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ISO 9000: Link between Seeking Certification and Perceived Benefit

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ABSTRAK

Makalah ini menerangkan keputusan kajian tentang faedah tertanggap di dalam pensijilan ISO 9000. Seterusnya, kajian juga meliputi hubungan di antara tujuan untuk mendapatkan persijilan ISO dengan faedah tertanggap. Keputusan diasaskan oleh tinjauan daripada 405 syarikat di Malaysia yang 307 daripadanya adalah syarikat ISO dan 98 syarikat bukan ISO. Hasil kajian menunjukkan tiga faedah dalaman hasil daripada pelaksanaan ISO: (1) Dokumentasi yang Lebih Baik (2), Kesedaran Kualiti yang Tinggi, dan (3) Memperbaiki Sistem Pengukuran. Bagi faedah luaran, perkara-perkara berikut telah dikenal pasti: (1) Peningkatan Kepuasan Pengguna, (2) Peningkatan Kualiti Terjangka, dan (3) Berdaya Saing. Keputusan statistik berkenaan hubungan di antara tujuan untuk mendapatkan pensijilan ISO dengan faedah tertanggap, menunjukkan bahawa syarikat yang mempunyai alasan ke arah pembangunan beroleh faedah dalaman yang lebih tinggi dari aspek: (1) Pengurangan Pembaziran, (2) Meningkatkan Kerjasama Di antara Jabatan, (3) Kesedaran Kualiti yang Tinggi, dan (4) Peningkatan Tindakan Pencegahan, apabila dibandingkan dengan syarikat yang tidak berasaskan pembangunan. Bagi syarikat yang berasaskan pembangunan dan kepelbagaian, perbezaan yang signifikan hanyalah ditemui pada aspek kesedaran kualiti yang tinggi. Manakala tiada perbezaan signifikan yang ditemui bagi syarikat yang berasaskan kepelbagaian dan tanpa pembangunan. Dari sudut faedah luaran, tiada perbezaan signifikan yang ditemui bagi mana-mana kombinasi tujuan untuk mendapatkan sijil ISO. Ini mungkin berdasarkan fakta bahawa faedah luaran adalah merupakan faktor-faktor luaran yang tidak boleh diambil kira sebagai tujuan untuk mendapatkan sijil ISO.

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the result of a study on perceived benefits of obtaining ISO 9000 certification. In addition, the link between the intentions of seeking ISO certification with perceived benefit was explored. The results were based on a survey of 405 Malaysian companies with 307 being ISO companies and 98 non-ISO companies. The study revealed that three internal benefits were expected from ISO exercise: (1) Better Documentation (2), Greater Quality Awareness, and (3) Improved Measurement System. For external benefits, these items were identified: (1) Improved Customer Satisfaction, (2) Higher Perceived Quality, and (3) Competitive Edge. Statistical results on the link between the reason for seeking the certificate with perceived benefit have indicated that companies with developmental reasons have higher perceived internal benefits in areas such as: (1) Reductions in Scrap, (2) Improved Departmental Co-operation, (3) Greater Quality Awareness, and (4) Higher Preventive Action, as compared to non-developmental companies. For pair developmental and mixed, significant difference was only evidenced for greater quality awareness. No significant differences were identified for pair mixed and non-developmental. In terms of external benefits, significant differences were not found for any combination of reason seeking certification. This may be due to the fact that external benefits were exogenous factors that could not be considered as reasons for seeking certification.

INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of quality concept, various methods have been advanced in materializing this particular concept. The more acknowledged methods included Total Quality Management (TQM), Statistical Process Control (SPC), Quality Functional Deployment (QFD), Kaizen, International Standard Organization (ISO), and Business Process Re-engineering (BPR). Among these methods, ISO 9000 appeared to be the most controversial one (Sun 1999). Many arguments have been put forward about the benefit and cost of ISO 9000. Criticism was loud, yet there were many advocates for ISO 9000. Taylor (1995) argued that ISO 9000 is necessary for the implementation of TQM. Garver and Lucore's (1994) enthusiasm toward ISO 9000 was reflected by believing that in the future, ISO 9000 is imperative for business. Jones *et al.* (1997) have provided statistical evidence showing that certified companies have eventually benefited from implementation of ISO 9000. Motwani *et al.* (1996) have summarized the benefits of ISO cited by Dzus (1991), Sateesh (1992), and Sprow (1992) into 6. These benefits are businesses with European countries, recognition by the international community; marketing edge; improvement in quality, productivity, costs; discarding second-party audits by prospective customers, and being listed in the international "certified supplier" directory. Benefits such as reduced customer complaints and conforming to specification were also reported (Kemezis 1992).

On the other hand, Sun (1999) has claimed that depending only on ISO 9000 would not guarantee quality improvement. To support this claim, it has pointed out that emphasis of ISO 9000 was not on Quality improvement. ISO 9000 focused more on quality management system and quality assurance. A similar notion was perceived by Juran and Gryna (1988), with reference to European inclination to ISO 9000. Lee (1998) in a study of ISO 9000 development in Hong Kong has revealed one big limitation of ISO 9000, which is the use of technology. Nonetheless, Lee's study has lent support to implementation of ISO 9000. Motwani *et al.* (1996) have listed out five major criticisms of ISO 9000 from previous literature. Their criticisms are the litigation problems concerning product safety, unaddressed issues on continuous improvement, preparation costs for certification, and maintenance of ISO certification.

Following all these debates, this study attempts to assess the perceived benefits of ISO 9000. This specifically refers to the degree of perceived ISO (internal and external) benefits of its implementation. Furthermore, the relationship between the intentions of seeking ISO certification with perceived benefits was also explored. This study would contribute to the presently scarce literature on the Malaysian ISO experience.

ISO Perceived Benefit

Jones *et al.* (1997) have delicately approached the perceptions of benefits received from ISO. Attempts have been made to see the relationship between intentions of applying ISO with perceived benefits. A questionnaire survey of 272 Australian ISO 9002 quality-certified companies has indicated that those companies that seek certification for internal development experienced a wider range of favorable outcomes from ISO than companies that seek certification for the purpose of "obtaining certificates". In particular, the favorable outcomes consisted of greater standardization of operational procedures, fewer mistakes and less defective work, fewer customer complaints, more business, lower operating costs. Statistical evidence has also indicated that longer-certified companies did not experience more beneficial outcomes from ISO than recently-certified companies, irrespective of the purpose of applying for certificates. However, authors revealed that longer-certified companies seem to outperform the newcomers in terms of businesses and operating costs. This finding holds true only for companies that seek certification for internal development.

Leung *et al.* (1999) presented the results of costs and benefits from obtaining ISO certification. Using 500 ISO certified companies in Hong Kong, the survey result buttressed the adoption of ISO, as 65% of the sample showed that the certification is worthwhile, and 76% believed that costs involved in obtaining the certificate are inexpensive. Three factors were investigated in its effect upon ISO cost and benefit, which were the duration of time taken to get certification, number of years since certification and reason for certification. The first two factors did not significantly affect cost-benefit. For the third factor, few companies that seek certificates to satisfy customers requirements indicated that benefits outweigh costs, as compared to companies seeking certification due to internal development. However, statistical results failed to indicate the significance of this factor. This finding commensurates with Jones *et al.* (1997) study but contradicted the study result of Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance (Osman 1994; Brecka 1994). It has found that longer-established certified companies (more than 5 years) enjoyed many more benefits compared to newcomers (less than 5 years).

In a study on the relationship between TQM practice and an organization's performance using a sample consisting of 1341 manufacturing sites located at Australia and New Zealand, Terziovski and Samson (1999) have conveyed an unfavorable message for ISO. As ISO status was suspected in influencing organization performance, its effect was removed from a TQM Model that linked TQM with organizational performance. After controlling this factor, it seemed that ISO did not have any significant explanatory power of organizational performance, irrespective of presence or absence of TQM environment. The authors believed that "ISO certification is implemented as part of the TQM philosophy and methods" (Terziovski and Samson 1999).

Sun (1999) showed similar inclination with regard to the effectiveness of ISO. Contributions of ISO and TQM towards quality improvement in 600 companies located in 20 different countries were elicited. The results postulated that TQM performed better than ISO. A strange phenomenon occurred as results showed that non-ISO certified companies exhibited a tendency of outperforming ISO-certified companies. The explanation given was the non-ISO certified companies might have implemented other TQM methods. However, extensive use of ISO techniques tends to associate with higher achievement. Learning effect may be the reason behind this occurrence. In regard to this, the author proposed a combination of ISO and TQM, which produced much more quality improvement as compared to companies adopting solely TQM and ISO.

Haversjo (2000), in an attempt to assess financial effects of ISO 9000 registration, has revealed that financial enhancement occurred simultaneously with registration. The author contended that a third variable may be in play here and not necessarily the effect of ISO registration. The third variable, according to the author, could be other improvement programs initiated by registered companies. Hence, financial effect is due to innovative management rather than ISO 9000. However, the view is kept open as ISO 9000 may be one of the improvement technologies applied by "the most innovative management". Than, ISO 9000 could be considered as worthwhile after all.

In another study, Lee *et al.* (1999), have presented the survey result of 363 companies on benefits of certification. The samples were manufacturing (114 companies), service (110 companies), and construction (139 companies). Table 1 below shows the findings documented in their study.

TABLE 1
Benefits of certification

Benefits	Percent(%)
Clearer work procedures	99
Improved quality of product/service	88
Improved team spirit	89
Better control of subcontractors	73
Increased efficiency	68
Less customer complaint	61

Source: Lee, T. Y., K. N. Leung and C. C. Chan (1999)

METHODOLOGY

This study forms a part of a larger study on quality practices among Malaysian manufacturers. 405 sets of usable questionnaire are utilized in producing the present results. Respondents' profiles are as in Tables 2 and 3. The 8 dimensions of internal benefits were considered here, namely: scrap/rework, inter-company communications, departmental/cross functional cooperation, documentation, measurement system, cultural change, quality awareness, and prevention. A 5 point Likert-scale was used upon these 8 dimensions, with 5 = most important and 1 = less important. The external benefit constructs were also based on a 5 – point Likert-scale, with 7 distinct items. The items stipulated in the questionnaire consist of: customer satisfaction, market share, perceived quality, company's glory, competitive edge, time to market, and quality audits (external).

TABLE 2
Respondent profile

Paid Up Capital (RM)	ISO	Non-ISO	Operating Years	ISO	Non-ISO
Not specified	95	28	Not specified	13	2
below 0.5 million	5	9	below 5 years	14	10
0.5-2.5 million	44	28	5-10 years	77	26
2.5-5 million	21	8	10-15 years	68	20
5-7.5 million	21	10	15-20 years	41	15
7.5-10 million	6	0	20-30 years	69	15
10-25 million	45	6	greater or equal to 30 years	25	10
25-50 million	37	3			
50-100 million	17	3			
greater than or equal 100 million	16	3			
Total	307	98	Total	307	98

TABLE 3
Respondent grouping by sectors

Sectors	ISO	Non-ISO
Agricultural & Machinery Products	3	2
Automotive & Component Product	12	3
Building Materials & Related Products	22	6
Cement & Concrete Products	14	0
Ceramics & Related Products	4	1
Chemical & Adhesive Products	19	6
Diversified Industries	4	1
Electrical & Electrical Products	79	14
Food & Beverages	14	19
Footwear & Leather Products	1	2
Furniture & Related Products	5	6
Gift & Jewelry	1	3
Industrial & Engineering Products	18	6
Iron & Steel Products	20	5
Petroleum & Gas	3	0
Pharmaceutical, Medical Equipment, Cosmetics & Toiletries	2	2
Plastic Resins & Plastic Products	16	3
Paper, Printing, Packaging & Labeling	22	6
Rubber Products	14	3
Stationery	1	0
Textiles &Wearing Apparel	5	1
Consultancy Services & Industrial Estates	2	2
Computer & Related Products	3	1
Transportation & Freight Forwarding	2	0
Mining and Quarrying	1	0

A reliability analysis was performed on the 8 internal benefits and 7 external benefits using Cronbach's coefficient alpha (Cronbach 1951). This approach was being adopted to examine whether these instruments were internally related or not in measuring degree of ISO's internal/external benefits. Cronbach's alpha approach was preferred, as it is free from limitations of split-half (Flynn *et al.* 1990). Two separate reliability analyses are conducted as the nature of external and internal benefit would be distinct and different, and both the analysis outcomes are documented in Table 4. Using SPSS reliability analysis-Cronbach's alpha, the Cronbach's alpha value along with *Alpha if item deleted* for each instrument were derived. According to Hair *et al.* (1992), an alpha value higher than 0.70 and above is considered as acceptable. With Cronbach's alpha of 0.8388 for internal benefit and 0.7851 for external benefit, and *Alpha if item deleted* over 0.70 for all instruments, it could be concluded that items stipulated in internal and external benefit were (statistically) consistent and reliable in measurement of perceived benefit of ISO.

RESULTS

Internal Benefit

Table 4 also depicts the mean scores for eight stipulated questions on internal benefits generated by ISO. The highest mean value for internal benefit was (i) Better Documentation, which appeared as the most important benefit and this finding commensurates with the finding of Lee *et al.* (1999b) as shown in Table 1. ISO disciplines were seen as "imposed on calibration, document control and internal audit ensure a company operating efficiently (Pun *et al.* 1999)." Hence, the adoption of ISO would eventually lead to establishment of new systems and procedures that intend to document relevant activity performance. Data solicited through documentation was used in conducting gap analysis. Velury (1996) contended that emphasis of ISO 9000 is on analyzing the gap between the standard and existing procedures, which then find ways to eliminate the gap. Pun *et al.* (1999), on the other hand, claimed that emphasis of ISO 9001 is on validating the supplier's ability in conforming to contract requirement.

(ii) Greater Quality Awareness is the second most important internal benefit on the list. It seems that many perceived certification of ISO as eventually improving quality awareness of their employees. Perhaps as organizations practise and fulfill all clauses specified in ISO, it is expected that the general perception on quality would change and be improved. However, this may not be true as many hold that ISO is weak on continuous improvement (Chin *et al.* 1995; Pun 1998). Moreover, claim has been made that ISO is more toward process and customer focus. It largely depends on an organization's ability to fulfill customer requirement. It would be presumptuous to claim that practices that aim to fulfill contract specifications lead to greater quality awareness.

(iii) Improved Measurement System is another important benefit that has been highly expected. ISO stresses the meeting of defined

TABLE 4
Reliability analysis of internal and external benefit

Internal Benefit	Mean	Std. Dev	Alpha if item deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Reduced scrap	3.81	1.00	0.8360	0.8388
Enhance inter-company communication	3.87	0.87	0.8187	
Improve departmental cooperation	4.02	0.87	0.8052	
Better documentation	4.44	0.72	0.8330	
Improved measurement system	4.13	0.79	0.8202	
Positive cultural change	3.87	0.89	0.8099	
Greater quality awareness	4.24	0.74	0.8084	
Increase prevention action	4.03	0.86	0.8155	
External Benefit	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**	**Alpha if item deleted**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
Improve customer satisfaction	4.43	0.74	0.7642	0.7851
Increased market share	3.91	1.05	0.7636	
Higher perceived quality	4.31	0.80	0.7549	
Glory for the company	3.98	1.07	0.7626	
Competitive edge	4.27	0.83	0.7570	
Quicker time to market	3.55	1.06	0.7322	
Reduced quality audits	3.16	1.22	0.7691	

requirements stipulated in ISO principal clauses. In order to assess and verify the actual performance with standards spelt out by ISO, empirical data must be at hand. Hence, comprehensive measurement system must be established in this connection. With this essential system in place, the basic requirement of ISO could be attained; measurement system enables organizations to document process and procedures that ensure conformity to specifications. However, caution was noted on the objectives of collecting and processing data (Lee *et al.* 1999). Pouring in all these efforts without clear objectives would be a waste of resources.

External Benefit

Views that ISO enables establishments of effective quality systems which enhance and facilitate trade, have been expressed (BSI 1994; Mahoney and Thor 1994). Many buyers and traders in the markets, irrespective of national or international, display vested interest in those organizations that have ISO certification. Possessing this certificate to some extent reflected organization's commitment to quality and dedication of performing in accordance with customer requirements. Hence, the result of (i) Improve Customer Satisfaction ranked at top position should not be surprising at all. Customers or buyers appreciate organizations that display attractive and beautiful performance in regard to products or services. Thus, owning the certification consequently improves existing customer satisfaction upon product and its producer.

(ii) Higher Perceived Quality falls in second position. This benefit is the result of general public perception on ISO. Contention has been made that in future, businesses and organizations should possess ISO certification in order to operate and sustain in operation (Garver and Lucore 1994). These beliefs and the recognition of ISO means that those holding this particular certification would display greater quality commitment and dedication than those that did not have this certification. Thus, holders of ISO certification generally yield higher perceived quality before certification.

The reasoning presented above is also applicable for (iii) Competitive Edge. With the majority of the public upholding the ISO, this certification has actually turned into a strategic tool or weapon in outperforming competitors. Furthermore, holders of certification sent a message that their products followed the stringent requirement of ISO clauses and hence should perform better than their competitors. This particular competitive edge becomes valuable for those who intend to penetrate into the European community. The European community has strongly advocated the implementation of ISO (Sun 1999; Chelsom 1997).

