghayr al-daruriyy). He describes necessary certainty as a solid belief on an existence state that is impossible to correspond to its otherwise at all time, whereas non-necessary certainty implies a periodically firm belief that only stands for a certain time.

Moreover, in his *Sharait al-yaqin*, al-Farabi has also theoretically signified six

conditions that must be met in order to attain absolute certainty (al-yaqin 'ala al-itlaq). These conditions basically outline the parts of a complex definition of certainty in which he later on analysed it into a genus-component. He quoted:

*Absolute certainty is: [1] to believe of something that it is thus or not thus; [2] to agree that it corresponds and is not opposed to the existence of the thing externally; [3] to know that it corresponds to it; and [4] that it is not possible that it does not correspond to it or that it be opposed to it; and further [5] that there does not exist anything opposed to it at any time; and [6] and that all of this does not happen accidentally, but essentially.*

In other words, as comprehended from al-Farabi's definition of al-yaqin, a subject, S, is acclaimed to have absolute certainty of a proposition, p, if and only if: [1] S believes in p (the belief condition); [2] p is true (the truth condition); [3] S knows that p is true (the knowledge condition); [4] it is impossible that p is not true (the necessity condition); [5] there is no time at which p can be false (the eternity condition); and, [6] conditions 1-5 hold essentially, not accidentally (the non-accidental condition). Hence, these conditions do not only justify the state of certainty, but also illustrate its theoretical reality in a deep substantial approach.

Al-Farabi's discussion of the conditions of certainty clearly signifies that certainty is not merely a matter of how and what one knows, but requires some form

of knowing that one knows. The inclusion of this reflexive self-awareness “knowing that one knows” into the very definition of certainty is very much essential to the concept of Islamic critical thinking since it requires us to be explicitly aware of the ground which justifies our beliefs and able to articulate exhaustively our reasons for claiming to know whatever we know. Critical thinking is supposedly aimed to reflectively construct a belief, and for a belief to be certain which is an affirmative principle in Islamic epistemology, it should has to consciously meet the theoretical criteria of an absolute or necessary certainty as suggested by al-Farabi.

## CONCLUSION

In general, the yaqin element is essential in Islamic critical thinking due to the affirmation of its epistemological standards and nature on the two edges of critical thinking context; from the data examination process to the conclusion of a belief. Moreover, the concept of al- yaqin also serves to differentiate between factual and vague opinion, and to verify the sources status and reliability in constructing a certain inference of thought. To sum up, the concept of al-yaqin as an element of Islamic critical thinking can be described as follows:

1. In term of its definition, al-yaqin is deemed as the highest standard of Islamic epistemological state engaged in the critical thinking process as well as its aimed result.

2. In term of its objective, al-yaqin is an assertion of a highest level of confidence, affirmation and belief that is critically constructed from a certain data in searching for the truth particularly with regard to the concept al-tawhid.
3. In term of its application, al-yaqin is a critical process of knowledge verification that certifies the certainty of the premises in terms of its validation, reliability and authority in order to conclude from them certain knowledge.
4. In term of its impact, al-yaqin is a mind state of satisfaction in justifying judgments that ultimately lead to a state of religious tranquillity which, in a way, forms a high-esteem characteristic of Muslim being.

The element of al-yaqin basically illustrates the concept of Islamic critical thinking in relative to its contexts of epistemology which represents the thinking from the Islamic worldview at large, and distinguishes it from the western perspective. Even though the Islamic and Western definitions of critical thinking seem to be technically similar, the differences lay significantly on the conceptual comprehension of those defined technical terms with regards to the distinctive worldviews of both traditions that tend to render variation of perceptions.

Islam provides a clear elucidation of the relationship between religion and critical thinking from the context of its conception of human nature. Fundamentally, Islam

holds great respects for both the mind and the conscience of man. Islam, therefore, is far from dogmatism concept, promotes the believers to embrace the religion based on critical justifications and to build this acceptance with rational reasoning and ultimate evidences. Muslims must perceive contemporary critical thinking from Islamic conceptual worldview to free themselves from the prevalent secular view of thought, especially in science, technology and human development, and to eventually rebuild the Islamic civilisation from its own perspective.

## REFERENCES

- al-Din, A. F. (2000). *Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (1<sup>st</sup> ed). Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyyah, vol. 2.
- al-Edrus, M. D. (1992). *Islamic Epistemology: An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge in al-Qur’an*. Cambridge: The Islamic Academy.
- al-Husayni, A. A. M. A. (2000). *al-Ta’rifat* (1<sup>st</sup> Edn). Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah.
- Daud, M. W. (1989). *The Concept of Knowledge in Islam*. London and New York: Mansell.
- Fatima, I. (1993). *Al-Qur’ān wa al-Nazar al-‘Aqlī*. Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Fuyumi, A. M. (1987). *al-Misbah al-Munir*. Beirut: Maktabah Lubnan.
- Hamid, A. A. (1994). *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (Ed.) Abd al-Mun’im al-‘Ani. Damascus: al-Hikmah.
- Hamid, A. A. (2000). *Al-Mustasfa Min ‘Ilm al-Usul*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah.
- Halstead, M. (2004). An Islamic Concept of Education. *Comparative Education*, 40(4), 517-529.
- Mukrim, I. M. J. A. M. (1990). *Lisan al-‘Arab*. Beirut: Dar Sadir.
- Tarkhan, A. M. M. (1987). *Kitab al-Burhan*. In M. Fakhri (Ed.), *al-Mantiq ‘inda al-Farabi*. Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq.



## **A Preliminary Case Study on Improving Engineering Students' Competency through Industrial Training in a Private University**

**Chong Foon Yee\* and Yeap Kim Ho**

*Faculty of Engineering and Green Technology, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Bandar Barat, 31900 Kampar, Perak, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

Engineers form an important part of our technical workforce to successfully transform Malaysia into a fully developed nation as envisaged in the Vision 2020 document. Thus, it is essential for higher learning institutions in Malaysia to produce effective and competent graduates who are able to contribute to the current needs and rapid changes in the engineering industry. However, a key challenge faced by engineering programmes is to address the misalignment in the graduates produced and the industry needs. To address this, industrial training in universities plays an important role in bridging academia and industry where students are able to experience real-life problems as opposed to only classroom challenges. In addition, it is also important that engineering students in universities are well equipped with critical thinking skills and strong technical knowledge to face current and future challenges in industries. In this study, feedback and evaluation forms from industries were analysed to explore the working competency of engineering students in a new engineering programme. It identifies aspects that call for improvement to successfully help engineering students' competency at workplace. This paper also offers a few suggestions on Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model to improve strategies prior to, during and post industrial training for the betterment of this new engineering programme.

*Keywords:* Continuous Quality Improvement, Engineering Education, Higher Learning Institutions, Industrial Training, Malaysia, Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) model, Working Competency

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

[chongfy@utar.edu.my](mailto:chongfy@utar.edu.my) (Chong Foon Yee),

[yeapkh@utar.edu.my](mailto:yeapkh@utar.edu.my) (Yeap Kim Ho)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

The need for competent fresh engineering graduates to achieve Malaysia's vision to be a fully developed nation by the year 2020 is vital. In fact, it is stated that there

will be a huge gap between demand and supply for engineers in Malaysia at the present and the near future (MOHE, 2012). Although Malaysia has taken several initiatives to produce more engineers to meet its targeted workforce to achieve Malaysia's Vision 2020, an emphasis on quantity alone is not adequate. As highlighted by Kennedy in NAE Annual Meeting (Kennedy, 2006), not only hard knowledge is important to secure jobs, broader skills including leadership, soft skills and attitudes are also required to be successful. The data from the Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOS, 2012) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE, 2012) showed that even though Malaysia had low unemployment rate, it has more than 60,000 young graduates who were unemployed in 2010. The major reasons cited for being unemployed were the lack of core knowledge and competency in the job they applied for, poor communication skills and language proficiency, and inadequate general knowledge. Similar findings were summarised by Mourshed, Farrell and Barton (2012), in a study of twenty-five countries, where it was found that 75 million youth were unemployed, with half of them were not sure that their study had improved their employability and almost 40% of the employers said lack of skills as the main reason for entry-level vacancies for jobs. In addition, a study conducted in Malaysia indicated that employers are in favour of fresh engineering graduates with a well-balanced profile (MOHE, 2011). Similar competencies are also prescribed

in the EAC Manual (2012), which will be discussed in our findings section later in this paper.

In order to address the gap between expectations and satisfaction levels of engineering graduates, Malaysian Engineering Accreditation Council (EAC, 2012) has made industrial training a compulsory element. The main objective of industrial training is to allow engineering students exposing professional practices during their four year engineering study.

It is suggested that learning experiences in engineering programmes should be strengthened in technical knowledge, soft skills and personal characteristics. The importance of holistic engineering education to foster competent engineers has been well documented in many studies (Hillmer, Wiedenbrueg & Bunz, 2012; Passow, 2012).

Industrial training in many engineering schools in higher learning institutions is regarded as an essential component in engineering curricula to ensure that engineering graduates produced have a well-balanced profile (Hasbullah & Sulaiman, 2002). The importance and necessity of industrial training has been highlighted by EAC (2012) and MOHE (2012), where it was strongly recommended that industrial training in higher learning institutions be extended to at least 6 months. However, in view of the heavy course structure scheduled for engineering programmes in general, the suggestion to extend the training duration may overstress or overload engineering students. A better suggestion

would be to have an improved 'well-structured' industrial training. It is thus important to find out what is the best way to cultivate necessary skills such as technical knowledge, soft skills and good engineering characteristics into the current industrial training in higher learning institutions within a reasonable time period. In addition, any elements incorporated into the industrial training must also be examined carefully.

*...the practical application of mathematics and science to create, design, test, improve and develop knowledge, research, money, business, economics, and technology. This is why engineering is such a challenging and demanding field of study. It involves areas of expertise that continue to evolve independently yet are required to perform together as part of the engineering process. Thus, an engineer must be expert in many areas, must know how to communicate knowledge among those areas, and must apply that knowledge to create, design, study, research, and invent all kinds of things. (Schiavone, 2007, p. 16)*

In this study, step by step of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is carried out for our new engineering programme based on the data obtained from the first two batches of students participated in industrial training. The objectives of industrial training for this engineering programme are:

- To provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills learnt in an actual working environment.

- To instil in students the right kind of work attitudes and professionalism.
- To familiarise with on-the-job requirements.
- To enable companies to assess working attitudes and technical capabilities of students.

Industrial training may help students make connections among all different areas of knowledge and skills, integrating these at various stages of their training period as their knowledge and skills develop (Renganathan, Abdul Karim, & Chong, 2012). The intellectual requirements involve students in the kind of thinking that engineers use in professional practice. Thus, we believe industrial training provides the most commodious and stable bridge between learning the basics of engineering knowledge, skill, as well as judgment and entry into actual practice.

The benefits of industrial training for engineering students are obvious; these are summarised by Schiavone (2007) in *Engineering Success*:

1. Trainee is learning on-the-job skills that cannot be learnt in the classroom to bridge the gap between academia and the workplace.
2. Trainee may gain valuable real work experience to prepare for the future job market.
3. Trainee may make valuable contacts for networking inside the engineering and business professions and have improved employment opportunities upon graduation.

4. Trainee may learn to work in groups and interdisciplinary teams.

In short, industrial training plays an important role for engineering students to 'taste' the real work life and understand what the expectation from industry is. Therefore, it is crucial for engineering students and academics to understand the expectation of industry and how they evaluate trainees' competency during industrial training (Omar, Kofli, Mat, Darus, Osman, Rahman, & Abdullah, 2008).

## RESEARCH CONTEXT

This study was conducted on a new engineering programme at a private university in Malaysia. It is compulsory for all students in this engineering programme to attend industrial training for at least 3 months before their graduation. Industrial training is offered in Year 3 with 4 credit hours. It is a pass/fail subject with a cut-off point of 50 marks. After the Industrial training, students will remain at least one more semester in the university to digest what they have learned during their industrial training and apply them in their final year of study. Prior to Industrial training, students must earn a minimum of 60 credit hours, maintain a CGPA of 2.00 or above, and must not be under academic probation.

During the industrial training, students are encouraged to conduct complex engineering activities and solve complex engineering problems (EAC manual,

2012). The evaluations of industrial training are divided into two parts. The first part is assessed by academic lecturers based on log book, final report and oral presentation prepared by the students pertaining to his/her experiences. The second part is assessed by the Supervisor (of the Company) concerning students' competency during industrial training (Industrial Training Handbook, 2012).

## METHODS

In this study, the whole population of eligible year three students in two successive years was involved. In 2012 and 2013, 14 students of the first batch and 33 students of the second batch in this new engineering programme went for industrial training. Their Industrial Training Evaluation Forms filled by the supervisor were collected and analysed.

In 2012, an evaluation form containing 17 competence criteria was used to collect the evaluation from the industry regarding students' competency (Industrial Training Handbook, 2012). In the year 2013, the evaluation form had been revised after taking into consideration the latest published EAC manual (2012). As shown in Table 1, apart from the previous 17 competence criteria, three more items were added, as follows:

18. Ability to follow rules and regulations at the work place
19. Technical ability and knowledge
20. Ability to link and apply theoretical knowledge to the work being done



TABLE 1  
Overall Student's Evaluation Data in 2012 and 2013

	Evaluation Criteria	2012	2013		Evaluation Criteria	2012	2013
1	Communicates in English with others at all levels	3.86	3.93	11	Working under pressure	3.50	3.73
2	Written communication skills	3.64	3.73	12	Questioning skills	3.43	3.63
3	Punctuality	4.14	4.40	13	Organisation skills	3.29	3.90
4	Teamwork / collaboration skills	4.14	4.13	14	Problem-solving skills	3.43	3.60
5	Self-motivation/initiative	3.57	3.93	15	Awareness of quality issues and continuous improvement	3.43	3.66
6	Work ethic / dependability	3.50	3.93	16	Appropriate codes of practice and industry standards	2.93	3.57
7	Critical thinking	3.50	3.60	17	Awareness of intellectual property and contractual issues	2.93	3.53
8	Flexibility / adaptability	3.93	4.03	18	Ability to follow rules and regulations at the work place	-	4.12
9	Leadership skills	3.29	3.40	19	Technical ability and knowledge	-	3.58
10	Interpersonal skills	3.57	3.93	20	Link and apply theoretical knowledge to the work	-	3.62

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the evaluations from on-site supervisor in two consecutive years of 2012 and 2013 were examined. The results are used as indicators for the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) of the department.

### *Students Competency in 2012*

As shown in Table 1, students' industrial training data in 2012 had 17 criteria which were used to evaluate students' competency. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the evaluation form to identify satisfaction levels from the industry ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. A scale equal or higher than 3 indicates that the students' competency is considered acceptable from

the perspective of industries. According to the data, 15 out of 17 items have met the expectation from the industry. The lowest scores obtained are: *item 16* - understanding of appropriate codes of practice and industry standards; and *item 17* - awareness of intellectual property and contractual issues. The possible reason(s) for low scores for *item 16* & *item 17* will be discussed later. The results indicate that there is still a gap between classroom knowledge and knowledge applied in engineering, which is more practical and realistic in a working context.

### *Students Competency in 2013*

After the evaluation forms were revised, 20 criteria were used to assess student's

competency, as shown in Table 1. All the 20 criteria being assessed scored higher than 3. This finding shows that all the criteria pertaining to students' competency being evaluated had met the expectation of the industry and improved compared to the previous batch. The improvement might be attributed to the action taken by CQI in the programme. The item that obtained the highest score was "Punctuality". According

to the feedback from the industry, most of the trainees were not only punctual to work, they also showed high commitment on task completion and completed ahead of due dates. These were acknowledged by their supervisors. On the other hand, the item which obtained the lowest score was leadership. Most of the trainees were not able to lead or were not given the opportunities to lead during their industrial training.

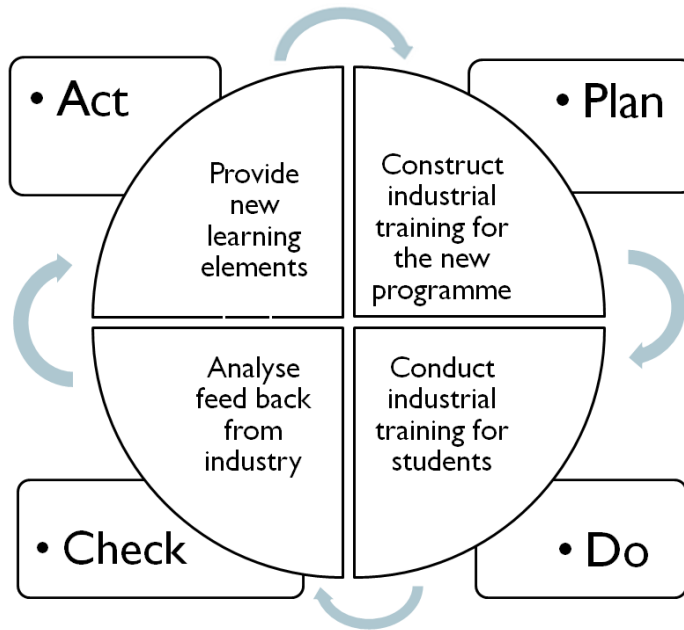


Fig.1: Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) for Industrial Training using Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) Cycle

*Evaluation as indicators for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)*

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process was carried out following the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle as action model (Sokovic, Pavletic, & Kern Pipan, 2010) as shown in Fig.1. Four steps of the PDCA cycle were implemented following the sequence of planning to send the first

batch of trainees, conducting the industrial training, evaluating their competency and suggesting an action plan for the next batch, and repeat the cycle again.

The results from 2012 were compared with the planned target to determine the satisfaction of the industry. The weakest competency was highlighted and actions were taken for rectification. The following

corrective measures were adopted before the second batch of trainees was sent for industrial training in 2013:

- Student Development Committee (SDC) discussed and suggested necessary action plans
- Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) (involving all academic staff) will take initiative to address gaps identified during lectures and practical work.
- Supports from other resources such as Centre of Extended Education (CEE) and Industrial Advisor Panel (IAP) to conduct talks and seminars were initiated.
- New criteria were added to further enhance students' competency in the future.
- Competencies from the next batch of students were analysed and compared with previous results to assess the effectiveness of rectified measures.

Realising the trainees' weakness in 2012, actions were taken for further improvement. The concept of using industrial codes and industrial standards was incorporated in courses taught in the engineering programme. For example, lecturers of the relevant courses have put in more effort to emphasise the concept of using industrial codes and industrial standards. In addition, speakers from the industry were invited to present talks to encourage students to gain knowledge and focus on these areas. The results were found to be positive. In 2013, these areas were improved.

Comparing the students' competency evaluation between 2012 and 2013 shown in Table 1, an overall improvement was observed. Although data in 2013 showed that satisfaction improved in general, the CQI process would continue and another PDCA cycle would be taken into consideration based on the latest data. New criteria were identified for further improvement, such as *Item 9* - leadership skill; *item 17* - awareness of intellectual property and contractual issues; *item 16* - understanding of appropriate codes of practice and industry standards; *item 19* - technical ability and knowledge; *item 7* - critical thinking and *item 14* - problem-solving skills. Therefore, another cycle of PDCA model was conducted to further enhance the competency of engineering students during future industrial training.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that industrial training provides opportunities for engineering students to apply knowledge and skills learned in class to actual working environment. The feedback and evaluation from the industry pertaining to the engineering students' competency during industrial training are very valuable. In more specific, it highlights the students' strengths and weaknesses, and serves as an indicator for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) of engineering programmes in higher learning institutions.

## REFERENCES

- Department of Statistics. (2012). *Statistics year book Malaysia 2011*. Department of Statistics, Malaysia.
- EAC. (2012). *2012 Engineering programme accreditation manual*. Engineering Accreditation Council.
- Hasbullah, H., & Sulaiman, S. (2002). Industrial internship programme at Universiti Teknologi Petronas – A collaboration strategy that enhanced students' soft skills in the ever-changing technology. *International Conference on Engineering Education (UK)*, August 2002, pp. 1-5.
- Hillmer, G., Wiedenbrueg, R., & Bunz, A. (2012). Competences required by industry from early-career engineering graduates – Developing management and leadership skills in engineering education. *Innovations*, 291-304.
- Industrial Training Handbook. (2012). *Industrial training handbook*.
- Kennedy, T. C. (2006). The “value-added” approach to engineering education: An industry perspective. *The Bridge Linking Engineering and Society, National Academy of Engineering*, 36(2), 14 – 16.
- Mourshed, M., Farrell, D., & Barton, D. (2012). Education to employment: Designing a system that works. *McKinsey & Company*, p. 16.
- MOHE (2011). *Graduates tracer study*. Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education.
- MOHE (2012). *The national graduate employability blueprint 2012-2017*. Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education.
- Okovic, M., Pavletic, D., & Kern P.(2010) Quality improvement methodologies – PDCA cycle, RADAR matrix, DMAIC and DFSS. *Journal of Achievements in Materials and Manufacturing Engineering*, 43(1), 476 – 483.
- Omar, M. Z., Kofli, N. T., Mat, K., Darus, Z. M., Osman, S. A., Rahman, M. N. A., & Abdullah, S. (2008). Employers' evaluation on attributes obtained during industrial training. In *Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> WSEAS international Conference on Education and Educational Technology*, pp. 259 – 263.
- Passow, H. J. (2012). Which ABET competencies do engineering graduates find most important in their work? *Journal of Engineering Education*, 101(1), 95-118.
- Renganathan, S., Karim, Z. A. A., & Chong, S. L. (2012). Students' perception of industrial internship programme. *Education + Training*, 54(2/3), 180-191.
- Schiavone, P. (2007). *Engineering Success* (3rd ed). Pearson Prentice Hall.



## **Research Article Writing: A Review of a Complete Rhetorical Organisation**

**Nurul Farahin Musa\* and Noorli Khamis**

*Centre for Languages and Human Development, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Hang Tuah Jaya, 76100 Durian Tunggal, Melaka*

### **ABSTRACT**

The need to write for scholarly publications has triggered many investigations into research articles published in reputable and indexed journals. This paper attempts to compile and provide a review of the complete rhetorical organisation of research articles, from *Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results* to *Discussion* sections, from several studies. Though the studies revealed a general pattern in the writing of these research articles, it was also noted that different disciplines adopt certain localised structures, which characterise the discourse of the disciplines. Thus, this paper calls for the discovery of local structures of research articles from more disciplines to cater for the growing demands for scholarly publications, especially amongst researchers, academicians and postgraduates.

*Keywords:* Genre Analysis, Research Articles, Rhetorical Organisation, Corpus-based

### **INTRODUCTION**

As a prerequisite for a paper to be published in an international journal, it must be written in English. Writing a quality English research paper is a major challenge for the Non-Native Speaker (NNS) academicians (Zamri, Yusof,

Junid, & Adnan, 2012). It has become the main reason for the low number of publications by Malaysians in international scholarly journals. Universities in many countries have required their academicians and researchers to publish research articles in international journals for career advancement. Several prestigious universities in China, for instance, have also stipulated that their doctoral candidates must have at least one paper accepted in an international journal before graduating (Hyland, 2007).

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

farahin.musa@gmail.com (Nurul Farahin Musa),

noorli@utem.edu.my (Noorli Khamis)

\* Corresponding author

The Malaysian scholars' contributions in international publications were relatively small from the year 1996 to 2012. From the SCImago Journal and Country Rank data, Malaysia had only 99,187 items of international publications compared to its neighbours, Singapore, which had 149,509 and Thailand with 82,209 publications. Different genres acquire different structural patterns and language use; researchers who wish to succeed through international journal publications need to acquire awareness of differences in text structures (Briones, 2012; Zand-Vakili & Kashani, 2012). Research articles have been a medium used by the academicians to communicate new knowledge to members of the academic community (Hyland, 2007). With the growing need for internationalisation of academic communities, academicians need to develop awareness and mastery of writing for publications in order to get their papers published in international journals, thus, gaining international recognition.

This paper provides a review of the studies on the structural patterns and organisations of the elements in research articles (RAs). It is revealed that although there is a general pattern in the research articles writing, it is also noted that different disciplines adopt certain localised structures, which characterise the discourse of the disciplines. The structure and organisation of the contents of the RAs are different according to the disciplines to which the RAs belong to.

## STUDIES ON RESEARCH ARTICLE WRITING: A REVIEW

### *Genre Analysis*

A genre has been defined as “a type of text or discourse designed to achieve a set of communicative purposes” (Swales, 1990). A genre is more often defined as a kind of text which relates form, function and context (Paltridge, 2001). In the writing of research articles, there are specific patterns and organisations of the RAs that most of researchers follow. Different disciplines have different cultures; thus, different organisations are adopted in writing the research articles. In order to ensure a research article is accepted in a scholarly publication, the standard organisation, textual patterns and language use in writing the research article should be adhered to. There are variations in textual pattern and organisation of research articles applied by different disciplines (Hyland, 2007). Previous research on genre revealed that researchers across disciplines applied the Introduction–Method–Results–Discussion (IMRD) standard (Ling Lin, 2012). This IMRD framework has been a reference for many authors, including those writing for scientific and technical research papers.

### *Move Analysis*

In the academic writing genres, the Move Analysis is one of the methods used by researchers in identifying the connections of ideas in a paper (Li, 2011). A move involves the segment made from a communicative function in a text (Wirada Amnuai, 2013). The Move Analysis has

also been employed by researchers to study culture variations in research articles. Different cultures are reflected by different language styles and structures in research articles writing. Swales (1990) proposed a framework for the move analysis known as CARS (Create a Research Space). Research into the organisation of research articles has been using the move-based analysis, including studies on all sections in research articles (Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999; Kanoksilapatham, 2005). Some of the studies focused on a discrete section of the research article, such as the *Introduction* (Habibi, 2008; Han Ping, 2010; Pedro, Martin, & Martin, 2009; Safnil, 2013), *Method* (Kallet, 2004; Lim, 2006), and *Discussion* sections (Holmes, 1997; Wirada Amnuai, 2013). Many researchers have also used this framework to analyse the structure of research articles from specific disciplines. The move-based analysis has been regarded as a tool in conducting a genre study (Ding, 2007).

#### *Corpus-Based Analysis in Genre Studies*

A corpus-based method is useful for obtaining a real language sample; it serves the needs of the target groups (Supatranont, 2012). Many corpus-based investigations have been conducted in language for specific purposes (LSP) involving genres or related concepts such as registers, text-types, domain, style, sublanguage, message form and the like (Lee, 2001). With the potential offered by corpus analysis, genre studies are becoming more extensive and interesting. Different syntactic patterns or

moves in different sections of article can be observed from a comparative study between sections in article writing (Bowker & Pearson, 2002; Cross & Oppenheim, 2006). By comparing a specific corpus with a general one, a variety of rhetorical patterns can be identified (Gavioli, 2005). In a different study, some groups of words in scientific abstracts reliably display a certain type of move (for example, the verb *show* commonly appears in the evaluation section) (Orasan, 2001). The potential of corpora to capture local characteristics of a language such as features of genres, promotes corpus work to complement genre studies (Noorli, 2011). Hence, this study is an attempt to compile and review corpus-based analysis of the RAs.

#### **STUDIES ON THE RHETORICAL ORGANISATION OF RESEARCH ARTICLES**

Previous studies on the rhetorical organisations of research articles have been on discrete sections of the articles (Holmes, 1997; Kallet, 2004; Lim, 2006; Ding, 2007; Flowerdew, 2008; Pedro Martin Martin, 2009; Han Ping, 2010; Supatranont, 2012; Safnil, 2013; Wirada Amnuai, 2013). Thus, this section compiles and reviews the findings from several studies on the rhetorical organisation of sections in research articles, from *Abstract*, *Introduction*, *Method*, *Results*, to *Discussion*. These studies are all corpus-based and adopt the research article rhetoric structure from the linguistics field as proposed by Swales in Table 1.

The framework proposed by Swales is one of the established frameworks and is acknowledged as a seminal move model for identifying rhetorical structure of RAs (Graham, Milanowski, & Miller, 2012).

TABLE 1  
RA Structure

<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Method</b>
Move 1: Introduction	Move 1: Describing data collection procedure/s
Move 2: Method	Step 1: Describing the sample
Move 3: Results	(a) Describing the location of the sample
Move 4: Discussion	(b) Describing the size of the sample/ population
	(c) Describing the characteristics of the sample
	(d) Describing the sampling technique or criterion
<b>Introduction</b>	Step 2: Recounting steps in data collection
Move 1: Establishing a Territory	Step 3: Justifying the data collection procedure/s
Step 1: Claiming centrality	Move 2: Delineating procedure/s for measuring variables
Step 2: Making topic generalization	Step 1: Presenting an overview of the design
Step 3: Reviewing items of previous research	Step 2: Explaining method/s of measuring variables
Move 2: Establishing Niche	(a) Specifying items in questionnaires/databases
Step 1A: Counter Claiming	(b) Defining variables
Step 1B: Indicating Gap	(c) Describing methods of measuring variables
Step 1C: Question-Raising	Step 3: Justifying the methods of measuring variables
Step 1D: Continuing Tradition	(a) Citing previous research methods
Move 3: Occupying Niche	(b) Highlighting acceptability of the method/s
Step 1A: Outlining purposes	Move 3: Elucidating data analysis procedure/s
Step 1B: Announcing present research	Step 1: Relating or recounting data analysis procedures
Step 2: Announcing principle findings	Step 2: Justifying the data analysis procedures
Step 3: Indicating RA Structure	Step 3: Previewing results
<b>Results</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
Move 1 Preparatory information	Move 1 Background Information
Move 2 Reporting results	Move 2 Reporting Result
Move 3 Commenting on results	Move 3 Summarising Result
(a) Interpreting results	Move 4 Commenting in Result
(b) Comparing results with the literature	Step 1: Interpreting Result
(c) Evaluating results	Step 2: Comparing Result with literature
(d) Accounting for results	Step 3: Accounting for result
Move 4 Summarising results	Step 4: Evaluating result
	Move 5 Summarising the Study
	Move 6 Evaluating the Study
	Step 1: Indicating Limitations
	Step 2: Indicating Significance
	Step 3: Evaluating Methodology
	Move 7 Deductions from research
	Step 1: Making Suggestions
	Step 2: Recommending further research
	Step 3: Drawing pedagogic implications



**ABSTRACT**

An *Abstract* is basically a summary from the whole research paper (Noorli, 2011). It consists of information that indicates the whole study of the research (Yang & Allison, 2003). It is important to ensure that the *Abstract* contains the needed information

of the theoretical knowledge and significant features of the research. Numerous studies on the *Abstract* section from different disciplines adopted the IMRD framework. However, there are also studies which do not adopt the framework; the researchers initiated new theoretical frameworks (Table 2).

TABLE 2  
Studies on RA Abstract Section

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Corpus (no. of articles)</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>
Han Ping, 2010	20	Computer Security, Computer Language
Samraj, 2005	12	Wildlife Behaviour, Conservation Biology

Han Ping (2010) compared the abstracts of RAs from two different disciplines; Computer Security and Computer Language. The findings showed that the *Abstracts* from the two disciplines included *purposes, results and conclusions*. *Abstracts* from both disciplines displayed similar macrostructures as proposed by Swales (1990) in Table 1. As for the Computer Security discipline, the “claim of centrality” in the *Abstract* formed the integral part of the section. However, the Computer Language discipline did not apply the “claim of centrality” in their *Abstract* section due to the field of Computer Language itself is a mature field in computer science and technology, thus, it explains the absence of the move (Han Ping, 2010).

Therefore, there are moves in the *abstract* section of a research articles that depend on the characteristics of the field. Based on the above studies, there are moves (for example “claim of centrality”) which are not included in the *Abstract* section. According to

Melander *et al.*, (1997) “such tactiness and taciturnity” could be a characteristic of *Abstracts* from more “mature” research area and the move is not applicable in the *Abstract* section.

Samraj (2005) studied the *Abstract* section from RAs of the Wildlife Behaviour and the Conservation Biology disciplines using the Swales’s *Abstract* section framework as in Table 1. The results revealed that the Conservation Biology research articles included the “claim of centrality” in the *Abstract* section but this was not applicable in the Wildlife Behaviour discipline. It is mainly due to the same factor as in Han Ping’s study, where the Wildlife Behaviour is a mature field, and the persuasive elements are not included in the *Abstract* section of the papers.

**INTRODUCTION**

An analysis on the structure of the *Introduction* section has become an interest among many authors. Research on the *Introduction* section has rapidly increased

since Swales proposed a framework in writing the *Introduction* section of RAs. The framework, i.e. CARS (Create a Research Space), consists of 3 main moves: (1) Establishing a Research Territory, (2) Establishing a Niche, and (3) Occupying a Niche (Table 1).

Each of the moves proposed consists of steps or sub-moves within it. The

framework is similar with the framework proposed for the *Abstract* section (Table 1). According to Swales (1990), the *Introduction* section is an integral part of an RA and it also acts as a promotion medium between the author and the reader to deliver the message, and to attract the readers' interest on the knowledge they are about to share.

TABLE 3  
Studies on the RA Introduction Section

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Corpus (no. of articles)</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>
Samraj, 2002, 2005	12	Wildlife Behaviour, Biology
Suharno, 2011	20	Science
Habibi, 2008	60	ESP, Psycholinguistics, Sociolinguistics

Adapting Swales' *Introduction* framework, Samraj (2005) figured out that in the *Introduction* section of the Wildlife Behaviour RAs, although the moves were generally similar with the moves proposed by Swales (Table 1), the "claim of centrality" move did not appear frequently. In contrast, the "claim of centrality" move seemed to be a compulsory move for the Biology RAs. Suharno (2011), on the other hand, found that most of the Science RAs did not adopt the Swales' *Introduction* framework.

Habibi's (2008) study of the *Introduction* section in ESP, Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics RAs revealed a similarity in the moves; the authors of these three disciplines applied Move 1 *Establishing a territory* in their *Introduction*. Habibi also posited that the CARS model cannot be fully adopted in the RAs of these disciplines as different

disciplines apply different structure of the *Introduction* section.

## METHOD

The *Method* section in RAs plays an important role in providing the readers the information on the validity of the study and the descriptions of the procedure taken during the research (Kallet, 2004). The *Method* section should include the specific research procedure, material and analysis. Without the *Method* section in an RA, the author might not be able to convince the readers on how the findings were obtained and the validity of the research itself (Lim, 2006). The author also may rely on the *Method* section to firm up their way on reporting the findings of the research in the *Result* section and trash out any possible doubts on how the findings were obtained and how accurate the result would be (Lim, 2006).

TABLE 4  
Studies on RA Method section

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Corpus (no. of articles)</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>
Brett, 1994	20	Sociology
Nwogu, 1997	15	Medical
Kanoksilapatham, 2005	12	Biochemistry
Lim, 2006	20	Business Management
Yang & Allison, 2003	20	Applied Linguistics

A number of research on the *Method* section have adopted the Swales *Method* framework (Table 1). However, Lim (2006) improvised the *Method* section structure of the Business Management RAs, as shown in Table 4. Lim found additional submoves and moves within the method section framework. Lim’s framework proposes that the method used in collecting data should be explained more in detail, as given in Table 5.

TABLE 5  
Lim’s framework of Method section

<i>Rhetorical moves</i>	<i>Constituent steps</i>
Move 1: Describing data collection procedure/s	Step 1: Describing the sample (a) Describing the location of the sample (b) Describing the size of the sample/population (c) Describing the characteristics of the sample (d) Describing the sampling technique or criterion Step 2: Recounting steps in data collection Step 3: Justifying the data collection procedure/s (a) Highlighting advantages of using the sample (b) Showing representatives of the sample
Move 2: Delineating procedure/s for measuring variables	Step 1: Presenting an overview of the design Step 2: Explaining method/s of measuring variables (a) Specifying items in questionnaires/databases (b) Defining variables (c) Describing methods of measuring variables Step 3: Justifying the methods of measuring variables (a) Citing previous research methods (b) Highlighting acceptability of the method/s
Move 3: Elucidating data analysis procedure/s	Step 1: Relating or recounting data analysis procedures Step 2: Justifying the data analysis procedures Step 3: Previewing results

The RAs of the three disciplines: sociology, medical and biochemistry (Table 4), displayed an almost identical structure of *data collection - measuring variables - data analysis* (Brett, 1994; Nwogu, 1997; Kanoksilapatham, 2005), which is similar to Swales’ *Method* section framework. However, the Applied Linguistics RAs did not seem to adopt Move 2 *Measuring variables* of the Swales’ (Yang & Allison, 2003). The results prove the variation in the move patterns in the *Method* section across the disciplines.

**RESULTS**

There have not been many studies on the *Result* section in an RA. In addition to Swales', another framework for the *Results* section derived from the Applied Linguistics RAs has been proposed by Yang and Allison (2003), as shown in Table 7. They stated that the *Result* section is one of the important parts of an article (Yang & Allison, 2003). The moves and steps of the *Result* section in the Applied Linguistics field are the same with those in the *Result* section in Computer Science and Medical research articles (Nwogu, 1997; Posteguillo, 1999), which explain that the Results section in different

fields tends to have the same features. Brett (1994) reported that in any field, this section is the place where the new findings are commented and highlighted by the authors.

A study of the Sociology and Organic Chemistry RAs by Bruce (2009), however, interestingly showed that the moves applied in the RAs seemed to be different from the framework proposed by both Swales (Table 1). The differences arise on how the results were presented. This is probably due to the availability of many established experimental procedures in the field; therefore, the justification of the procedures has to be made (Bruce, 2009).

TABLE 6  
Studies on RA Result section

<i>Author</i>	<i>Corpus (no. of articles)</i>	<i>Disciplines</i>
Bruce, 2009	20	Sociology & Organic Chemistry
Lim, 2006	20	Business Management
Williams, 1999	8	Medical
Yang and Allison, 2003	20	Applied Linguistics

TABLE 7  
Yang and Allison's Framework of Result section (Yang & Allison, 2003)

<i>Moves</i>	<i>Steps</i>
Move 1 Preparatory information	
Move 2 Reporting results	
Move 3 Commenting on results	e) Interpreting results f) Comparing results with literature g) Evaluating results h) Accounting for results
Move 4 Summarising results	
Move 5 Evaluating the study	a) Indicating limitations b) Indicating significance/advantage
Move 6 Deductions from the research	a) Recommending further research

**DISCUSSION**

The *Discussion* section in an RA explains how the results can contribute to new disciplinary knowledge (Holmes, 1997;

Yang & Allison, 2003; Samraj, 2005; Safnil, 2013). Table 8 shows some of the research focusing on the *Discussion* section of RAs.

TABLE 8  
Studies on RA Discussion section

Author	Corpus (no. of articles)	Disciplines
Safnil, 2013	47	Social Science
Holmes, 1997	30	History, Political Science, Sociology
Wirada Amnuai, 2013	60	Linguistics
Yang and Allison, 2003	20	Linguistics

Safnil (2013), in his study on Social Science RAs of the *Discussion* section, found that most results and discussion sections were collapsed into one section. There was no particular section for the discussion. Thus, the discussion section for the Social Science RAs differs from the framework proposed by Swales. Holmes (1997), on the other hand, looked into the *Discussion* structure of the History, Political Science and Sociology RAs, and identified a similarity between the Political Science and Psychology *Discussion* structures; both started with the *Background Information* (Move 1). As for the History RAs, Move 1 is not used and the *Discussion* section

in the History is rarely cyclical and also seldom has reference to the previous research findings (Holmes, 1997).

Yang and Allison (2003), in their study of the *Discussion* section of the Linguistics RAs, found that the RAs did not seem to follow the *Discussion* section framework proposed by Swales (Table 1). Some of the moves in the *Discussion* section were cyclical; not only the author explains about the results, he/she also comments on it. Therefore, some submoves were added into the framework proposed by Swales. They came up with an improvised framework in Table 9.

TABLE 9  
Yang & Allison's framework of Discussion section (Yang & Allison, 2003)

Moves	Steps
Move 1 Background information	
Move 2 Reporting results	
Move 3 Summarizing results	
Move 4 Commenting on results	(a) Interpreting results (b) Comparing results with literature (c) Accounting for results (d) Evaluating results
Move 5 Summarizing the study	
Move 6 Evaluating the study	(a) Indicating limitations (b) Indicating significance/advantage (c) Evaluating methodology
Move 7 Deductions from the research	(a) Making suggestions (b) Recommending further research (c) Drawing pedagogic implication

## CONCLUSION

The writing in the research articles consists of scientific communication elements, which depend heavily on writers' ability to explain and interpret their findings and use appropriate language in the fields. The main goal of writing a research article is to help readers and viewers understand the concept and ideas that the writers intend to propose. Therefore, academicians need appropriate writing skills to ensure that new knowledge they have explored can be shared with other academic communities and readers.

The review of studies on all the sections in the RAs in this paper has proven that though there is an identified general organisation outlined such as that by Swales, the different disciplines possess different cultures in presenting and interpreting the information; thus, differences in the organisation of RAs are inevitable from one field to another. As such, studies on writings from RAs of disciplines are very much required, not only to understand and identify the similarities and differences in the organisations of the RAs, but more importantly to ensure that the knowledge intended to be shared by the writers can be presented and read in readily available structure and organisation which can boost readers' understanding of new knowledge.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by the short grant PJP/2013/PBPI(4D)S01157 from Universiti Teknikal Malaysia, Melaka.

## REFERENCES

- Amnuai, W., & Wannaruk, A. (2013). A Move-Based Analysis of the Conclusion Sections of Research Articles Published in International and Thai Journals. *3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, 19(2), 53-63.
- Bowker, L., & Pearson, J. (2002). *Working with specialised language : A practical guide to using corpora*. London: Routledge.
- Bhatia, V. K. (1997). Genre-Mixing in Academic Introductions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(3), 181-195.
- Brett, P. (1994). A Genre Analysis of the results section of sociology articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13(1), 47-59.
- Briones, R. R. Y. (2012). Move Analysis of Philosophy Research Article Introductions Published in the University of Santo Tomas. *Philippine ESL Journal*, 9, 56-75.
- Bruce, I. (2009). Results Sections in Sociology and Organic Chemistry Articles : A Genre Analysis. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28(2), 105-124.
- Cross, C., & Oppenheim, C. (2006). A genre analysis of scientific abstracts. *Journal of Documentation*, 62(4), 428-446.
- Ding, H. (2007). Genre Analysis of personal statements: Analysis of moves in application essays to medical and dental schools. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26(3), 368-392.
- Flowerdew, L. (2008). *Corpus-Based analyses of the problem-solution patterns*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Gavioli, L. (2005). *Exploring corpora for ESP learning*. Amsterdam : John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Habibi, P. (2008). Genre Analysis of Research Article Introduction across ESP Psycholinguistics and Sociolinguistics. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 87-111.

- Holmes, R. (1997). Genre Analysis, and the Social Sciences : An Investigation of the Structure of Research Article Discussion Sections in Three Disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), 321-337.
- Hyland, K. (2007). English for Professionals Academic Purposes: Writing for Scholarly Publication. In: B. Diane (Ed.), *English for Specific Purposes in Theory and Practice* (pp. 83-105). Ann Arbor, MI, U.S.A.: University of Michigan Press.
- Hyland, K. (2008). As can be seen: Lexical bundles and disciplinary variation. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27(1), 4-21.
- Kallet, R. H. (2004). How to Write the methods Section of a Research Paper. *Respiratory Care*, 49(10), 1229-1232.
- Kanoksilapatham, B. (2005). Rhetorical Structure of Biochemistry Research Articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(3), 269-292.
- Li, Y. (2011). *A Genre Analysis of English and Chinese Research Article Abstract in Linguistics and Chemistry*. (Master thesis dissertation). San Diego State University.
- Lim, J. M. (2006). Method sections of management research articles : A pedagogically motivated qualitative study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(3), 282-309.
- Lin, L., & Evans, S. (2012). Structural patterns in empirical research articles: A cross-disciplinary study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 31(3), 150-160.
- Martín, P. A. M., & Pérez, I. K. L. (2009). Promotional Strategies in Research Article Introductions: An Interlinguistics and Cross-Disciplinary Genre Analysis. *Revista canaria de estudios ingleses*, (59), 73-88.
- Noorli, K. (2011). *A Lexical Investigation of Engineering English: A Corpus-Based Approach*. Unpublished dissertation, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, UTEM.
- Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The Medical Research Paper: Structure and Functions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(2), 119-138.
- Orasan, C. (2001). Patterns in scientific abstracts. In *Proceedings of the Corpus Linguistics 2001 Conference* (pp. 433-443). Retrieved from <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/publications/CL2003/CL2001%20conference/papers/orasan.pdf>.
- Paltridge, B. (2001). *Genre and the Language Learning Classroom*. University of Michigan Press.
- Ping, H., Qingqing, W., Yuying, L., & Zhengyu, Z. (2010). An Analysis of a Genre Set in RA Abstract and Introductions in Different Disciplines. *IEEE Computer Society*, 690-695.
- Posteguillo, S. (1999). The Schematic Structure of Computer Science Articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2), 139-160.
- Ruiying, Y., & Allison, D. (2003). Research Articles in Applied Linguistics: Moving from Results to Conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22(4), 365-385.
- Safnil, S. (2013). A Genre-Based Analysis On The Introductions Of Research Articles Written By Indonesian Academics. *TEFLIN Journal: A publication on the teaching and learning of English*, 24(2), 180-200.
- Samraj, B. (2002). Introduction in research articles: variations across disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(1), 1-17.
- Samraj, B. (2005). An exploration of a genre set: Research article abstracts and introductions in two disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(2), 141-156.

- Supatranont, P. (2012). Developing a writing template of research article abstracts: A corpus-based method. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 66, 144-156.
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Upton, T. A., & Connor, U. (2001). Using Computerized corpus analysis to investigate the textlinguistics discourse moves of a genre. *English for Specific Purposes*, 20(4), 313-329.
- Williams, I. A. (1999). Results Sections of Medical Research Articles : Analysis of Rhetorical Categories for Pedagogical Purposes. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(4), 347-366.
- Zamri, Z. M., Yusof, J., Junid, R. A., & Adnan, A. H. (2012). Publish or Perish: Challenges in Scholarly Writing and Publishing in Local and International English Medium Journals Among UiTM Perak Academicians. In *Proceedings of the 7<sup>th</sup> Malaysia International Conference on Languages, Literatures and Cultures*.
- Zand-Valik, E., & Kashani, A. F. (2012). The Contrastive Move Analysis: An Investigation of Persian and English Research Articles Abstract and Introduction part. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(2), 129-137.



## **What Do Students and Engineers Have to Say about Communicative Competence in Technical Oral Presentations?**

**Bhattacharyya, E.<sup>1\*</sup> and Zainal, A. Z.<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, 32610 Seri Iskandar, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia*

*<sup>2</sup>English Department, University of Malaya, Lembah Pantai, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

This article reports how the notion of communicative competence was perceived by engineering students and engineers during 16 final year technical oral presentation sessions. Six sub-sets associated to linguistic and rhetorical competence such as brevity and terminology; confident, interactive and argumentative language; visual language; humour; formality, and exchange of questions are deemed necessary. There is, however, notable diversity in the participants' perception of the said notion. Engineers stressed contextualised real-world application presentation, while students were drawn toward academically inclined structured content based type of presentation. Implications of the study for English Language teaching in the ESL context are discussed.

*Keywords:* Communicative Competence, Technical Oral Presentation, Linguistic and Rhetorical Competence, Oral Immediacy Competence

### **INTRODUCTION**

The teaching of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as an area of teaching English Language communication courses such as Technical English seeks to ensure that students are able to function

effectively in their target environment (Chambers, 1980; Dudley-Evans, & St. John, 1998; Basturkmen, 2010; Bruce, 2011). However, in the course of teaching such courses in institutions such as that of an engineering university, the issue of concern centres over the linguistic disparity between the academy and the workplace on the portability or transferability of ESP education (Bhatia, 2004; Artemeva, 2009; Bhatia, & Bremner, 2012). This implies that different communities of practice

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

##### *Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

##### *E-mail addresses:*

ena\_bhattacharyya@petronas.com.my (Bhattacharyya, E.),

azlinzainal@um.edu.my (Zainal, A. Z.)

\* Corresponding author

such as the academic practitioners of the community and workplace professionals (like engineers in the industry) relate to different views and experiences as a result of legitimate peripheral practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). One way of addressing this linguistic disparity and concern in ESP education lies in a study on the perception of student speaking activities in the target genres as used by expert users of the genres.

At present, there is limited literature on genre, linguistic and rhetorical competence features in the context of oral communicative events such as design presentations (Dannels, 2009; Morton, 2009). Lack of knowledge of such features will contribute to the apparent academia-industry practitioner gap on communication skills requirement expected of prospective graduates (Norback & Hardin, 2005). An insight into such features in technical oral presentations contributes to the apparent disparity in specific genre required for such communicative events for effective workplace participation (Hyland, 2002, 2005). This study aims to explore the notion of communicative competence as perceived by different stakeholders, namely, engineers and students in the context of technical oral presentation, which is noted as a significant oral communicative event at the workplace setting (Bhattacharyya, 2011).

Communicative competence and specific genre used in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) type of presentations are crucial for effective global workplace participation (Carter, 2013). Such competence is fundamental in enhancing

the communication of scientific and technical ideas. The impact of a successful presentation is resounded by a speaker's clarity in the delivery of a message (Carter, 2013). Linguistic competence refers to the "way language is used in variance in real communication" either in oral or written communication (Gatehouse, 2001). In this context, linguistic competence encompasses linguistic accuracy and linguistic appropriacy (Telebaković, 2009). According to Telebaković (2009), linguistic accuracy refers to the correct use of language expressions and involves the control of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling and punctuation (Telebaković, 2009). Linguistic appropriacy, however, refers to the use of language adequate to context, function or intention/purpose, vocabulary and text structures (Telebaković, 2009).

Rhetorical competence to Dannels (2009) includes reference to rhetorical explanatory and rhetorical personalised style. In relation to rhetorical explanatory competence, the rhetorical features incorporate reference to use of interpretive lens rather than through the use of descriptive language. This form of rhetorical input includes the use of justification, interpretation, application and evaluation skills (Dannels, 2009). To Dannels (2009), successful presentations indicate the use of clear explanation and rationale, together with scientific evidence to ascertain decision making processes conducted during the investigation. In rhetorical personalised language, there is

personal reference to engage the audience through the use of personal language, motivational language and translational language to indicate personal motivation in a discussion. Personal language is where there is reference to examples, illustrations, justified evidence and appeals that personally inspire or influence students and audience alike. Successful presentations make mention of the personal ownership of decision making conducted during the duration of the project. In other words, students account for decision making processes and exhibit personal ownership of such processes during the presentation session of the project. Rhetorical competence implies ability to create “audience awareness, sense of purpose, organization, use of visuals, professional appearance, and style” in oral presentations (Ford, 2004).

Dannels (2009) states that rhetorical competence encompasses a student’s ability to be “rhetorically explanatory, rhetorically personalized, orally immediate, orally professional and structurally holistic” when delivering a presentation. This integrates interactivity and necessary interaction between the presenter and audience. Thus, linguistic (linguistic and structural) and rhetorical (interactive) elements are crucial communicative competence sub-sets in technical oral presentation. However, although these competencies are deemed essential genre and rhetorical features necessary to enhance interactivity and engagement in the context of technical oral presentations, such competency markers

have not been thoroughly investigated in the language and communication and ESP related studies. There is lack of consensual definition over what elements constitute the notion of linguistic and rhetorical competence (Morton, 2009).

This study differs from existing studies as it seeks to identify essential communicative competence features from a linguistic and rhetorical dimension in technical oral presentations from the stakeholders’ perspective. Such insight enables stakeholders (like students and professional engineers) to attain their own goals in their respective discourse community. This study builds on previous studies by exploring how engineering students and professional engineers perceive the sub-set of communicative competence, i.e. linguistic and rhetorical competence in oral communicative events such as technical oral presentations.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Presentations represent one of the many oral communicative events and job specifications expected of prospective engineers (Bhattacharyya, Shahrina Mohd Nordin, & Rohani Salleh, 2009). Technical oral presentations denote one of the many workplace technical oral communication activities conducted by engineering professionals (Bhattacharyya *et al.*, 2009). Tenopir and King (2004) affirmed the importance of oral communication activities in relation to the job specification of engineers. Presentations denote one of the many professional oral communicative

events where professional engineers are known to spend almost 60% of their time in the business of oral communication (Tenopir & King, 2004; Tilli & Trevelyan, 2008). Engineers are expected to be familiar with both written and oral presentations as they work with clients and teams from a borderless environment. In such workplace environment, it is essential that any form of miscommunication (written or oral) is avoided as any misconception about others' opinions and thoughts may lead to project delays (Venkatesan & Ravenell, 2011).