Relationship between Intention and Perceived Benefit

The hypothesis advanced by Jones *et al.* (1997) was tested here in order to compare and contrast the present study with the prior one. The hypothesis that is of interest here is:

H: Organizations that apply ISO certification for non-developmental reasons perceived fewer benefits obtained from ISO implementation than those organizations that apply ISO certification for developmental reasons.

To categorize the reasons gave by respondents, the grouping was based on paradigms proposed by Jones *et al.* (1997):

- Non-developmental reasons: requirement of major customer(s), desire not to be locked out of future tendering processes or markets, realization that it is progressively becoming a requirement of doing business, marketing and public relations tool.
- Developmental reasons: desire to improve the company's internal processes, desire to enhance the overall competitive performance of the company.
- Mixed reasons: constitutes the combination of developmental and non-developmental reasons.

Independent sample t-test (Table 5) was carried out upon these three pairs: mixed and non-developmental, mixed and developmental, developmental and non-developmental. The result for pair mixed and non-developmental was omitted here as none of the items for external and internal benefits exhibited statistical differences.

For pair developmental and non-developmental, statistical differences ($p<0.1$) are found for four items in internal benefits, namely:

TABLE 5
Independent sample t-test result

	Develop and mixed			Develop & Non-develop		
	T	SIG.	diff	T	SIG.	diff
External Benefit						
Improve customer satisfaction	0.875	0.383	0.10	1.095	0.275	0.11
Increased market share	0.662	0.509	0.11	0.060	0.952	0.01
Higher perceived quality	0.925	0.356	0.12	0.313	0.754	0.04
Glory for the company	0.151	0.880	0.03	-0.560	0.576	-0.08
Competitive edge	-0.526	0.599	-0.07	0.590	0.556	0.07
Quicker time to market	0.834	0.406	0.14	0.903	0.368	0.14
Reduced quality audits	-0.246	0.806	-0.04	0.058	0.953	0.01
Internal Benefit						
Reduced scrap	0.621	0.536	0.10	1.744	0.083	0.24
Enhance inter-company communication	0.339	0.735	0.04	1.492	0.137	0.17
Improve departmental cooperation	0.342	0.733	0.04	2.016	0.045	0.24
Better documentation	-0.447	0.655	-0.05	1.145	0.253	0.11
Improved measurement system	0.125	0.901	0.02	0.542	0.588	0.06
Positive cultural change	-0.125	0.901	-0.02	0.561	0.575	0.07
Greater quality awareness	2.986	0.003	0.33	2.370	0.019	0.23
Increase prevention action	0.321	0.749	0.04	1.824	0.070	0.22

reductions in scrap, improve departmental co-operation, greater quality awareness, and increase prevention action. For pair developed and mixed, statistical difference is evidenced only for greater quality awareness. In contrast to Jones *et al.* (1997) findings, mixed and non-developmental pair did not exhibit any form of significant difference for all items under internal and external benefit. In addition, findings of statistical difference in pair developmental and mixed also contradicted with Jones *et al.* (1997) study where the opposite has occurred. However, the divergence of findings is considered mild as only one item (greater quality awareness) showed statistical difference.

The plausible explanation for no statistical difference for external benefit for all three pairs might rest on the factors themselves. As external benefits are exogenous variables for ISO certificate organizations, the endogenous variable of seeking certification should not cast any significant influence upon perceived external benefits. In other words, the external benefits perceived are more of reflection upon current business development and international community perception of ISO. Hence, no significant differences should be expected, and this is what happened here, in respect of reason in seeking ISO certification.

The same argument is implied for internal benefits. Motives of applying ISO certification exert salient impact upon perceived internal benefit. This is shown through statistical differences in internal benefit for pair developed and non-developmental, and a slight extent for pair developmental and mixed. For organizations that explored further into the realm of quality with the purpose of internal improvement, it was mostly initiated by top management. The case of operation or supporting level employees urging top management to pursue quality improvement is very rare in reality, hence it would not be assumed here. With strong drive from top management, an organization's quality awareness improved consequently. Proactive implementation of ISO exercise usually required interdepartmental involvement and collaboration. As a result, an organization with a more serious attitude toward ISO exercise naturally demonstrates higher perceived benefit of interdepartmental co-operation.

Organizations concerned with internal efficiency normally keep an eye open on defect rates of products during the production process. ISO exercise generally produces adequate quality record and product performance data, which may be of use in fixing line errors and formulation of preventive actions. Lee *et al.* (1999) have contended that ISO registered organizations exhibited better performance in employing quality records, which enable these firms to pinpoint the exact training needed to avoid repetition of errors. From here, the argument is clear. Statistical differences for reduced scrap and increase preventive action have buttressed forwarded claims.

Absence of significant differences for both improved measurement system and better documentation in three different pairs might be due to weight allocated upon these two elements by ISO certificate. Notable weight is placed upon auditing through document for ISO implementation when certifying the ISO applicant. Hence, regardless of what motivates the applicant of ISO, adequate attention and resources are directed toward establishment of proper measurement and documentation systems. As for inter-company communication, this is not strongly emphasized by ISO. This explains the insignificant difference for this particular item. Finally, positive cultural changes seemed likely soon as the shift of organization culture is apparent and identifiable.

To sum up, developmental companies perceived higher degree of beneficial outcomes as compared to non-developmental companies. As for mixed companies, its intention of seeking ISO certification may have caused the insignificant differences for all items.

CONCLUSION

The present paper has found that these three internal benefits were expected from ISO certification: (1) Better Documentation (2) Greater Quality Awareness, and (3) Improved Measurement System. For external benefits, these items were identified: (1) Improved Customer Satisfaction, (2) Higher Perceived Quality, and (3) Competitive Edge. The identified internal benefits represent the core or thrust of ISO certification, which imply that the samples seek certification to derive the essence of ISO and instill it into their companies. Result for external benefits were in line with existing literatures, in which the recognition of international community upon ISO certification has transformed this certificate into a tool that helps increase customer satisfaction, perceived quality and competitive edge.

Investigation of the relationship between reasons seeking certificate with perceived benefits has arrived with the following results:

- For internal benefits: significant differences are found for pair developmental and non-developmental in: (1) reductions in scrap, (2) improved departmental co-operation, (3) greater quality awareness, and (4) higher prevention action. For pair developmental and mixed, significant difference was only found for greater quality awareness. Finally, for pair mixed and non-developmental, none of the items has significant differences.
- For external benefits: not significant differences were identified for any pair of reasons seeking certification.

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Relationship between the Individual Facets of Job, Job Satisfaction and Organisational Commitment

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Keywords: Job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job performance, facets of job satisfaction

ABSTRAK

Banyak kajian telah mendokumenkan hubungan positif antara kepuasan kerja dan komitmen organisasi. Beberapa kajian, walau bagaimanapun, menfokuskan faset kerja individu yang membentuk kepuasan kerja secara keseluruhan. Corak kajian melibatkan tinjauan ke atas pekerja di pelbagai industri elektrik dan elektronik di Lembah Klang, Malaysia. Respons kesemua sampel 426 operator telah dihantar kepada satu siri Pearson Product Moment Correlation dan analisis regresi berganda untuk menguji hipotesis tersebut. Selepas dihipotesis, hasil keputusan menunjukkan bukti yang menyokong kepuasan faset individu atau dimensi kepuasan kerja (model kepuasan kerja Herzberg) yang semuanya secara positif berkaitan dengan komitmen organisasi. Analisis regresi berganda menyokong hubungan yang dihipotesis antara lima variabel dalam model Herzberg dan komitmen organisasi. Secara keseluruhannya, kedua-dua faktor dalaman (motivasi) dan luaran (ilmu kesihatan) model Herzberg didapati mempunyai perkaitan dan implikasi praktikal untuk menjangka komitmen organisasi.

ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have documented positive relationships between overall job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Some research has, however, focused on the individual facets of job that constitute the overall job satisfaction. The study's design involved a survey of workers in a variety of electrical and electronic industries in the Klang Valley in Malaysia. The responses of a total sample of 426 operators were submitted to a series of Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis in order to test the hypotheses. As hypothesized the results provided evidence to support that satisfaction with the individual facets or dimensions of job satisfaction (Herzberg's Job satisfaction model) were all positively related to organisational commitment. Multiple regression analysis supported the hypothesised relationships between five variables in Herzberg's model and organisational commitment. Overall, both the intrinsic (motivational) factors and the extrinsic (hygiene) factors of Herzberg's model were found to have relevance and practical implications for predicting organisational commitment.

INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades a great deal of time and energy by way of research have been devoted to the analysis of organisational commitment and other work-related behaviours (turnover, absenteeism and employees willingness to help one another). The reason being that developing personnel commitment to an organisation is not only important to achieving the goal of human resources development policy and practice but also the findings of researchers have shown that developing personnel commitment in organisations have positive effects on performance (Bishop and Scott; Matthieu and Zajac 1990; Randell 1990; Crampton and Smith 1976). Organisational commitment is also important because past researchers have suggested that it might have an impact on several other work-related attributes such as productivity (Larson and Fukami 1984; Steers 1977; Crampton and Smith 1976), absenteeism (Larson and Fukami 1984; Koch and Steers 1978), turnover (Price and Mveller 1981) and employees' willingness to help one another (Bishop and Scott 1977). Although past emphases have actually been on turnover and absenteeism, researchers have lately realized that employees' job satisfaction is arguably just as or more important than for example, turnover (Meyer *et al.* 1989). Other studies that have also explored the relationship between organisational commitment and job satisfaction have found that satisfied employees have a tendency to be committed to their organisations. This in turn will lead to loyalty to the organisation and a willingness to work hard to achieve organisational goals such as high productivity (Porter *et al.* 1974). Furthermore, according to Bishop and Scott (1997) low commitment in an organisation leads to absenteeism, turnover and intention to quit.

It is important for organisations to create an environment in which workers are reasonably motivated to perform their tasks effectively and in which they have a reasonable opportunity to fulfill some of their own objectives and goals. This is a prerequisite to what motivation is all about and the related reaction of the workers towards their work situations including their attitude and sense of job satisfaction. It should be noted that when workers join a particular organisation they bring with them their own built-in sets of values and motivations including the desire for security, income, achievement and the like. If the work situation fulfills the desires of the workers it can be expected that the desires and reactions of the workers will be favourable. On the other hand, frustration of such desires will tend to propel workers to exhibit unfavourable attitudes and possibly through a chain reaction of hostility, poor job satisfaction, attendance problems and other undesirable effects.

Workers cannot become committed to their jobs if their basic necessities are not met. In other words, they should first be satisfied with their present situations. The Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivation Theory establishes the difference between two kinds of motivational influences which seem to relate differently to human behaviour and motivation. These factors are categorized as hygiene and motivational factors. The theory is hinged on the fact that employees' satisfaction depends on factors that are intrinsic to the nature of their job. Among these factors are recognition, achievement and personal growth in competence mainly because employees are assumed to be highly motivated to acquire more of them. The theory further states that gratification of the motivational factors increases job satisfaction, but when not gratified, they will lead to some dissatisfaction (Herzberg 1970). On the other hand, dissatisfaction is largely accounted for by factors extrinsic to the nature of the work. These factors are related to the nature of the work environment (pay, good supervision, sound policies and working conditions). When extrinsic rewards categorized under 'hygiene' factors are gratified, only minimum job satisfaction is created and when not gratified, negative attitudes may be created. The absence of rewards, especially pay, results in dissatisfaction, and leads to demotivation.

Focus of the Study

The present study postulates that employees who experience great satisfaction in their jobs would become committed to their organisations. Most past studies seem to have focused only on the direct relationship between organisational commitment and job satisfaction and have side-stepped the effects of different facets of job satisfaction in the relationship. Little was done to sharpen the hypothesis. In reality, overall job satisfaction in all aspects of organisational behaviour cannot equally influence attitudinal outcomes and behaviours such as organisational commitment. In assessing organisational commitment therefore, we believe that it is important to determine employees' satisfaction as being the focus. Different individuals may have different facets of job satisfaction which may motivate them to become committed to their organisation. For example, while some employees may be highly interested in such hygiene factors as pay, friendly co-workers and a good supervisor, others may be interested in the motivational factors that are intrinsic to them, for example, recognition on the job and achievement.

A number of studies on the relationship between the facets of job satisfaction and organisational commitment were encountered in the literature. For example, some studies have shown that satisfaction with supervisor, good supervision and pay may translate into the willingness on the part of the employees to go beyond normal compliance level, become loyal and stay with the organisation and internalise its goals. These strong feelings are clearly linked with high job performance and increase in productivity (Greenberg and Baron 1993; Whyte 1957).

According to Near (1989) and Mowday *et al.* (1979), several work characteristics should be important correlates of organisational commitment. Salancik (1977) argues that one theoretical rationale for the relationship between several job characteristics and organisational commitment is the extent to which they create a sense of 'felt responsibility' in job incumbents, a feeling that gives individuals the power to act. The stronger the feeling of felt responsibility, the stronger the commitment to the organisation in which that responsibility has been developed. Given this context, one would assume that the more satisfaction individuals have in performing their jobs, the stronger would be their commitment to the organisation. The study therefore posits that there is a positive relationship between the operators' level of satisfaction with the individual facets of job satisfaction variables* and their level of organisational commitment.

In connection with the lack of a deeper focus between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and the need to identify the facets of job satisfaction that would influence organisational commitment, this research was designed to explain: a) why the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment is generally weak b) what is the nature of relationship between facets of job satisfaction and organisational commitment? c) which hygiene and motivational variable(s) in the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory are better predictors of organisational commitment? and d) which factor (hygiene or motivational) is a stronger predictor of organisational commitment?

Objectives of the Study

The overall purpose of the research was to study which individual facets of job satisfaction in the Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivational Theory are better predictors of organisational commitment. The specific objectives of the study were: a) to determine the operators' level of organisational commitment and job satisfaction b) to determine the nature of the relationship between the individual facets of hygiene and motivational variables and organisational commitment and c) to determine which variables (hygiene or motivation) can better predict organisational commitment. The study was also aimed at determining whether the Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivational Theory is a useful framework for the study of the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

METHODS

Measures

The measurement of organisational commitment (dependent variable) and the individual facets of job satisfaction (independent variables) was based on instruments that have been used in past studies and have been proven to have high reliability and validity. The measurement of each concept in this study is discussed below.

Organisational Commitment

The criterion variable, organisational commitment, was measured by adapting several instruments used in previous commitment studies by Turiman Suandi (1991) and Rahim Sail (1983). In both studies, the instruments were adapted from Porter *et al.* (1979), Steers (1977) and Porter and Lawler (1975). These instruments included diverse definitions and measures of employee commitment. Specifically for this study, the workers' level of commitment was a measure of the operators' perception of their level of a) strong belief in the acceptance of the goals and values of the industry/ factory they work for, b) willingness and readiness to exert considerable effort to achieve the industry's goals and objectives and c) loyalty and strong desire to stay with the industry or factory.

The Likert scale or the summated rating scale, which has been used in previous studies to measure employees' commitment to their organisations, was used in this study. The decision to use the Likert scale was based on the

* This study used the Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivational Theory variables (Hygiene and motivational) to measure job satisfaction.

effectiveness of the instrument in past commitment studies (Porter *et al.* 1974; Mowday, *et al.* 1979; Bateman and Strasser 1984). Its reliability has been as high or higher than the more complex techniques (Forest 1970). Most studies that have shown organisational commitment to be related to behavioural outcomes have used Porter's measure of commitment (Porter *et al.* 1974) which was based on the psychological approach described in Porter and Smith (1970). The scale also allowed for both attitudinal and cognitive type of statements to be included. In addition, Porter's index has a substantial body of reliability and validity documentation as testified by Mowday *et al.* (1979). The 19 items used in the questionnaire to measure the operators' level of commitment was adopted and modified from the instruments used by Turiman Suandi's (1991) study on commitment of youth leaders and Rahim Sail's (1983) study of clients' commitment to the Federal Land Development Authority's schemes in Malaysia.

In line with the definition of operators' level of commitment to the industries as described above, the scale (see Appendix A) used contained items concerning the three content areas of the definition of commitment mentioned earlier. Some of the questions were stated in a positive form while others were posed in the negative form to reduce response biases.

Job Satisfaction

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), a rating scale for measuring job satisfaction was used in this study. Indviduals completing this scale indicate the extent to which they were satisfied with various aspects of their jobs. There are two forms of the MSQs. The long form has 100 items where each item deals with reinforcer in the work environment. The short form has 20 items measuring intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and general satisfaction (Weiss *et al.* 1967). In this study, parts of the MSQ that are applicable to the Malaysian environment, Seegmiller's (1977) instrument and a modified content of the variables as defined by Herzberg, Mausner and Synderman (1959) were adapted for use. In total, the job satisfaction instrument contained 101 items regarding specific satisfaction facets of the job and also a single item question to measure overall satisfaction. The nomenclature for one of the variables, "company policy and administration" was changed to read "industry policy and administration" in order to make it more relevant and understandable to the respondents.