#### **TECHNICAL ORAL PRESENTATION**

Technical and Scientific Communication, a study within a specific discipline, derived from English for Specific Purpose (ESP) pedagogy, focuses more toward the communicative needs and practices of social groups (Hyland, 2007). This means to say that language teaching and research is centred on the use of specific language taught in authentic context and in real-world scientific and technical knowledge rather than in teaching grammar or language structures (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). Technical and Scientific Communication can be defined "as a process of data gathering, organising, presenting and refining information" (Collier & Toomey, 1997, p. 1). Technical communication refers to "scientific, engineering, technological, business, regulatory, legal, managerial, or social scientific information" (DiSanza & Legge, 2002, p. 198). In this study, technical oral

presentation denotes a formal presentation of technical information with elements of persuasion and objectivity conveyed to a varied audience from technical and non-technical background (Collier & Toomey, 1997). Technical oral presentations have been selected as this type of oral communicative event is considered part of an engineers' workplace requirement (Tenopir & King, 2004). In fact, engineers are said to spend 60% of their time on oral communicative events which include their participation in technical oral presentations (Tenopir & King, 2004; Tilli & Trevelyan, 2008; Bhattacharyya, 2011).

#### **RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE GENRE OF PRESENTATIONS**

Several studies have been carried out on the use of genre in presentations. Earlier competency studies conducted focused only on introduction sections in scientific conference presentations with particular focus on specific genre such as personal pronouns and use of self-mention (Elizabeth Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas, 2005). A later study on medical discourse focused on the use of "if-conditionals" (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2008). In this sense, the focus is specific toward one type of linguistic device prevalent in scientific or medical setting.

Darling's (2005) study focused on mechanical engineering community engaged in communication across curriculum (CXC) public presentations. The study concluded by suggesting possible change agents of focus on the

product in scientific and technical courses (like engineering) rather than on speakers in such CXC programmes. Thus, Darling's (2005) study focused only on content or disciplinary competence and was limited to only one engineering programme.

Other studies have focused on different ESP contexts such as healthcare settings (Schryer, Lingard, & Spafford, 2005), architectural presentations (Morton 2009) and mechanical engineering presentations (Dannels, 2009). Some of these studies highlight the rhetorical competence in different language specific settings. Mortons' study accentuated the genre and rhetorical language used in ESP architecture presentations (Morton, 2009). The findings from these studies indicate that students are still confused with the choice and use of ESP genre set within an ESP environment. Students are often left perplexed over the type of genres (academic or professional) to be used in oral presentations (Dannels, 2002; Artemewa, 2008).

Dannels (2009) reiterates the importance of relational genre knowledge in mechanical engineering presentations. She stresses on the importance of the use of "rhetorical strategies, oral styles and organisational structures" to ensure successful presentation with focus on only one engineering program (Dannels, 2009, p. 399). The findings from these studies indicate that many of such linguistic competency studies were ESP context driven but conducted in either native speaker or EFL environment. The findings suggest that limited research is

conducted in the ESL context. Moreover, it is also argued that research in spoken genre remains an under-researched area in comparison to written discourse (Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas, 2005).

In the Malaysian context, previous studies on oral communicative competence include a quantitative study carried out by Hafizoah Kassim and Fatimah Ali (2010), which investigated the concept of communicative competence from the perspective of employers. Hafizoah's study (2010) investigated the issue of communicative competence solely from the perspective of the employers and did not specify the required genre necessary in oral communication skills requirement.

Thus, the present study is appropriate as it seeks to explore the said notion within an ESL setting which if left untapped will continue to contribute to the existing communication skills divide among the academia and industry practitioners on communicative competency requirement in language and communication courses such as technical oral presentation. Limited input on required linguistic and rhetorical competency requirement in technical oral presentations will inadvertently have pedagogical implications in the curriculum design and teaching of technical oral presentation skills in an ESL context. A lack of insight may inadvertently impinge on manpower planning and human capital necessary for nation policy economic development purposes (Ministry of Higher Education, 2007; STAR, 2009).

## COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND COMPETENCY STUDIES

Various models of communicative competence have been proposed (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, 1985; Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Celce-Murcia, 2007). This study, however, adopted Celce Murcia's (2007) model. Celce-Murcia's (2007) communicative competence model is chosen as the theoretical framework that underpins this study. In the perspective of this study, the concept of communicative competence in technical oral presentation is initially examined with the five sub-sets of competences propagated in Celce-Murcia's (2007) model of communicative competence which stipulates five vital linguistic and rhetorical devices necessary to achieve a unified coherent text, namely,

- i) socio-cultural competence,
- ii) discourse competence,
- iii) linguistic competence,
- iv) interactional or actional competence, and
- v) strategic competence.

This model was chosen as it addresses the vital features expected of an oral communicative event such as technical oral presentations. The said model was chosen as it accentuates the importance of knowledge, skills, interactivity, as well as proper use of language expressions necessary and expected of a presenter when engaged and speaking within a particular socio-cultural setting. The findings of this study will elaborate on the

linguistic and rhetorical competence due to limited literature available on this aspect of communicative competence in oral communication literature.

According to Celce-Murcia's (2007) model, socio-cultural competence is associated to the presenters' pragmatic knowledge, i.e. how to express communication within a socio-cultural context and knowledge on language variations in such contexts (Celce-Murcia, 2007). Discourse competence, on the other hand, refers to the selection, sequencing and arrangement of words, structures and utterances to achieve a unified spoken message. In addition, linguistic competence is associated with four types of knowledge, namely, phonological, lexical, morphological and syntactic knowledge of sentence structures and other aspects of syntax in language use (Celce-Murcia, 2007). Interactional competence includes actional competence, where evidence of knowledge on interactions such as information exchanges, interpersonal exchanges, expressions of feelings and opinions, problems and future scenarios are expressed (Celce-Murcia, 2007). To Celce-Murcia, strategic competence incorporates specific behaviours or thought processes that students use to enhance their own second language learning. Language strategies include cognitive (logical analysis), meta-cognitive (self-evaluation) and memory related strategies (Celce-Murcia, 2007). Communication strategies include achievement, stalling, self-monitoring, interacting and social strategies to enhance communicative competence of a presenter.

Thus, according to Celce-Murcia's model of communicative competence, the said notion encapsulates competency in both the linguistic skill, i.e. language proficiency, as well as the verbal and non-verbal behaviours that accentuate the presenter's competence in delivering a technical oral presentation. The said investigation was conducted with the aim of contributing to the notion of communicative competence of technical oral presentations as perceived by the students and professional engineers who are both end users of the said event in academic, professional and workplace settings. The aim of this study is to identify sub-sets of linguistic and rhetorical competence which will then add to Celce-Murcia's communicative competence model (2007).

From the ESP pedagogy, the notion of communicative competence is associated to the use of language and its genre in specific context. Technical oral presentations delivered in such scientific and technical setting is not an exception. Genre competency studies are essential as other studies like Morton's (2009) research stressed on genre specificity to create interactivity in presentations. Genre specificity implies the use of specific technical or scientific terminology typically used by presenters and understood by the audience. The familiarity in reference to a certain technical or scientific genre would create that interaction with the audience. Audience who are not familiar with a certain technical term may not be able to comprehend the content or

message by the presenter. The need for specific genre is similarly echoed in Hyland's 2007 study which stressed the need for educators to relook at tailoring language and communication courses to equip learners with essential ESP genre and discourse used in specific disciplines (Hyland, 2007; Bhattacharyya, 2014). To Morton, this aspect of language specificity is essential as it creates that "magic" or interactivity wanting in presentations (Morton, 2009). Morton & O'Brien's (2005) study only focused on design studio presentations, while Morton's 2009 study did not address the specific genre necessary for communicative competence in presentations. Thus, the said study is essential to investigate the students' and engineers perceptions on specific language use wanting in technical oral presentations.

The present study differs from the existing studies in terms of context and focus. It aims to compare students and engineers' perceptions of communicative competence, i.e. linguistic and rhetorical competence required in technical oral presentation as grounded in the situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This study provides a qualitative perspective of varied stakeholders from different communities of practice (i.e., students and practitioners, i.e. professional engineers) involved in professional oral communication focusing on technical oral presentations across all engineering programmes conducted at a university. An insight into the views of the students and professional engineers comments from

the linguistic and rhetorical perspective aim to identify the necessary features that accentuate the oral communicative competence in technical oral presentation communicative event. Although the context is set in an academic setting, the technical oral presentation mirrors the elements and setting of an oral communicative event at the workplace, as participants involved in such technical oral presentation sessions comprise of members from varied background and experience (such as engineering lecturers from the academic community and professional engineers from the professional engineering community).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study (part of a larger study) represents a qualitative examination of the final year engineering students and engineers' perceptions of linguistic and rhetorical competence required in technical oral presentations. More specifically, it aims to answer the following research question:

- 1) What are the similarities and differences among selected stakeholders' (engineering students and professional engineers) perceptions of communicative competence, i.e. linguistic competence and rhetorical competence in technical oral presentation?

The units of analysis in this study are the interview sessions conducted among the students and professional engineers

who are involved in the technical oral presentation sessions. Feedback from the interview sessions seeks to investigate what students and professional engineers perceive about communicative competence in technical oral presentations. The technical oral presentations refer to technical project presentations delivered by the engineering students who are in the final year of the engineering degree programme. In this context, the students and professional engineers are both involved in the technical oral presentations. The students are the presenters who present the outcome of their study in an oral presentation mode. The study is presented to a panel of evaluators. The evaluators comprise of the professional engineers who have been selected by the university to evaluate the oral presentation of the students. Thus, both students and professional engineers share common knowledge on the oral communicative event, i.e. the technical oral presentation. A description is provided on the participants involved in the study and its procedure for collecting and processing the data findings.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

Data for this study were collected from twenty-six students and twelve engineers. The student participants were selected from a cohort of 275 students who were involved in the four-year engineering programme at the Technical Engineering University (a pseudonym, hereafter TEU for short), a private technological university in the state of Perak Darul



Ridzuan, Malaysia. Identifiers are used to refer to students, for example “MIESCS25” which have been coded as “Male, Indian, Engineering Student, Case Study 25”. These students were from various engineering programmes such as Mechanical, Chemical, Civil and Electronics and Electrical. At the time of data collection, these were the only engineering courses offered at TEU. These

students were selected as they fulfilled the researcher criteria which include being final year engineering students and students who were involved in presenting technical oral presentations. Out of the twenty-six, seventeen were male while the rest were female participants. Table 1 indicates the student programme background and gender involved in the research.

TABLE 1  
Information on the participation of students as per programme

Students/ Program ME*	Bachelor of Engineering Programme			Total	
	CHE*	CVE*	EE*		
Male	4	2	7	4	17
Gender Female	0	0	3	6	9
Total	4	2	10	10	26

\*ME–Mechanical Engineering Programme; CHE – Chemical Engineering Programme; CVE – Civil Engineering Programme; EE – Electrical and Electronics Engineering Programme

The above Table 1 indicates the information on students’ participation as per programme. The said participants indicated their willingness to be part of the study. The participants were in the know that they had the option to opt out from the study at any moment if they decided to do so. In cases where clarification was required for certain feedback, follow up interviews were carried out with selected participants.

As for the professional engineers, this pool of participants was selected by the University Project Panel Committee to take the task as external examiners for the students’ project presentations. These

engineers are required to have more than 5 years of working experience. The professional engineers are henceforth referred to as engineers. A list of pool of engineers was made available by the project coordinator to the researcher. Emails were sent to the 66 engineers and 12 responded agreeing to be part of the qualitative study. The engineers were selected as they fulfilled the researcher criteria of having more than five years of working experience and were involved as evaluators in the evaluation of the students’ technical oral presentation in the university. Table 2 shows the demographics of the engineers’ background.

TABLE 2  
Information on the engineers' professional background

Engineers' Designation	Field Of Specialisation				Total
	ME*	CHE*	CVE*	EE*	
Manager	1	1	/	/	2
Principal Engineer	/	/	/	1	1
Senior Manager or Consultant/Senior Engineer/ Process Technologist	3	2	1	1	7
Chairman	/	/	1	/	1
Managing Director	1	/	/	/	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>

\*ME–Mechanical Engineering Programme; CHE – Chemical Engineering Programme; CVE – Civil Engineering Programme; EE – Electrical and Electronics Engineering Programme

Table 2 above indicates that the engineers involved in the study are from diverse professional backgrounds and held different positions in the national oil company. All engineers had more than 5 years of working experience and held managerial or consultancy positions in the company. These engineers were ranked from middle to senior management positions. In addition, all of the engineers had experience in evaluating the students' technical oral presentations. Given the rank, diversity in work experiences and field of specialisation, the researcher anticipated that the engineers would be able to provide relevant comments on communicative competence requirements expected out of students' technical oral presentation.

## DATA COLLECTION

The data from the student participants and engineers were collected at TEU from April to August 2008 based on the students' final year engineering project presentation students. It was obligatory that the said

students present the findings of the study during the second semester of the final year degree programme. It is during this oral presentation session that engineers are engaged as part of the panel of evaluators for the technical oral presentations.

The duration of the interview sessions ranged from forty minutes to an hour, depending on the participants' feedback. All the participants were informed that the interview sessions would be tape-recorded for transcription purposes. Interview sessions were located at office rooms or scheduled venues at the research site.

For the convenience and ease of understanding during the interview sessions, all the participants were required to comment on six domains of inquiry, such as: (a) definition of technical oral presentation; (b) technical oral presentation experiences; (c) presenter skills and attributes; (d) communicative competence requirements (language, content and rhetorical skills); (e) challenges in enhancing communicative competence,

and (f) improvements to enable students to be actively engaged in oral communicative events. These domains would provide qualitative data related to what students and engineers had to say about communicative competence, i.e. linguistic and rhetorical competence in technical oral presentations. Within Celce-Murcia's communicative competence model (2007), Dannels' (2009) framework of oral immediacy was utilised to identify the necessary linguistic and rhetorical sub-sets of communicative competence in presentations.

The six sub-sets associated with linguistic and rhetorical competence include use of: i) brevity and terminology, ii) confident, interactive and argumentative language, iii) visual language, iv) humour, v) formality, and vi) exchange of questions. These sub-sets were coded according to Dannels' (2009) framework of oral immediacy competence in design presentations. The said sub-sets enhance "connectedness" and "relatedness" with one's listeners with the audience (Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas, 2005). The notion of communicative competence thrives on the engagement and interaction between presenter and audience. As such, these linguistic and rhetorical features are pertinent communicative competence features which aim to engage and create connectedness with the audience present in an oral communicative event. Thus, feedback provided by the students and engineers from the linguistic and rhetorical features is intended to create that connection between the presenter and the audience.

Qualitative feedback from all 26 students and 12 engineers were transcribed and quantitatively analysed by the use of Qualitative Software Research or QSR NVivo 11, a software programme to analyse qualitative data. The study adopted Creswell's (2003) generic process of data analysis design for analysing qualitative data that include six main steps like "organizing and preparing the data; reading through all data; coding; narrating descriptions and themes; and interpreting data" (Creswell, 2003, pp. 191-195).

The study investigated the perceptions of selected students and engineers on the use of such linguistic and rhetorical devices in enhancing communicative competence in technical oral presentation sessions. Students and engineers were required to provide their feedback on the importance or the lack of emphasis accorded to genre or language specific features and rhetorical features utilised to enhance communicative competence in technical oral presentation sessions which mirror workplace oral communicative events.

## RESULTS

The following section details the results as perceived by students and engineers on the use of linguistic and rhetorical features, such as: i) brevity and terminology, ii) confident, interactive and argumentative language, iii) visual language, iv) humour, v) formality, and vi) exchange of questions, in technical oral presentations. Qualitative analysis indicates that engineers have accorded 75% level of importance, while students

emphasised 61.5% to the said construct. This level of importance was attained by the number of references accorded by the said participants on the various sub-sets of communicative competence. In this particular sub-set, 9 out of 12 engineers and 16 out of 26 students responded on the importance of the said construct.

### BREVITY AND SPECIFIC TECHNICAL TERMINOLOGY

9 engineers and 16 students agreed that brevity is an important significant feature in technical communication for professionals and engineers. As mentioned by Sharma (2007), “round about sentences and expressions” are avoided in scientific and technical presentations. A technical student has to be “brief, to the point, cogent and relevant”(Sharma, 2007, p. 15). Thus, this means that a technical writer must avoid circumlocution and verbosity. In the context of technical oral presentation, both engineers and students concur that the notion of communicative competence is depicted when there is brevity in a presentation. Brevity is supported through the use of visual aids to assist audience understanding.

Specific technical features are also agreed by the students. MCESCS14 makes a point that students need to be well-versed with language of the workplace. This is evident in the excerpt 1 by MIESCS25 (Male, Indian Engineering Student, Case Study 25) in the following excerpt 1.

#### Excerpt 1 MIESCS25

“...the most important element in technical oral presentation would be the *flow, overall flow, the targeted audience; if we are presenting to a technical audience background or a new crowd, we need to explain using certain technical language, technical terms* depends whether audience has *similar background, as people with different background, we need to explain more...the language is less technical or less specific to our field...we can use simple language...*”

The above excerpt 1 indicates that the crux of professional communication lies in the use of appropriate language and technical features in an explanation of a presentation. Students need to choose the appropriate register and language specific terminology for audience’s understanding of the message relayed in a presentation. Engineers also accorded similar emphasis on brevity and terminology, as seen in the following excerpt 2 by MMEEPTCS4 (Male, Malay, External Examiner, Process Technologist, Case Study 4).

#### Excerpt 2 MMEEPTCS4

“...should focus on *specific application* in the construction industry, get *to the point* of the experiment and focus...”

In the above feedback, it can be ascertained that both students and engineers emphasise the importance to inculcate discourse and linguistic competence, as illustrated in Celce-Murcia’s (2007) model of communicative competence. Both

students and engineers comprehend the significance of sequencing the sentences to ensure the existence of a flow of ideas and yet ensure that syntactic structural content is exhibited in brief and concise sentences. This finding contributes to the notion of communicative competence on the choice and use of language features within the linguistic dimension. These linguistic features are essential elements that contribute to engagement with the audience as the message is well understood by the audience. Brevity and technical terminology are essential linguistic features that contribute to Celce-Murcia's model of communicative competence. Thus, it is essential that educators ensure that students practice using brief, concise and precise sentences during a presentation.

### **CONFIDENT, INTERACTIVE AND ARGUMENTATIVE LANGUAGE**

9 out of the 12 engineers also noted the importance of use of confident language. Confident language is projected by a students' ability to provide succinct and thorough methodological clarification without much uncertainty. Students, however, did not imitate this category in their responses. This perspective is articulated in excerpt 3 by MMEEMCS1 (Male, Malay, External Examiner, Manager, Case Study 1).

Excerpt 3 MMEEMCS1

"...One is confident and you can see the *confidence how they already speak*

about it; and *you can see crystal clear the problem; how they explain step by step* about it; they must able to *interpret to all clearly*, and I can *understand the problem when he explains it to me very clearly...*"

The above excerpt 3 indicates that a student's project familiarity with the project allows one to deliver confidently in a presentation. Such use of confident language engages and creates oral immediacy with the audience as the audience attention is directed at what is stated by the student. The linguistic expertise through mastery of subject matter, ease of interaction and composed argumentative ability are other essential features that contribute to the notion of communicative competence in technical oral presentations. This finding is essential as it amplifies other necessary linguistic elements vital to the existing model of communicative competence. There is, however, no mention on the need to use professional language such as reference to words like "Chairman" to create the artificial professional environment.

### **VISUAL LANGUAGE**

In terms of visual language, 61.5% or 16 out of the 26 students expressed the need to use visual language during presentations. None of the engineers commented on this aspect in their responses. MIESCS25 (Male, Indian, Engineering Student, Case Study 25) affirms the sentiment in the following excerpt 4.

#### Excerpt 4 MIESCS25

“...I was trying to prove that we can use *oil palm leaf* as the source of energy if we go through a process of gasification...”

The student identified the need to use visual language such as “oil palm leaf energy” to explain the technical concept of “gasification”. Such examples facilitate the audience appreciation of a technical jargon. Such visualisation permits the audience to be familiar with unfamiliar abstract concepts (Rowley-Jolivet, 2004). Students are expected to add finer details to explain a technical concept.

#### HUMOUR

Humour (if used appropriately) creates rapport with the audience (Lannon & Gurak, 2011). 61.5% or 16 out of the 26 students concurred on the importance of humour. This sentiment is uttered by FIESCS19 (Female, Chinese, Engineering Student, Case Study 19) in the excerpt 5.

#### Excerpt 5 FIESCS19

“... *people with humor* in whatever they talk; able to *engage the audience* ...is very important in their talk...”

Excerpt 5 above indicates the students’ awareness to include humour as part of oral immediacy competence. However, the said category is not reflected in the response provided by the engineers.

#### LEVEL OF FORMALITY

Oral immediacy is classified by the level of formality required in a presentation. This concern is commented by the students but is not reflected among the engineers. Such language style sets the mood for the presentation. 61.5% students concurred on the importance, as expressed in excerpt 6 by FIESCS16 (Female, Indian, Engineering Student, Case Study 16).

#### Excerpt 6 FIESCS16

“...*wasn’t too sure on how formal the presentation slides should be*. Because in course, we were *taught to be professional* but *some seniors told us the external prefer it to be more laid back, more pictures*, so that was a bit like ‘*Which should I do?...*’”

Excerpt 6 shows the need to ascertain the level of formality required prior a final presentation. It is essential that students are clarified on the formality to craft the language required. Such reference indicates the mood set for the presentation.

#### EXCHANGE OF QUESTIONS

The exchange of queries and input between the student and audience denotes interaction, justification, clarification and deliberation of ideas. 75% or 9 out of the 12 engineers support this category. Students, however, did not indicate any comments on this aspect. MMEPTCS4 (Male, Malay, External Examiner, Process Technologist, Case Study 4) expressed the viewpoint in excerpt 7.

#### Excerpt 7 MMEEPTCS4

“...when the listeners are listening and they have the interest in the subject; then you can *expect some form of questioning; so that could be an indication that the presentation is effective...*”

The excerpt indicates that oral immediacy competence occurs when a presentation is marked by a series of questions and answers between the student and audience. Verbal exchange is noted as one of the key elements of any speaking event (Hymes, 1972). Thus, questioning is perceived as a linguistic strategy to create oral immediacy between the student and audience. The literature also emphasises the importance of such feature to create audience interaction in presentation sessions (Dannels, 2009).

#### DISCUSSION

In relation to oral immediacy competence, different stakeholders accord importance to different sub-sets associated to the construct. In terms of brevity and terminology, both lecturers and students expressed their agreement on the importance and its inclusion as said sub-sets of oral immediacy competence. As for the use of confident, interactive and argumentative language, engineers expressed their emphasis for such linguistic expression in presentations. On the contrary, students, however, stressed on the importance of visual language. Unlike engineers, students stressed the need to include humour to create engagement with the audience. Thus, in relation to

Celce-Murcia's notion of communicative competence, the findings from this study indicate that different communities of practice (i.e., students or professional engineers) indicate preference for certain features when presenting technical oral presentations.

Engineers differ in that these professionals are more concerned with the analytical interpretation of data results. The results on the use of confident, interactive and argumentative language differ from the findings in the existing literature such as Dannels' (2009) study which highlights the importance of using professional language in a technical or scientific presentation. However, the results in this context indicate that students stressed on the use of confident, interactive and argumentative language to validate a certain query or decision making during the duration of the project.

Reference to this form of genre illustrates the presenter's critical thinking ability, confidence and sense of ownership toward the project (Dannels, 2009; Venkatesan & Ravenell, 2011). Venkatsen and Ravenell (2011) mentioned that engineers think in a structured fashion as sequential flow of ideas enables the audience to understand the thoughts and flow of ideas in a discussion or presentation. Thus, linguistic features on the use of clear and concise language indicating clear sequence and flow of ideas are essential in the notion of communicative competence in technical oral presentations. Whitcomb and Whitcomb (2013) made reference to the need for presenter's to accentuate a sense of ownership through

the use of “personal pronouns” which must be a feature emphasised by educators in the language and communication classrooms. The importance of such features is in line with Celce-Murcia’s (2007) strategic competence. The inclusion will enhance the communicative competence of a presenter from a linguistic dimension.

Students voiced emphasis on the importance of formality in technical oral presentations. This has immediate effect on the type of diction chosen to benefit the audience present. For engineers, presentations centres on clarification and explanation of data findings to the audience. There is, however, no mention on the use of professional language with reference to specialised terms such as “*Chairman*” by the students or engineers. All stakeholders show agreement that such genre needs not be used in the presentation sessions.

In terms of the use of visual language in technical oral presentations, the results confer with other studies. Lannon and Gurak (2011) suggested that analogies are useful in cases that involve translating “something abstract, complex or unfamiliar to something broadly familiar with the audience” (Lannon & Gurak, 2011, p. 234). These analogies create oral immediacy with the audience. Analogies provide a clear picture of an otherwise technical concept. It creates that oral immediacy and rapport, which is a feature of linguistic and strategic competence in the model of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007).

As for the use of humour in technical oral presentations, the result differs from

the literature in that there is indication on the inclusion of humour. This feature is not part of Celce-Murcia’s (2007) model but has been argued as an essential element in public speaking to enhance audience interaction and rapport (Koch, 2010). It is evident that engineers are inclined toward contextual application and interpretative skills of students who should be expressive, verbal, interpretive and analytical in presentation sessions. In this sense, students must possess a good understanding of technical and non-technical presentation genre to relate to varied audience background. In terms of the level of formality, students expressed concern over the said competency requirement as such clarification would influence the language crafted in the presentation. The findings relate more to oral immediacy as mentioned by Dannels (2009). Students placed greater emphasis on use of academic language such as language choice, style and use of humour in technical oral presentations.

## CONCLUSION

Students and engineers are in agreement over the types of sub-sets that determine the notion of communicative competency. The diversity in students’ and professionals’ responses on certain sub-sets of oral immediacy features suggests apparent differences in the way different focal groups perceive the said notion. In addition, the findings contribute to the enhancement of Celce-Murcia’s (2007) communicative competence model from



the linguistic and rhetorical dimension. In terms of pedagogical implications for ESP language and communication courses, language and communication input experienced by the engineering students can promote transferable skills and linguistic competence to narrow the gap between the academy and the workplace. Another is that specificity should be treated as an important principle in the teaching of ESP language and communication English. Human interaction is situated (Dias *et al.*, 1999), with reference to time, place, role-relationship and activity (Gu, 2002), and therefore, the interaction must be handled in a specific manner (Zhang, 2013). The third pedagogical implication is that ESP technical oral presentation linguistic features must be taught in a professional and contextual way. This study indicates that the production of a professionally acceptable speech requires enacting the relevant professional role by displaying the formal, process, rhetorical, and subject-matter dimensions of linguistic competency features. This insight may be translated into a few guidelines for teaching ESP in technical oral presentations. Synergy is required between academia and industry practitioners to lessen the apparent divide on communication skills requirement at the workplace.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the management of the research university for funding the project and all the participants who volunteered in the study.

## REFERENCES

- Artemeva, N. (2009). Stories of becoming: A study of novice engineers learning genres of their profession. In C. Bazerman, A. Bonini, & D. Figueiredo (Eds.), *Genre in a changing world* (pp. 158–178). Fort Collins, Colorado: The WAC Clearinghouse/West Lafayette, Indiana: Parlor Press. Retrieved September 14, 2010, from <http://wac.colostate.edu/books/genre>.
- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Basturkmen, H. (2010). *Developing courses in English for specific purposes*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bhatia, V. K. (2004). *Worlds of written discourse: A genre-based view*. London: Continuum.
- Bhatia, V. K., & Bremner, S. (2012). English for business communication. *Language Teaching*, 45(04), 410–445.
- Bhattacharyya, E. (2014). Communicative Competence in Technical Oral Presentation: Perspective of ESL Educators and Professional Engineers. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 22(S), 1-16.
- Bhattacharyya, E. (2011). Communicative competence in technical oral presentation in engineering education: Stakeholder perceptions in a Malaysian context. *Journal of Applied Sciences*, 11(8), 1291-1296.
- Bhattacharyya, E., Nordin, S. M., & Salleh, R. (2009). *Internship students' workplace communication skills: Workplace practices and university preparation*. Paper presented at the CIEC Conference, Florida, Orlando, USA.

- Bruce, I. (2011). *Theory and concepts of English for academic purposes*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carter-Thomas, S., & Rowley-Jolivet, E. (2008). If-conditionals in medical discourse: From theory to disciplinary practice. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 7(3), 191-205.
- Carter, M. (2013). 15 - *The Use of Slides in Oral Presentations Designing Science Presentations* (pp. 191-201). San Diego: Academic Press.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (2007). Rethinking the role of communicative competence in language teaching. In E. A. Soler, & P. S. Jordà (Eds.), *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning* (pp. 41-57). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Collier, J. H., & Toomey, D. M. (1997). *Scientific and technical communication: Theory, practice, and policy* (Digital Edition). Retrieved from <http://www.faculty.english.vt.edu/Collier/stc/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dannels, D. P. (2009). Features of success in engineering design presentations: A call for rhetorical knowledge. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 23(4), 399-427.
- Darling, A. L. (2005). Public presentations in mechanical engineering and the discourse of technology. *Communication Education*, 54(1), 20-33.
- DiSanza, J. R., & Legge, N. J. (2002). *Business and professional communication: Plans, processes, and performance* (2nd Ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ford, J. D. (2004). Knowledge Transfer across Disciplines: Tracking Rhetorical Strategies From a Technical Communication Classroom to an Engineering Classroom. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 47(4), 301-315.
- Gatehouse, K. (2001). Key issues in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curriculum development. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7(10), 1-11.
- Hyland, K. (2002). Specificity revisited: How far should we go now? *English for Specific Purposes*, 21(4), 385-395.
- Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, 7(2), 173-192. doi: 10.1177/1461445605050365.
- Hyland, K. (2007). English for Specific Purposes. In *International handbook of English language teaching*, (pp. 391-402). Springer US.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Harmondsworth*. Middlesex, England: Penguin Books.
- Lannon, J. M., & Gurak, L. J. (2011). *Technical Communication* (12th Ed.). Boston: Longman.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Ministry of Higher Education. (2007). *Triggering Higher Education Transformation, National Higher Education Action Plan 2007-2010*. Kuala Lumpur: Retrieved from [http://www.mohe.gov.my/transmansi/images/1\\_bi.pdf](http://www.mohe.gov.my/transmansi/images/1_bi.pdf).
- Morton, J. (2009). Genre and disciplinary competence: A case study of contextualisation in an academic speech genre. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28(4), 217-229.
- Morton, J., & O'Brien, D. (2005). Selling your design: Oral communication pedagogy in design education. *Communication Education*, 54(1), 6-19.

- Norback, J. S., & Hardin, J. R. (2005). Integrating workforce communication into senior design tutorial. *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, 48(4), 413 -426. doi: IEEE DOI 10.1109/TPC.2005.859717.
- Rowley-Jolivet, E. (2004). Different Visions, Different Visuals: a Social Semiotic Analysis of Field-Specific Visual Composition in Scientific Conference Presentations. *Visual Communication*, 3(2), 145-175 doi: 10.1177/147035704043038.
- Rowley-Jolivet, E., & Carter-Thomas, S. (2005). The rhetoric of conference presentation introductions: Context, argument and interaction. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15(1), 45 -70.
- Schryer, C. F., Lingard, L., & Spafford, M. M. (2005). Techne or Artful Science and the Genre of Case Presentations in Healthcare Settings. *Communication Monographs*, 72(2), 234-260.
- Sharma, S. D. (2007). *Textbook of scientific and technical communication writing for engineers and professionals*. Retrieved from <http://www.ebookdb.org/reading/54G3GE38247A1C1217G0G269Textbook-of-Scientific-and-Technical-Communication-Writing-for-Engineers-and-Professionals>
- STAR. (2009, January 31). Govt concerned about finding jobs for 18,000 grads. *The STAR online*. Retrieved from <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/1/31/nation/3162420&sec=nation>
- Tilli, S., & Trevelyan, J. P. (2008, 20-22 June). *Longitudinal study of Australian engineering graduates: Preliminary results*. Paper presented at the American Society for Engineering Education Annual Conference (ASEE), Pittsburgh, USA.
- Telebaković, G. D. (2009). Assessing university level ESP students. *Serbia ELTA Newsletter* (April Academic), 1-7. doi: [http://www.britishcouncil.org/vi/serbia-elta-newsletter-2009-april-academic\\_corner](http://www.britishcouncil.org/vi/serbia-elta-newsletter-2009-april-academic_corner)
- Tenopir, C., & King, D.W. (2004). *Communication patterns of engineers*. River Street, Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-IEEE Press.
- Venkatesan, P., & Ravenell, R. (2011). What is the most important skill/quality in the engineering workplace? [The way I see it]. *Potentials, IEEE Xplore*, 30(3), 6-8.
- Zhang, Z. (2013), Business English students learning to write for international business: What do international business practitioners have to say about their texts? *English for Specific Purposes*, 32(3), 144-156.



## **Importance of Correct Pronunciation in Spoken English: Dimension of Second Language Learners' Perspective**

**Zulqarnain Abu Bakar\* and Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah**

*Department of Management and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS, 31750 Tronoh, Perak, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how learners perceive pronunciation and its importance in spoken English. The motivation for the study is the increasing unpopularity of the aspect of pronunciation in the ESL context which has caused lack of measures in improving learners' pronunciation skill despite being quite a concern among professionals in job environments that demands intelligible spoken English. The study specifically looked into the dimensions of students' perceptions towards accurate English pronunciation. The study employed survey questionnaires as data collection tool and the data were analysed statistically using SPSS and factor analysis. Based on the findings, four dimensions emerged in their perception for the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English: 1) their awareness towards the importance of correct pronunciation; 2) concern on its accuracy; 3) level of achievement on their performance; and 4) the affinity for the effort to improve their English pronunciation in general. Overall, the findings suggested that the respondents have clear understanding of the concern for correct pronunciation in spoken English.

*Keywords:* Pronunciation skill, perception, awareness, accuracy, achievement, affinity, L2 learners

### **INTRODUCTION**

Pronunciation has a key role in successful communication both productively and receptively. It has been a common concern

among L2 learners with regard to their confidence in oral communication (Bang, 1999). Operating at a sub-conscious level, it is often not easily amendable, though it is not impossible for an L2 learner to achieve an impressive performance (Munro & Derwing, 2008). When a pronunciation feature impedes the intelligibility of a word, native listeners can use contextual cues to resolve ambiguity. Non-native listeners, on the other hand, who might rely

#### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

[zulqab@petronas.com.my](mailto:zulqab@petronas.com.my) (Zulqarnain Abu Bakar),

[ridhuan\\_tony@petronas.com.my](mailto:ridhuan_tony@petronas.com.my)

(Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah)

\* Corresponding author

more on the acoustic signal are prone to face communication breakdown (Harper, 2004). Nevertheless, considering the fact that L2 learners use English more often among non-native speakers than among the native speakers (Jenkins, 2000), most commonly in the Malaysian educational and professional set up, L2 learners may still need to master the much learnable segmental sounds of English for mutual intelligibility instead of the complex suprasegmental qualities. Such limitations among L2 speakers can be frustrating and may need addressing. More soundly, the teaching of pronunciation is vital for L2 learners in the context of interactions between both non-native speakers and also with native speakers in general. However, training to improve one's pronunciation may be pointless if the learners do not see the importance of such needs. A study carried out by Rajadurai (2001) on the attitude and concern for accurate English pronunciation among a group of Malaysian ESL teacher trainees showed that more than 80% of the trainees agreed that pronunciation is an important element in spoken English. Such finding may naturally be expected since they are to be English teachers. Another study on a non-Malaysian context revealed that learners expressed real concern about the accuracy of segmental aspects of their pronunciation (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 2000). Some experts (Roach, 1991; Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwind, 1996; Dalton & Seidlhofer, 2000) claimed that

generally learners would want to improve their pronunciation although it is a skill that has been asserted to be the most difficult to acquire. In general, the awareness on the importance of the language in relation to how words are uttered and pronounced can be considered high.

Since the onset of communicative approach in language teaching, particularly in relation to the teaching and learning of English, teachers have generally placed minimal emphasis on the importance of pronunciation (Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwind, 1996). The rising unpopularity of this aspect in the ESL context has caused a lack of measures in terms of exploring ways and techniques to improve learners' pronunciation skill. It would be enlightening to find out what actually the concerns and perceptions of the Malaysian English learners in relation to the importance of accurate English Language pronunciation currently. Bang (1999) conducted a study investigating EFL learners' reactions towards oral error correction. A questionnaire was administered to 100 EFL students in Spoken English classes at a university. In response to methods of error corrections, respondents showed a preference for specific types of oral feedback. The study indicated that the learners had a positive perception towards error correction but were particularly sensitive to the manner in which feedback was given. Relevant to the purpose of this study is the fact

that only a very small number of the respondents felt that phonological error correction of pronunciation was a great concern. In contrast, Rajadurai (2001) surveyed a group of students in a TESL programme in Malaysia, investigating the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation. Findings showed that more than 85% of the subjects agreed that pronunciation training was essential, particularly on the segmental aspect of pronunciation. Derwing and Rossiter (2002) also used the survey approach in the study on learners' perception of their pronunciation needs and strategies. The results disclosed segmental superiority over suprasegmental importance as perceived by their respondents. Considering the mixed results in these studies of which the survey approach was adopted to investigate learners' concern for improvement in English pronunciation, the present aim is to explore learners' attitude and perceptions towards accurate English pronunciation. To date, no study on the attitudes and perceptions of English pronunciation for Malaysian English learners has been conducted even though this aspect of the language has been quite a concern among the professionals to some extent. It has become a common concern among fresh college and university graduates who are expected to function well in job environments that demand intelligible spoken English. Teaching needs to be adjusted to the perception of the learners.

Thus, it is the aim of this study to find out how learners perceive pronunciation and its importance in spoken English. It is also the interest of this study to explore the level of awareness and concerns for improvements among the learners. This is achieved by proposing the dimension and variables involved in understanding language learners' perception on the importance of correct pronunciation in Spoken English.

#### *Objectives of the Study*

In the interest of achieving these aims, the study seeks to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To determine secondary L2 learners' perceptions towards the importance of accurate English pronunciation.
2. To ascertain the variables influencing L2 learners' perception towards the importance of accurate English pronunciation.
3. To develop the dimension of L2 learners' perspective towards the importance of accurate English pronunciation.

In order to achieve the above objectives, this study attempts to answer the research questions below:

1. What are the variables of learners' perception in the importance of Correct Pronunciation in Spoken English?
2. What does the dimension of L2 learners' perception in the importance of Correct Pronunciation in Spoken English consist of?

## METHODOLOGY

A set of survey questionnaire was employed to tap on learners' perceptions towards accurate English pronunciation. Hence, to further support the data collected through the survey, some of the respondents were interviewed to elicit details on the reasons and justifications of their standpoints. It is hoped that the findings could, to some extent, illuminate some considerations in providing conducive environment and training approach in improving Malaysian English learners. Approximately 300 secondary level students (n=300) of a randomly selected school in the states of Johor, Kelantan and Selangor (one from urban area school and one from rural area school of each state, n~50) participated in the study. All the participating students were given a set of survey questionnaire comprising 33 items.

Data gathered from the survey questionnaire was analysed statistically using SPSS to verify significance of perceptions between the students on the importance of pronunciation in spoken English. The researcher used different statistical tests such as frequency, mean, standard deviation and factor analysis to fulfil the objectives of the study. First, frequency is used to examine the respondents' demographic characteristics. Secondly, responses to the 33 items for the perception on

importance of pronunciation were calculated for their means based on the respondents' expectations. Third, in order to identify the underlying dimensions of the students' perceptions towards the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English, factor analysis was employed. Each variable for every factor derived was calculated to test their reliability using Cronbach's alpha. In this study, the variables that have eigenvalue of equal or greater than one and a factor loading of 0.4 were retained (Hair *et al.*, 1998). In the analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett Test of Sphericity were applied to determine the appropriateness to apply the factor analysis.

Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was applied in the analysis to simplify the factor matrix by maximising variance to produce conceptual pure factors. The factors were extracted through the use of Principal Component Analysis of factor analysis. The number of the factors to be extracted was determined by the eigenvalue percentage of variance. A factor loading of .40 was applied in the analysis of the data for this study (Henson & Roberts, 2006). In determining the factor loading for factor analysis, Hair *et al.* (1998) advised that a small factor loading would be considered as significant if the sample size or the number of variables was larger. However, a larger factor loading



is needed if the number of factors is large. They added in detail that if the sample size is larger than 100, the factor loadings should be greater than  $\pm .30$  to meet the minimum level. However, factor loadings of  $\pm .40$  are taken as more important, while factor loadings of  $\pm .50$  or greater are considered as practically significant. If the sample number is 350 or more, the factor loading of  $\pm .30$  is therefore considered as significant. Only factors with eigenvalue equal to 1 or greater were found significant to be extracted.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The general aim of this study is to investigate how learners perceive pronunciation and its importance in spoken English. It is also aimed at establishing the items that govern the

learners' perception. The main instrument used to illicit their perceptions was a set of survey questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two major sections: 1) Demographic details of the students; and 2) Students' perceptions on the importance of correct pronunciation in Spoken English. A pilot study was conducted on 30 students from the same population using the instrument to improve the questionnaire items. The instrument consists of a five-point Likert scale for section 2 to determine the students' perceptions. However, the same students were not included in the actual study. The Cronbach alpha of the 33-item questionnaire is 0.810, which fulfils the standard of the reliability test, as shown in Table 1. The Cronbach alpha test was carried out, taking into account all the reverse-coded items in the questionnaire.

TABLE 1  
Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.810	.825	33

### *Findings of Section 1*

Demographically, in terms of the sample of the study, the data were elicited from 308 respondents from three states, namely,

Johor, Selangor and Kelantan, with approximately equal numbers (n~50) of respondents from the respective districts (see Table 2).

TABLE 2  
District

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Skudai	55	17.9	17.9	17.9
	Segamat	51	16.6	16.6	34.4
	Shah Alam	50	16.2	16.2	50.6
	Kuala Langat	50	16.2	16.2	66.9
	Kota Bharu	50	16.2	16.2	83.1
	Machang	52	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	308	100.0	100.0	

The sample of this study consisted of 119 male students (38.4%) and 189 female students (61.4%), as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3  
Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	119	38.3	38.4	38.4
	female	189	61.4	61.6	100.0
	Total	307	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.3		
Total		308	100.0		

### *Findings of Section 2*

The following section of the findings reports on the perception of the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English Language. Data from the learners' response for the survey questionnaire were analysed using descriptive analysis to identify the means and standard deviations and investigate their perceptions based on individual items (questionnaires). Factor analysis was conducted on the responses to each item so as to determine the dimensions attributing to the students' perceptions on the correct pronunciation in English Language. The dimensions would aid in discussion of learners' perceptions.

### *Dimension of Students' Perceptions*

The aim of the study was to determine the items and dimensions that would aid in describing students' perception of the correct pronunciations in spoken English Language. This was achieved by involving the respondents to rate the 33 items on a five-point Likert scale: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree. The results of the expectations are shown in Table 4. The table indicates the mean scores for each of the 33 items. A mean score of higher than 3.00 indicates a positive level of agreement on the statement that represents the students' perception, while a mean score lower than 3.00 is considered as not meeting the students' positive agreement.

TABLE 4  
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1) Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English Communication	306	4.43	.744
2) I am satisfied with my English pronunciation	308	2.89	.997
3) It is important to learn how to pronounce English words	305	4.61	.625
4) I admire a person who speaks English fluently	306	4.62	.720
5) I have more confidence to speak English if I can pronounce well	306	4.32	.918
6) I like to practice my pronunciation with my close friends	306	3.58	1.047
7) I think people evaluate my English based on my pronunciation.	306	3.72	.930
8) I would love to sound like a native speaker	307	3.87	1.093
9) I think those with good pronunciation can get good jobs in the future	307	4.26	.941
10) An ability to pronounce English words correctly is a significant achievement	308	4.20	.890
11) Pronunciation training can help me improve my pronunciation.	306	4.54	.814
12) English lesson should also focus on the teaching of pronunciation	306	4.24	.789
13) One's proficiency of English may be perceived as 'good' if he or she can pronounce well.	306	4.13	.799
14) Correction is vital in learning pronunciation.	306	4.41	.691
15) I like listening to English programmes on the radio.	308	3.47	1.187
16) Good pronunciation reflects high proficiency of language use.	307	4.13	.928
17) Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English Communication	306	4.43	.744
18) I will improve my pronunciation. (reverse-coded)	306	4.2614	1.00341
19) The ability to speak good English does affect one's professional image (reversed)	308	3.7727	1.19184
20) It is worth spending time working on pronunciation. (reversed)	307	4.3388	.93719
21) I feel easy speaking English to someone who I think has good command of spoken English. (reversed)	308	2.4318	1.18290
22) I think practicing to pronounce new vocabulary is sensible. (reversed)	306	3.9739	1.16758
23) I will not use certain words in my speech when I am not sure of the right pronunciation. (reversed)	308	3.1006	1.04909
24) One has to speak with the native accent. (reversed)	307	2.3094	1.03470
25) I do mind speaking with inaccurate pronunciation though I can be understood. (reversed)	308	2.7110	1.09972
26) Accurate pronunciation in spoken English contributes to clear communication. (reversed)	307	3.8534	1.07619
27) Pronunciation skills can be improved through training. (reversed)	306	4.0948	1.06855
28) I think that pronunciation is as important as grammar and writing. (reversed)	293	3.6348	1.09783
29) I think it makes a difference if one cannot pronounce well in English. (reversed)	294	3.5714	1.07722
30) I do really care about my English pronunciation. (reversed)	294	4.2177	1.02539
31) Pronunciation skills need to be emphasized in English proficiency class. (reversed)	294	3.8741	1.09036
32) I do pay attention on a person's pronunciation when he or she speaks. (reversed)	202	3.7673	1.12869
33) I feel that pronunciation skill is important skill for one to be good in English	306	4.4300	.74400

Table 4 indicates students' positive agreement for all the items given to them except for item 2 (I am satisfied with my English pronunciation), item 21 (I feel easy speaking English to someone whom I think has good command of spoken English), item 24 (One has to speak with the native accent) and item 25 (I do mind speaking with inaccurate pronunciation though I can be understood) which register the mean below 3.00. The negative responses to all these group of items showed that the students perceived discomfort and lack in confidence to speak English with lack of correct pronunciation. In other words, the students regard highly on the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English. However, the students do not perceive that it is important to have a native accent, as indicated by a low mean of 2.3094 for item 24 (One has to speak with the native accent). Tokumoto and Shibata (2011), in their study on university EFL learners in Japan, indicated similar findings among Malaysian students who highly valued their accented English as opposed to native spoken English. However, their study showed that the Japanese and the Korean students did not prefer their accented English to native English.

In general, the means of the items displayed in Table 4 above reflect the respondents' general perceptions of the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English. The consistency in their perceptions can be seen from their responses to the items, both in response to the direct statements and reversed-coded ones.

For example, in response to a statement perceiving pronunciation as an important skill for English communication (item 1), a mean of 4.43 was registered, showing a positive agreement on the matter. The same goes to the items concerning the need and importance to learn how to pronounce well (item 3) with a mean of 4.61. Registering a mean of 4.62, the respondents agreed that they admire those who can converse with good pronunciation (item 4). This is very coherent with their responses to the reversed-coded statements. In relation to their concern for their pronunciation, with a mean of 4.21, the respondents showed that they care about it (item 30).

Naturally, many second language learners feel uneasy when conversing with people whom they perceive possessing good pronunciation of the target language. This is exemplified in the respondents' responses to the statement with regard to feeling easy when speaking to one, with which a mean of 2.43 was recorded, a value that reflects much of disagreement (item 21). The awareness and consistency on the whole idea with regard to the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English is obvious as the mean for speaking with inaccurate pronunciation though they can be understood is only 2.71, a value below 3.00 on the Likert scale (item 25). Equally surprising is that the respondents are aware of the practicality and appropriateness of not emulating native English speaker's accent (item 24).

In short, the findings of this study indicate students' positive attitude towards

the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English. This is consistent with findings of past research. For example, Steed and Delicado Cantero (2014), in their study on Spanish students learning English in Australia, indicated similar result where the Spanish students showed a positive attitude towards the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English. However, they argued that further steps need to be taken to increase the students' awareness of the importance of correct pronunciation and that appropriate pedagogical method need to be considered to effectively teach pronunciation.

#### *Findings of Factor Analysis*

Taking into consideration of the Cronbach alpha value, which is 0.810, and the consistency in the perceptions of most items from both, the direct statements and the reverse-coded ones, descriptively, the

items in the questionnaire are more than valid to be run through the factor analysis to identify the relevant dimensions that govern the respondents' perceptions on the importance of correct pronunciation of spoken English.

Technically, in order to be appropriate for the analysis, the items (variables to assess learners' perceptions) need to be tested for inter-correlation and grouping among the items. The researchers applied Bartlett's test of sphericity (via chi-square test) to ensure that items were not inter-correlated. Meanwhile, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkins (KMO) was used to determine whether the sampling was adequate for analysis and also to ensure that the items were grouped in order. The data of the study would be appropriate to be analyse using factor analysis if the Bartlett's test showed significant result ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) and the KMO value is greater than .50.

TABLE 5  
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.801
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	667.371
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

Table 5 shows that the data of the study are not inter-correlated as the result of the Bartlett's Test is significant with the correlation matrix value of .000 ( $p \leq 0.001$ ), with the sphericity value of 667.371. The KMO value is .801, which is higher than .50 (Kaiser, 1974). Both results indicated that the data are appropriate for factor analysis. Varimax rotation with Kaiser

Normalisation was applied in the analysis to simplify the factor matrix by maximising variance to produce conceptual pure factors. The factors were extracted through the use of Principal Component Analysis of factor analysis. The number of the factors to be extracted was determined by the eigenvalue percentage of variance. A factor loading of .40 was applied in the

analysis of the data for this study (Kline, 1994). In determining the factor loading for factor analysis, Hair *et al.* (1998) advised that a small factor loading would be considered as significant if the sample size or the number of variables was larger. However, a larger factor loading is needed if the numbers of factors are larger. They added in detail that if the sample size is larger than 100, the factor loadings should be greater than  $\pm .30$  to meet the minimum level. However, factor loadings of  $\pm .40$  are taken as more important and factor loadings of  $\pm .50$  or greater are considered as practically significant. If the sample number is 350 or more, the factor loading of  $\pm .30$  is therefore considered significant.

According to Kline, however, variables with a factor loading of .60 or greater is closer to the meaning of the factor; thus, it is useful for searching a name for the factor that captures the joint meaning. Only factors with eigenvalue equal to 1 or greater were found significant to be extracted. In this study, as a result of the application of analysis method with Varimax rotation, 16 out of 33 items were retained and grouped into four (4) factors, as shown in Table 6. The four variables were reduced from 16 variables as only the variables with factor loadings equal or greater than .40 were accepted for factor analysis (Kline, 1994; Hair *et al.*, 1998) (refer to Table 6). Moreover, the 'Scree plot' (Fig.1) reveals that plot begins to level out after the third factor. Table 6 shows the rotated component matrix as the result of the factor analysis, which indicates the groupings of the variables into four factors.