Procedure

The study was conducted in six industries in the Nilai, Ulu Klang and Bangi Industrial zones in Malaysia. The total operator population in the six industries was 8,850. A total of 426 respondents were randomly selected for this study based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining sample size. A quantitative research design was adopted for this study and a structured questionnaire was chosen as the research instrument. Before the actual instrument was used, a reliability test was carried out to determine the reliability of the research instrument used. The results of the pre-test provided an acceptable level of reliable statistics ranging from 0.67 to 0.91 for all the variables. Data were collected using questionnaires in the selected industries by the researcher himself with the aid of three research assistants, the personnel of the human resources departments in the selected industries and the line supervisors. Data were collected from the respondents on demographic characteristics, job attitudes and organisational commitment. The data were summarized and analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. Multiple regressions were used to determine the predictor variables.

RESULTS

Respondents' Profile

More than three fourths of the respondents (78%) were young and below the age of 30. Their mean age was 26.5 years and 73% of them were females. The ratio of male and female operators was 1 to 2.7. Almost all of them (94%) had upper secondary school level of education while three percent had university education. The average number of years of formal education was 10.3 years (see Table 1).

It is also evident from Table 1 that only 28% of the respondents had worked for more than 5 years. Slightly more than two-thirds (72%) of them had tenure ranging from one to five years with the industries.

The data in Table 2 show that all the eight variables under the hygiene factor and the six

TABLE 1
Descriptive statistics on respondents' background profile

Characteristic		Freq.	%
Age (Years)			
Less than 20		60	4.1
21 – 30		272	63.8
31 – 40		81	19.0
Above 40		13	3.1
TOTAL		426	100.0
Mean = 26.5	S.D. = 5.9	Min. = 17.0	Max. = 47
Gender			
Female		311	73.0
Male		115	27.0
TOTAL		426	100.0
Education (No. of Years)			
0 – 6		11	2.0
7 – 9		129	30.3
10 – 11		240	56.3
12 – 14		33	7.7
Above 14		13	3.1
TOTAL		426	100.0
Mean = 10.28	S.D. = 2.83	Min. = 6.0	Max. = 17.0
Tenure (No. of Years)			
1 – 5		307	72.1
5.1 – 10		53	12.4
10.1 – 15		41	9.6
15.1 – 20		25	5.9
TOTAL		426	100.0
Mean = 5.1	S.D. = 4.7	Min. = 1.0	Max. = 20.0

variables under the motivation factor were positively related to organisational commitment. The overall hygiene and motivation factors had a moderate r-value of 0.46 and 0.48 respectively while job satisfaction (combination of hygiene and motivation factors) had an r value of 0.5.

The hypothesised relationships involving each facet of both the hygiene and motivation factors were positive and significant (ranging from a low of $r = .23$ to $r = .47$) at the 0.05 level, indicating that job satisfaction (hygiene and motivation factors) would tend to lead to organisational commitment. It can also be discerned from Table 2 that the strength and direction of the job satisfaction variables (the hygiene and motivational factors) among industry operators and their level of commitment to the industries were almost similar (r-values of 0.46 and 0.48 respectively) thus implying that both factors are equally important in influencing organisational commitment.

The findings of this study supported the hypothesis that the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment was significantly related ($r = 0.50$, $p = 0.00$). This finding is important because it reinforces the results of similar studies on job satisfaction and organisational commitment as reported by Turiman (1991), Shore and Martin (1989) and Welsh and La Van (1981).

Job Satisfaction Facets as Predictors of Organisational Commitment

In order to determine which of the variables in the Herzberg's Model were better predictors of organisational commitment, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was computed. Out of a total of 14 independent variables in the Herzberg Two-Factor Model, five were significant in the regression equation at SIG-F level of 0.05. These variables were "advancement", "achievement", "interpersonal relationship with supervisor",

TABLE 2
Correlation coefficient between job satisfaction variables and operators organisational commitment (n=426)

Variables	r-value
Hygiene Factors	
Status	0.32
Inter-personal relationship with supervisor	0.35
Inter-personal relationship with peer group	0.23
Quality of supervision	0.36
Industry policy and administration	0.39
Job security	0.32
Working conditions	0.32
Pay/salary	0.27
Overall Hygiene Factors	.46
Motivation Factors	
Work itself	0.29
Achievement	0.47
Possibility for growth	0.26
Responsibility	0.33
Advancement	0.47
Recognition for achievement	0.35
Overall Motivator Factor	0.48
Job Satisfaction	0.50

* Significant at $p < .05$ (One tail test)

industry policy and administration" and "work itself". These five variables in the Herzberg's model were found to be sufficiently good predictors of organisational commitment. Table 3 indicates the strength of the relationship between the five independent variables and organisational commitment (R-value = 0.52) and together they accounted for 27% of the variance explained in the degrees of organisational commitment.

It is interesting to note that two of the variables 'Industry Policy and Administration" and "Relationship with Supervisor" that were significant in the regression equation were from the hygiene factor while the other three, "Advancement", "Achievement" and "Work Itself", were from the motivational factor. The finding is contrary to popular belief that hygiene factors are only important at the extrinsic level in the motivational process. These findings show that they are important at the extrinsic as well as the intrinsic levels in developing organisational commitment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings presented in Tables 2 and 3 supported the hypothesis that job satisfaction would have positive effects on operators' organisational commitment. From the findings, it can be concluded that two hygiene factors (relationship with supervisor and industry policy and administration) and three motivator factors (advancement, achievement and work itself) are good predictors of organisational commitment. The implication arising out of this is that some hygiene factors may act as motivators besides providing the necessary condition to motivate employees at work. They serve as hygiene as well as motivator factors. Given the present situation in the industries, it is strongly recommended that managers should concentrate on increasing the commitment of the workers as well as their job satisfaction to higher levels because fostering high levels of commitment among the workers can lead to low levels of absenteeism, less grievance and alienation, low turnover and high levels of willingness to share and make sacrifices on behalf of the industries. Some of the strategies

TABLE 3
Regression analysis of the effect of job satisfaction variables and operators organisational commitment

		Multiple		R^2
Job Satisfaction Variables	Beta	R	R^2	Incremental
Advancement	0.15	0.42	0.17	-
Achievement	0.20	0.47	0.22	0.05
Industry Policy & Administration	0.18	0.50	0.25	0.03
Relationship with Supervisor	0.11	0.51	0.26	0.01
Work Itself	0.09	0.52	0.27	0.01

R = 0.52 R squared adjusted = 0.27
F = 31.1 F – Sig. = 0.00

to be adopted by managers should include understanding the dynamics of employees' apathy and disillusionment in the industries through policy pulse-testing surveys and good relationships. In addition, managers of industries should provide conducive work environments for workers, especially having cordial relationships with supervisors and to institute industry policy and administration that is worker friendly which emphasizes workers' welfare as its top priority. Open dialogues and discussions on a regular basis, should be carried out to build up team spirit and organisational commitment.

Employees need to be given adequate responsibility, trust and autonomy to carry out their tasks. This would create a sense of achievement and more importantly, a sense of belonging to the organisation. To achieve this, employees must be trained regularly so as to improve their knowledge and skills and hence their productivity. In line with this and a close monitoring procedure, capable employees should be given the opportunity to shoulder more responsibility to advance in their career. Advancement opportunities have been proven to motivate employees and be good predictors of organisation commitment.

Job rotation as well as varying the tasks should be implemented wherever possible so as to minimize boredom among employees. Boredom can lead to a number of job-related attitude problems such as absenteeism and turnover. Job rotation allows the development of new experience and new approach of doing things while varying the tasks would allow, whenever possible, an employee to complete a whole task and be able to see a complete product of his/her effort.

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APPENDIX A

Section D - Commitment

Listed below are a series of statements that represent the possible feelings that individuals might have about their involvement or working with an organisation. With respect to your own feelings about working with this industy/factory, please indicate your reaction to the following statements by circling the number most closely associated with your feelings according to one of the following alternatives.

scale: 1 strongly disagree
2 disagree
3 neutral
4 agree
5 strongly agree

1. I would accept any kind of job assignment in order to keep myself involved in the industry/ factory activities.

   1 2 3 4 5

2. There is not much to be gained by involving myself in this industry/factory activities. (R)

   5 4 3 2 1

3. I am willing to put in extra effort, more than my usual share, to ensure the success of this industry/factory.

   1 2 3 4 5

4. I would definitely like to see this industry/factory improve far more than it is at the moment.

   1 2 3 4 5

5. This industry/factory's goal to improve workers' quality of life will not be achieved. (R)

   5 4 3 2 1

6. No matter what happens I will remain a member of this industry/factory.

   1 2 3 4 5

7. I am happy I chose to become a member of this industry/factory.

   1 2 3 4 5

8. Deciding to be a member of this industry/factory was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

   5 4 3 2 1

9. I am happy to tell others that I work for this industry/factory.

   1 2 3 4 5

10. Life in industry/factory has taught me the values of sharing responsibility with my fellow workers.

    1 2 3 4 5

11. I feel that my values and the values of this industry/factory are very similar.

    1 2 3 4 5

12. This industry/factory gives workers more responsibility in carrying out the daily duties.

    1 2 3 4 5

13. My commitment to the industry/factory has increased greatly in the last six months to one year.

    1 2 3 4 5

14. This industry work really inpires the best of me in the way of achieving high performance.

    1 2 3 4 5

15. Even when I am sick, I always manage to come to work everyday.

    1 2 3 4 5

16. I always do my best not to come to work late.

    1 2 3 4 5

17. I am willing to be in the industry/factory's management team to manage the organisation in the future.

    1 2 3 4 5

18. Often, I disagree with all the policies of the industry/factory on important matters relating to the work. (R)

    5 4 3 2 1

19. I am committed to this industry/factory because it is an indigenous industry/factory and I would like to stay and wotk for it.

    1 2 3 4 5

Please Indicate Your Employment No(h). ____________

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND PATIENCE IN FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

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Interplay of ESL Students' Goal Orientations, Self-Beliefs, and Attitudinal Factors in Academic Help-Seeking Behaviors

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Keywords: Academic help-seeking, goal orientations, social competence, cognitive competence

ABSTRAK

Makalah ini meneliti faktor-faktor berkaitan dengan perilaku mendapatkan bantuan akademik daripada perspektif motivasi kognitif. Secara ringkas, kajian ini meneliti faktor motivasi dan sikap yang membantu memerihalkan perilaku mendapatkan bantuan akademik di kalangan 453 pelajar univerisiti yang sedang mengikuti kursus *English Business Report Writing.* Secara spesifik, kajian ini mengkaji hubung kait antara persepsi keupayaan sosial dan kognitif, orientasi bermatlamat *(goal orientation)* dan sikap terhadap perilaku mendapatkan bantuan akademik. Dapatan mencadangkan bahawa pelajar yang mengamalkan matlamat yang berfokuskan tugasan *(task-focused goal)* dalam pembelajaran lebih cenderung memperluas pencapaian dan pemahaman mengenai kursus, dan juga memohon bantuan apabila diperlukan. Memandangkan pelajar yang berorientasikan *task-focused goal* lebih mengambil berat untuk menguasai pelajaran, daripada dinilai keupayaan mereka oleh orang lain, mereka merasakan yang guru dan rakan sebagai kurang mengancam. Hubung kait yang negatif antara perilaku tidak mendapatkan bantuan, persepsi keupayaan kognitif dan *task goal orientation* menyarankan bahawa pelajar yang melihat diri mereka sebagai kurang keupayaan kognitif, dan mereka yang melaporkan kurang *task-focused goal* lebih cenderung mengelak bertanyakan soalan apabila berhadapan dengan kesukaran. Ancaman daripada rakan sebaya dan guru merupakan penentu yang lebih signifikan untuk perilaku mengelak daripada mendapatkan bantuan akademik. Dapatan ini dibincangkan dalam konteks amalan bilik darjah.

ABSTRACT

This paper examined correlates of academic help-seeking behavior from a cognitive-motivational perspective. Briefly, the study examined motivational and attitudinal factors that help explain reported help-seeking behavior among 453 Malaysian undergraduates enrolled in an English Business Report Writing course at a university in Malaysia. The study investigated the relationships between perceptions of cognitive and social competence, goal orientations, and attitudes toward help seeking. Findings suggested that students who adopted a task-focused goal in learning sought to extend their mastery and understanding of the course, and would also seek more help whenever needed. Since task-focused students were more concerned about subject mastery, rather than being judged able by others, they would view teachers and peers as less threatening. The negative relationship between avoidance help-seeking, perceived cognitive competence and task goal orientation suggested that students who viewed themselves as less cognitively able and those who reported low task-focused goals were more inclined to avoid help-seeking in the face of difficulties. Threats from peers and teachers were more significant determinants of avoidance help-seeking behavior. These findings were discussed in relation to classroom practice.

INTRODUCTION

There is a considerable agreement among teachers that many students do not like to ask questions or seek help in order to make progress in their learning. Although attempts have been made by many researchers in the field to throw light on the problem, the fact continues to be an enigma to teachers and schools. Research on strategic help seeking has matured significantly in recent years. Important distinctions have been made between forms of help seeking. Of these, asking questions is the most frequent manifestation of help seeking.

Adaptive help-seeking involves "...strategic posing of direct, verbal questions for the purpose of obtaining information required for the successful completion of school tasks..." (Newman and Schwager 1992:125). Briefly, adaptive help-seekers have the goal of obtaining information for the sake of learning and mastery of a task. Research to date has repeatedly indicated that seeking assistance from knowledgeable others, such as classmates or teachers, is one of the self-regulatory strategies that can enhance learning (Karabenick and Sharma 1994; Newman 1994). However, students generally view help seeking as a manifestation of incompetence, dependency, and immaturity. In the Malaysian classroom for instance, a majority of students remain passive learners. Very few would actually seek out explanations of misunderstood problems, clarifications of ambiguous problems, or confirmations of answers of which they are still in doubt. Similar phenomenon is observed at the tertiary level where a good number of undergraduates who seek academic assistance are, in fact, those who need help the least.

From a developmental perspective, these undergraduates have reached the adolescent cognitive capacity. They are supposed to be equipped with a wider repertoire of cognitive and metacognitive skills compared to children (Keating 1990), and they are better able to monitor their progress to determine their need for help in academic contexts (Newman 1991, 1994). Despite these presumptions, research in the West has shown that many adolescents do not actively seek academic help when needed (Ryan and Pintrich 1997; Ryan, Gheen and Midgley 1998). It is predicted that this avoidance of help-seeking behavior would be more pronounced in the Malaysian classroom, especially in the English as a second language class. It is rather oblivious to say that Malaysian undergraduates do not seek out help at all, but it is widely known among educators and also supported by empirical data that those who seek help are generally among the more academically inclined students (Karabenick and Knapp 1991; Alderman 1999).

Why do few students seek help while a majority of below average students avoid help-seeking despite their metacognitive capacity? This question reminds us of students who have the 'skill' but without 'will' as being posited by the social cognitive theorists (Pintrich and Schunk 1996). To understand this classroom behavior, we need to recognize the simultaneous effects of cognitive-affective motivational factors that might influence students' behavior. Factors such as students' perceptions of competence, academic and classroom goal orientations, and attitudes toward help-seeking have been proposed to yield significant explanatory power for help-seeking behaviors (Newman 1994, 1998; Newman and Schwager 1992). The scarcity of research in academic help-seeking behavior in Malaysia, albeit numerous grouses by teachers and educators, prompts the researcher to investigate correlates of academic help-seeking behavior, and to examine help-seeking in relation to academic achievement. The present study also extended Ryan and Pintrich's (1997) study on adolescents' help-seeking in math class to another subject domain, i.e. the English class.

It is hoped that findings of this study help us understand the interplay between both factors within the students and classroom environment, which might explain students' help-seeking behavior. Then, we can suggest ways to help teachers encourage students to take a more active role in their own learning by seeking help whenever needed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relationship between Help-Seeking and Goal Orientations

The theoretical framework of the study was guided by Newman and Schwager's (1992) cognitive-motivational approach. The theory proposed that students' perceptions about themselves (thoughts, views, attitudes and beliefs) and the world are instrumental in defining their 'reality' and in guiding their actions. For instance, perceptions about the self and the classroom play a significant role in explaining adaptive help-seeking or avoidance behavior. Researchers have often discussed motivational orientations in terms of goals. These goals, which concern the purpose and meaning each students ascribes to achievement behavior, affect motivation, achievement, and self-regulation (Bandura 1997; Pintrich and Schunk 1996; Schunk 1991). Since help-seeking is seen as one important component of self-regulation, it is hypothesized that goals have significant bearing on students help-seeking behavior. Recent findings were consistent with previous findings, where significant relationships between students' motivational orientations or achievement goals and their help-seeking behavior were observed (Ryan and Pintrich 1997; Ryan, Gheen and Midgley 1998).

Though goals are generally discussed in terms of 'learning' versus 'performance' (Dweck 1986), various labels have been used to distinguish these goals. This study used the terms 'task-focused goals' versus 'performance-oriented goals.' Albeit differences somewhat in their operational definition, task-focused goals are similar to learning, mastery, and process goals; performance-oriented goals are analogous to outcome, ego-ability, and product goals (Ames 1992; Dweck and Leggett 1988; Jagacinski 1992; Meece 1991; Pintrich and Schrauben 1992; Urdan and Maehr 1995; Schunk and Ertmer 1999). Findings from the above studies and many more cited in Pintrich and Schunk (1996) indicated that students with task-focused goals are more concerned with developing their competence, and seek to extend their mastery and understanding. On the other hand, students who adopt performance goals are more concerned with demonstrating their competence or gaining favorable judgments of their abilities in relation to others. In this study, performance goals were conceptualized in terms of 'approach' and 'avoidance' components as evidenced in recent studies (Elliot and Harackiewicz 1997; Middleton and Midgley 1997).