The researchers proposed to label the first factor as 'Awareness' as it involves five (5) variables (Preference for 'Native-speaker' like pronunciation, I think those with good pronunciation can get good jobs in the future, an ability to pronounce English words correctly is a significant achievement, English lesson should also focus on the teaching of pronunciation, and correction is vital in learning pronunciation), as highlighted in bold (refer to Table 6 and Table 7). This factor explains 23.3% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 3.72. The second factor explains 8% of the variance with an eigenvalue of 1.28. This factor consists of the variables 'Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English Communication', 'It is important to learn how to pronounce English words', 'I admire a person who speaks English fluently', and 'I have more confidence to speak English if I can pronounce well'. Thus, based on the variables, the second factor was labelled as 'Accuracy'. For the third factor, based on the minimum factor loading of 0.40, this factor finally consists of 'I think people evaluate my English based on my pronunciation', 'Pronunciation training can help me improve my pronunciation', 'One's proficiency of English may be perceived as 'good' if he or she can pronounce well' and 'Good pronunciation reflects high proficiency of language use'. This factor is labelled as 'Achievement'. The fourth factor which is labelled as 'Affinity' as a result of the minimum factor loading value consists of variables 'I am satisfied with my English pronunciation', 'I like to practice my

pronunciation with my close friends' and 'I like listening to English programmes on the radio'. This factor explains 6.77% of the variance, with an eigenvalue of 1.083. The researchers named these four factors

Secondary Level Language Learners Perception dimensions. The factors with their respective categorised variables are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 6  
Variance of Factors

Component	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.723	23.271	23.271	3.723	23.271	23.271	2.063	12.895	12.895
2	1.282	8.015	31.286	1.282	8.015	31.286	2.012	12.574	25.469
3	1.233	7.705	38.991	1.233	7.705	38.991	1.748	10.927	36.395
4	1.083	6.768	45.759	1.083	6.768	45.759	1.498	9.364	45.759
5	.986	6.161	51.920						
6	.937	5.855	57.774						
7	.883	5.517	63.291						
8	.854	5.337	68.627						
9	.772	4.826	73.453						
10	.751	4.693	78.146						
11	.714	4.463	82.609						
12	.666	4.165	86.774						
13	.603	3.772	90.546						
14	.568	3.552	94.098						
15	.531	3.321	97.419						
16	.413	2.581	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot

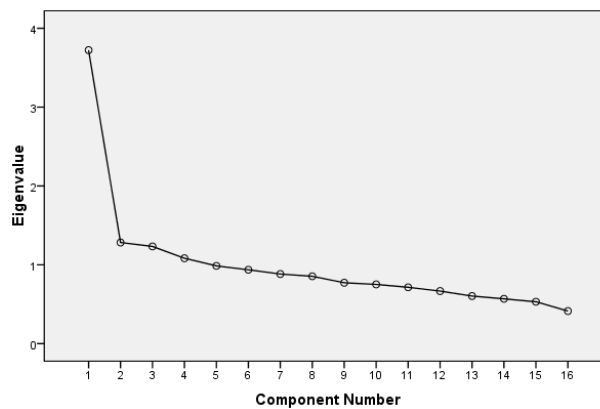


Fig.1: Scree Plot

TABLE 7  
Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

Variables / Items	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English Communication.	.042	<b>.601</b>	.170	.232
I am satisfied with my English pronunciation.	-.018	-.007	.105	<b>.806</b>
It is important to learn how to pronounce English words.	.252	<b>.634</b>	.129	.001
I admire a person who speaks English fluently.	.049	<b>.741</b>	.068	-.106
I have more confidence to speak English if I can pronounce well.	.376	<b>.569</b>	-.017	.188
I like to practice my pronunciation with many close friends.	<b>.471</b>	.010	-.063	<b>.527</b>
I think people evaluate my English based on my pronunciation.	-.063	.003	<b>.708</b>	.247
I would love to sound like a native speaker.	<b>.452</b>	.187	.001	.204
I think those with good pronunciation can get good jobs in the future.	<b>.456</b>	.093	.178	-.040
Pronunciation training can help me improve my pronunciation.	.261	.212	<b>.627</b>	-.164
An ability to pronounce English words correctly is a significant achievement.	<b>.706</b>	-.015	.179	-.052
English lesson should also focus on the teaching of pronunciation.	<b>.498</b>	.200	.132	.303
One's proficiency of English may be perceived as 'good' if he or she can pronounce well.	.337	-.032	<b>.572</b>	.138
I like listening to English programmes on the radio.	.106	.357	.194	<b>.474</b>
Correction is vital in learning pronunciation.	<b>.513</b>	.231	.084	.030
Good pronunciation reflects high proficiency of language use.	.115	.258	<b>.578</b>	.030

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

TABLE 8  
Dimension of L2 Perception on Correct Pronunciation for Spoken English

Awareness	Accuracy	Achievement	Affinity
Preference for 'Native-speaker' like pronunciation	Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English Communication	I think people evaluate my English based on my pronunciation.	I am satisfied with my English pronunciation
I think those with good pronunciation can get good jobs in the future	It is important to learn how to pronounce English words	Pronunciation training can help me improve my pronunciation.	I like to practice my pronunciation with my close friends
An ability to pronounce English words correctly is a significant achievement	I admire a person who speaks English fluently	One's proficiency of English may be perceived as 'good' if he or she can pronounce well.	I like listening to English programmes on the radio.
I would love to sound like a native speaker			
English lesson should also focus on the teaching of pronunciation	I have more confidence to speak English if I can pronounce well	Good pronunciation reflects high proficiency of language use.	
Correction is vital in learning pronunciation.			



As a supposition, in the investigation of L2 learners' perception towards correct pronunciation for Spoken English Language, the findings proposed four underlying factors of 'Awareness', 'Accuracy', 'Achievement', and 'Affinity'. These factors are determined as important constructs of the dimensions of L2 Perception on Correct Pronunciation for Spoken English.

The first factor 'Awareness' consists of six (6) variables: "Preference for 'Native-speaker' like pronunciation", "I think those with good pronunciation can get good jobs in the future", "An ability to pronounce English words correctly is a significant achievement", "English lesson should also focus on the teaching of pronunciation" and "Correction is vital in learning pronunciation". These statements reflect the learners' mindfulness on the importance of being able to speak with some level of 'recognition' though not to emulate the native speakers exactly. They seemed to believe that the ability to speak with correct pronunciation would lead an individual to better opportunity in future undertakings to the extent that they see the importance of good training and exposure for one to achieve a targeted level. Accordingly, the term Awareness refers to a state of consciously admitting the needs to hone one's ability in English pronunciation that facilitates smooth communication for successful future.

The second factor, 'Accuracy' consists of the variables "Pronunciation is an important skill for oral English

Communication", "It is important to learn how to pronounce English words", "I admire a person who speaks English fluently" and "I have more confidence to speak English if I can pronounce well". Naturally, possessing a mindful understanding on the importance of correct pronunciation in communication alone is not enough, and effort has to be put in to achieve accuracy and fluency, which in turn will ensure confidence to express oneself. A mispronunciation may lead to miscommunication which may also complicate subject comprehension (Gilakjani, 2012). Thus, it may be deduced that Accuracy denotes a clear conscience on ensuring precision of one's pronunciation to avoid misapprehension.

The third factor, which is 'Achievement', consists of "I think people evaluate my English based on my pronunciation", "Pronunciation training can help me improve my pronunciation", "One's proficiency of English may be perceived as 'good' if he or she can pronounce well" and "Good pronunciation reflects high proficiency of language use". A sense of achievement is inevitably a feeling, to some extent, gauges one's attainment into something that he or she has ventured into. The respondents seemed to suggest that if their pronunciation is positively perceived and commented by others, it would be a gratification. This feeling may be experienced upon going through routine of exercises and practices which eventually lead to the improvement of the pronunciation skill in the target

language. Such achievement will gauge Achievement that can be referred as the state of pleasing emotion for a desired capability in English pronunciation.

The fourth factor which is labelled ‘Affinity’ consists of variables, ‘I am satisfied with my English pronunciation’, ‘I like to practice my pronunciation with my close friends’ and ‘I like listening to English programmes on the radio’. These statements which represent the fourth aspect of the emerging factors reflect the relevance of Affinity in perceiving the importance of correct pronunciation for spoken English. One will not venture into something that he or she likes, by force. It takes one’s clear conscience to have a desire to improve his or her pronunciation. This may include the fondness for the language. In other words, one will not see the need to improve if the skill is perceived as already adequate or ‘good’ to the learners’ perception. It can, however, be totally the interest of a learner to practise and to get him or her master the natural nuances of the pronunciation skills. Accordingly, Affinity denotes the liking for the language and the persistent aspiration for accurate and standard pronunciation on the target language.

Taking everything into account, the findings of the present study reveal that there are several aspects governing students’ perceptions on the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English. In other words, how one perceives the relevance and significance of correct pronunciation in English communication depends on the Awareness, Accuracy, Achievement and Affinity, which reflect a learner’s stance. Instinctively, a person with a strong awareness will most likely desire for high accuracy in pronunciation. One may have to put extra effort to attain a desired outcome. The achievement in getting to the targeted level in improving one’s pronunciation would logically be influenced by the sense of Affinity one has towards the effort to improve and for the love of the target language. Thus, the 4-As dimension; namely, Awareness, Accuracy, Achievement and Affinity, proposes that a positive perception on the importance of correct pronunciation in spoken English would yield a fruitful outcome and vice versa.

Based on the findings as discussed here, Fig.2 shows the conceptual framework of the proposed dimension.

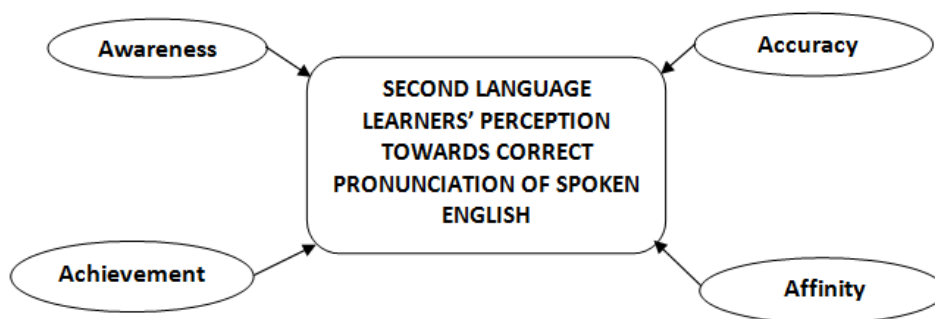


Fig.2: Dimension of Second Language Learners’ Perception towards Correct Spoken English

## CONCLUSION

The findings from the study aimed at contributing towards recognising essential needs in helping the students towards getting positive attitudes and perception towards correct pronunciation in spoken English. The dimension proposed in this study as a result of the findings could implicate on how instructors could assess and make predictions of their students' perception, specifically in the importance of pronunciation in spoken English. Thus, it is a wise step for English language teachers and trainers to consider the dimensions as a set of booster in ensuring positive results for a given English class or an intensive English programme. It is recommended that teachers or trainers enhance learners' awareness on the importance of acquiring correct pronunciation. At the same time, they also need to instil in the learners the will to strive for accuracy through enough practices and exposures that could lead them to commendable achievements. It may also be equally important that these learners build intrinsic liking and fondness towards English so as to ease the passage to acquire the natural nuances of the target language. This can be considered vital as some experts have claimed that pronunciation is a skill that is difficult to acquire, thus, some level of affinity towards it could be a bonus. The findings also lead the researchers to identify ways to maximise learning and acquisition of pronunciation skills as the perception and concern for improvement are positive. One possible study to be carried out upon positive attitudes and perceptions on the importance

of English pronunciation is learners' preferences on how pronunciation training should be implemented. This includes their perceptions on corrective feedback with regard to pronunciation errors. Such study may be extended to find out if there exist specific preferences that learners have on the various types of error feedback mechanisms (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). It may also be relevant to study the feasibility of coming out with a prototype of pronunciation software that employs automatic speech recognition (ASR), which is equipped with interactive meaningful corrective feedback to aid the learners. This may be made possible after assessing the feedback mechanisms deemed as preferred by the learners. The findings of the study revealed the perceptions and attitudes of the students towards the importance of accurate English pronunciation. The study contributes to sustainable development through exploration of general interest and concern on the importance of proper and accurate English pronunciation in future undertakings of young Malaysian school leavers for the interest of human capital building. The outcome of the study will have an impact on pedagogical issues, specifically on the approach and implementation in relation to pronunciation trainings with regard to the teaching of English in Malaysia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are greatly indebted to Universiti Teknologi Petronas for the research fund in support of this research through its internal STIRF allocation.

## REFERENCES

- Bang, Y. J. (1999). Reaction of EFL students to oral error correction. *Journal of Pan Pacific Association of Applied Linguistic*, 3, 39-51.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., & Goodwind, J. M. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation: reference for teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalton, C., & Seidlhofer, B. (2000). *Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Derwing, T. M., & Rossiter, M. J. (2002). ESL learners' perception of their pronunciation needs and strategies. *System*, 30(2), 155-166.
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2012). The significance of pronunciation in English language teaching. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 5(4), 96-107.
- Hair, J. F. (1998). *Multivariate data analysis*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Harper, A. G. (2004). *CALL based pronunciation exercises and their effectiveness for beginning ESL learners*. Paper presented at the CLaSIC 2004.
- Henson, R. K., & Roberts, J. K. (2006). Use of exploratory factor analysis in published research common errors and some comment on improved practice. *Educational and Psychological measurement*, 66(3), 393-416.
- Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language: new models, new norms, new goals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, J. (2002). A sociolinguistically based, empirically researched pronunciation syllabus for English as an International Language. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(1), 83-102.
- Klein P. (1994). *An Easy Guide to Factor Analysis*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Kormos, J. (2006). *Speech production and second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19(01), 37-66.
- Munro, M. J., & Derwing, T. M. (2008). Segmental acquisition in adult ESL learners: a longitudinal study of vowel production. *Language Learning*, 58(3), 479-502.
- Neri, A., Cucchiari, C., & Strick, H. (2001). Effective feedback on L2 pronunciation in ASR-based CALL. In *Proceedings of the workshop on Computer Assisted Language Learning, Artificial Intelligence in Education Conference*. San Antonio, Texas.
- Neri, A., Cucchiari, C., & Strick, H. (2008). The effectiveness of computer-based speech corrective feedback for improving segmental quality in L2 Dutch. *ReCALL*, 20(2), 225-243.
- Rajadurai, J. (2001, July). An investigation of the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation to Malaysian TESL students. In *Forum*, 39(3), 10-15. Retrieved from <http://exchange.state.gov/forum/vols/vol39/no3/p10.htm>
- Roach, P. (1991). *English phonetics and phonology: a practical course* (2nd Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Steed, W., & Delicado Cantero, M. (2014). First things first: exploring Spanish students' attitudes towards learning pronunciation in Australia. *The Language Learning Journal*, (ahead-of-print), 1-13.
- Tokumoto, M., & Shibata, M. (2011). Asian varieties of English: Attitudes towards pronunciation. *World Englishes*, 30(3), 392-408.

## **A Preliminary Study of the Needs for the Development of Competency Measurement Instrument for Malaysian Chefs**

**Nornazira, S.<sup>1\*</sup>, Aede Hatib, M.<sup>1</sup>, Nor Fadila, M. A.<sup>1</sup> and Noor Khairul Anuar, J.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310, Skudai, Johor, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Universiti Malaysia Perlis, 02600 Arau, Perlis, Malaysia

### **ABSTRACT**

Competency-based performance, as part of competency assessment and measurement at the workplace, has gained much attention in the field of technical and vocational training and education (TVET), and human resource management (HRM). There is an increasing concern over competencies that are needed for successful work performance, as well as methods involved in the assessment and measurement of these competencies in the workplace. In today's contemporary world of work, the practice of competency assessment and measurement is required as it is a guide in evaluating the performance of employees. Assessment of competencies is a lens through which the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics needed to succeed in a job can be observed. Thus, an instrument measuring culinary competencies for superior performance at work that is reliable and valid needs to be established. From the literature reviewed, there have been few studies on the development of an instrument to measure vocational competencies, especially with regards to culinary competency among Malaysian chefs. Therefore, a preliminary study has been conducted to gain the perspectives of stakeholders in the Malaysian culinary industry regarding the need for this instrument. This paper presents the preliminary findings, which are the views of culinary educators and culinary professionals in the industry on the need for instruments to measure a chef's competency.

*Keywords:* Competency assessment, instrument, culinary professional

#### ARTICLE INFO

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

p-nazira@utm.my (Nornazira, S.),

aedehatib@googlemail.com (Aede Hatib, M.),

p-fadila@utm.my (Nor Fadila, M. A.),

nkanuar@gmail.com (Noor Khairul Anuar, J.)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Malaysian government has always dedicated its unwavering commitment in producing competent and expert human capital resources across the field of specialisation and for the different types

and levels of industry. Espousing the hasty demand for quality workforce in the industry, the government has put extensive effort to ensure that the supply of skilled workers is always adequate and tailored to meet the demand from all sectors in the industry (Ramlee & Rohana, 2013). In the recent 2015 Budget announced by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, enhancement of the quality of workforce in the industry was emphasised, which was highlighted in the third strategy (empowering talent and entrepreneurship). To intensify upskilling and reskilling programmes, the Government introduced a new programme, the Globally Recognised Industry and Professional Certification (1MalaysiaGRIP) with an allocation of RM300 million in matching grant between the Government and the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) to train 30 thousand employees in the industry.

Recently, there has been a growing interest in the concept of competence and competencies in the areas of human resource management, training and professional development. Accordingly, competency modeling and assessments have been utilised and these are essentially found in the field of business, marketing and management. In the area of technical and vocational education and training, there is a need to extend this approach as competency is one of the critical aspects in the assessment of vocational performance. Competency is a person's ability to apply her skills, knowledge, and experience so as to perform their

job decorously. On the other hand, at workplace, competency assessment is used to ensure that the employees fulfil their duties as required by the job scope (Krajcovicova, Caganova, & Cambal, 2012). The process involved in competency assessment provides indications and degree of competency levels among workers while performing their respective tasks based on the identified standards (Yahya, 2005; Greenstein, 2012).

Since the early 1990s, competency-based education has been implemented in technical and vocational education and training. This has led to the practice of having competency assessment conducted on graduates in higher learning institutions. This practice reflects the prominence of the concept of training with defined standards of competency as the basis for training of skilled workers (Bowden & Masters, 1993). The Department of Education, Training and Employment, Queensland Government (2012) states that the concept of industry competency concerns the ability to perform particular tasks and duties to the standard of performance expected in the workplace. In an organisation, assessment is important as one of the methods to justify the standard of a worker's ability to perform his best at the workplace. By using the right methods and tools, organisations are able to ensure that they are hiring the right persons for the job. Only apprentices and trainees who possess the relevant skills and knowledge will be certified as competent (Jackson, 2009). Thus, this kind of assessment should be valid, reliable, flexible and fair.

Concerns over the importance of identifying competencies related to effective and efficient work performance has been highlighted as there is a lack of consensus on the approved methods for measurement and assessment. There is a vast literature in the assessment field, however, studies emphasising performance assessment and performance of professional work are still rare and limited (Gonczi, Hager, & Athanasou, 1993; Kak, Burkhalter, & Cooper, 2001; Marin-garcia, Pérez-peñalver, & Watts, 2013).

In the recent years, several studies have shown the need to assess competency of professional workers and study the significance of competency towards career success (Miller, Mao, & Moreo, 2008; Bisset, Cheng, & Brannan, 2010). Furthermore, recent studies provide little evidence on the existence of such instrument of measurement at workplace, especially an assessment tool for employees who are already in the industry. Symons (2004) highlights that the Cooks and the Chefs exist behind every occasion and foods served are always the true evidence of their hard work. Much literature focuses on *what* has been their creation such as the meals, foods and recipes; *how* they cook such as the methods of preparing meals, however, too little emphasis on *who* are these Cooks and Chefs. These people will remain in the background despite their contributions to the society's civilisation. It is indeed mentioned by Wood (2012, p. 132) that:

*the whole of 'foodie' culture revolves, of course, around Chefs and yet remarkably little is known about Chefs as an occupation, nor the aesthetic values that drive the Chefs.*

Congruent with the statement of Wood (2012), this gap also has been addressed by Zopiatis (2010) where the author highlights the needs to explore knowledge, skills and abilities of a specific job classification such as Chefs. Recent studies in measuring the level of competencies among culinary professional have been done in Cyprus, Taiwan and the United States (Ko, 2010; Riggs & Hughey, 2011; Cheng, 2012; Aguirre, Andrade, Latina, Heredia, & Rica, 2013). There is a need for people in Malaysian culinary industry to be aware of the new global competency requirements for the profession (Mohd Amin, Sahul Hamed, & Mohd Ali, 2010). Thus, measuring culinary competencies is significant in Malaysia in order to obtain an empirical data regarding the level of competencies of culinary professionals in the Malaysian context.

Therefore, in this study, a need analysis with the aims of investigating a feasibility study and supporting the need for the study was conducted. Titcomb (2000) states that a need analysis is the process of identification and evaluation of needs, confirmation of any gaps (if assumed to be exist) and description of the problems encountered by the community or defined population. By using this means, the problems of the study are examined, reviewed and possible solutions are proposed.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main purposes of conducting this preliminary study are to understand and discover the perceptions of culinary professionals on the need for an instrument to measure culinary competency among culinary professionals in Malaysian culinary sector. A study by Nor Fadila (2013) showed that conducting a need analysis study prior to instrument development provides multiple views regarding the research. Thus, the aim of this research is to answer the following:

- i. Are there instruments for measuring chefs' culinary competencies for superior performance at work?
- ii. How are competencies at the workplace assessed?
- iii. Why is competency measurement among chefs important?

The preliminary study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative part of the study was conducted using semi-structured, virtual and face-to-face interviews with seven participants who are culinary educators, human resource representatives of hotels, culinary training officers and chefs in the industry. Purposive sampling was employed to select the interview participants based on a criteria of selections set by the researcher.

In addition to the qualitative approach, a descriptive survey as the quantitative approach was employed. Using an online survey technique, the questionnaire was distributed randomly to chefs using a social media networking account. Specifically, the respondents involved in the study were chefs who joined the Chefs Associations of Malaysia Facebook group. They are the chefs

who work in various culinary establishments of the industry, as well as those who work in the culinary education and training segments. The chefs were contacted and asked to participate in the survey. In the questionnaire, there are seven items measuring the need for an instrument measuring chefs' competencies. These items were adapted from a study by Abdul Hamid, Raja Mohamed Fauzi, and Juhary (2011) which focused on the competency model development of human resource practitioners.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Both qualitative and quantitative findings are discussed in this section.

### *Interview Findings*

There are seven participants involved in the qualitative phase. Interview data were analysed using thematic analysis and code development as suggested by Boyatzis (1998) and Saldana (2014) until the point of saturation was reached. Findings from the study showed that majority of the interviewees shared their views which highlighted the need to develop an instrument to measure the competencies of chefs in the Malaysian culinary industry. The findings are divided into three sections, namely, absence of competency measurement approaches, need for a comprehensive competency measurement instrument and importance of competency assessment and measurement. Table 1 shows a summary of the interview data analysis using the framework method analysis (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013).



TABLE 1  
Summary of the interview findings based on the framework method analysis

<b>Research Questions</b>	Are there instruments for measuring chefs' culinary competencies for superior performance at work?	How are competencies at the workplace assessed?	Why is competency measurement among chefs important?
<b>Themes</b>	Absence of competency measurement approaches for the chefs profession in Malaysia	Need for a comprehensive competency measurement instrument	Importance of competency assessment and measurement
<b>ID01</b>	To date, <u>I don't think there is a tool for competency assessment. There have been no specific assessment and measurement tool,</u>	<u>even if such tool ever exists, it haven't made available for every member in the industry</u>	To have an instrument for me, it's good because it will help a lot of ways to improve in the <u>sense of the educational and industrial point of view</u>
<b>ID02</b>	For me, <u>for now, no such instrument. Do you have any?</u> I also would like to know	All these while, for the purpose of performance appraisal, we are using the same staff evaluation forms that are used for every staff in hotels. For a chef's role and function, <u>we need to adjust our feedback in the existing evaluation forms so that we could measure our chefs using the respective forms.</u> Well... it is good if we have one instrument that could be used precisely for chefs job position	The most difficult situation is when a person wishes to apply for a higher position... sometimes it is not fair for those degree/master holders to start from the bottom... unless their skills are zero... Therefore, it might be beneficial if there is a system <u>to identify possessed skill by individual...</u> Because once they are already in the vocation, it is not that difficult as there will be someone who can guide them...
<b>ID03</b>	There is <u>no instrumentation developed to assess the a chef's capability in the industry.</u> The only method of assessment is based on loyalty, seniority and also other personal influential factors.	The assessment form for performance appraisal is too broad and general... <u>It does not address the area of competency in detail.</u>	In overseas, if we learn from the history of City & Guilds, the system is derived from the 18th century. During that time, the instrumentation of measurement is based on the <u>success of the apprentice to be able to develop their branding and products.</u>
<b>ID04</b>	After all, <u>such instrument is not available in the industry...</u>	We do not really have a <u>detailed, specific measure for our workers' competency.</u>	It's good to have a proper competency instrumentation. <u>so that we could use it in measuring competencies held by our students before them graduating</u>
<b>ID05</b>	I don't think there is <u>any and I am not sure how to do that kind of assessment</u>	If we want to assess people, <u>that competency must be categorised into a specific area... knowledge? Skills? Attitude?</u>	It's important to have some forms or tools to measure our knowledge and skills... <u>then we know, how good am I?</u>

### **Absence of competency measurement approaches for the chefs profession in Malaysia**

From the qualitative data, the interview findings show that there is currently no available standard approach used as a measurement of chefs' competencies in the culinary industry, especially in the hotel settings. The inavailability of such instrument is supported by the interview responses, as shown in Table 1. Based on the comments given by the interviewees, these findings are similar to those from some previous studies which highlight several factors limiting competency assessment in the workplace. Previous study highlights that these challenging factors revolve around reformulation of the curriculum, reformatting standards, development of delivery strategies and designing assessment schemes, which incorporate psychometric values such as validity, reliability and fairness (Bissett, Cheng, & Brannan, 2010; Riggs & Hughey, 2011; Greenstein, 2012).

### **Need for a comprehensive competency measurement instrument**

Another finding from the interview is the suggestion that there is a need for the existing assessment process and instrument to be improved. Most of the interviewed participants agreed that the existing methods used for a worker's assessment at the workplace is very general. The nature of the work in a foodservice establishment such as hotels,

restaurant and catering is very dynamic. However, most of the organisations inclusive of the hotel industry have been using the same type of evaluation forms. Thus, suggesting that there should be an instrument to measure competencies of the foodservice establishment of the house personnel, namely, the culinary professionals. Thus, this practice has yielded an ineffective value of the results for human capital management and development.

### **Importance of competency assessment and measurement**

Another key finding from the needs analysis study is that it will be beneficial if there is an instrument or assessment system that can measure competencies of chefs. One of the reasons is that the use of the instrument will result in a profile of Malaysian culinary professionals and their competency assessment could be included in the individual portfolios. The need for such an instrument is reflected in the interview responses. In a wider context, a comprehensive competency assessment and measurement tool is useful for training and education institutions as it will be used as a reference in the evaluation of mastery and learning outcomes of specific knowledge and skills. Therefore, the research is important as there is a need to develop a reliable and valid instrument measuring culinary competencies for superior performance at work. This instrument can then be utilised to

measure the level of culinary competencies for superior work performance among chefs of Malaysian hotels. However, there are a few considerations and limitations of using such instruments and these have been highlighted by an interviewee who said:

*“Assessment at workplace is actually hard to be done... need the cooperations from the human resource management and our superiors such as the General Manager...” (ID03)*

*“My sense is this would be beneficial to the chefs, provided that the assessment instrument does not create added costs or liabilities of the company and second, there is an applicable outcome - does passing this test results in a raise or promotion for said chef, and does failing the test reflect on training policies of the company or the failings of the individual, hence setting them up for potential firing. Protecting employee rights do come into play...” (ID 05)*

*“Having an instrument to measure competencies will benefit us, however we need to think of the most appropriate methods in conducting the assessment...” (ID 02)*

Thus, based on the the analysis of the interview responses, further study to develop an instrument for measuring culinary competencies among chefs needs to be conducted. By using a prescribed

instrument or tool of measurement, important information related to worker competencies can be gathered and utilised for further analysis. This will also benefit the human resource management practices in organisations, especially in the selection and hiring, as well as training and development of skills for workers. By having a competency profile, the human resource management of an organisation could focus on the training needs and emphasise on the development of skills for their workforce. According to Mahazani and Noraini (2010), a customised design of competency profile can be used in targeting specific interventions for specific competencies.

#### *Survey Findings*

The questionnaire consists of seven items measuring the needs and importance of a competency measurement instrument with a reliability value of Cronbach's alpha of 0.86. In this preliminary study, 42 completed questionnaires were used. The first section contains the description of respondents' characteristics. A summary of the respondents' demographic information according to age, educational culinary background, culinary work experience, current job position and current workplace is shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2  
A Summary of the Respondents' Demographic Information

Demographic	Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	37	88.1
	Female	5	11.9
Age	21-30 years old	14	33.3
	31-40 years old	18	42.9
	41-50 years old	8	19.0
	Over 50 years old years old	2	4.8
Experience	Less than 5 years	6	14.3
	5-10 years	9	21.4
	11-15 years	14	33.3
	Over 15 years	13	31.0
Job Position	Executive Chef	11	26.3
	Head Chef	3	7.1
	Sous Chef	5	11.9
	Chef de Partie	4	9.6
	Commis	3	7.1
	Trainer/ Educator	10	23.8
	Trainee/ Students	3	7.1
	Others	3	7.1
Institution	Hotel	10	23.8
	Restaurant	10	23.8
	Training/Education	15	35.7
	Consultant	1	2.4
	Freelance	2	4.8
	Catering	1	2.4
	Others	3	7.1

Note:  $n = 42$

With reference to the data on job position and institutions, the respondents are classified further as either in the industry or education sector. The following Table 3

and Table 4 show the classification of the respondents representing the population of culinary professionals in Malaysia.

TABLE 3  
Classification of the Respondents according to their Job Position

Sectors	Criteria	f	%	Total %
1. Industry	Executive Chef	11	26.3	69.1
	Head Chef	3	7.1	
	Sous Chef	5	11.9	
	Chef de Partie	4	9.6	
	Commis	3	7.1	
	Others (retiree, engineers)	3	7.1	
2. Education	Trainer/ Educator	10	23.8	30.9
	Trainee/ Students	3	7.1	

TABLE 4  
Classification of the Respondents according to Institutions

Sectors	Criteria	f	%	Total %
1. Industry	Hotel	10	23.8	64.3
	Restaurant	10	23.8	
	Consultant	1	2.4	
	Freelance	2	4.8	
	Catering	1	2.4	
	Others (self-business)	3	7.1	
2. Education	Training/Education	15	35.7	35.7

**Perceptions towards use of an instrument for competency measurement**

As shown in Table 5, the findings of the survey demonstrate that most of the

respondents have positive perceptions towards the need to develop a competency measurement instrument.

TABLE 5  
Perceptions towards Instrument for Competency Measurement

Statement	SD	D	SMA	A	SA	M	Sd
1 Currently, there is no instrument for measuring chefs' competencies in Malaysia	0 0	4 9.5	9 21.4	17 40.5	12 28.6	3.88	.942
2 Instrument for measuring chefs' competencies is important for a chef's self-evaluation	0 0	1 2.4	2 4.8	25 59.5	14 33.3	4.24	.656
3 Having an instrument for measuring chefs' competencies will help chefs know their current level of competency	0 0	1 2.4	2 4.8	26 61.9	13 31.0	4.21	.645
4 Having an instrument for measuring chefs' competencies will help chefs identify competencies that they have mastered.	0 0	1 2.4	3 7.1	28 66.7	10 23.8	4.12	.633
5 Having an instrument for measuring chefs' competencies will help chefs identify competencies of as a good Chef	0 0	1 2.4	3 7.1	26 61.9	12 28.6	4.17	.660
6 Having an instrument for measuring chefs' competencies will help chefs identify competencies that need improvement.	0 0	0 0	1 2.4	26 61.9	15 35.7	4.33	.526
7 Having an instrument for measuring chefs' competencies will guide chefs towards superior work performance in the culinary profession	0 0	0 0	2 4.8	24 57.1	16 38.1	4.33	.570
						4.17	0.662

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, SMA=Somewhat Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree  
M=Mean, Sd=Standard Deviation  
Note: n = 42

Table 5 provides distribution of the importance level based on the survey responses. Majority of the respondents (90.5%) participating in the survey agreed that there are currently no instruments for measuring chefs' competencies in Malaysia. The respondents were also asked to rate their perceptions of the benefits of having such instruments as self-evaluation, identifying current level of existing competencies, identifying competencies that the chefs are well-mastered, identifying competencies of good chefs, identifying competencies that need improvement, as well as a guidance for chef's profession. Nearly 80% agreed that having an instrument for measuring

chefs' competencies is important for chefs' self-evaluation. Most of the respondents agreed that having a competency instrument would inform the chefs of their present level of competency, identify competencies that they have mastered and determine competencies of a good chef, as well as review competencies that need to be improved. Based on the information in Table 6, all respondents agreed that an instrument for competency measurement would guide chefs to attain superior work performance in the culinary profession. It can be seen that the respondents' perceived level of importance of having competency assessment is high (92.9%).

TABLE 6  
Distribution of the Importance Level

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Importance	Low (1.00-2.33)	0	0
	Moderate (2.34-3.66)	3	7.1
	High (3.67-5.00)	39	92.9
	Total	42	100.0

## CONCLUSION

The current world of vocation requires skilled workers to be able to orchestrate themselves in accordance with the contemporary and dramatic changes of the industry. The attainment of competencies has become the most fundamental component of individual, organisational and governmental aspirations (Potgieter & Merwe, 2002). Future study in this area is of importance because competencies development and assessment are important factors that would ensure all parts of an

organisation work in harmony. This is a challenge faced by the human resource management as it plays an important role in managing organisations' human capital which should be parallel with the government's aspirations to enhance competencies of the existing workforce in the Malaysian industry. The Malaysian government is targeting that 33% of the workforce to in the high-skilled jobs category in 2015, and an increase to 50% by 2020. This target will definitely require greater involvement from every stakeholder

in the industry. Although various initiatives have been taken to assist future skilled workers, namely, graduates in the TVET, those who are already in the vocation system have not had their potential be optimally utilised. These potential highly-skilled workers need to be developed further so that they can be fully utilised and thus, increase the rate of job retention (10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, 2011-2015).

Highlighting the concept of competencies is important during the delivery of educational interventions and training, as well as in the actual profession. From the perspective of education, the delivery and assessment method of competency is apparent because it is embedded in the system, allowing institutions to gauge the value of programs offered. For the profession, especially in the culinary industry, assessment methods of competency are not defined and tailored for the profession because the definition of chefs' competencies has not been thoroughly explored (Zopiatis & Kyprianou, 2006; Zopiatis, 2010). The significance of such assessment and measurement is perceived to be less valuable as the turnover rate is high for the culinary industry. This is one of the key challenges for implementing competency assessment and measurement in the industry.

Having such an assessment and measurement is important because this will allow the industry to have standards linked to education and training that will eventually contribute to the quality of the profession. By having a reliable and valid

instrument, organisations could identify the area of competencies that is needed, as well as those which have to be improved or strengthened to be used by organisations in identifying and developing specific training and/ or education in the culinary field. Additionally, findings from the needs analysis of this study proposed that the existing assessment process and instrument are in need of improvement. However, further research in this area is recommended to include more samples in the quantitative survey, as well as the qualitative techniques in order to provide more comprehensive perspectives from industrial stakeholders. Therefore, the preliminary findings of the study have shown that there is an urgency to develop an instrument specifically for competency assessment and measurement in the culinary industry as this will be beneficial in facilitating issues related to technical and vocational training, education and ultimately providing skilled workforce.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Although this study is an initial step to addressing this issues, it contributes to our understanding on the needs of a meticulous and comprehensive instrument which precisely addresses the employees' competencies. Further empirical investigation with a more refined classification of the respondents who represent the population of culinary professionals in Malaysia is needed on this issue. As this study includes a small sample from various levels of job positions, a

larger number of sample which focuses on a targeted job position is also recommended for future study in order to provide a better understanding on the specific level of the chefs being studied. More definitive empirical study in this area is required to provide the most convincing evidence on the value of developing instrument for competency measurement among culinary professionals in the industry.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express appreciation towards Ministry of Education Malaysia for the financial support for the research study.

## REFERENCES

- Abdullah, A. H., Musa, R. M. F. R., & Ali, J. H. (2011). The Development of Human Resource Practitioner Competency Model Perceived by Malaysian Human Resource Practitioners and Consultants: A Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Approach. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 6(11), 240–255. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v6n11p240
- Aguirre, J., Andrade, L., Latina, U., Heredia, C., & Rica, C. (2013). Students perception of the 21st Century. *Chefs*, 11, 417–425.
- Bissett, R. L., Cheng, M. S. H., & Brannan, R. G. (2010). Research in Food Science Education A Quantitative Assessment of the Research Chefs Association Core Competencies for the Practicing Culinologist. *Journal of Food Science Education*, 9(1), 11–18.
- Bowden, J. A., & Masters, G. N. (1993). *Implications for Higher Education of a Competency-based Approach to Education and Training*. Department of Education, Employment and Training. Commonwealth of Australia,; Watson Ferguson and Co. Brisbane.
- Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. United States of America: Sage Publications.
- Cheng, M. S. (2012). *A competency model for Culinology® graduates: Evaluation of the Research Chefs Association's Bachelor of Science in Culinology® core competencies*. (Doctoral thesis dissertation). IOWA State University.
- Gale, N. K., Heath, G., Cameron, E., Rashid, S., & Redwood, S. (2013). Using the framework method for the analysis of qualitative data in multi-disciplinary health research. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 13(1), 117. doi:10.1186/1471-2288-13-117
- Gonczy, A., Hager, P., & Athanasou, J. (1993). *The development of competency-based assessment strategies for the professions: National office of Overseas skills recognition research article no. 8*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Greenstein, A. (2012). *Assessing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*. United States of America: Corwin.
- Jackson, D. (2009). Profiling industry-relevant management graduate competencies: The need for a fresh approach. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 8(1), 85–98. doi:10.3794/ijme.81.281
- Kak, N., Burkhalter, B., & Cooper, M. (2001). Measuring the Competence of Healthcare Providers. *Quality Assurance Project*, 2(1), 1–28.



- Ko, W. H. (2010). To Evaluate the Professional Culinary Competence of Hospitality Students. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 8(2-3), 136–146. doi:10.1080/15428052.2010.511101
- Krajcovicova, K., Caganova, D., & Cambal, M. (2012). Key Managerial Competencies and Competency Models in Industrial Enterprises. *Annals of DAAAM for 2012 & Proceedings of the 23rd International DAAAM Symposium*, 23(1), 1119–1122.
- Mahazani, A., Noraini, K., & Wahid, R. (2010). Development of a new empirical based competency profile for Malaysian Vocational Education and Training Instructors. In *Proceeding of the 1<sup>st</sup> UPI International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training*, Bandung Indonesia, November 10-11.
- Marin-garcia, J. A., Pérez-peñalver, M. J., & Watts, F. (2013). How to assess innovation competence in services : The case of university students. Cómo medir la competencia en innovación?: aplicación a estudiantes universitarios. *Direccion Y Organizacion*, 50, 48–62.
- Miller, M., Mao, Z., & Morea, P. (2008). Hospitality management educators vs the industry: A competency assessment. *Hospitality Management*. Paper 6. Retrieved from <http://reository.usfca.edu/hosp/6>
- Nor Fadila, M. A. (2013). Pendidikan rekacipta menerusi sistem pembelajaran web berdasarkan prinsip andragogi dan pembelajaran arah diri. (*Thesis dissertation*). Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
- Ramlee, M., & Rohana, R. (2013). Integration of social skills and social values in the National Dual Training System ( NDTs ) in the Malaysian automotive sector : employers ’ perspective. *TVET@ Asia*, (1), 1–15.
- Riggs, M. W., & Hughey, A. W. (2011). Competing values in the culinary arts and hospitality industry: Leadership roles and managerial competencies. *Industry and Higher Education*, 25(2), 109–118. doi:10.5367/ihe.2011.0033
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (p. 336). London: SAGE Publications.
- RMK (2010). *10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, 2011-2015*. The Economic Planning Unit Prime Minister’s Department Putrajaya 2010. Retrieve May 25, 2014, from [http://www.pmo.gov.my/dokumenattached/RMK/RMK10\\_Eds.pdf](http://www.pmo.gov.my/dokumenattached/RMK/RMK10_Eds.pdf)
- Saldana, J. (2004). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd Ed). Sage Publications. Arizona State University.
- Symon, M. (2004, January 10). *A history of cooks and cooking* (The Food Series). University of Illinois Press.
- Titcomb, A. L. (2000). Need Analysis. *ICYF Evaluation Concept Sheet, Spring* (The University of Arizona), 1–2.
- Van der Merwe, R. P., & Potgieter, T. E. (2002). Assessment In The Workplace : A Competency-Based Approach. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 28(1), 60–66.
- Wood, R. C. (2012). Why are there so many celebrity chefs and cooks (and do we need them)? Culinary cultism and crassness on television and beyond. *Strategic Questions in Food and Beverage Management* (pp. 129–152). Elsevier Science Ltd. doi:10.1016/B978-0-7506-4480-8.50013-9
- Yahya, E. (2005). *Pendidikan teknik dan vokasional di Malaysia*. IBS Buku Sdn. Bhd. Selangor, Malaysia.

- Zakaria, M. A., Wahab, S. H. A., & Jasmi, M. A. (2010). Culinary Art Education : A Demanding Profession In Culinary Tourism for Malaysian New Economy Niche. In *Proceedings of the 1st UPI International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training*, 1(November), 10–11.
- Zopiatis, A., & Kyprianou, G. (2006). Perceptions and attitudes towards the hospitality professions in Cyprus. *Tourism Today, Fall*(Full Paper), 33–46.
- Zopiatis, A. (2010). Is it art or science? Chef's competencies for success. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(3), 459–467. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2009.12.003



## **Re-examining the Determinants of Malaysia's Outward FDI**

**Teo, Y. N.\*, Tham, S. Y. and Kam, A. J. Y.**

*Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia*

### **ABSTRACT**

While Malaysia is well known as an attractive destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), the country is also becoming a significant source of outward FDI (OFDI) as it has become a net exporter of capital since 2007. The increase in the outward investment may be due to the attractiveness of foreign host countries relative to Malaysia's domestic constraints. Consequently, outward investment may be used as one of the strategies to overcome domestic constraints in Malaysia. This paper examines the push and pull factors influencing Malaysia's investment abroad based on the country's top 15 destination countries that accounted for approximately 65 percent of Malaysia's OFDI from 2003 to 2011. The empirical determinants of OFDI, from the perspectives of pull and push factors, were tested using macroeconomic data in a gravity model. Since OFDI activities are still relatively new in Malaysia, this study is exploratory in nature. The value added of this paper is to fill the research gap by providing a more comprehensive understanding on the factors that drive OFDI from Malaysia compared to the relative attractiveness of Malaysia as a host economy. The findings in this paper indicate that Malaysia's outward investments are significantly influenced by relative market size, tax rates, openness, distance and cultural proximity. In addition, the results indicate that OFDI from Malaysia is likely to be horizontal or market seeking.

*Keywords:* Outward FDI, Dunning's OLI eclectic paradigm, location advantages, gravity model, pull and push factors

### **ARTICLE INFO**

*Article history:*

Received: 24 February 2015

Accepted: 21 August 2015

*E-mail addresses:*

annteo1437@gmail.com (Teo, Y. N.),

tham@ukm.edu.my / tham.siewyeon@gmail.com (Tham, S. Y.),

andrew@ukm.edu.my / cchizz@yahoo.com (Kam, A. J. Y.)

\* Corresponding author

### **INTRODUCTION**

Outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) from Malaysia can be observed from the mid-1970s, albeit these flows are rather small. As a developing country, the priority was on attracting FDI into

Malaysia compared to encouraging OFDI. The strategic location of Malaysia complemented the government's efforts in attracting inward FDI (IFDI) through export-oriented industries. This policy has contributed towards making Malaysia a well-known investment destination in Southeast Asia.

However, Malaysia's OFDI has increased since early 1993 due to the pull factors of foreign countries, which include among others, increasing liberalisation in other developing economies such as Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, East Asia, Middle East and Africa that progressively reduced barriers in capital flows to these countries (Ragayah, 1999; Tham, 2005). Besides, the emergence of countries with high growth and large domestic markets such as China and India also added to the attraction for outward flows (Ragayah, 1999; Tham, 2005). The attractiveness of increasingly open door policies in labour surplus economies such as Vietnam and China also served to attract investment to these countries (Ragayah, 1999; Tham, 2005). The push factors have led to strong economic and industrial growth after the economic crisis of the mid-1980s, supported by government's incentives for Malaysian companies to expand their trade and investment opportunities abroad by exploring new markets OFDI (Tham, 2005). For instance, tax exemption was given on income earned overseas and remitted back to Malaysia's (Ragayah, 1999). The efforts in promoting OFDI became more prevalent when it was

outlined in Malaysia's long-term planning in Outline Perspective Plan III in 2001 (Ariff & Lopez, 2007).

UNCTAD Statistics indicated that the stock of 1980 – 2011 OFDI from Southeast Asian countries increased by eight fold in the world's total. Apart from Singapore, Malaysia is one of the key countries in Southeast Asia that is actively involved in OFDI activities. While predominantly a host economy for inward FDI, Malaysia has slowly moved into becoming a significant source of OFDI as well. According to UNCTAD (2006), PETRONAS, YTL Corporation Berhad and MISC Berhad are among the top 100 non-financial transnational corporations in 2004 that have invested aggressively in foreign countries. Malaysia became a net exporter of capital when OFDI flows surpassed IFDI flows for the first time in 2007 and consecutively to date.

Consequently, examining the key determinants of OFDI from the perspective of both pull and push factors is necessary to formulate appropriate FDI policies. A comparative approach is required to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive OFDI from Malaysia compared to the relative attractiveness of Malaysia as a host economy. As such, the aim of this study is to re-examine the determinants of Malaysia's OFDI from these two perspectives. Dunning's OLI eclectic paradigm (Dunning, 1980) was adopted, where the locational or "L" advantages of the paradigm were the focus in this empirical study. This study focused

on the top 15 selected host countries for Malaysian investment, namely, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Virgin Islands (British), Viet Nam, Thailand, Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Germany, Netherlands, and India, for the period between 2003 and 2011, based on the availability of data at the time of research.

### **A REVIEW OF THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

There are several theories on the development and motivation of FDI that are relevant for explaining OFDI. According to the International Production Theory (Dunning 1980), the choice of investing abroad is dependent on the relative advantage of investing in different host countries compared to investing at home. Internalisation Theory, on the other hand, examines FDI versus other alternatives such as exports and licensing in the presence of market imperfections, namely, transaction costs, non-physical assets (intangible assets) and government regulations (Buckley & Casson, 1981; Hennart, 1982) for accessing foreign markets.

One of the most popular theories on foreign investment used in empirical studies is Dunning's OLI eclectic theory (Dunning, 1980). Dunning combined three important conditions to explain the 'why' and 'where' to invest. First, a firm must have ownership advantages (the "O" advantage in the OLI) in terms of technology, research and development or labour skills. Second, foreign markets must offer the locational advantages (the "L" advantage in the OLI) in

terms of production costs in foreign countries for accessing foreign markets than producing goods from the home country. Third, multinationals must have internalisation advantages (the "I" advantage in the OLI) or advantages through own production instead of other forms of arm's length transfer which may involve higher licensing costs (Dunning, 1977, 1981; Erdilek, 1985). In other words, firms will exploit their "O" or "I" advantages through FDI in countries that offer relatively better "L" advantages as an alternative to continuing production at home and exporting goods to foreign markets.

In terms of the multinational theory, it classifies FDI into two broad categories of investment, namely, horizontal FDI and vertical FDI. Horizontal FDI generally occurs between countries with similar factor endowments, income and technology. Horizontal FDI is also known as market seeking type of investment and/or investment to avoid trade frictions caused by high transportation costs and import protection policies imposed by foreign countries (Markusen, 1983; Enders & Lapan, 1987; Brainard, 1997). Thus, the transfer of a production process to foreign countries mostly involves end products, export substitution or re-import. Hence, FDI tends to substitute exports (Markusen & Venables, 1995; Helpman, Melitz, & Yeaple, 2003; Desai, Foley, & Hines, 2005).

Vertical FDI generally occurs between countries with different factor endowments. It is sometimes known as cost efficiency seeking type of FDI. The objective of this type of FDI is to exploit location specific

factors via the relocation of different levels of the production process to different countries with relatively lower factor prices that are driven by differences in factor endowments between home and host country (Konings & Murphy, 2001; Greenaway & Kneller, 2007; Elia, Mariotti, & Piscitello, 2009; Temouri & Driffield, 2009; Yamashita & Fukao, 2009). Production and trade in intermediate goods among foreign affiliates before the end product is shipped back to the home country of investors for export is an example of this type of investment. Hence, FDI tends to complement exports.

The objectives for conducting investment abroad can be categorised in four main groups: market seeking, efficiency seeking, resources seeking and strategic asset seeking. Market seeking FDI aims at serving the local market of a foreign or a neighbouring country. At the same time, this type of FDI maybe seeking new market or expanding the existing market following the success of exports. Market seeking FDI is usually associated with high transportation costs or government regulations (Dunning, 1993).

As mentioned before, the main objective of efficiency seeking FDI is to enhance the efficiency in production cost by relocating either partially or the whole production processes to the foreign country that offers cheaper labour costs. This is primarily due to the differences in factor endowments, economies of scale and scope (Dunning, 1993).

Resource-seeking FDI aims to acquire specific resources abroad at lower prices as

compared at home. The three main types of resource-seeking FDI are: (i) physical or natural resource-seeking, which tend to be location specific such as minerals, raw materials and agricultural products. Thus, the investment needs to be conducted in a specific location to guarantee a cheap and safe supply of some natural resources (Dunning 1993); (ii) cheap and well-motivated unskilled or semi-skilled labour-seeking; and (iii) technological-capacity, management or market expertise and organisational skills-seeking (Dunning, 1993, pp. 57).

Lastly, strategic asset-seeking FDI aims to obtain strategic assets (tangible or intangible) for their long-term strategy, including sustaining or enhancing their international competitiveness. The strategic asset seeker aims to capitalise on the advantages of some common ownership of network activities to capitalise in diverse environments (Dunning, 1993, pp. 60).

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The choice of the estimation period is based on the availability of OFDI data from 2003 to 2011 and by country. A panel data is applied in this study because it allows us to take into account different country specific features over time (Ramanathan, 2001).

## MODEL SPECIFICATION

Based on the above theoretical discussion, a gravity model is used as studies using this type of model have achieved empirical success in explaining various types of inter-regional and international flows

including international trade (Cheng & Wall, 2005) and FDI (Ellingsen, Likumahuwa, & Nunnenkamp, 2006; Kayam & Hisarciklilar, 2009; Shen, 2009). The popularity of the gravity model is highlighted by Eichengreen and Irwin (1998, pp. 33), who name it as the “workhorse for empirical studies of (regional) to the virtual exclusion of other approaches” (Cheng & Wall, 2005).

An augmented gravity model is applied in this study by taking into account both pull and push factors. A relative comparison method is used here by comparing the relative locational advantage of foreign country (pull factors) with locational disadvantages of home country (push factors), which is different from previous studies. This method provides a more comprehensive understanding in terms of explaining the extent to which the advantage of foreign countries relative to Malaysia is able to attract OFDI from Malaysia. However, trade cost and similar communication language dummy variables were excluded from using the comparison due to the characteristics of data which could not be measured by comparison.

The empirical model in this paper is shown in the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \ln\text{SOFDID}_{ij} = & \alpha + \beta_1 \ln\text{GDPPC}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_2 \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji} + \beta_3 \text{DSG} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_4 \text{DINDO} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji} + \beta_5 \text{DAU} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_6 \text{DCHN} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji} + \beta_7 \ln\text{OIL}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_8 \text{DSG} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji} + \beta_9 \text{DINDO} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_{10} \text{DAU} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji} + \beta_{11} \text{DCHN} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji} \\ & + \beta_{12} \ln\text{TAX}_{ji} + \beta_{13} \ln\text{OPENN}_{ji} + \beta_{14} \ln\text{DIST}_{ij} \\ & + \beta_{15} \text{LANG}_{ij} + \varepsilon_i \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

Where  $i$ , is Malaysia,  $j$  is the host country and  $\varepsilon_i$  is the error term.