Previous studies have shown that task-focused oriented students are more likely than the performance-oriented students to seek information or ask for confirmation of previous work (Butler and Newman 1995; Newman and Schwager 1995). These adaptive help-seeking behaviors presumably help students resolve difficulties during an impasse, and thus, move toward task mastery. Additionally, classroom context that fosters a similar goal orientation with students' own goals would reinforce this behavior, leading researchers to conclude that classroom contextual goals can moderate students' achievement goals.

Research on students' achievement goals has flourished in the last few years. Newman (1998), for instance, examined goals from three different perspectives: learning, performance, and social. Middleton and Midgley (1997) recently suggested that researchers should also examine performance goals from two different perspectives: performance-approach (demonstrating ability), and performance-avoidance (avoiding demonstrating lack of ability). This suggestion seems congruent with earlier motivational research in education where some students were motivated to attain success but some were motivated to avoid failure (Pintrich and Schunk 1996). Hence, this study will examine performance goals from approach-avoidance continuuum, that is performance-approach goal and performance-avoidance goal. It is hypothesized that students with performance-avoidance goals tend to avoid the demonstration of incompetence and will, therefore, avoid help-seeking.

Relationship between Help-Seeking and Perceived Competence

In their book chapter on students' perceptions and academic help-seeking, Newman and Schwager (1992) summarized voluminous research that supports the relationship between self-perceived competence and help-seeking behavior. Their summary indicated a consistent pattern of relationship between the various measures of self-perceived competence (such as self-concept of ability, perceived academic competence, or beliefs of agency or capacity) and task engagement and help-seeking behavior. In the classroom context, when asked why they do not seek help earlier, very often students reply "I don't know exactly what I don't know, and therefore I don't know what to ask". This common statement reflects students' perceived cognitive competence of the subject domain. From the researcher's observation, cognitive competence is deemed important in understanding patterns of help-seeking in English class as it may act as a filter in adaptive help-seeking. Students who perceived themselves as academically competent were more likely to view help-seeking as an instrumental strategy for classroom learning; thus, they tend to display high levels of task engagement and have high achievement (Ryan and Pintrich 1997).

Newman's (1990) study with grades 3, 5, and 7 school children indicated that when children feel competent, they were not afraid of looking dumb by seeking out help. The study also observed a stronger relationship at grade 7. This finding is not surprising because as individuals grow older they tend to have a more accurate conception of their own ability (Dweck and Leggett 1988). From this developmental perspective, the relationship between self-perceived competence and students' decisions, whether or not to seek help when needed, may be more pronounced during adolescence. As these decisions are also closely linked to potential costs such as social embarrassment, those who have positive self-percepts would be more willing to seek help.

Recent evidence (Ryan and Pintrich 1997) added more support to the importance of both perceived cognitive competencece and social competence in help-seeking research. Research to date has indicated how social motivational factors in classroom contexts, such as individuals' social goals and social competence, were positively related to various academic outcomes, including self-regulatory strategies, adaptive help-seeking and academic achievement (Ryan and Pintrich 1997; Wentzel 1991). Since help-seeking requires both social engagement and cognitive competence, it is hypothesized that high perceptions of these two aspects should be positively related to adaptive help-seeking behavior, and negatively related to avoidance of help-seeking.

Relationship between Help-Seeking and Attitudes Toward Help-Seeking

Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) seminal work explained how attitudes influenced behavioral intentions and, in turn, actual behavior. This theoretical framework was repeatedly adopted by several researchers to understand help-seeking behaviors (Karabenick and Knapp 1991; Newman 1990, 1994; Ryan and Pintrich 1997). These researchers proposed that attitudes mediate the relationships between students' perceptions of social and cognitive competence, and goal orientations, and reported help-seeking behavior in the classroom.

Following Ryan and Pintrich's (1997) study, the present study examined attitude variables from a threat to self-worth perspective. As threat may derive from both teachers and peers, the two scales from Ryan and Pintrich's study, that is, threat from teachers and threat from peers, were adapted for this study. When help-seeking is construed as low ability or incompetence, individuals tend to exacerbate negative judgment from others. These negative attitudes will mediate between students' goal orientations and patterns of help-seeking. Since threat to self-worth is more salient when students approach learning with performance-oriented goals (Newman and Schwager 1992), it is hypothesized that both performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals would be positively related to perceived threat from peers and teachers, and positively related to avoidance of help-seeking. On the contrary, students with task-focused goals conceive success as mastering something new through continued effort (Pintrich and Schunk 1996). Thus, it is hypothesized that task-focused goals would be negatively related to perceived threat from peers and teachers, and positively related to adaptive help-seeking.

Purpose of Study

This present study investigated motivational and attitudinal factors that help explain reported help-seeking behavior among Malaysian undergraduates at a university in Northern Malaysia. Particularly, the study focused on perceptions of cognitive and social competence, goal orientations, and attitudes toward help-seeking (from threat to self-worth perspective). The following research questions guided this study:

1. How are students' perceptions of competence, goal orientations, and attitude toward help-seeking related to their endorsement of adaptive help-seeking behavior?
2. How are students' perceptions of competence, goal orientations, and attitude toward help-seeking related to students' reported avoidance of help-seeking behavior?

METHOD

Participants and Procedures

Participants were 453 undergraduates enrolled in an English Bussiness Report Writing course at a university in Northern Malaysia. The participants were 165 (36.4%) males and 288 (63.6%) females of whom 313 (69.1%) were Malays, 113 (24.5%) Chinese, and 27 (5.9%) Indians and other ethnic groups. The mean age was 21.86 years old (SD=1.64) with the median age at 22. Questionnaires were distributed via their respective English instructors during regular class periods. These English instructors were briefed on the procedures for data collection. To ensure participants' cooperation, they were briefed about the intent of study and the confidentiality of their responses. The items from the different scales were intermixed in the questionnaire in order to avoid response set. The questionnaire took about 20 minutes to administer.

Instruments and Variables in the Study

The questionnaires consisted of two parts: instrument and demographic. The scales for the instrument were adapted from Ryan and Pintrich's (1997) study and the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey -PALS (Midgley *et al.* 1997). With the authors' permission, these scales were adapted and translated into Bahasa Malaysia using back-translation method (Brislin 1970, 1980). The format for all scales used a six point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree). Descriptions of each scale follow:

1. Perceived Competence Scale. The questionnaire comprised two sub-scales: Perceived Cognitive Competence, and Perceived Social Competence (Ryan and Pintrich 1997). The *Cognitive Competence Scale* was adapted to measure students' perceptions of cognitive competence in English. A sample item is: "I can finish my English work quickly." *Perceived Social Competence* measures students' perception of their ability to socialize with others. A sample item is: "I think that most students like me."
2. Achievement Goal Orientations. The questionnaire comprised three sub-scales adapted from the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey - PALS (Midgley *et al.* 1997): Task Goal Orientations, Performance-approach Goal Orientations, and Performance-avoid Goal Orientations. All items were adapted to make them specific to English. *Task goal orientation* students are more concerned with developing their competence, and seek to extend their mastery and understanding. A sample item is: "I like English work that I'll learn from, even if I make a lot of mistakes." *Performance-approach goal orientations* students are "...positively motivated to outperform others and to demonstrate their competence and superiority..." (Pintrich 2000: 476). A sample item is: "I would feel successful if I did better than most of the other students in my class." *Performance-avoid Goal Orientations* students are negatively "...motivated to try to avoid failure and to avoid looking dumb, stupid, or incompetent..." (Pintrich 2000: 476). A sample item is: "The reason I do my work is so others won't think I'm dumb."
3. Attitudes Toward Help Seeking. The questionnaire comprised two sub-scales adapted from Ryan and Pintrich's (1997) study: Threat from Peers, and Threat from Teachers. A sample item from *Threat from Peers* is: "I think other students might think that I am dumb when I ask questions in English class." A sample item from *Threat from Teacher* is: "I feel the teacher will get annoyed with me when I ask a question in English class."
4. Help-seeking Behaviors. The questionnaire consisted of two scales adapted from Ryan and Pintrich's (1997) study: Avoidance Help Seeking, and Adaptive Help-Seeking. A sample item from *Avoidance Help Seeking* is: "If I need help to do a problem in English, I skip it." A sample item from *Adaptive Help Seeking* is: "If I have trouble doing an English problem, I ask someone to give me examples of similar problems we have done."

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows mean, standard deviation, and the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency reliability of each scale. All scales reached acceptable reliability levels to enable further analyses. The item means suggested that these undergraduates have high task-focused goal orientation (M= 4.36) compared to performance-approach (M= 3.53) or performance-avoidance (M= 3.44) goal orientations for the Bussiness Report Writing Course. They also felt more threat from peers (M= 3.00) than teachers (M= 2.51) about asking questions in class. Cognitive competence (M= 3.35) was rated lower than social competence (M= 4.27) among these participants. Finally, these undergraduates seem to have a more adaptive help-seeking behaviours (M= 4.42) than avoidance help-seeking (M= 2.82).

The nature of the course that requires group collaboration and several draft writings may

TABLE 1
Summary statistics for each scale and achievement

Scale	#of items*	Item M	Item SD	α
Task Focused	5	4.36	.67	.74
Performance-Approach	6	3.54	.85	.78
Performance-Avoid	5	3.44	.82	.72
Peer Threat	7	3.00	.70	.74
Teacher Threat	5	2.51	.65	.65
Cognitive Competence	6	3.35	.72	.75
Social Competence	5	4.27	.65	.75
Avoidance Help-seeking	4	2.82	.69	.60
Adaptive Help-seeking	4	4.42	.63	.62
Course grades		43.73	8.29	

*items may be less than the original scales following item deletion during reliability analysis.

explain this positive help-seeking behaviour. Unlike other English courses offered by the university, the report writing course has no final examination. The course grades are derived mainly from a written and oral report (70%), a project based on an individual case-study. To complete the individual project, a student has to go through several consultations and discussions with the instructor right after a topic is selected (and brainstormed with group members) through to writing the final draft of the report. In order to complete the report writing project, students have to do their own independent study which put them through a series of tasks such as gathering information, making analyses, weighing evidence, solving problems, making decisions which require them to seek help from significant others. Such case-based learning tends to involve skills that are generally considered processes of self-regulated learning (Paris and Newman 1990).

Table 2 displays intercorrelations among the variables in the study. The directions of the correlations were consistent with current help-seeking behavior research. For instance, students with high task-focused goals would also feel less peer threat ($r= -.21$, $p<.05$) compared to their counterparts. Task-focused goals were also positively associated with performance approach goals ($r= .27$, $p<.05$), perceived cognitive competence ($r= .49$, $p<.05$), and perceived social competence ($r= .24$, $p<.05$). However, perceived cognitive competence was inversely related to performance-avoidance behavior ($r= -.21$, $p<.05$), peer threat ($r= -.36$, $p<.05$), and teacher threat ($r= -.14$, $p<.05$), which suggested that students who felt less competent in the subject were also those who reported high performance-avoidance goal orientation, and those who perceived teachers and peers as more threatening during the learning process. Performance-avoidance

TABLE 2
Zero order correlation between variables and achievement

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1. Task Focused	1.00								
2. Perform-Approach	.27**	1.00							
3. Perform-Avoid	.07	.57**	1.00						
4. Peer Threat	-.21**	.22**	.49**	1.00					
5. Teacher Threat	-.01	.42**	.50**	.52**	1.00				
6. Cognitive Comp.	.49**	.13**	-.21**	-.36**	-.14**	1.00			
7. Social Competence	.24**	.12*	.03	-.19**	-.09*	.20**	1.00		
8. Avoid Help-seek	-.29**	.13**	.24**	.49**	.39**	-.37**	-.20**	1.00	
9. Adapt Help-seek	.59**	-.15**	-.02	-.32**	-.16**	.39**	.23**	-.38**	1.00
10. Course scores	.08	-.09	-.28**	-.13**	-.12*	.25**	-.09	-.10*	.09

*p<.05; **p<.001

students were likely to focus more on the self and try to avoid the demonstration of incompetence, which may explain their avoidance behavior. The direction and the strength of the relationships were similar to previous research in help-seeking behavior (Ryan and Pintrich 1997; Ryan, Gheen and Midgley 1998).

Three separate regression analyses were run to determine predictors of achievement and adaptive-avoidance help-seeking behaviours. A stepwise regression analysis indicated three significant predictors of achievement: performance avoid (β= -.23; p<.05), perceived cognitive competence (β= .23; p<.05), and perceived social competence (β= -.14; p<.05). These three factors accounted for only 13.7% ($F(3, 377)=19.74$; $p<.05$) of the variance accounted for in achievement. This low variance explained suggests that there are other significant predictors of ESL achievement that are not being investigated in this study. However, these findings suggested that students who were so concerned about being evaluated by others would avoid help seeking, thus, resulting in lower academic performance as reflected in their course grades. Consistent with other studies, higher perception of cognitive competence also resulted in higher performance. However, the negative relationship between perceived social competence and performance, albeit marginal (β= -.14; p<.05) does not support previous studies. This finding suggests that even those who perceived themselves as socially competent did not perform well in the course.

The second regression analysis indicated that all the seven motivation and attitudinal factors accounted for a total of 40% ($F(7, 445)=42.92$; $p<.05$) of the variance in adaptive help-seeking behaviour. However, only three factors, task-goal orientation, peer threat, and teacher threat, were significant predictors with betas of .49 (p< .05), -.17 (p< .05), and -.11 (p<.05) respectively. Findings suggested that students who adopt task-focused goals in learning Business Report Writing seek to extend their mastery and understanding of the course, and thus, would seek more help whenever needed. Since task-focused students were more concerned about subject mastery, rather than being judged able by others, they tend to view teachers and peers as less threatening.

A third regression analysis indicated that all the seven motivation and attitudinal factors accounted for a total of 32% ($F(7,446)=31.32$; $p<.05$) of the variance in avoidance help-seeking behaviour. Four strongest predictors, peer threat, teacher threat, perceived cognitive competence, and task goal orientation were significant (p<.05), with betas .29, .21, -.19, and -.14 respectively. Another predictor, performance-approach goal orientation was only marginally significant (β= .10; p<.05). The negative relationship between avoidance help-seeking and perceived cognitive competence (β= -.19; p<.05) and task goal orientation (β= -.14; p<.05) suggested that students who view themselves as less cognitively able and those who reported low task-focused goal tend to avoid help-seeking whenever needed. However, threat from peers (β= .29; p<.05) and teachers (β= .21; p<.05) were more significant determinants of maladaptive help-seeking behaviour. These findings can be explained from goal theory and self-worth perspectives. First, avoidance help-seeking may be greater for students who do not seek mastery learning. Perhaps these students are more concerned about demonstrating or avoiding demonstrating their competence. In this study, avoidance behaviour may be due to their low perception of cognitive competence. Low perception of cognitive competence may engender more threat from peers and teachers as students were trying to protect their self-worth.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The findings of this study suggest that English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor should help inculcate academic intrinsic goal orientation and increase classroom task values in order to encourage students' school engagement, such as increased persistence by seeking help from knowledgeable others when faced with difficulties. In this way, we are also working toward lifelong learning where learning is done by the students voluntarily. Since most undergraduates in this study were majoring in business-related fields, instructors should put more emphasis on the value and importance of business writing in their future life.

On the other hand, focusing too much on extrinsic goals may adversely affect achievement because students may then adopt a performance-avoidance goal. Even though students can have multiple goal orientations concurrently, the intrinsic goal should outweigh the extrinsic. This intrinsic goal can be enhanced if instructors can relate the courses or subjects to students in a meaningful, interesting, and non-threatening way. For instance, an ESL classroom that focuses on understanding and mastery may foster intrinsic goals among students; however, an ESL classroom that focuses on competition among students may perpetuate extrinsic goals. Even though healthy competition is believed to generate positive outcomes, we also need to examine its impact on the less able students as some of these unfortunates will simply drop out of the race (performance-avoiders).

Undergraduates are especially so pre-occupied with the self; thus, those who are weak in English and have low cognitive and social competence, for instance, will avoid help-seeking in order to protect their self-worth. These students are more vulnerable to classroom threats, be it from peers or instructors. Consistent with self-worth theory (Covington 1992), students will adopt avoidance behavior in order to conceal their inability. From a cognitive-motivational perspective, these students are motivated, but for the wrong reason: they are motivated to avoid failure. Future research should therefore examine current ESL classroom goal practices and whether ESL teachers are reinforcing mastery learning in their classroom.

Generally, most findings of this research were consistent with help-seeking literature. However, the findings should be interpreted with caution as this study involves only a group of undergraduates at one university in Malaysia and focuses on one subject domain, i.e., Business Report Writing. Because many motivation theories are domain specific, future studies should be replicated with different groups of undergraduates from various domains in order to come up with a more conclusive statement. We also need to refine the newly translated instrument in order to improve its precision.

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Academic Performance, Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Technical Secondary School Students

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Keywords: Academic achievement, educational aspiration, occupational aspiration

ABSTRAK

Satu kajian telah dijalankan untuk menilai prestasi akademik, aspirasi pendidikan dan aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar daripada sekolah menengah teknik. Sebanyak dua ratus empat puluh tiga pelajar terlibat dalam kajian ini. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pelajar sekolah menengah teknik mempunyai aspirasi pendidikan yang tinggi. Majoriti daripada mereka merancang untuk belajar sehingga sekurang-kurangnya ke peringkat ijazah Bacelor. Kira-kira 76% daripada mereka merancang untuk memasuki kursus teknikal terutamanya dalam bidang kejuruteraan. Secara purata kira-kira 60% pelajar tersebut mempunyai kebolehan akademik am dan 50% mempunyai kebolehan akademik dalam mata pelajaran sains dan matematik. Tiada perkaitan signifikan diperhatikan antara pencapaian akademik dan aspirasi pendidikan serta aspirasi pekerjaan. Majoriti pelajar berkeyakinan dalam mendapatkan tempat untuk menyambung pelajaran, bidang pengajian dan aspirasi pekerjaan mereka. Pelajar secara sederhananya mempunyai pengetahuan tentang bidang pengajian dan aspirasi pekerjaan mereka.

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to assess the academic performance, educational and occupational aspirations of students from technical secondary schools. Two hundred forty-three students were involved in the study. The findings of the study showed that technical secondary school students have high educational aspiration. The majority plan to study for at least a Bachelor degree. About 76% of them plan to enroll in technical courses especially in engineering. About 60% of the students have an average general academic ability and about 50% have an average academic ability in mathematics and sciences. No significant correlations were observed between academic achievement and educational aspirations and occupational aspiration. The majority of the students were confident in obtaining a place for further education, the area of studies and the occupations they aspired for. Students were moderately knowledgeable about the field of studies and the occupations they aspire for.

INTRODUCTION

Proponents of career development believe that the students' educational and occupational aspirations have been identified as the most important variable influencing the students' later educational and occupational attainment (Gottfredson 1981; Marjoribanks 1985) and vocational attainment (Blau and Duncan 1967; Burke and Hoelter 1988; Marini 1978; Otto and Haller 1979; Sewell Haller, and Strauss 1957; Anderson 1980). What is aspiration? Markus and Nurius (1986) described aspiration as an individual's ideas of their possible selves, what they would like to become, what they might become, and what they do not wish to become. Trice and King (1991) believe that aspirations, even if formed at an early developmental stage have been found to be highly stable and significant in the students' final occupational choices and occupational futures.

Super (1969) indicated that adolescents are in the crucial stage of "exploring" and "crystallizing" their occupational options. Yong (1996) considered high school students as being in a transitional stage from adolescence to adulthood. While in the process, they face the task of making both educational and occupational choices after completing high school. Adolescents must decide whether to take a vocational track, a college preparatory track, or other options such as an apprenticeship training program (U.S. Department of Labor 1992). In the Malaysian context, the choice of subjects is made at the Form Four level. Students in the academic secondary schools will choose technical-related subjects or science-related subjects or arts and humanities-related subjects. While students who choose to enroll in technical secondary schools will choose their area of studies such as mechanical or electrical or civil engineering studies, among others. According to Kelly (1988), the decisions made by the students at the secondary school level have a direct and important influence on later occupational choices.

Studies by Conroy (1997) and Empson (1992) have shown that adolescents often have unrealistic occupational aspirations. Many believe that aspiration is an important factor for future attainment. However, high aspiration alone does not guarantee high educational attainment. There are other factors that determine educational attainment. Yong (1996) found that the educational plan of high school students were closely related to their abilities, as reflected by their school grades and self-rating on school abilities and intelligence. Studies also have shown that students' academic achievements are related to their educational aspirations (Powell and Peet 1996). Academic achievement has also been found to influence the minority students' educational aspirations (Velez 1989; Yang 1981).

Research Problem

Choosing an occupation is one of the most difficult tasks a student has to do when he or she finishes school. Whether students like it or not, a tentative choice has to be made while they are still in schools. The tentative occupational choice a student makes will affect the type of subjects or courses he or she will enroll in while in secondary school. Subsequently, it will affect the type of courses he or she will enroll in while at tertiary institutions which will eventually determine his or her occupational option.

Malaysia is an emerging industrialized country. Thus, Malaysia needs many technical people in the process of transformation from a predominantly agricultural country to an industrialized country. Efforts (e.g. establishment of technical universities, advanced technical training institutes, polytechnics) are continually being made by the government to ensure that Malaysia has qualified technical professionals to move the country to the industrialized status. It is estimated that by 2005, Malaysia will need 108,400 engineers, and 247,739 engineering assistants (addition of 52,915 and 117,715 respectively). It is also estimated that enrollment in engineering courses at a first degree level will be 57,684 and at a certificate and diploma level will be 107,395. The statistics show that there is a slight oversupply (+4,669) of engineers but a short supply of engineering assistants (-9,420) by the year 2005. Based on the statistics presented, will our schools be able to fulfill the needs for technical personnel in the future? It all depends on what our students plan to do in the future. Will they pursue courses in the technical fields? Will they enter occupations in the technical fields? Do they have the right academic qualifications to enroll in the technical fields? It is anticipated that most of the students who have chosen to enroll in the technical schools have already made up their minds with regard to the type of education and occupation of their choices. Most, if not all, will choose technical-related occupations. Otherwise, they would not have chosen to enroll in the technical schools. However, is that true for every student who is in the technical secondary schools? What are the educational aspirations of students enrolled in technical secondary schools? Do students in the technical secondary school have good academic abilities for the choices of education and occupation they are embarking on? In view of this, a study was deemed appropriate to determine both educational and career aspirations as well as the academic performances of secondary school students, specifically students from technical secondary schools.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to determine the educational and occupational aspirations of technical secondary school students. Specifically the study was conducted to determine:

1. the academic performance (general academic performance and academic performance in mathematics and science) of Form Five technical secondary school students;

2. the educational aspiration (highest level of education and fields of studies) of Form Five technical secondary school students;
3. the occupational aspiration of Form Five technical secondary school students;
4. the relationship between academic performance and educational aspirations; and
5. the relationship between academic performance and occupational aspirations.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive survey research using a sample of 243 Form Five technical secondary school students. The sample was randomly selected from 6 technical secondary schools in the states of Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, and Johor.

A questionnaire was used to obtain the data which consisted of two parts. Part One of the questionnaire contained questions soliciting demographic information from students (example: location of residence, parental education). Part Two contained questions related to their academic achievement, educational and occupational aspirations. The students' academic achievements were assessed using the results of the final semester examination at Form Four, and also of the selected subjects (Mathematics and Science). Students were requested to provide the grades of each of the subjects taken in all the examinations. The grades provided ranged between 1A and 9G. Each of the grades was assigned a value ranging form 0 and 8 (1A = 8, 2A=7, 3B=6, 4B=5, 5C=4, 6C=3, 7P=2, 8P=1, 9G=0). The school counselors were requested to verify the students' grades. The students' educational aspirations were assessed by asking them the highest level of education they plan to attain if they have the choice and the field of studies they plan to pursue at the tertiary level. The students' occupational aspirations were determined by asking "what type of occupation would you want to enter once you complete your education". Students were also asked about their confidence in achieving the level of education, the field of studies, and the occupations they aspired for. The field of studies and the type of occupations students aspired for were categorized into either technical or non-technical fields.

Data were summarized using means, frequencies, standard deviations, chi-square, and correlation coefficients.

FINDINGS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The respondents comprised 54.6% male and 45.5% female students. About 30% of the respondents were from housing estates, 28.2% were from small towns, 27.4% were from big towns, and 14.7% were from rural areas. They come from families whose parents were educated at various level of education. About 40% of the fathers were educated at the Form Five levels and another 40% were educated to a college or university level. About 44% of the others were educated till Form Five level and about 27% of the mothers were educated to a college or university level.

Academic Performance of Form Five Technical Secondary School Students

The students' academic performance was based on the grades of subjects they made available to the researcher. Their grades were assigned values ranging form 0 to 8 (9G=0, 8P=1, 7P=2, 6C=3, 5C=4, 4B=5, 3B=6, 2A=7, 1A=8). The students' academic performance scores (based on cumulative scores of the grades) ranged between 5.0 and 60 with a mean of 29.56 (SD. = 6.9). Their academic performance was categorized into low performers (score of 5.00 - 22.30), average performers (score of 22.4 - 44.6), and high performers (score of 44.7 - 60.0). About 60% of the respondents can be categorized as average performers, 12.7% of the students can be classified as high performance, and 27.5% of the students can be classified as low performers.

The students' academic performance in Mathematics and Science was also analyzed (Table 1). The study shows that students are doing quite well in Modern Mathematics with a mean score of 4.56 (S. D. = 2.43) that is an average of 4B. However, their academic performance in Additional Mathematics was not good (Mean = 2.48, S. D. = 2.56). Translated into a letter grade, it means the students obtained grades between 6C and 7D. As shown in the table, about 36% of the students failed Additional Mathematics. Their performance in Physics was also not good (Mean=2.95, SD. =2.25). Students obtained about 6C grade in this subject. The students' performance in Chemistry was better than their performance in Physics and Additional Mathematics (Mean=3.40, SD. = 2.29). The students obtained grades between 6C and 5C in this subject. The students' performance in the selected subjects were categorized into 5 categories (failed, below average, average, above average, and excellent). The study shows that 14.2% of the students failed Chemistry, 20.4% failed Physics, 36.4% failed Additional Mathematics, and 7.6% failed Modern Mathematics. The percentage of students who obtained grades between 7P and 8P (below average grades) were 14.4% for Modern Mathematics, 19.7% for Additional Mathematics, 22.4% for Physics, and 21.4% for Chemistry. The percentages of students who obtained average scores in Mathematics were 22.4%, Additional Mathematics (19.2%), Physics (32.1%), and Chemistry (31.5%). About 30% of the students obtained above average grades in Mathematics, Additional Mathematics (15.2%), Physics (16.8%), and Chemistry (19.3). The percentages of students who obtained excellent grades in Mathematics were 25.7%, Additional Mathematics (9.6%), Physics (8.1%), and Chemistry (12.7%).

Educational Aspirations of Form Five Secondary Technical School Students

As shown in Table 2 technical secondary school students have high educational aspirations. A little more than one-half (53.1%) of them plan to pursue studies up to the level of a Master's Degree and 38.5% would further their education to a Bachelor's degree level. The majority of the students (73%) feel confident in obtaining a place for further education. Technical secondary school students have chosen a variety of studies. As shown in Table 3, the majority of students (76.3%) in the technical secondary schools planned to further their education in technical areas and about 22% of them aspired for areas of studies that may not be suitable with their enrollment in technical schools (Psychology, Law, Sports Science, Communication, and Medicine). About 63% of all the respondents wanted to study Engineering, 4.8% wanted to study Architecture, 1.8% wanted to study Design, 6.9% wanted to go into skill training, 9.5% chose

TABLE 1
The students' performance in mathematics and science

Level of performance	Subjects								
	Grades	Modern Mathematics		Additional Mathematics		Physics		Chemistry	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Failed	9G	18	7.6	71	36.4	40	20.4	28	14.2
			7.6		36.4		20.4		14.2
	8P	22	9.3	23	11.6	23	11.7	20	10.2
Below average	7P	12	5.1	16	8.1	21	10.7	22	11.2
			14.4		19.7		22.4		21.4
	6C	21	8.9	22	11.1	32	16.3	34	17.3
Average	5C	32	13.5	16	8.1	31	15.8	30	15.2
			22.4		19.2		32.1		32.5
	4B	37	15.6	16	8.1	20	10.2	27	13.7
Above average	3B	34	14.3	14	7.1	13	6.6	11	5.6
			29.9		15.2		16.8		19.3
	2A	34	14.3	10	5.1	13	6.6	17	8.6
Excellent	1A	27	11.4	9	4.5	3	1.5	8	4.1
			25.7		9.6		8.1		12.7
	Total	237	100.0	196	100.0	196	100.0	197	100.0
	Missing	25	9.5	66	24.4	66	25.2	65	24.8
	Mean		4.56		2.48		2.95		3.40
	SD.		2.43		2.56		2.25		2.29

Notes: 9G=0, 8P=1, 7P=2, 6C=3, 5C=4, 4B=5, 3B=6, 2A=7, 1A=8

TABLE 2
The students' educational aspirations and their general academic abilities

Academic ability	Educational Aspiration					Total
	SPM Only	Polytech Cert	A Diploma	Bachelor Degree	Master Degree	
Low (1-22.3)	1(1.5%)	7 (10.6%)	7(10.6%)	22 (33.3%)	29 (43.9%)	66
Average (22.4-44.6)	1 (0.8%)	3 (2.1%)	2 (1.3%)	60 (41.1)	80 (54.7)	146
High (44.7-68)				11 (35.5%)	20 (64.5%)	31
Total	2(.8%)	10 (4.1%)	9 (3.7%)	93 (38.5%)	129 (53.1%)	243

Kendall-tau C = .147, $p < .01$

TABLE 3
The area of studies students plan to choose

Areas of studies aspired to by students	Frequency	Percent
Science-related fields		
Medicine	2	.9
Sports science	3	1.3
Science related studies	1	.4
Technical-related fields		
Engineering	145	62.8
Architecture	11	4.8
Design	4	1.8
Computer related studies	11	4.8
Non-science and technical-related areas		
Education	3	1.3
Psychology	1	.4
Law	4	1.8
Accounting	22	9.5
Economics	1	.4
Communication	1	.4
Skill training	16	6.9
Total	231	100.0

Missing = 31 (11.8%)

Accounting, and 4.8% chose Architecture and Computer-related studies (respectively). Other areas of studies can be viewed in Table 3.

We should praise our students for having such confidence in obtaining the desired level of education. Blau and Duncan (1967), Sewell and Hauser (1975), and Sewell and Shah (1968) suggested that the extent to which an adolescent believes that he or she should attain a higher level of education will directly affect the drive, motivation, and effort that they put toward the achievement of that goal. However, having confidence alone is not enough. Students must prove that they have the academic ability to fulfill their aspirations.

Relationship between the Students' Academic Performances and Their Educational Aspirations

An analysis was done to determine the relationship between the students' academic performances and their educational aspirations. The students' academic performance was divided into three categories. The categories were: low performance, average performance, and high performance. The study shows that there is a significant correlation between the students' academic performance and their educational aspirations (Kendall-tau C = .147, p <. 01). All high performing students plan to study either for a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. However, the study also revealed that some students did not have a realistic choice of the highest level of education they want to obtain. For example, there were 66 students who could be categorized as low performers (scores below 22.3) but interestingly, 77.2% of them wanted to study for either a Bachelor's or a Master's Degree.

The areas of studies chosen by students were categorized into two: technical and non-technical fields. A chi-square analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the students' choices of the area of studies and their academic abilities in Mathematics and Science. The result shows that there is no association between the students' choices of the area of studies and their abilities in mathematics and science ([Chi square $_{(DF. = 2)}$ = 1.72, p >.05]). As shown in Table 4 almost 60% of the students with low ability in Mathematics and Science planned to pursue courses in technical areas, mainly Engineering and Architecture. About 71% of students with average ability in Mathematics and Science plan to pursue their studies in technical fields. About 33% of students with high ability in mathematics and science do not plan to further their education in technical areas. What it means is that students have made the choices without paying any attention to their academic ability in the subjects required for a successful performance in the selected courses. For example, as shown in Table 5, of those who wanted to study Engineering, 63.1% obtained poor grades in Additional Mathematics, 53.2% obtained poor grades in Physics, and 46.8% obtained poor grades in Chemistry.

Occupational Aspirations of Form Five Technical Secondary School Students

Technical secondary school students have chosen a variety of occupations. Among the occupations chosen were Engineering (42.2%), Architecture (8.1%), Business or Entrepreneurship (8.1%), and Accounting (8.1%). Other occupations chosen by students can be obtained from Table 6. The students' occupational choices were divided into two categories, namely technical and non-technical occupations. Based on these two categories it shows that about 50% of the students in technical schools plan to enter technically related occupations such as Engineering and Architecture. These two professions require job applicants to have college degrees or professional qualifications. Other occupations requiring college degrees or professional qualifications aspired by students are law profession, managerial related occupation, teachers and lecturers, economist, accountants, computer related occupations, and business.