- $\text{SOFDID}_{ij}$ - Malaysia's outward FDI stocks in country  $j$ ,
- $\text{GDPPC}_{ji}$  - relative market size of country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{ULCI}_{ji}$  - relative labour costs of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DSG} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji}$  - interaction of Singapore country dummy with relative labour costs of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DINDO} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji}$ - interaction of Indonesia country dummy with relative labour costs of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DAU} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji}$  - interaction of Australia country dummy with relative labour costs of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DCHN} * \ln\text{ULCI}_{ji}$  - interaction of China country dummy with relative labour costs of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{OIL}_{ji}$  - relative crude oil proved reserves of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DSG} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji}$  - interaction of Singapore country dummy with relative crude oil proved reserves of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DINDO} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji}$  - interaction of Indonesia country dummy with relative crude oil proved reserves of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DAU} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji}$  - interaction of Australia country dummy with relative crude oil proved reserves of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{DCHN} * \ln\text{OIL}_{ji}$  - interaction of China country dummy with relative crude oil proved reserves of the country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{TAX}_{ji}$ - relative corporate tax rates of country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,
- $\text{OPENN}_{ji}$ - relative trade liberalisation of country  $j$  to Malaysia  $i$ ,

- $DIST_{ij}$  - distance from capital of Malaysia  $i$  to country  $j$ , and
- $LANG_{ij}$  - similar communication languages between Malaysia  $i$  and country  $j$ .

A description of the variables is shown in Table 1.

This study focused on the top-15 foreign countries that received the most investments from Malaysia for the time

period of this study. These included Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Virgin Islands (British), Viet Nam, Thailand, Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Germany, the Netherlands and India for the period of 2003 to 2011. Together, they accounted for approximately 64.5 percent of Malaysia's total OFDI stock.

TABLE 1  
Description of the Variables

Variables	Definitions	Sources	Expected Signs (+/-)
$SOFDID_{ij}$	Outward FDI stocks of Malaysia (i) in host country (j), (US\$mil.)	Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)	
$GDPPC_{ji}$	Relative market size is proxied by gross domestic product per capita of host country (j) to Malaysia (i), (US\$ nominal)	<i>EIU country data</i> , <a href="https://eiu.bvdepc.com/">https://eiu.bvdepc.com/</a>	(+)
$ULCI_{ji}$ ( $DSG*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ; $DINDO*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ; $DAU*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ; $DCHN*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ )	Relative labour costs is proxied by ratio of unit labour costs index of host country (j) to Malaysia (i)	<i>EIU country data</i> , <a href="https://eiu.bvdepc.com/">https://eiu.bvdepc.com/</a>	(-)
$OIL_{ji}$ ( $DSG*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ; $DINDO*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ; $DAU*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ; $DCHN*\ln OIL_{ji}$ )	Relative natural resources is proxied by ratio of crude oil proved reserves of host country (j) to Malaysia (i), (billion barrels)	<i>U.S. Energy Information Administration</i> , <a href="http://www.eia.gov">http://www.eia.gov</a>	(+)
$TAX_{ji}$	Relative government policy is proxied by ratio of corporate tax rates of host country (j) to Malaysia (i), (%)	<i>KPMG, Corporate and Indirect Tax Survey 2011</i> , <a href="http://www.gfmag.com">http://www.gfmag.com</a>	(-)
$OPENN_{ji}$	Relative trade liberalisation is proxied by ratio of (total trade/nominal GDP) of host country (j) to Malaysia (i), (US\$ mil.)	<i>EIU country data</i> , <a href="https://eiu.bvdepc.com/">https://eiu.bvdepc.com/</a>	(+)
$DIST_{ij}$	Transportation costs is proxied by capital distance from Malaysia (i) to host country (j), (km)	<a href="http://www.globefeed.com/World_Distance_Calculator.asp">http://www.globefeed.com/World_Distance_Calculator.asp</a>	(+/-)
$LANG_{ij}$	Cultural proximity is proxied by similar communication languages, dummy variable $D=1$ if English, Malay, Mandarin or Tamil/Hindu are official languages, $D=0$ if not.	Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, <a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html">https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html</a>	(+)

Notes:

- $DSG*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ,  $DINDO*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ,  $DAU*\ln ULCI_{ji}$  and  $DCHN*\ln ULCI_{ji}$  are respectively the interaction of  $j =$  Singapore, Indonesia, Australia and China country dummy with relative labour costs to Malaysia.
- $DSG*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ,  $DINDO*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ,  $DAU*\ln OIL_{ji}$  and  $DCHN*\ln OIL_{ji}$  are respectively the interaction of  $j =$  Singapore, Indonesia, Australia and China country dummy with relative natural resources to Malaysia.



Based on equation (1), the following hypotheses were tested.

*Hypothesis 1: Relative larger market size in foreign countries is expected to be positively associated with Malaysia's OFDI.*

According to Dunning and Narula (1996), a small population size indicates little aggregate consumption. Thus, in order to enjoy economies of scale, domestic firms are forced to seek larger foreign markets abroad. A large market size is not only important for the exploitation of economies of scale and efficient utilisation of resources (Buckley *et al.*, 2007), but also reflects higher potential investment returns. Previous studies found positive relationship between foreign markets' size with Malaysia's OFDI, implying market-seeking investments in the host economies (Kitchen & Syed Zamberi, 2007 Goh & Wong, 2010). Besides, a small domestic market is found as one of the domestic constraints contributing to Malaysia's investment abroad (Ariff & Lopez, 2007; Ragayah, 1999; Tham, 2007). Given the above reasons, the relative market size ( $GDPPC_{ji}$ ) is expected to positively affect Malaysia's outward FDI stocks in country  $j$  ( $SOFDID_{ij}$ ) if OFDI is market-seeking. Therefore, the greater the relative market size in foreign countries ( $GDPPC_{ji}$ ), the larger the amount of  $SOFDID_{ij}$  is expected to be attracted to these countries.

*Hypothesis 2: Relative higher labour cost in foreign countries is expected to be negatively associated with Malaysia's OFDI.*

Some studies have shown that increasing domestic labour cost is another factor pushing Malaysia's OFDI to countries with relatively lower labour cost. This is especially relevant for labour-intensive activities or for vertical type of investment in order to sustain or enhance competitiveness (Ragayah, 1999; Ariff & Lopez, 2007; Tham, 2007). Ariff and Lopez (2007) highlighted Malaysia's investments in Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Vietnam and China as driven by the low cost factors available in these countries, particularly in labour-intensive manufacturing activities such as textiles. Tham (2007) also shared a similar finding, i.e. one of the main objectives of OFDI by Malaysia's manufacturing firms is to exploit low wage costs, in addition to other domestic push factors such as a small domestic market as well as increasing competition in the domestic market.

A case study by Ragayah (1999) indicated market-seeking and natural resource-seeking as the main objectives of Malaysia's companies for investing abroad, while increasing labour cost is not necessarily a major determinant depending on the type of investments. Given the above findings, relative labour cost was included in this study in order to ascertain the extent to which it influenced Malaysia's investment abroad. Relative labour cost ( $ULCI_{ji}$ ) is expected to be negatively related with  $SOFDID_{ij}$  if OFDI is motivated by efficiency-seeking. The  $ULCI_{ji}$  is interacted with Malaysia's top three OFDI host economies

dummies (Singapore,  $DSG*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ; Indonesia  $DINDO*\ln ULCI_{ji}$  and Australia,  $DAU*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ) and China<sup>1</sup> ( $DCHN*\ln ULCI_{ji}$ ) to examine further whether OFDI to these countries is significantly influenced by relatively lower factor prices. The lower the relative labour cost ( $ULCI_{ji}$ ), the larger the amount of  $SOFDID_{ij}$  is expected to be attracted to these countries.

*Hypothesis 3: Relative abundance of natural resources in foreign countries is expected to be positively associated with Malaysia's OFDID*

Natural resource-seeking FDI tends to be location specific. Investments have to be made in natural resource-abundant countries to ensure a cheap supply of natural resources. Findings from the previous studies by Ariff and Lopez (2007), Kitchen and Syed Zamberi (2007) and Rasiah, Gammeltoft, and Yang (2010) have indicated that Malaysia's OFDI is also driven by natural resource-seeking motivations. According to Ariff and Lopez (2007) and Kitchen and Syed Zamberi (2007), PetroliaM Nasional Berhad (PETRONAS) and plantation companies actively invest abroad to seek for natural resources due to diminishing supply of these resources in Malaysia (such as oil fields and arable land) in Malaysia. PETRONAS has also invested heavily in Sudan and

<sup>1</sup>China is chosen as it is well known as a low labour cost country. All four countries accounted for more than half of Malaysia's total OFDI during the period of this study.

Chad (UNCTAD, 2006). Rosfadzimi, Abd. Halim and Abu Hassan (2012) also found that the diminishing supply of natural resources in Malaysia to be one of the push factors for Malaysia's OFDI. As a result, the relative abundance of natural resources is significant as a determinant of Malaysia's OFDI. The relative abundance of natural resources ( $OIL_{ji}$ ) is expected to be positively related with  $SOFDID_{ij}$  if OFDI is motivated by natural resource-seeking. Since it is location specific, the indicator will be interacted with Malaysia's top three OFDI country dummies, namely, Singapore ( $DSG*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ), Indonesia ( $DINDO*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ) and Australia ( $DAU*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ). China ( $DCHN*\ln OIL_{ji}$ ) is also included to further examine whether OFDI to these countries is significantly influenced by natural resource-seeking arguments. The larger the relative abundance of natural resources ( $OIL_{ji}$ ), the more  $SOFDID_{ij}$  is expected to be attracted to these countries.

*Hypothesis 4: Relative higher corporate tax rate is expected to be negatively associated with Malaysia's OFDID*

Caves (1971) and Gordon and Hines (2002) argued that tax factors could influence the decision of firms whether to produce at home country or in foreign countries; it also influences the amount and the choice of OFDI's location. Duanmu and Guney (2009) found that China and India's investments abroad are attracted to countries with low corporate tax rates. As low tax rates represent a higher net return

from investments, they are considered to be more competitive in attracting FDI, *ceteris paribus*. This is supported by Aminian, Fung and Lin (2007) who found that 'tax haven' countries are commonly sought by investors. Therefore, the relative tax rate ( $TAX_{ji}$ ) is expected to be negatively related with  $SOFDID_{ij}$ , or the higher foreign corporate tax rates in foreign countries as compared to Malaysia's tax rate ( $TAX_{ji}$ ), the less amount of  $SOFDID_{ij}$  is expected to be lured away from Malaysia.

*Hypothesis 5: Relative trade liberalization is hypothesised to be positively related with Malaysia's OFDI.*

As stated by the theory of internalisation, high trade costs (such as transport costs and tariffs) tend to replace exports with FDI (Buckley & Casson, 1981; Markusen, 1995). Thus, trade liberalisation is expected to attract more foreign investment. The higher the degree of trade liberalisation, the more foreign investment is expected to be attracted into a country. In addition to the elimination or reduction of both tariff and non-tariff barriers<sup>2</sup>, trade agreements also provide increased market access to large integrated markets (Banga, 2007). Trade liberalisation is found as one of the factors that pushes Malaysia's investment abroad (Ariff & Lopez, 2007; Kueh, Pua, & Apoi, 2008; Goh & Wong, 2010). Given the above reasons, the relative trade liberalisation

<sup>2</sup> Tariff includes duties and surcharges. Non-tariff barriers include licensing regulations, quotas and other requirements

variable ( $OPENN_{ji}$ ) is expected to be positively linked with  $SOFDID_{ij}$ . Therefore, Malaysian OFDI depends on the relatively greater trade liberalisation in other countries ( $OPENN_{ji}$ ).

*Hypothesis 6a: Transportation cost is hypothesised to be positively related with Malaysia's OFDI if it is horizontal type of FDI.*

*Hypothesis 6b: Transportation cost is hypothesised to be negatively related with Malaysia's OFDI if it is vertical type of FDI.*

Although transportation cost is generally negatively related to trade in gravity models, the relationship between transportation costs and FDI varies, depending on the type of FDI (horizontal or vertical) (Duanmu & Guney, 2009; Egger, 2008; Fung, Garcia-Herrero, & Siu, 2009). Horizontal FDI occurs when MNEs conduct similar production activities in different countries (Helpman *et al.*, 2003; Wong, 2005). Matsuura and Hayakawa (2012) showed that a decrease in trade costs does not increase horizontal FDI because investors prefer exporting compared to investing directly in geographically closer destinations (Buckley & Casson, 1981). On the other hand, vertical FDI occurs when MNEs fragment the production process across border to different countries with the objective of minimising production costs or increasing access to externalities such as knowledge spillovers (Helpman *et al.*, 2003; Wong, 2005).

Decrease in trade costs induces vertical FDI (Matsuura & Hayakawa, 2012). This is because the reduction in production costs (via lower labour costs) needs to outweigh the increase in the cost for investing abroad. Thus, vertical FDI is likely to be conducted with countries with lower wages and lower trade costs. Given the above, the distance variable, ( $DIST_{ji}$ ) is expected to be positively or negatively linked with  $SOFDID_{ij}$ . A positive relationship is expected for horizontal type of OFDI, while a negative relationship is expected for the vertical type.

*Hypothesis 7: Cultural proximity is hypothesised to be positively related with Malaysia's OFDI.*

As discussed earlier, cultural proximity is expected to attract more FDI as it compensates investment risks. The model of firm internationalisation by Johanson and Vahlne (1977) states that in the early stages of investment abroad, firms tend to invest in countries with similar cultural backgrounds or well-established networking countries or the trading partners. Harzing (2003) also found that differences in national language could be a barrier to doing business abroad. Thus, the culture variable as proxied by the use of a common communication language (Cheng & Wall, 2005) was tested in this study to ascertain whether this variable influences Malaysia's OFDI. The variable  $LANG_{ij}$  is hypothesised to be positively related to  $SOFDID_{ij}$ , i.e. the use the similar communication languages between the

Malaysia (i) and foreign countries (j) is expected to promote the OFDI from Malaysia to foreign country (j).

## EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The Hausman test ( $Prob > \chi^2 = 0.0001$ ) indicated fixed effect model is appropriate under this study. The Least Square Dummy Variable (LSDV) model is applied because it allows for time invariant variables to be estimated under the fixed effect. It also takes into account the problem of heterogeneity by incorporating the related dummy variables into the model, such as country dummy variables and similar communication languages dummy variables in this study.

As expected, hypothesis 1 is accepted, in which relative market size is significant and positively influences Malaysia's OFDI. This finding is consistent with that of Goh and Wong (2010), Ragayah (1999) and Tham (2007) who argued that one of the main objectives of Malaysia's OFDI is to seek new markets in order to expand existing market, diversify risks and enhance returns on investment abroad. Furthermore, it is more beneficial to invest in huge markets because large markets provide economies of scale, and higher potential returns on investment due to higher potential demand.

Surprisingly, Table 2 shows that hypothesis 2 is rejected, in which relative labour cost variable positively and significantly influences the OFDI of Malaysia. The interactions with Malaysia's top three recipient countries and China

show that the OFDI from Malaysia are not significantly driven by relatively lower labour costs, *ceteris paribus*. It is important to note that the result does not imply that OFDI to these countries are not driven by lower labour costs; instead, it merely indicates that lower labour cost is not the primary investment objective into these countries, *ceteris paribus*.

Explanation for these not significant interaction terms can be due to Malaysia's investment activities to Singapore that are dominated by finance services, while Malaysia's investments in Indonesia are dominated by finance and plantation activities (DOSM unpublished). Malaysia's investment into Australia is dominated by mining activities (DOSM unpublished). The study, however, is unable to ascertain the impact of relative labour costs on investment into China. The insignificant interaction sign may reflect that domestic market size that outweighs low-cost labour in driving Malaysia's OFDI to China. This is supported by Zhang (2012) who found that China's labour costs in the urban manufacturing sector registered a compound growth rate of 13.8% per employee per year from 2003 to 2010. Zhang (2012) further added that China's costs are growing at a faster rate than other low manufacturing costs countries such as Vietnam, India, and Mexico<sup>3</sup>. Hence,

<sup>3</sup> For example, an entrepreneur claimed that only a smaller factory is kept in China to serve America and China's domestic market due to increasing labor costs which have doubled in the past four years at his factories in Guangdong (The Economist 2012).

contrary to previous studies, China's labour cost competitiveness may not be the main driving force for Malaysia OFDI there.

Hypothesis 3 is rejected for the overall results when a negative and significant sign was found when controlling for the overall relative natural resources variables. However, regression result also suggests that only OFDI to Australia is significantly driven by natural resource-seeking. The negative and significant signs indicate that OFDI to Singapore is not driven by natural resources-seeking, and as stated before, OFDI to Singapore is dominated by finance services. Indonesia's restrictive rules impede foreign investors to invest into their mining and quarrying sector. Table 2 indicates the main objectives for Malaysia OFDI into China is also not driven by natural resources-seeking, *ceteris paribus*.

TABLE 2  
Regression Results

InSOFDID	Coefficient	Number of obs = 108	
		t	P> t
InGDPPC <sub>ij</sub>	1.510	2.03	0.046
InULCI <sub>ij</sub>	1.833	1.78	0.079
DSG*InULCI <sub>ij</sub>	-6.060	-1.65	0.102
DINDO*InULCI <sub>ij</sub>	-3.013	-0.8	0.425
DAU*InULCI <sub>ij</sub>	2.359	1.57	0.120
DCHN*InULCI <sub>ij</sub>	-0.091	-0.03	0.979
InOILR <sub>ij</sub>	-1.106	-2.45	0.016
DSG*InOILR <sub>ij</sub>	-4.126	-1.69	0.094
DINDO*InOILR <sub>ij</sub>	-2.182	-1.56	0.122
DAU*InOILR <sub>ij</sub>	1.344	2.5	0.014
DCHN*InOILR <sub>ij</sub>	1.442	1.04	0.302
InTAX <sub>ij</sub>	-1.875	-2.47	0.016
InOPENN <sub>ij</sub>	5.325	8.74	0.000
InDIST <sub>ij</sub>	23.184	2.67	0.009
LANG	31.365	3.44	0.001

A high tax rate represents lesser net returns from investment. Therefore, in terms of relative government policies, a significant negative relation is shown between relative corporate tax rates

( $TAX_{ji}$ ) and OFDI of Malaysia, and thus, hypothesis 4 is accepted. Table 2 also indicates more competitive tax policies of foreign countries compared to Malaysia attract more Malaysia's investment there.

Relative trade liberalisation ( $OPENN_{ji}$ ) also affects the OFDI of Malaysia positively and significantly at 99 percent confidence level, and hence, hypothesis 5 is accepted. This finding shows that the higher the degree of integration of a foreign country with the world relative to Malaysia, the more likely the country will receive more investment from Malaysia.

In terms of transportation costs, the distance variable ( $DIST_{ij}$ ) is found to affect the stock of Malaysia's OFDI ( $SOFDID_{ij}$ ) positively, supporting hypothesis 6a. The positive sign of  $DIST_{ij}$  implies that investments tend to be horizontal in nature, or market seeking type of investment. Therefore, the main motivation for OFDI from Malaysia is to seek for new markets or to expand existing markets.

In Table 2, cultural proximity affects stock of OFDI positively, and thus, hypothesis 7 is accepted. The result shows that similar communication languages will influence the locational choices of investments from Malaysia.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings imply that Malaysia's OFDI tends to be horizontal in nature. Relative market size, government policies, trade liberalisation and corporate tax rates are the main drivers for Malaysia to invest abroad. Natural resource-seeking OFDI is, however,

very country specific due to its nature. Only OFDI to Australia is significantly driven by natural resource-seeking. Interestingly, the findings of this study show that overall, Malaysia's OFDI is not driven by relative cheap labour costs; instead, market seeking factor is relatively more important, *ceteris paribus*. As for China, the findings indicate relative lower labour cost is not the main driver for Malaysia's OFDI to China due to the rising labour costs particularly since 2003. Instead, the findings indicate the larger market domestic size in China outweighs the relatively lower labour cost advantage in the country.

Investing abroad to enhance the market reach of Malaysia's investors can be beneficial to the domestic economy through the repatriation of profits. Policies that facilitate the repatriation of profits are therefore important. The government can also facilitate a greater market reach for domestic investors who may not have the capacity to invest outside the country by encouraging exports through increasing market access to other countries. Given the current doldrums in multilateral liberalisation, forging deeper integration within ASEAN is another option for increasing the market reach of domestic investors.

## REFERENCES

- Aminian, N., Fung, K. C., & Lin, C. C. (2008). Outward FDI from East Asia: The Experience of Hong Kong and Taiwan. In R. S. Rajan, R. Kumar, & N. Virgill (Eds.), *New Dimensions of Economic Globalization: Surge of Outward Foreign Direct Investment from Asia* (pp. 171-208). Singapore: World Scientific Publishing.

- Ariff, M., & Lopez, G. P. (2007). *Outward foreign direct investment: The Malaysian experience*. Paper presented at the International Workshop on "Intra-Asian FDI Flows: Magnitude, Trends, Prospects and Policy Implications. Organized by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), New Delhi 3, India, 25-26 April. Retrieved May 21, 2012, from <http://www.icrier.org/pdf/Mohamed%20Ariff%20and%20Greg%20Lopez.pdf>.
- Banga, R. (2007). Drivers of outward foreign direct investment from Asian Developing Economies. In *Towards Coherent Trade Policy Frameworks: Understanding Trade and Investment Linkages, Studies in Trade and Investment* (pp. 195-215). Thailand: UNESCAP. Retrieved October 10, 2009, from [http://www.unescap.org/tid/artnet/pub/tipub2469\\_chap7.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/tid/artnet/pub/tipub2469_chap7.pdf).
- Brainard, L. S. (1997). An empirical assessment of the proximity-concentration trade-off between multinational sales and trade. *American Economic Review*, 87, 520-544.
- Buckley, P. J., & Casson, M. (1981). The optimal timing of a foreign direct investment. *Economic Journal*, 91, 75-87.
- Buckley, P. J., Clegg, J. L., Cross, A.R., Liu, X., Voss, H., & Zheng, P. (2007). The determinants of Chinese outward foreign direct investment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 38(4), 499-518.
- Caves, R. E. (1971). International corporations: The industrial economics of foreign investment. *Economica*, 38(149), 1-27. Retrieved December 20, 2012, from <http://www.jstor.org/www.ezplib.ukm.my/>
- Cheng, I. H., & Wall, H. J. (2005). Controlling for heterogeneity in gravity models of trade and integration. *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review*, 87(1), 49-63. Retrieved December 20, 2013, from <http://ir.nuk.edu.tw:8080/bitstream/310360000Q/11970/2/cheng-wall-Review.pdf>.
- Desai, M. A., Foley, C. F., & Hines, J. R. (2005). Foreign direct investment and the domestic capital stock. *American Economic Review*, 95(2), 33-38.
- Duanmu, J. L., & Guney, Y. (2009). A panel data analysis of locational determinants of Chinese and Indian outward foreign direct investment. *Journal of Asia Business Studies Spring*, 3(2), 1-15.
- Dunning, J. H. (1977). Trade, location of economic activity and the multinational enterprise: A search for an eclectic approach. In B. Ohlin, P. O. Hesselborn, & P. M. Wijkman (Eds.), *The International Allocation of Economic Activity* (pp. 395-418). London: Macmillan.
- Dunning, J. H. (1980). Toward an eclectic theory of international production: Some empirical tests. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 11(1), 9-31.
- Dunning, J. H. (1981). *International Production and the Multinational Enterprise*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Dunning, J. H. (1993). *Multinational Enterprises and the Global Economy*. Harlow, Essex: Addison-Wesley Publication Company.
- Dunning, J. H., & Narula, R. (1996). The investment development path revisited: some emerging issues. In J. H. Dunning & R. Narula (Eds.), *Foreign Direct Investment and Governments* (pp. 1-41). London: Routledge.
- Egger, P. (2008). On the role of distance for outward FDI. *Annals of Regional Science*, 42(2), 375-389.
- Eichengreen, B., & Irwin, D. A. (1998). The role of history in bilateral trade flows. In A. F. Jeffrey (Ed.), *The Regionalization of the World Economy* (pp. 33-57). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Elia, S., Mariotti, I., & Piscitello, L. (2009). The impact of outward FDI on the home country's labour demand and skill composition. *International Business Review*, 18(4), 357-372.
- Ellingsen, G., Likumahuwa, W., & Nunnenkamp, P. (2006). Outward FDI by Singapore: a different animal? *Transnational Corporations*, 15(2), 1-40.
- Enders, W., & Lapan, H. E. (1987). *International Economics: Theory and Policy*. USA: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Erdilek, A. (Ed.). (1985). *Multinationals As Mutual Invaders: Intra-Industry Direct Foreign Investment*. Australia: Croom Helm Ltd.
- Fung, K. C., Garcia-Herrero, A., & Siu, A. (2009). A comparative empirical examination of outward foreign direct investment from four Asian economies: People's Republic of China; Japan; Republic of Korea and Taipei, China. *Asian Development Review*, 26(2), 86-101.
- Greenaway, D., & Kneller, R. (2007). Firm heterogeneity, exporting and foreign direct investment. *Economic Journal*, 117(517), F134-F161.
- Goh, S. K., & Wong, K. N. (2010). Malaysia's: The effects of foreign market size and home government policy. *Monash Economics Working Papers* 33/10. Department of Economics, Monash University. Retrieved January 2, 2011, from <http://www.buseco.monash.edu.au/eo/research/papers/2010/3310malaysiagohwong.pdf>.
- Gordon, R. H., & Hines Jr. J. R. (2002). International taxation. *NBER Working Paper No. 8854*. Retrieved June 25, 2013, from <http://www.nber.org/papers/w8854>
- Harzing, A. W. K. (2003). The role of culture in entry mode studies: from negligence to myopia? *Advances in International Management*, 15, 75-127.
- Helpman, E., Melitz, M., & Yeaple, S. R. (2003). Export versus FDI. *NBER Working Paper No. 9439*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hennart, J. E. (1982). *A Theory of Multinational Enterprise*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Johanson, J., & Vahlne, J. E. (1977). The internationalization process of the firm – a model of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitment. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 8(1), 23-32.
- Kayam, S. S., & Hisarciklilar, M. (2009). Determinants of Turkish FDI abroad. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive Paper No. 17813*. Retrieved October 25, 2014 from: [http://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/17813/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_17813.pdf](http://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/17813/1/MPRA_paper_17813.pdf).
- Kitchen, P. J., & Syed Zamberi A. (2007). Overseas investment by developing country firms: the case of emerging Malaysian corporations. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 2(4), 122-135. Retrieved January 13, 2009, from <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijbm/article/viewFile/2235/3424>.
- Konings, J., & Murphy, A. (2001). Do multinational enterprises substitute parent jobs for foreign ones? Evidence from firm level panel data. *University of Michigan Working Paper No. 371*. University of Michigan. Retrieved December 10, 2010, from <http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/2027.42/39755/3/wp371.pdf>
- Kueh, J. S. H., Puah, C. H., & Apoi, A. (2008). Outward FDI of Malaysia: An empirical examination from macroeconomic perspective. *Economic Bulletin*, 6(28), 1-11. Retrieved March 23, 2013, from <http://economicsbulletin.vanderbilt.edu/2008/volume6/EB-07F20037A.pdf>.
- Markusen, J. R. (1983). Factor movements and commodity trade as complements. *Journal of International Economics*, 14(3), 341-356.