TABLE 4

Selected area of studies by the students' academic abilities in mathematics and science

Mathematics and science ability	Areas of studies			
	Non-technical		Technical	
	F	%	F	%
Low ability	14	41.2	20	58.8
Average ability	37	29.4	89	70.6
High ability	15	32.6	31	67.4

$\chi^2_{(2)}$ =1.72, p > .05; n = 206
Phi = .091, p=.422

TABLE 5
Course grades in selected subjects for students aspiring to the engineering program

Level of performance	Grades	Chemistry		Physics		Additional Mathematics		Mathematics	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Failed	9G	40	28.4	49	34.8	65	46.1	19	13.5
Below Average	8P	13	9.2	15	10.6	14	9.9	12	8.5
	7P	13	9.2	11	7.8	10	7.1	7	5.0
Average	6C	18	12.8	20	14.2	11	7.8	13	9.2
	5C	18	12.8	18	12.8	10	7.1	15	10.6
Above average	4B	17	12.1	12	8.5	11	7.8	16	11.3
	3B	6	4.3	7	5.0	6	4.3	18	12.8
Excellent	2A	11	7.8	7	5.0	8	5.7	22	15.6
	1A	5	3.5	2	1.4	6	4.3	19	13.5
	Total	141	100.0	141	100.0	141	100.0	141	100.0
	Mean		2.86		2.38		2.14		4.39
	SD		2.48		2.31		2.58		2.70

Notes: 9G=0, 8P=1, 7P=2, 6C=3, 5C=4, 4B=5, 3B=6, 2A=7, 1A=8

TABLE 6
Occupational aspirations of students from technical schools

Type of occupations	Frequency	Percent
Doctor	2	.9
Engineer	94	42.2
Architect	18	8.1
Businessman/entrepreneur	18	8.1
Lawyer	11	4.9
Computer related occupation	13	5.8
Managerial related occupation	6	2.6
Accountant	18	8.1
Technician/mechanics	12	5.4
School teachers	9	4.0
Lecturer	1	.4
Economist	1	.4
Designer	9	4.0
Security related occupation	3	1.3
Others	8	3.6
Total	223	100.0

Missing =26

Is There a Relationship Between Academic Performance and Occupational Aspiration?

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the relationship between the students' academic performances in Mathematics and Science and the students' occupational aspirations. The students' performances in Mathematics and Science were categorized into three groups (low ability, average ability and high ability). About 15% of the students had low ability in Mathematics and Science, 63.1% of them had an average ability in Mathematics and Science, and about 22% had a high ability in Mathematics and Science. A chi square analysis was conducted to determine if occupational choice is related to academic ability in mathematics and science. The result of a chi-square analysis shows that the students' occupational choices are not related to their ability in Mathematics and Science (Chi square $_{(2)}$ = 1.92, p>.05). As shown in Table 7 even students with low ability in Mathematics and Science choose technical occupations (64.5%). Also shown in the table, a large percentage (27.3%) of the students with a high ability in Mathematics and Science do not choose technical occupations. A larger percentage of the students who choose technical occupations are with an average ability in Mathematics and Science (65.3%). The results may suggest that some of the students may not really know what is required of them in order to pursue occupations in technical fields.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS

Economic development will continue to influence and impact the lives of many people in many parts of the world. With the advancement of new technologies, businesses and industries demand workers who are highly skilled and educated. Therefore, students will have to prepare themselves to meet the demands of the world of work so they can realize their aspirations. Upon the examination of the academic performance (general academic ability, Mathematics and Science), one may conclude that not all students will be able to realize both their educational and occupational aspirations. Without appropriate planning and preparation, many students may never fulfill their aspirations. The present study shows that more than 50% of the students have a moderate amount of knowledge about the occupations of their choices. Almost 60% of them have a moderate knowledge about the field of studies of their choices. Without a good amount of knowledge about the chosen field (education and occupations) students will not be making appropriate educational and occupational decisions. Therefore students should (either by

TABLE 7
Students' academic performance and occupational aspirations

Academic performance	Occupational aspirations		Total
	Non-technical	Technical	
Low ability (1-22.3)	18 (8.5%)	35 (16.5%)	53 (25.0%)
Average ability (22.4-44.6)	29 (13.7%)	102 (48.1%)	131 (61.8%)
High ability (44.7-68)	12 (5.7%)	16 (7.5%)	28 (13.2%)
Total	59 (27.8%)	153 (72.2)	212 (100.0%)

Chi-square (DF. =2) =6.25, p <. 5
Cramer V =0.172, p = .044

TABLE 8
Students' performance in mathematics and science and occupational aspirations

Science and mathematics ability	Occupational aspirations		Total
	Non-technical	Technical	
Low ability (< 4.51)	11 (5.4%)	20 (9.9%)	31 (15.3%)
Average ability (4.52-19.89)	30 (14.8%)	98 (48.3%)	128 (63.0%)
High ability (> 19.9)	12 (5.9%)	32 (15.3%)	44 (21.7%)
Total	53 (26.1%)	150 (73.9%)	203 (100.0%)

Mean = 12.25, SD. = 7.64, Chi square (DF. =2) = 1.92, p > .05
Max. score =32, min score = 1.0

themselves or with help from teachers or counselors) obtain the needed information to enable them to make good educational and occupational choices. Providing factual occupational information and educational and vocational planning seems especially important for students (Wei-Cheng Mau 1995). Thus, Mau (1995) asserted that students must receive appropriate educational training and career guidance if they are to compete in the competitive workplace. In fact as George (1990) suggested, students must begin to receive information on educational and career planning as early as grade 8 (equivalent to Form 2 in Malaysia). Grant and Sleeter (1988) believed that as early as the age of 13, students must make a decision by selecting the subjects they will study.

Technical secondary school students have high educational aspiration, which is very good. The study shows that more than 90% of them will pursue their studies for a Bachelor's or a Master's degree. Walberg (1989) postulated that young people's aspirations guide what they learn in school, how they prepare for adult life, and what they eventually do. With the rapid technological advances, Valadez (1998) suggested that some form of postsecondary education is almost a necessity for students entering today's job market

The study shows that about 63% of technical secondary school students will pursue studies in technical areas mainly engineering. The students' choices of the areas of studies were independent of their academic ability in Mathematics and Science. This finding differs from those of Farrel and Pollard (1987), Mau (1995), Shepard (1992). Their findings suggested that academic ability influences students' aspirations. In this study it was found that almost 60% of the students with low ability in Mathematics and Science planned to pursue courses in technical areas, mainly Engineering and Architecture. About 71% of students with an average ability in Mathematics and Science plan to study Engineering and Architecture. About 33% of students with high ability in Mathematics and Science did not plan to further their education in technical areas. The result of this study indicated that the students had made the choices without paying any attention to their academic ability in the subjects required for a successful performance in the selected areas of study. For example, about 44% of the students obtained a grade of at least 6C in Additional Mathematics (mean=2.14) and 46% obtained a grade of at least 6C in Physics (mean=2.38). These two subjects are normally required for a successful enrollment and performance in engineering courses. This shows that some of the students do not possess the academic ability to pursue courses in their selected fields. They are actually working on their aspirations with limited knowledge and with limited access to information.

In Malaysia, about 356,000 new employees in technical areas (mainly engineers and assistant engineers) will be needed by 2005. By 2005 we expect to have 57,684 engineering students at a degree level, 42,879 at a diploma level, and 64, 516 at a certificate level (a total of 165,079 potential professional and sub-professional). However, the result of this study shows that only about 45% of the students in technical secondary school are assumed to have the required academic ability for enrollment in technical fields especially engineering. It means that only about 45% of students (grades between 6C and 1A) from technical secondary schools will be eligible to study engineering at all levels (degree, diploma, and certificate) although about 65% of them plan to enroll in technical-related courses. If this situation persists, Malaysia will face a shortage of engineers and assistant engineers in the future. With the academic ability (general and mathematical and science) students may be unlikely to meet their educational and occupational goals and consequently the country may not be able to have a pool of qualified engineers and assistant engineers. Their poor performance in both Mathematics and Science was partially related to their performance in Mathematics and Science at the PMR level. An analysis shows that 51.8% of the students at the technical secondary schools obtained an A and 31.2% obtained a B and about 42% of the students obtained an A and about 39% obtained a B in Science and Mathematics respectively in the PMR examinations. There are some 17% who obtained poor grades in Mathematics and about 19% who obtained a poor grade in Science. Something has to be done to help students acquire the academic ability needed to pursue courses in engineering. The issue of obtaining good academic performance especially in Mathematics and Science-related subjects should be made known to students in order for them to make realistic educational and occupational choices. Otherwise, we may not be able to produce eligible students for engineering courses at the tertiary level.

It is good for students to have high educational aspirations for education and occupations in technical fields. However, the choice or the aspiration must of course be based on accurate and adequate information about educational and occupational opportunities as well as about themselves. Educational and occupational choices are best made by integrating what one knows about one's self and about different occupations and/or majors (Billups and Peterson 1994) and according to Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) there should be some congruence between interest, abilities, achievement, and the educational preparation required for specific occupations. Preparing students to make informed occupational choices is a developmental process requiring counselors to have up-to date information and knowledge about education and occupational opportunities available now and in the future. Wahl and Blackhurst (2000) believed that educational and occupational aspirations are of concern to school counselors at all levels. The knowledge of students' aspirations play an important role in the education-planning process regardless of the philosophical underpinnings that drive the program development process (Conroy 1999).

CONCLUSION

Based on the study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Technical secondary school students have high educational aspirations with more than 90% planning to pursue their education up to at least a Bachelor's degree. About 76% of them plan to enroll in technical courses especially engineering. This is good for the country to fulfill the needs for more technical people to achieve the objective of becoming an industrialized nation.
2. About 60% of the students have an average general academic ability and about 50% have an average academic ability in Mathematics and Science. Since their academic ability was about average, it makes their educational aspirations (highest level of education and field of studies) as well as occupational aspirations unrealistic. It shows that students may not know the requirements for further studies in the areas they have selected.
3. Low significant correlations were observed between academic achievement and educational aspirations and occupational aspiration. The majority of the students wanted to study for either a Bachelor's or a Master's degree and choose technical-related occupations. It implies that students may not know the academic requirements needed for the highest level of education and type of occupations they aspired for.
4. The majority of the students were confident of obtaining a place for further education, the area of studies and the occupation they aspired for.
5. Students were moderately knowledgeable about the field of studies and the occupations they aspired for. It means that they have no exposure to the world of work. If they have little information about courses available at the tertiary institutions as well as the information of the world of work, then students have been making unrealistic educational and occupation choices.
6. There are some significant correlations between achievement in Mathematics and Science at the PMR level and achievement in mathematics and science at the Form Four level. If we continue taking in students into technical schools without concentrating on the mathematical and science ability, we may be doing injustice to the students themselves. Administrators of technical schools should realize that technical streams are almost similar to science streams in academic schools except, students in technical schools need not do biology. Thus, those who are admitted for enrolment in technical schools should have a strong ability in both Mathematics and Science.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Schools should provide more time for career advice and career exposure to students and it should begin as early as possible at least prior to enrollment in technical schools. According to Picklesimer (1998), exploring various career options is imperative to help adolescents formulate a plan of action for their future, no matter what route they take after high school graduation.

2. Helps students make their aspiration become a reality. Students need to be told about the professional or academic requirement needed for a particular occupation. They need to be advised on the academic qualifications needed to obtain a place in their desired field of studies.
3. Encourage the students to have realistic educational and occupational aspirations. It is unwise for a student to choose Engineering as his or her occupational option when he or she does not do well in engineering related subjects (such as Mathematics and Physics). If students still choose Engineering, then some kind of help needs to be given to them to master the basic subjects needed for Engineering courses.
4. Encourage students to do self-analysis prior to committing themselves to a specific occupational choice or even before attempting to enroll in technical schools. Students must identify their strengths and weaknesses. They should capitalize on their strengths and work on improving their weaknesses. The process of self-analysis should be done on a regular basis.
5. Schools should provide the students with more information about possible occupations related to their fields of studies in technical schools so that they have many more options to choose from for further education as well as occupational choices. Job awareness and exploration is an important feature of preparing students for future educational and occupational opportunities. Picklesimer *et al.* (1998) indicated that exploring various occupational options is imperative to help adolescents formulate a plan of action for their future, no matter what route they take after high school graduation. In fact, O'Brien (1996) reported that students participating in the career exploration programs had increased their confidence in performing tasks related to investigating, selecting, and implementing a career choice.
6. Proper academic screening should be done prior to selecting students into technical secondary schools. If possible, admit only students with good grades in Mathematics and Science especially for those who plan to do Engineering.

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Perceived Leadership Characteristics of Students Majoring in Education at Universiti Putra Malaysia

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ABSTRAK

Satu kajian telah dijalankan untuk menilai ciri kepimpinan pelajar pengkhususan dalam Pendidikan di Universiti Putra Malaysia. Kajian menunjukkan bahawa secara amnya guru pelatih UPM yang memiliki ciri kepimpinan diperlukan berfungsi sebagai pemimpin secara efektif. Kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa penglibatan guru pelatih dalam aktiviti organisasi adalah secara purata. Hasil kajian juga mendapati bahawa ciri kepimpinan secara signifikannya berbeza di kalangan pelajar dengan perbezaan tahap penyertaan dalam aktiviti organisasi, kebolehan pengamatan dalam menguruskan organisasi pelajar, jumlah pengetahuan yang dimiliki pelajar tentang pengurusan organisasi, kepentingan organisasi pelajar dan jenis program pendidikan guru.

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to assess the leadership characteristics of Universiti Putra students majoring in Education. The study showed that in general, UPM trainee teachers possess the leadership characteristics needed to function effectively as a leader. The study also showed that the trainee teachers' involvement in organizational activities was about average. It was also found that the leadership characteristics differed significantly among students with different level of participation in organizational activities, the perceived ability to manage the students' organizations, the perceived amount of knowledge the students have about the management of the organizations, the perceived importance of a student's organization, and the type of teacher education programs.

INTRODUCTION

Many people believed that leaders are born not made. If we are to subscribe to this belief, then we should also subscribe that education and training are not needed to develop leaders. Someone who is now in a leadership position may have been born with certain leadership traits but without education and training a person cannot be a leader. In order to lead, it requires more than having leadership traits alone. Leadership is more than having suitable leadership traits. The leadership traits a person possesses should be developed and enhanced. Leadership has been defined differently by different people. However, there are some commonalities. In fact, according to Stogdill (1974), the definition of leadership is as many as the number of people who define the concept. Tucker (1984) for example, defined leadership as the ability to influence or motivate an individual or a group of individuals to work willingly toward a given goal or objective under a set of specific circumstances. Leadership involves people who include a leader and followers. It involves influence. It involves goals. It is a process of influencing others to behave in a way that is desired to achieve the goals of the organization.

According to Schein (1992) and Yukl (1994) leadership is a critical factor for organizational performance and effectiveness. Kets de Vries (1996) also pointed that effective leadership is a determining factor in creating high performance organizations. Others such as Blanton (1991) and Robinson (1996) also believed that there is emerging evidence that leadership is a significant factor in the development of quality organization. Paine *et al.* (1992) believed that leadership is significant in the development of quality education in school.

The role of leadership in educational systems is to sustain the vision of connectedness, so that students, teachers, administrators, parents and taxpayers understand their roles with respect to the larger system, of learning in which they operate (Langford and Clearly 1995). Berry (1997) believed that leadership is an action which yields social change and improvement, and is associated with the development of community involvement and participation on decision making, equal opportunity for students learning, the development of an aware and enlightened community, the management of educational change and the development process to promote quality educational outcomes

Gregory (1996) indicated that education is the foundation on which a competitive workforce is built. He further reiterated that despite some impressive improvements in performance in schools and colleges, many young people still emerge from education system ill-equipped to meet the challenges of life and employment. It is generally believed that in developing educational excellence, leadership somehow makes a difference (Fisher and Tack 1988; Moses 1985; Murphy *et al.* 1988). According to Cheng (1994) in order to improve classroom educational process as well as outcomes, teacher's effectiveness should be enhanced. In a classroom the teacher is presumed to be a leader of the groups and students were presumed to be the followers. It is the role of the teacher to bring the best out of the teaching and learning process. He has to create a mix of activities that will have a positive impact on learners. He as a leader should be able to practice his leadership roles to bring the impact on the lives of students either directly or indirectly. Leadership can be learned and developed. Hitschorm (1988) posited that colleges and universities in the US have established some sort of leadership education programs for students and according to Love and Yoder (1989) students believed that leadership abilities are an important part of their college education. Based on a transformational leadership theory, someone can become a leader through education and training.

Problem Statement

As a leader of a small social organization, in this case, a classroom, teachers' leadership may affect students' learning attitudes and social behavior at both individual and group levels (Cheng 1994). A teacher therefore needs to practice his leadership effectively. To be an effective leader, one has to have effective leadership skills. Jones, Simonetti and Vielhaber-Hermon (2000) believed that well-developed leadership skills are essential to create an organization where people thrive and build an organization capable of sustained drive and vitality for the distant future. Leadership, according to Poster and Brodsky (1992) can be learned and enhanced through education. Students of education who will ultimately become teachers will have to have characteristics and learn to lead while in college. They must realize that they will be leaders in schools. But, do they (students of the Faculty of Education, UPM) possess the characteristics needed to be a leader? A study was conducted to answer this question.

Objectives

The primary purpose of the study was to assess the leadership characteristics of UPM trainee teachers. Specifically the study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived leadership characteristics of UPM trainee teachers?
2. Do perceived leadership characteristics differ among UPM trainee teachers based on selected factors? (a) gender, (b) the level of participation in organizational activities, (c) perceived ability to manage the organization, (d) the perceived amount of knowledge the students have about the management of a student's organization, (e) the perceived importance of a student's involvement in the organization, and (f) type of teacher education programs?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research method.

Population and Sample

The population of the study were all final year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program at the Faculty of Educational studies, UPM with the exception of students from the Bachelor of Education (Physical Education) during the academic year 1996/97. Students in the Physical Education program were excluded from this study because it was thought they would provide much data with regard to participation in organizational activities and thus would result in a bias finding. There were 433 final year students enrolled in the education program at the Faculty of Educational Studies for the academic year 1996/97.

Students who participated in the study were selected using a cluster random sampling procedure whereby the programs of study were the clusters. According to Morgan and Kerjie (1970), a population size of 440 requires a sample size of 205. However, the researcher decided to choose 300 students as a sample to compensate for weaknesses of not employing a simple random sampling. Another reason was that by increasing the number of subjects in the sample there would be a greater variation among the subjects of the study especially when cluster sampling is used.

Instruments

The research instrument contained two parts. One part of the instrument contained questions related to demographic characteristics and another part contained questions related to the leadership characteristics. Part one of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to: (a) gender, (b) program of studies, (c) the perceived ability to manage the students' organizations, (d) the perceived amount of knowledge the students have to manage the students' organizations, (e) the perceived importance of a student's involvement in the organization, and (f) type of teacher education program, (g) academic achievement as measured by the cumulative grade point average. The questionnaire was tested for face validity and reliability estimate. No major problems (such as misunderstanding of the questions) were encountered during the pilot study. The result of a pilot test showed the reliability estimate of the leadership statements to be .94.

FINDINGS

Background of the Respondents

The questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 300 students who were selected to participate in the study. One hundred and seventy students returned the questionnaire. However, some students did not answer many of the questions. These questionnaires were discarded. Data analysis was based on 151 respondents who comprised 46 students from TESL, 23 students from PBMP, 12 students from Home Science Education, 22 students from Agricultural Science Education, and 47 students from Guidance and Counseling. The respondents comprised 45.5% female and 54.5% male students. Their ages ranged between 22 years and 43 years with a mean age of 31.3 years (S.D. =6.34 years) and a median of 33 years. Their teaching experience ranged from no experience at all to 18 years experience. About 37% of the respondents have no teaching experience while another 63% have taught in secondary schools prior to their enrollment in various Bachelor of Education programs. Of those who have taught in schools, their experiences from ranged 1 to 18 years with a mean of 6.14 years (S. D. = 5.75 years) and the median was 6 years. The respondents used different types of academic qualifications to enroll in the teacher education programs at the Faculty of Educational Studies. Among the academic qualifications used by the respondents to enroll in the Bachelor of Education program were: Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (22%), Diploma in various disciplines (12%), Malaysian High School Certificate (24%), and Teacher's College Certificate (40%).

Students' Academic Achievement

The respondents' academic achievements were determined based on the cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Their academic performances ranged between 2.25 and 3.80. The mean was 3.05 (S. D. = .27). About 4% of the respondents obtained a CGPA below 2.5 and about 6% of them obtained a CGPA of 3.5 and above. About 55% of the respondents obtained a CGPA between 3.0 and 3.49 and about 35% obtained a CGPA between 2.5 and 2.99.

Students' Involvement in Organizational Activities

The students' involvement in organizational activities was assessed by asking them to indicate their level of involvement in organizational activities while on campus. On a scale of 1 to 3 (being no involvement at all, 2 being average involvement, and 3 being highly involved), students will indicate their level of involvement in the organizational activities organized by the universities. The study shows that about 69% of the respondents' involvement in the organizational activities here at UPM is at the average level (Mean =1.95, S.D.= .57). About 18% of the respondents indicated that they were not involved at all in the organizational activities organized by the university.

Perceptions of the Ability to Manage a Student's Organization

One of the teacher's roles in schools is to become an advisor to the students' organizations. It is therefore very important for them to have the ability to manage the students' organization. Related to this, we asked the respondents the extent to which they believed they are able to manage the students' organization when given the task. Using a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being very confident, 2 being not confident, 3 being confident, and 4 very confident) they will indicate their perceived level of confidence to manage the students' organizations. The finding shows that about 84.0% of the respondents indicate that they are confident in managing a student's organization when given the task (Mean=3.06, S. D. = .39).

Perceptions of the Level of Knowledge in Managing a Student's Organization

For a teacher to manage a student's organization he or she must have some knowledge about the management of a student's organization. We asked the respondents to tell us the level of knowledge they may have about the management of a student' organization. On a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being no knowledge, 2 being little knowledge, 3 being moderate amount of knowledge, 4 being a lot of knowledge), the respondents will indicate the level of knowledge on how to manage a student's organization that they have. The study shows that about 85% of the respondents believed they have a moderate amount of knowledge to manage a student's organization (Mean=2.93, S. D. = .36).

Importance of Participation in a Student's Organization

To participate in a student's organization, one must believe that such participation is important. We solicited from the respondents their perceptions about the importance of participations in students' organizations. On a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being not important at all, 2 being somewhat important, 3 being important, 4 being very important), the respondents will indicate their perceived levels of importance of participation in a student's organization. The study shows that 42% of the respondents believed that involvement in organizational activities was important and another 51% believed that the involvement is very important (Mean = 3.48, S. D. =. 60).

Perceived Leadership Characteristics of UPM Trainee Teachers

UPM trainee teachers' leadership characteristics were assessed using a questionnaire containing 38 statements of leadership characteristics. The reliability estimate of the leadership characteristics instrument as ascertained by Cronbach alpha was 0.94. The UPM trainee teachers, in general, believe that they have the necessary leadership characteristics (Mean = 4.14, S. D. = .24). The trainee teachers gave a rating of 4 or higher for about 65% of all the leadership characteristics statements. The score for each item of the leadership characteristics statement were summed up to obtain a total score of the leadership characteristics. The total scores ranged between 131 and 190. The mean was 167.97 and S. D. = 11.92.

Do the Perceived Leadership Characteristics Differ Among Students?

We hypothesized that students' perceived leadership characteristics do not differ across

TABLE 1
Means and standard deviations of students' involvement in organizational activities

	Involvement in organizational activities at UPM	Ability to manage organizational activities	Knowledge in managing organizational activities	Importance of involvement
N	149	149	148	147
Mean	1.95	3.06	2.93	3.48
Std. Deviation	.57	.39	.36	.60
Scale range	1-3	1-4	1-4	1-4

TABLE 2
Means and standard deviations of the perceived leadership characteristics of UPM trainee teachers

Statements of leadership characteristics	Mean	S. D.
I have the confidence in promoting important ideas	4.20	.59
I enjoy expressing ideas on important issues	4.06	.64
I encourage people to become involved in many beneficial activities	4.25	.60
It is easy for me to make friends and to get along with others	4.27	.59
I enjoy sharing information with others	4.38	.53
I enjoy meeting new people	4.34	.58
I am able to convince others about my opinions	3.99	.59
I am able to motivate others	4.12	.53
I like getting involved in organizational activities	3.98	.67
I like to see conflict resolved	4.27	.56
I am considered a trustworthy person by many people	4.27	.56
I understand that people have feelings, motives, and goals of their own	4.65	.51
I try to put myself in someone's shoes so that I can better understand the situation faced by others	4.28	.59
I feel people respect and admire me for what I am	4.10	.48
I am a flexible person	4.32	.57
I am concerned about maintaining good interpersonal relationships	4.44	.54
I willingly listen to others	4.34	.49
I like to maintain good interpersonal relations with friends	4.48	.75
People will seek guidance from me when they are having a difficult time	3.97	.55
People look for advice from me	3.90	.72
People always accept my ideas	3.88	.55
People accept me as their leader	3.64	.71
People often look to me to lead a discussion	3.64	.74
I am an effective decision-maker	3.70	.59
I feel I am proficient in my work	4.06	.60
Each year brings me closer to my professional goals	4.07	.73
I view myself as a professional	3.77	.80
I am tactful in everyday life	4.10	.75
I am persistent in my work	4.10	.67
I am intelligent	4.12	.51
Once I begin a project, I will work on it until it is completed	4.38	.53
I enjoy success and strive for it	4.54	.54
I stay on a project until it is completed	4.22	.59
I am enthusiastic about my work	4.2	.65
I have a good sense of humor	4.05	.63
Belonging to an organization is important for me	4.14	.70
It is relatively easy for me to mingle in a group	4.23	.70

Overall item mean = 4.14, S. D. = .24; scale mean =167.97, S. D. = 11.92

gender. A t-test was performed to test this hypothesis. The result shows that the students' perceived leadership characteristics did not differ between male and female students ($t_{132} = .55$; $p > .05$). The scores of the leadership characteristics for both male and female students were almost the same (Mean=168.61, S.D.= 13.14 and Mean=167.37, S. D. =12.62, respectively).

We also hypothesized that perceived leadership characteristics do not differ across the levels of participation in a student's organization. A one-way ANOVA was employed to determine if this hypothesis was tenable. The result of the one-way ANOVA (Table 3) shows that the perceived leadership characteristics differ among students with different levels of participation in a student's organization ($F_{3, 133}$) = 4.68, p =. 01. Post hoc analysis using Tukey test showed that students who were actively involved in the student's organizations obtained a significantly higher score (Mean = 165.94, S. D. = 13.57) on the perceived leadership characteristics as compared to inactive and moderately active students (Mean = 154.63, S. D. = 10.02 and Mean = 156.61, S. D. = 12.98 respectively).

Another hypothesis we tested was whether perceived leadership characteristics do not differ among students with different ability to manage the students' organizations. The results of a one-way ANOVA (Table 3) show that perceived leadership characteristics differ among students with different abilities to manage the students' organizational activities ($F_{(2, 134)}$ = 14.64, p = . 000). Students who felt that they have a lot of ability to manage the activities of the organizations obtained significantly higher leadership characteristics scores (Mean =171.53, S. D. = 12.63) than students who felt they have a moderate ability and the students who felt they do not have the ability (Mean =156.57, S. D. =11.96; Mean= 145.54, S. D. = 7.69, respectively).

As shown in Table 3, the leadership characteristics also differ among students with different amounts of knowledge about the management of organizational activities ($F_{(2, 133)}$ = 9.99, p= . 000). Students who thought they have a lot of knowledge about the management of activities scored significantly higher (Mean = 179.40, S. D. = 9.01) than those who felt they have a moderate amount of knowledge and those who felt they do not have the knowledge (Mean=157.29, S. D. = 12.54 and Mean= 151.21, S. D = 9.15, respectively).

We also wanted to know if the perceived leadership characteristics differ among students based on different teacher education programs. The results of a one-way ANOVA show that there is a significant difference of the perceived leadership characteristics among students based on different teacher education programs (F 4, 133 = 3.51, p < .05). A post-hoc Tukey test showed that agricultural science students obtained significantly higher scores on the perceived leadership characteristics than the home science students, guidance and counseling students, and the Malay language students (Table 3).

TABLE 3
Means and standard deviations of perceived leadership scores by selected variables

Variables		Min score	S. D.	Test statistics	p
Gender	Male	158.07	13.14	t (132)=.55	>.05
	Female	157.57	12.62		
Levels of partici -pation	No participation	154.63	10.02	F (2,133)=4.68	<.05
	Moderate participation	156.61	12.99		
	Active participation	165.94	13.57		
Levels of ability	No ability	145.14	7.69	F(2,134)=14.64	<.05
	Moderate ability	156.57	11.95		
	A lot of ability	171.53	12.63		
Amount of know -ledge	No knowledge	151.21	9.15	F(2,133)=9.99	<.05
	Moderate knowledge	157.29	12.54		
	A lot of knowledge	179.40	9.02		
Perceived levels of importance	Not important	148.20	9.63	F(2,131)=3.74	<.05
	Somewhat important	154.91	12.38		
	Very important	159.81	12.95		
Type of teacher education programs	TESL	158.88	12.7	F(4,133)=3.51	<.05
	Agriculture Science	165.60	10.05		
	Malay Language	155.86	12.98		
	Home Science	150.75	12.80		
	Guidance & Counseling	155.31	12.80		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Teacher trainees from five program areas were involved in the study. Their teaching experiences ranged from no teaching experience to 18 years with a mean of 6.15 years and median of 6 years. A variety of academic qualifications were used to enroll in the program of their choices. Their academic performance based on CGPA ranged between 2.25 and 3.80 with a mean of 3.05. About 55% of the trainee teachers obtained grades between 3.00 and 3.49. It showed that the trainee teachers were doing well in their studies.

UPM trainee teachers were not very active participants in organizational activities at UPM although they thought that involvement in those kinds of activities were important. They believed that they have the ability to manage the organizational activities when given the task. They also believed that they have the knowledge on the manage of organizational activities.

In general, the UPM trainee teachers possess the leadership characteristics needed to lead a group. The study found that students who were active in organization felt that they possess the leadership characteristics needed to function compared to those who were less active. Students with a good amount of knowledge in the management of organization possessed the required leadership characteristics needed for the success of the organization. Participation in activities organized by clubs or societies have been found to correlate with adult leadership. We should recognize that leadership is learned over time through interaction with others.

Participation in a group provides abundance of opportunities for students to learn how to be leaders. They will be able to acquire the leadership skills and develop the required leadership characteristics to help them become leaders of the schools. By having the required leadership characteristics and the perception that they have the ability to manage and by having a good amount of knowledge in managing the organization, and by having positive self-concepts, these potential teachers will surely be able to help develop leadership in students. Researchers are in agreement about the importance of leadership development in students (Chan 2000 and Shore, Cornell, Robinson and Ward 1991). According to Chan, educators in Hong Kong (for example) felt that it is important to encourage and develop leadership in students. Shore, Cornell, Robinson and Ward (1991) believed that it is important that all students, regardless of their ability, know the rudiments of leadership. By having good leadership characteristics as well as good leadership skills, these potential teachers will be able to play a significant role in the development of education in schools. Jones, Simoneti and Vielhaber-Hermon (2000) believed that well-developed leadership skills are essential to creating an organization where people thrive in their work and can build an organization capable of sustained drive and vitality right into the distant future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study the following recommendations were made:

1. Participation in organizational activities should be made compulsory to trainee teachers, especially to those who have not taught schools. Chan (2000) in a study of leadership for gifted and talented students found that students learn the most from group exercises in which they assume the leadership roles.
2. Encourage trainee teachers to acquire leadership skills and develop their leadership characteristics. The importance of leadership in the success of any organization cannot be questioned. Yousef (1998) advocated that leadership represents an important factor in the determination of the success or failure of organizations.
3. A course on leadership development should be included in the teacher education curriculum to expose students in a formal way to leadership. In a study 'the Ohio 4-H Teen Community Leadership College, Kleon and Rinehart (1998) reported that participation in leadership programs improved teens' perception of their leadership skills. A similar result was reported by Hodson (1992).
4. Another important aspect that needs to be considered by the management of the teacher education program is the integration of leadership experience in teacher education classes. Leadership aspect has to be integrated into the subject matter. It means that student teachers need to be given an opportunity to develop and enhance certain leadership characteristics

by means of a group discussion (example). Cox (1996) suggested that today's youth must develop positive leadership knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspiration in order for them to become productive and contributing individuals who can be effective and proactive in determining the course of tomorrow's word.

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Aspirasi Pekerjaan Pelajar Kejuruteraan Sekolah Menengah Teknik

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ABSTRAK

Aspirasi kerjaya adalah satu aspek penting dalam kehidupan seseorang yang boleh mempengaruhi kemajuan kerjayanya. Aspirasi kerjaya boleh menjadi daya penarik kepada pelajar sekolah untuk menceburi sesuatu pekerjaan. Satu kajian deskriptif dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti aspirasi kerjaya pelajar bidang kejuruteraan di sekolah menengah teknik di Semenanjung Malaysia. Sejumlah 1,123 pelajar Tingkatan Empat dipilih sebagai sampel kajian. Soal selidik digunakan untuk mengumpul data. Dapatan menunjukkan kebanyakan pelajar perempuan memasuki bidang kejuruteraan awam dan binaan, manakala kebanyakan pelajar lelaki memasuki bidang kejuruteraan elektrikal dan mekanikal. Majoriti responden menyatakan mereka memilih bidang pengajian kerana minat. Walaupun responden memasuki bidang kejuruteraan, hanya separuh daripada mereka bercita-cita menjadi jurutera, manakala yang lain telah memilih pelbagai jenis pekerjaan lain selain jurutera. Justeru itu, adalah dicadangkan agar usaha perlu dilaksanakan untuk menarik lebih banyak pelajar berminat untuk menjadi jurutera, terutama di kalangan mereka yang mengikuti bidang kejuruteraan. Ini boleh dilakukan dengan mendedahkan mereka kepada pelbagai jenis pekerjaan yang berkaitan bidang pengajian mereka.

ABSTRACT

Career aspiration is an important aspect in a person's life that can influence his or her career development. Career aspirations can become a motivating force to school students to get involved in certain kinds of jobs. A descriptive study was conducted to identify the career aspirations of engineering students in the secondary technical schools in Peninsular Malaysia. A total of 1,123 Form Four students was chosen as research sample. Questionnaires were used to collect the data. The findings showed that many female students were enrolled in the fields of civil and construction engineering, whereas many male students were enrolled in the fields of electrical and mechanical engineering. A majority of the respondents said that they had chosen their fields of study because of their interests. Though even the respondents enrolled in the fields of engineering, only one half of them had the ambition to become engineers, whereas the others had chosen other kinds of jobs besides engineers. As a result, it was suggested that efforts should be made to attract more students to be interested in becoming engineers, especially among those enrolled in the field of engineering. This could be done by exposing them to various kinds of jobs that were related to their fields of study.