- Markusen, J. R. (1995). The boundaries of multinational enterprises and the theory of international trade. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 9, 169-189.
- Markusen, J. R., & Venables, A. J. (1995). Multinational firms and the new trade theory. *NBER Working Paper, No. 5036*. Cambridge: Mass. Retrieved August 8, 2013, from [http://www.nber.org/papers/w5036.pdf?new\\_window=1](http://www.nber.org/papers/w5036.pdf?new_window=1).
- Matsuura, T., & Hayakawa, K. (2012). The role of trade costs in FDI strategy of heterogeneous firms: Evidence from Japanese firm-level data. *ERIA Discussion Paper Series*. Retrieved May 27, 2013, from <http://www.eria.org/ERIA-DP-2012-04.pdf>
- Ragayah, H. M. Z. (1999). Malaysia reverse investments: trends and strategies. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 16(3), 469-496.
- Ramanathan, R. (2001). *Introductory Econometrics with Applications* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed). South-Western: Thomson Learning.
- Rasiah, S., Gammeltoft, P., & Yang, J. (2010). Home government policies for outward FDI from emerging economies: lessons from Asia. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 5(3/4), 333-357.
- Rosfadzimi, M. S., Abd Halim, M. N., & Abu Hassan, S. M. N. (2012). Outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) drivers in developing economies: A case of Malaysia. *Business & Management Quarterly Review*, 3(1), 26-34.
- Shen, G. (2009). *The predictive capacity of the gravity model of trade on foreign direct investment*. Nationalekonomiska Institutionen, Uppsala Universitet. Retrieved October 24, 2010, from <http://uu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:216318/FULLTEXT01>
- Temouri, Y., & Driffield, N. L. (2009). Does German foreign direct investment lead to job losses at home? *Applied Economics Quarterly*, 55(3), 1-21.
- Tham, S. Y. (2005). Japan's response to globalization: Learning from Japanese direct investment. *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Review*, 1(2), 3-26. Retrieved May 23, 2013, from [http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/aptir2383\\_yean.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/aptir2383_yean.pdf).
- Tham, S. Y. (2007). Outward foreign direct investment from Malaysia: An exploratory study. *Südostasienaktuell*, 5, 44-72. Retrieved September 21, 2010, from [http://www.giga-hamburg.de/openaccess/suedostasienaktuell/2007\\_5/giga\\_soa\\_2007\\_5\\_tham.pdf](http://www.giga-hamburg.de/openaccess/suedostasienaktuell/2007_5/giga_soa_2007_5_tham.pdf)
- The Economists. (2012). *The end of cheap China: What do soaring Chinese wages mean for global manufacturing?* Retrieved January 17, 2015, from <http://www.economist.com/node/21549956>
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2006). FDI from the developing and transition economies: implications for development. *World Investment Report*. New York and Geneva: United Nations.
- Wong, H. T. (2005). The determinants of foreign direct investment in the manufacturing industry of Malaysia. *Journal of Economic Cooperation*, 26(2), 91-110. Retrieved March 5, 2014, from <http://www.sesrtic.org/files/article/89.pdf>
- Yamashita, N., & Fukao, K. (2009). Expansion abroad and jobs at home: evidence from Japanese multinational enterprises. *Asia Pacific Economic Papers No. 377*. Australia-Japan Research Centre, Crawford School, Australia National University. Retrieved December 5, 2011, from <http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/pdf/pep/apep-377.pdf>
- Zhang, S. (2012). China's rising costs. *China Business Review*. Retrieved January 17, 2015 from: <http://www.chinabusinessreview.com/chinas-rising-costs/>



**REFEREES FOR THE PERTANIKA  
JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**

**VOL. 23(S) AUG. 2015**  
*Special Edition*

**The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia**

The Editorial Board of the Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities wishes to thank the following:

Abdul Halim Abdul Raof  
*(UTM, Malaysia)*

Abdullah Mat Rashid  
*(UPM, Malaysia)*

Azamudin Badri@Harun  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Chan Mei Yuit  
*(UPM, Malaysia)*

Chua Soo Yeap  
*(USM, Malaysia)*

Haliza Jaafar  
*(UTM, Malaysia)*

Ilyana Jalaluddin  
*(UPM, Malaysia)*

Lai Fong Woon  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Melissa Malik  
*(UiTM, Malaysia)*

Mohd Azhar Abd Hamid  
*(UTM, Malaysia)*

Muhaimin Sulam  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Muhamad Sayuti Hassan @ Yahya  
*(UPSI, Malaysia)*

Nazri Muslim  
*(UKM, Malaysia)*

Noor Amila Wan Abdullah Zawawi  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Normah Abdullah  
*(UiTM, Malaysia)*

Raja Ahmad Iskandar Raja Yaacob  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Rohani Salleh  
*(UTP, Malaysia)*

Rushita Ismail  
*(UiTM, Malaysia)*

Salawati Mat Basir  
*(UKM, Malaysia)*

Sharifah Muzlia Syed Mustafa  
*(UiTM, Malaysia)*

Siti Maftuhah Damio  
*(UiTM, Malaysia)*

Wan Mazwati Wan Yusoff  
*(IIUM, Malaysia)*

---

UPM - Universiti Putra Malaysia  
UKM - Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia  
USM - Universiti Sains Malaysia  
UTP - Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS

UTM - Universiti Teknologi Malaysia  
UPSI - Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris  
UiTM - Universiti Teknologi MARA Malaysia  
IIUM - International Islamic University Malaysia

---

While every effort has been made to include a complete list of referees for the period stated above, however if any name(s) have been omitted unintentionally or spelt incorrectly, please notify the Chief Executive Editor, *Pertanika* Journals at [nayan@upm.my](mailto:nayan@upm.my).

Any inclusion or exclusion of name(s) on this page does not commit the *Pertanika* Editorial Office, nor the UPM Press or the University to provide any liability for whatsoever reason.



### **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS** (Manuscript Preparation & Submission Guidelines)

Revised: August 2015

*We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing.  
We value and support our authors in the research community.*

Please read the Pertanika guidelines and follow these instructions carefully. Manuscripts not adhering to the instructions will be returned for revision without review. The Chief Executive Editor reserves the right to return manuscripts that are not prepared in accordance with these guidelines.

## **MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION**

### **Manuscript Types**

*Pertanika* accepts submission of mainly **four** types of manuscripts for peer-review.

#### **1. REGULAR ARTICLE**

Regular articles are full-length original empirical investigations, consisting of introduction, materials and methods, results and discussion, conclusions. Original work must provide references and an explanation on research findings that contain new and significant findings.

*Size:* Generally, these are expected to be between 6 and 12 journal pages (excluding the abstract, references, tables and/or figures), a maximum of 80 references, and an abstract of 100–200 words.

#### **2. REVIEW ARTICLE**

These report critical evaluation of materials about current research that has already been published by organizing, integrating, and evaluating previously published materials. It summarizes the status of knowledge and outline future directions of research within the journal scope. Review articles should aim to provide systemic overviews, evaluations and interpretations of research in a given field. Re-analyses as meta-analysis and systemic reviews are encouraged. The manuscript title must start with "Review Article:".

*Size:* These articles do not have an expected page limit or maximum number of references, should include appropriate figures and/or tables, and an abstract of 100–200 words. Ideally, a review article should be of 7 to 8 printed pages.

#### **3. SHORT COMMUNICATIONS**

They are timely, peer-reviewed and brief. These are suitable for the publication of significant technical advances and may be used to:

- (a) report new developments, significant advances and novel aspects of experimental and theoretical methods and techniques which are relevant for scientific investigations within the journal scope;
- (b) report/discuss on significant matters of policy and perspective related to the science of the journal, including 'personal' commentary;
- (c) disseminate information and data on topical events of significant scientific and/or social interest within the scope of the journal.

The manuscript title must start with "*Brief Communication:*".

*Size:* These are usually between 2 and 4 journal pages and have a maximum of three figures and/or tables, from 8 to 20 references, and an abstract length not exceeding 100 words. Information must be in short but complete form and it is not intended to publish preliminary results or to be a reduced version of Regular or Rapid Papers.

#### 4. OTHERS

Brief reports, case studies, comments, concept papers, Letters to the Editor, and replies on previously published articles may be considered.

**PLEASE NOTE: NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR PAGE LENGTH.**

#### Language Accuracy

Pertanika **emphasizes** on the linguistic accuracy of every manuscript published. Articles must be in **English** and they must be competently written and argued in clear and concise grammatical English. Contributors are strongly advised to have the manuscript checked by a colleague with ample experience in writing English manuscripts or a competent English language editor.

Author(s) **must provide a certificate** confirming that their manuscripts have been adequately edited. A proof from a recognised editing service should be submitted together with the cover letter at the time of submitting a manuscript to Pertanika. **All editing costs must be borne by the author(s)**. This step, taken by authors before submission, will greatly facilitate reviewing, and thus publication if the content is acceptable.

Linguistically hopeless manuscripts will be rejected straightaway (e.g., when the language is so poor that one cannot be sure of what the authors really mean). This process, taken by authors before submission, will greatly facilitate reviewing, and thus publication if the content is acceptable.

#### MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

The paper should be submitted in one column format with at least 4cm margins and 1.5 line spacing throughout. Authors are advised to use Times New Roman 12-point font and *MS Word* format.

##### 1. Manuscript Structure

Manuscripts in general should be organised in the following order:

##### Page 1: Running title

This page should **only** contain the running title of your paper. The running title is an abbreviated title used as the running head on every page of the manuscript. The running title should not exceed 60 characters, counting letters and spaces.

##### Page 2: Author(s) and Corresponding author information.

This page should contain the **full title** of your paper not exceeding 25 words, with name(s) of all the authors, institutions and corresponding author's name, institution and full address (Street address, telephone number (including extension), hand phone number, and e-mail address) for editorial correspondence. First and corresponding authors must be clearly indicated.

The names of the authors may be abbreviated following the international naming convention. e.g. Salleh, A.B.<sup>1</sup>, Tan, S.G<sup>2\*</sup>., and Sapuan, S.M<sup>3</sup>.

**Authors' addresses.** Multiple authors with different addresses must indicate their respective addresses separately by superscript numbers:

George Swan<sup>1</sup> and Nayan Kanwal<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Biology, Faculty of Science, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, USA.,

<sup>2</sup>Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (R&I), Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia.

A **list** of number of **black and white / colour figures and tables** should also be indicated on this page. Figures submitted in color will be printed in colour. See "5. Figures & Photographs" for details.

##### Page 3: Abstract

This page should **repeat** the **full title** of your paper with only the **Abstract** (the abstract should be less than 250 words for a Regular Paper and up to 100 words for a Short Communication), and **Keywords**.

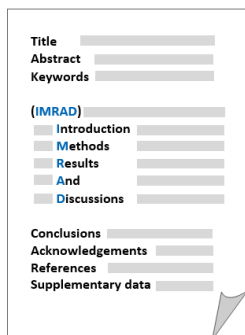
**Keywords:** Not more than eight keywords in alphabetical order must be provided to describe the contents of the manuscript.

#### Page 4: Introduction

This page should begin with the **Introduction** of your article and followed by the rest of your paper.

#### 2. Text

Regular Papers should be prepared with the headings *Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusions, Acknowledgements, References, and Supplementary data* (if available) in this order.



#### MAKE YOUR ARTICLES AS CONCISE AS POSSIBLE

Most scientific papers are prepared according to a format called IMRAD. The term represents the first letters of the words Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, And, Discussion. It indicates a pattern or format rather than a complete list of headings or components of research papers; the missing parts of a paper are: Title, Authors, Keywords, Abstract, Conclusions, and References. Additionally, some papers include Acknowledgments and Appendices.

The Introduction explains the scope and objective of the study in the light of current knowledge on the subject; the Materials and Methods describes how the study was conducted; the Results section reports what was found in the study; and the Discussion section explains meaning and significance of the results and provides suggestions for future directions of research. The manuscript must be prepared according to the Journal's instructions to authors.

#### 3. Equations and Formulae

These must be set up clearly and should be typed double spaced. Numbers identifying equations should be in square brackets and placed on the right margin of the text.

#### 4. Tables

All tables should be prepared in a form consistent with recent issues of Pertanika and should be numbered consecutively with Roman numerals. Explanatory material should be given in the table legends and footnotes. Each table should be prepared on a new page, embedded in the manuscript.

*When a manuscript is submitted for publication, tables must also be submitted separately as data - .doc, .rtf, Excel or PowerPoint files- because tables submitted as image data cannot be edited for publication and are usually in low-resolution.*

#### 5. Figures & Photographs

Submit an **original** figure or photograph. Line drawings must be clear, with high black and white contrast. Each figure or photograph should be prepared on a new page, embedded in the manuscript for reviewing to keep the file of the manuscript under 5 MB. These should be numbered consecutively with Roman numerals.

Figures or photographs must also be submitted separately as TIFF, JPEG, or Excel files- because figures or photographs submitted in low-resolution embedded in the manuscript cannot be accepted for publication. For electronic figures, create your figures using applications that are capable of preparing high resolution TIFF files. In general, we require **300 dpi** or higher resolution for **coloured and half-tone artwork**, and **1200 dpi or higher** for **line drawings** are required.

Failure to comply with these specifications will require new figures and delay in publication.

**NOTE:** Illustrations may be produced in colour at no extra cost at the discretion of the Publisher; the author could be charged Malaysian Ringgit 50 for each colour page.

## 6. References

References begin on their own page and are listed in alphabetical order by the first author's last name. Only references cited within the text should be included. All references should be in 12-point font and double-spaced.

**NOTE:** When formatting your references, please follow the **APA reference style** (6th Edition). Ensure that the references are strictly in the journal's prescribed style, failing which your article will **not be accepted for peer-review**. You may refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for further details (<http://www.apastyle.org/>).

## 7. General Guidelines

**Abbreviations:** Define alphabetically, other than abbreviations that can be used without definition. Words or phrases that are abbreviated in the introduction and following text should be written out in full the first time that they appear in the text, with each abbreviated form in parenthesis. Include the common name or scientific name, or both, of animal and plant materials.

**Acknowledgements:** Individuals and entities that have provided essential support such as research grants and fellowships and other sources of funding should be acknowledged. Contributions that do not involve researching (clerical assistance or personal acknowledgements) should **not** appear in acknowledgements.

**Authors' Affiliation:** The primary affiliation for each author should be the institution where the majority of their work was done. If an author has subsequently moved to another institution, the current address may also be stated in the footer.

**Co-Authors:** The commonly accepted guideline for authorship is that one must have substantially contributed to the development of the paper and share accountability for the results. Researchers should decide who will be an author and what order they will be listed depending upon their order of importance to the study. Other contributions should be cited in the manuscript's Acknowledgements.

**Copyright Permissions:** Authors should seek necessary permissions for quotations, artwork, boxes or tables taken from other publications or from other freely available sources on the Internet before submission to Pertanika. Acknowledgement must be given to the original source in the illustration legend, in a table footnote, or at the end of the quotation.

**Footnotes:** Current addresses of authors if different from heading may be inserted here.

**Page Numbering:** Every page of the manuscript, including the title page, references, tables, etc. should be numbered.

**Spelling:** The journal uses American or British spelling and authors may follow the latest edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary for British spellings.

## SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Owing to the volume of manuscripts we receive, we must insist that all submissions be made electronically using the **online submission system ScholarOne™**, a web-based portal by Thomson Reuters. For more information, go to our web page and [click "Online Submission"](#).

### Submission Checklist

1. **MANUSCRIPT:** Ensure your MS has followed the Pertanika style particularly the first four pages as explained earlier. The article should be written in a good academic style and provide an accurate and succinct description of the contents ensuring that grammar and spelling errors have been corrected before submission. It should also not exceed the suggested length.
2. **COVER LETTER:** All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter detailing what you are submitting. Papers are accepted for publication in the journal on the understanding that the article is **original** and the content has **not been published** or **submitted for publication elsewhere**. This must be stated in the cover letter. Submission of your manuscript will not be



accepted until a signed cover letter (*original pen-to-paper signature*) has been received. The cover letter must also contain an acknowledgement that all authors have contributed significantly, and that all authors are in agreement with the content of the manuscript. The cover letter of the paper should contain (i) the title; (ii) the full names of the authors; (iii) the addresses of the institutions at which the work was carried out together with (iv) the full postal and email address, plus telephone numbers and emails of all the authors. The current address of any author, if different from that where the work was carried out, should be supplied in a footnote.

3. **COPYRIGHT:** Authors publishing the Journal will be asked to sign a copyright form. In signing the form, it is assumed that authors have obtained permission to use any copyrighted or previously published material. All authors must read and agree to the conditions outlined in the form, and must sign the form or agree that the corresponding author can sign on their behalf. Articles cannot be published until a signed form (*original pen-to-paper signature*) has been received.

Please do **not** submit manuscripts to the editor-in-chief or to any other office directly. Any queries must be directed to the **Chief Executive Editor's** office via email to [nayan@upm.my](mailto:nayan@upm.my).

Visit our Journal's website for more details at <http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/home.php>.

### **HARDCOPIES OF THE JOURNALS AND OFF PRINTS**

Under the Journal's open access initiative, authors can choose to download free material (via PDF link) from any of the journal issues from Pertanika's website. Under "**Browse Journals**" you will see a link, "*Current Issues*" or "*Archives*". Here you will get access to all current and back-issues from 1978 onwards.

The **corresponding author** for all articles will receive one complimentary hardcopy of the journal in which his/her articles is published. In addition, 20 off prints of the full text of their article will also be provided. Additional copies of the journals may be purchased by writing to the Chief Executive Editor.



## Why should you publish in *Pertanika*?

### BENEFITS TO AUTHORS

**PROFILE:** Our journals are circulated in large numbers all over Malaysia, and beyond in Southeast Asia. Our circulation covers other overseas countries as well. We ensure that your work reaches the widest possible audience in print and online, through our wide publicity campaigns held frequently, and through our constantly developing electronic initiatives such as Web of Science Author Connect backed by Thomson Reuters.

**QUALITY:** Our journals' reputation for quality is unsurpassed ensuring that the originality, authority and accuracy of your work is fully recognised. Each manuscript submitted to *Pertanika* undergoes a rigid originality check. Our double-blind peer refereeing procedures are fair and open, and we aim to help authors develop and improve their scientific work. *Pertanika* is now over 35 years old; this accumulated knowledge has resulted in our journals being indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier), Thomson (ISI) Web of Knowledge [BIOSIS & CAB Abstracts], EBSCO, DOAJ, Google Scholar, AGRICOLA, ERA, ISC, Citefactor, Rubriq and MyAIS.

**AUTHOR SERVICES:** We provide a rapid response service to all our authors, with dedicated support staff for each journal, and a point of contact throughout the refereeing and production processes. Our aim is to ensure that the production process is as smooth as possible, is borne out by the high number of authors who prefer to publish with us.

**CODE OF ETHICS:** Our Journal has adopted a Code of Ethics to ensure that its commitment to integrity is recognized and adhered to by contributors, editors and reviewers. It warns against plagiarism and self-plagiarism, and provides guidelines on authorship, copyright and submission, among others.

**PRESS RELEASES:** Landmark academic papers that are published in *Pertanika* journals are converted into press releases as a unique strategy for increasing visibility of the journal as well as to make major findings accessible to non-specialist readers. These press releases are then featured in the university's UK-based research portal, ResearchSEA, for the perusal of journalists all over the world.

**LAG TIME:** The elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles averages 4 to 5 months. A decision on acceptance of a manuscript is reached in 3 to 4 months (average 14 weeks).



An  
Award-Winning  
International-Malaysian  
Journal  
—MAY 2014

## About the Journal

*Pertanika* is an international multidisciplinary peer-reviewed leading journal in Malaysia which began publication in 1978. The journal publishes in three different areas — Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science (JTAS); Journal of Science and Technology (JST); and Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (JSSH).

JTAS is devoted to the publication of original papers that serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to **tropical agricultural research-** or related fields of study. It is published four times a year in **February, May, August and November.**

JST caters for **science and engineering research-** or related fields of study. It is published twice a year in **January and July.**

JSSH deals in **research or theories in social sciences and humanities research.** It aims to develop as a flagship journal with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. It is published four times a year in **March, June, September and December.**



## Call for Papers 2015-16

now accepting submissions...

*Pertanika* invites you to explore frontiers from all key areas of **agriculture, science and technology to social sciences and humanities.**

Original research and review articles are invited from scholars, scientists, professors, post-docs, and university students who are seeking publishing opportunities for their research papers through the Journal's three titles; JTAS, JST & JSSH. Preference is given to the work on leading and innovative research approaches.

*Pertanika* is a fast track peer-reviewed and open-access academic journal published by **Universiti Putra Malaysia.** To date, *Pertanika* Journals have been indexed by many important databases. Authors may contribute their scientific work by publishing in UPM's hallmark SCOPUS & ISI indexed journals.

Our journals are open access - international journals. Researchers worldwide will have full access to all the articles published online and be able to download them with **zero subscription fee.**

*Pertanika* uses online article submission, review and tracking system for quality and quick review processing backed by Thomson Reuter's ScholarOne™. Journals provide rapid publication of research articles through this system.

For details on the Guide to Online Submissions, visit [http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/guide\\_online\\_submission.php](http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/guide_online_submission.php)

Questions regarding submissions should only be directed to the **Chief Executive Editor,** *Pertanika* Journals.

Remember, *Pertanika* is the resource to support you in strengthening research and research management capacity.



Address your submissions to:  
**The Chief Executive Editor**  
Tel: +603 8947 1622  
[nayan@upm.my](mailto:nayan@upm.my)

Journal's profile: [www.pertanika.upm.edu.my](http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my)



Importance of Correct Pronunciation in Spoken English: Dimension of Second Language Learners' Perspective <i>Zulqarnain Abu Bakar and Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah</i>	143
A Preliminary Study of the Needs for the Development of Competency Measurement Instrument for Malaysian Chefs <i>Nornazira, S., Aede Hatib, M., Nor Fadila, M. A. and Noor Khairul Anuar, J.</i>	159
Re-examining the Determinants of Malaysia's Outward FDI <i>Teo, Y. N., Tham, S. Y. and Kam, A. J. Y.</i>	173

**Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities**  
**Vol. 23 (S) Aug. 2015**

**Contents**

<b>The Rise of the Rest: Reimagining Southeast Asia</b>	
The Principle of Responsibility to Protect: The Case of Rohingya in Myanmar <i>Hariati Ibrahim and Rohaida Nordin</i>	1
Migration and Statelessness: Turning the Spotlight on Malaysia <i>Rodziana Mohamed Razali, Rohaida Nordin and Tamara Joan Duraisingam</i>	19
Identifying Genuine Whistleblowers from Chicken Little in Government Agencies <i>Aizatul Marsitah Ibrahim, Azila Ayob, Nurulaini Zamhury and Rugayah Hashim</i>	37
The Non-Admissibility of the Principle of Therapeutic Privilege in Clinical Trials <i>Yuhanif, Y., Anisah, C. N. and Md Rejab, M. D.</i>	47
Perception of Undergraduates on Their Language Competence Based on English Language National Examination Results <i>Muhammad Ridhuan Tony Lim Abdullah, Saedah Siraj and Lim Li Yean</i>	55
Internationalisation of Higher Education: Proposed Framework on International Students' Satisfaction <i>Pui-Yee, Chong</i>	73
The Islamic Epistemological Element of Al-Yaqin in Critical Thinking <i>Mohd Nuri Al-Amin Endut and Nur Arfah A. S.</i>	91
A Preliminary Case Study on Improving Engineering Students' Competency through Industrial Training in a Private University <i>Chong Foon Yee and Yeap Kim Ho</i>	103
Research Article Writing: A Review of a Complete Rhetorical Organisation <i>Nurul Farahin Musa and Noorli Khamis</i>	111
What Do Students and Engineers Have to Say about Communicative Competence in Technical Oral Presentations? <i>Bhattacharyya, E. and Zainal, A. Z.</i>	123



**Pertanika Editorial Office, Journal Division**  
Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (R&I)  
1st Floor, IDEA Tower II  
UPM-MTDC Technology Centre  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
43400 UPM Serdang  
Selangor Darul Ehsan  
Malaysia

<http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/>  
E-mail: [executive\\_editor.pertanika@upm.my](mailto:executive_editor.pertanika@upm.my)  
Tel: +603 8947 1622 / 1619

**PENERBIT**  
**UPM**  
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA  
**P R E S S**

<http://penerbit.upm.edu.my>  
E-mail : [penerbit@upm.edu.my](mailto:penerbit@upm.edu.my)  
Tel : +603 8946 8855 / 8854  
Fax : +603 8941 6172