PENGENALAN

Aspirasi adalah satu faktor penting yang menentukan sesuatu pencapaian dalam hidup seseorang (Gottfredson 1981). Pencapaian dalam bidang pendidikan pula sebagaimana yang dinyatakan oleh Wolffe (1985) adalah suatu nilai yang amat penting dalam sesebuah masyarakat. Walberge (1989) berpendapat aspirasi adalah panduan kepada pelajar tentang apa yang akan mereka pelajari di sekolah, bagaimana mereka menyediakan diri untuk menjadi orang dewasa dan seterusnya mencapai sesuatu yang dihajati.

Malaysia adalah sebuah negara membangun yang bercadang menjadi sebuah negara maju menjelang 2020. Oleh itu ramai pekerja dalam pelbagai bidang teknikal diperlukan (Jadual 1). Berdasarkan unjuran Rancangan Malaysia Kelapan, negara kekurangan 52,915 jurutera dan 117,715 pembantu jurutera. Secara keseluruhan, bilangan graduan dalam bidang kejuruteraan yang diunjurkan daripada institusi pengajian tinggi tempatan menjelang 2005 ialah 163,079 orang (Jadual 2). Daripada unjuran ini, kita dapati negara masih kekurangan 65,235 tenaga teknikal menjelang 2005. Kekurangan yang ketara ialah dalam kategori pembantu jurutera.

Salah satu matlamat pendidikan teknikal dan vokasional ialah melahirkan bakal pekerja mengikut bidang pengajian yang mereka ikuti. Dari segi ekonomi, kejayaan sesuatu bidang pendidikan teknikal dan vokasional boleh diukur mengikut kejayaan penempatan pelajar di dalam pekerjaan yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian yang diikuti. Jika sesuatu bidang teknikal dan vokasional itu dapat membentuk pelajar yang akan menceburi pekerjaan yang berkaitan bidang pengajian, maka bidang pengajian berkenaan dianggap berkesan dan berjaya, dan begitulah sebaliknya.

Pengukuran terhadap keberkesanan dan kejayaan sesuatu bidang pengajian dalam melahirkan golongan pekerja dilakukan dengan menjumlahkan bilangan bekas pelajar yang bekerja dalam pekerjaan yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian. Ini dilakukan melalui kajian 'tracer' atau 'follow-up'. Bagaimanapun ada kajian yang dilakukan dengan melihat kepada aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar yang sedang mengikuti sesuatu bidang pengajian semasa di sekolah. Jika aspirasi pekerjaan mereka selaras dengan bidang pengajian yang diikuti, maka bidang pengajian berkenaan boleh dianggap berkesan dan berjaya dalam melatih dan melahirkan pelajar beraspirasi pekerjaan yang sesuai dengan bidang pengajian mereka.

Kajian untuk melihat sejauh mana sesuatu bidang pengajian berkesan dan berjaya dalam menghasilkan golongan pekerja yang berkaitan adalah penting dari segi ekonomi kerana peruntukan kewangan yang besar diperlukan untuk melatih seorang bakal pekerja melalui sekolah menengah teknik. Jika kebanyakan pelajar dalam sesuatu bidang pengajian tidak berminat bekerja dalam pekerjaan yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian mereka, maka usaha untuk melatih mereka dalam bidang yang mereka tidak akan ceburi apabila bekerja adalah suatu pembaziran dari segi masa dan kewangan. Malah sesuatu bidang pengajian teknikal atau vokasional perlu menjustifikasikan kerelevanannya untuk melahirkan golongan pekerja yang dikehendaki. Jika tidak, bidang pengajian berkenaan perlu dihentikan atau diteruskan dengan modifikasi untuk memastikan kerelevanannya dalam melahirkan golongan pekerja seperti yang dikehendaki.

JADUAL 1
Keperluan tenaga teknikal menjelang 2005

Kategori Kerja	Kedudukan pada 2002	Jangkaan keperluan pada 2005	Tambahan
Jurutera	55,485	108,400	52,915
Pembantu jurutera	130,024	247,739	117,715
JUMLAH	185,509	356,139	170,630

JADUAL 2
Unjuran bilangan pelajar kejuruteraan di institusi pengajian tinggi awam tempatan menjelang 2005

Peringkat pengajian	Bilangan
Ijazah	57,684
Diploma	42,879
Sijil	62,516
JUMLAH	163,079

OBJEKTIF

Objektif kajian ini ialah untuk mengenal pasti aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar bidang kejuruteraan di sekolah menengah teknik di Semenanjung Malaysia. Secara khususnya, objektif kajian ini ialah untuk: (1) meninjau aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan di sekolah menengah teknik, (2) mengenal pasti sama ada terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar dengan bidang pengajian yang mereka ikuti, dan (3) mengenal pasti sama ada terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar dengan minat mereka.

METODOLOGI

Kajian ini berbentuk deskriptif-korelasi. Populasi kajian terdiri daripada pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan di sekolah menengah teknik di Semenanjung Malaysia. Sampel kajian dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik persampelan kelompok dengan pelajar di sekolah yang terpilih sebagai sampel dijadikan responden. Saiz minimum sampel ditentukan dengan menggunakan formula Cochran (1977). Data yang diperoleh daripada Unit Data, Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan (BPPDP), Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. Jumlah pelajar Tingkatan Empat di semua sekolah menengah teknik di Semenanjung Malaysia ialah 21,670 orang. Saiz minimum sampel yang diperlukan untuk kajian ini, setelah dikira dengan menggunakan formula Cochran, ialah 625 orang. Oleh kerana kajian ini menggunakan teknik persampelan kelompok, sebanyak sebelas buah sekolah telah dipilih secara rawak dan semua pelajar Tingkatan Empat di sekolah terpilih itu dijadikan sampel kajian. Ini menjadikan jumlah pelajar yang dijadikan sebagai sampel kajian ialah 1,219 orang.

Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan soal selidik yang mengandungi soalan bertanyakan latar belakang responden dan aspirasi pekerjaan mereka. Soal selidik telah diberikan kepada panel pakar yang terdiri daripada pensyarah dan guru sekolah untuk meneliti dan memberi komen ke atas soalan yang telah dibentuk. Maklum balas panel pakar telah diambil kira dalam mengkaji semula soalan dalam soal selidik sebelum diedarkan kepada responden. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan penyelidik mentadbir sendiri soal selidik kepada pelajar di sekolah-sekolah yang terlibat. Data yang dikumpul dianalisis dengan menggunakan perisian SPSS. Data deskriptif dianalisis dengan menggunakan statistik deskriptif seperti kekerapan dan peratusan. Manakala statistik inferensi digunakan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara pemboleh ubah.

DAPATAN KAJIAN

Daripada saiz sampel 1,219 pelajar, di 11 sekolah yang dipilih secara rawak, sebanyak 1,123 pelajar (92.1%) telah mengembalikan soal selidik untuk dianalisis. Daripada jumlah tersebut, 822 (73.2%) adalah pelajar lelaki dan 301 (26.8%) adalah pelajar perempuan. Jika ditinjau taburan jantina pelajar mengikut bidang pengajian, kebanyakan pelajar perempuan didapati mengikuti bidang kejuruteraan awam (63.8%) dan kejuruteraan binaan (56.1%). Pelajar lelaki pula didapati banyak mengikuti bidang kejuruteraan elektrikal (81.9%) dan kejuruteraan mekanikal (87.5%). Majoriti responden berbangsa Melayu (97%). Sebanyak 41.9% responden berasal dari luar bandar, 32.6% dari bandar dan 25.6% dari pekan kecil. Majoriti bapa (91.6%) dan ibu (96.6%) responden berpendidikan tertinggi sekurang-kurangnya peringkat Diploma.

Sebanyak 78% responden menyatakan mereka memilih bidang pengajian di sekolah menengah teknik kerana minat, 16.6% atas nasihat ibu bapa atau ahli keluarga dan 2.6% atas nasihat rakan. Majoriti responden (96%) menyatakan mereka ingin meneruskan pengajian pada peringkat lebih tinggi setelah tamat pengajian di sekolah menengah teknik. Sebanyak 71.3% responden tinggal di asrama, 24.9% tinggal bersama ibu bapa dan kurang 5% menumpang di rumah rakan, menyewa rumah dan menumpang di rumah saudara-mara. Majoriti responden (77.6%) menyatakan pendapatan ibu bapa mereka kurang daripada RM1,500.00 sebulan.

Pelajar yang mengikuti sesuatu bidang pengajian sepatutnya meminati atau mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian. Dapatan kajian mendapati sebanyak 56.2% responden bercita-cita menjadi jurutera dalam pelbagai bidang, manakala 44.5% bercita-cita memilih pelbagai pekerjaan lain selain jurutera. Jika dianalisis dengan lebih mendalam, kajian mendapati sebanyak 76.9% responden kejuruteraan mekanikal bercita-cita menjadi jurutera dalam bidang pengajian mereka, berbanding responden daripada bidang kejuruteraan yang lain, seperti 42.3% responden kejuruteraan awam, 47.1% responden kejuruteraan elektrikal dan 19.3% responden kejuruteraan binaan (Jadual 3). Bagi responden kejuruteraan binaan, sebanyak 47.3% bercita-cita menjadi arkitek. Begitu juga bagi responden kejuruteraan awam, sebanyak 24.9% bercita-cita menjadi arkitek. Bagi responden kejuruteraan mekanikal, sebanyak 7.5% bercita-cita menjadi juruterbang. Ini jelas menunjukkan terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara bidang pengajian dengan aspirasi pekerjaan responden (Cramer's V = 0.45, $p < 0.05$).

Jika ditinjau sama ada terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara minat dengan aspirasi pekerjaan responden, kajian mendapati hubungan yang signifikan wujud antara kedua-dua pemboleh ubah ini (Phi = 0.16, $p < 0.05$). Daripada 858 responden yang berminat mengikuti bidang pengajian kejuruteraan, sebanyak 59.2% bercita-cita menjadi jurutera. Sebaliknya, daripada 265 responden yang menyatakan sebab lain selain minat yang mendorong mereka mengikuti bidang pengajian yang dipilih, 40.4% bercita-cita menjadi jurutera (Jadual 4).

PERBINCANGAN

Powlette dan Young (1996) berpendapat keputusan tentang pilihan kerjaya adalah suatu perkara yang amat penting bagi golongan remaja atau belia. Mereka juga menyatakan pilihan kerjaya adalah suatu tugas utama yang remaja perlu lakukan dalam hidup mereka. Tugas ini akan memberikan kesan ke atas masa hadapan mereka. Oleh itu, adalah wajar bagi golongan pelajar membuat suatu pilihan kerjaya yang realistik. Namun kajian oleh Conroy (1997) dan Empson dan Krahn (1992) menunjukkan bahawa sering kali pilihan kerjaya pelajar adalah tidak realistik. Kajian Ab. Rahim (2001) misalnya mendapati sebanyak 60% pelajar yang lemah dalam bidang sains dan matematik bercadang melanjutkan pengajian dalam bidang kejuruteraan.

Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan lebih kurang 56% sahaja pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan bercadang menjadi jurutera. Sebanyak lebih kurang 44% pelajar dalam bidang berkenaan bercadang mendapatkan pekerjaan dalam bidang selain jurutera. Dapatan kajian Ab. Rahim (2001) ke atas pelajar sekolah

JADUAL 3
Aspirasi pekerjaan responden mengikut bidang pengajian

Bidang pengajian	Aspirasi Kerjaya				Jumlah	
	Jurutera		Lain			
	N	%	n	%	n	%
Kejuruteraan awam	90	42.3	123	57.7	213	100
Kejuruteraan binaan	11	19.3	46	80.7	57	100
Kejuruteraan elektrik	224	47.1	252	52.9	476	100
Kejuruteraan mekanikal	290	76.9	87	23.1	377	100

Cramer's V = 0.45, $p < 0.05$

JADUAL 4
Hubungan aspirasi pekerjaan dengan pendorong responden mengikuti bidang pengajian

Aspirasi Pekerjaan	Minat		Selain Minat	
	n	%	n	%
Jurutera	508	59.2	107	40.4
Selain Jurutera	350	40.8	158	59.6
Jumlah	858	100	265	100

Phi = 0.16, $p < 0.05$

menengah teknik mendapati hanya 42.2% sahaja pelajar sekolah berkenaan bercadang memilih kejuruteraan sebagai kerjaya mereka. Dapatan kedua-dua kajian ini jelas menunjukkan bahawa peratusan pelajar sekolah menengah teknik yang mengikuti bidang kejuruteraan yang ingin menjadi jurutera adalah rendah.

Dalam Rancangan Malaysia Kelapan dinyatakan bahawa sistem sekolah menengah teknik akan menyediakan tenaga manusia terlatih dan merupakan penyalur utama pelajar ke universiti teknikal. Atas sebab itu, enrolmen pelajar di sekolah menengah teknik dijangka meningkat menjadi 99,755 orang pada 2005, iaitu 10.8% daripada jumlah enrolmen pelajar di peringkat menengah atas dengan peruntukan lebih kurang satu bilion ringgit untuk tempoh Rancangan Malaysia Kelapan. Ini merupakan aspirasi negara yang berhasrat untuk melahirkan tenaga kerja teknikal yang mencukupi. Hasrat ini mungkin tidak tercapai sekiranya bilangan pelajar yang bercadang menceburi pekerjaan dalam bidang kejuruteraan adalah rendah walaupun mereka mengikuti bidang pengajian teknikal atau kejuruteraan semasa di sekolah menengah teknik.

Memang terdapat ketidakselarasan antara aspirasi pekerjaan pelajar dengan aspirasi negara, dan keadaan ini boleh menjejaskan perancangan pembangunan negara. Di samping itu, ketidakselarasan ini akan menyebabkan peningkatan kadar pengangguran seperti yang sedang dialami oleh lulusan institusi pengajian tinggi sekarang. Tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa ketidakselarasan ini akan wujud sekiranya pekerjaan yang ingin diceburi oleh pelajar tidak selari dengan bidang pengajian mereka. Arbono dan Novy (1991) menunjukkan bahawa terdapat lulusan institusi pengajian tinggi tidak mendapat pekerjaan yang selaras dengan aspirasi mereka. Gottfredson dan Holland (1975) berpendapat ketidakselarasan ini mungkin berpunca daripada pilihan pekerjaan oleh pelajar yang tidak realistik. Keadaan ini berlaku mungkin akibat daripada ketidakpastian pelajar semasa membuat keputusan mereka untuk menyambung pengajian dalam bidang kejuruteraan di sekolah menengah teknik. Ketidakpastian ini juga mungkin berlaku disebabkan oleh kekurangan maklumat tentang kelayakan akademik untuk meneruskan pengajian dalam bidang kejuruteraan pada peringkat universiti dan seterusnya menjadi jurutera. Kekurangan maklumat kerjaya juga boleh menyebabkan pelajar membuat pilihan kerjaya yang tidak sesuai dengan bidang pengajian mereka. Maklumat kerjaya yang tepat adalah sesuatu yang amat penting bagi seseorang pelajar (Mau 1995). George (1990) berpendapat bahawa pelajar sepatutnya mendapat maklumat kerjaya seawal-awalnya sejak mereka berada di dalam tingkatan dua.

Tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa membuat keputusan tentang kerjaya adalah satu tindakan yang perlu dilakukan oleh setiap pelajar. Pelajar mesti membuat keputusan sama ada untuk menjurus dalam bidang teknikal, vokasional, pendidikan umum atau mengikuti program latihan (U.S. Department of Labor 1992). Keputusan ini perlu dibuat oleh pelajar sama ada mereka mendapat atau tidak mendapat bantuan daripada orang dewasa seperti guru dan ibu bapa. Daripada empat bidang kejuruteraan yang dikaji, hanya bidang kejuruteraan mekanikal mempunyai pelajar yang paling banyak mempunyai aspirasi untuk menjadi jurutera, manakala bagi bidang kejuruteraan lain, kecuali bidang kejuruteraan binaan, separuh daripada pelajar masing-masing mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai jurutera. Bagaimanapun, hampir separuh pelajar kejuruteraan binaan mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai arkitek. Memang tidak dinafikan, bidang seni bina mempunyai kaitan dengan bidang kejuruteraan binaan, tetapi persoalannya ialah jurutera binaan dan arkitek adalah dua jenis pekerjaan yang berbeza. Apa yang diajar dalam kurikulum kejuruteraan binaan mungkin tidak menepati sepenuhnya apa yang diperlukan dalam bidang arkitek. Jika pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan binaan memang ingin menjadi arkitek, maka bidang pengajian yang relevan, iaitu bidang pengajian seni bina, perlu ditawarkan kepada kumpulan pelajar berkenaan.

Seperkara lagi yang perlu diberi perhatian terhadap dapatan kajian ini ialah minat sebagai pendorong pelajar mengikuti sesuatu bidang pengajian kejuruteraan. Kajian mendapati lebih separuh daripada pelajar yang mengikuti sesuatu bidang pengajian di sekolah menengah teknik adalah kerana minat dan mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai jurutera. Jika pekerjaan yang diaspirasikan itu selain jurutera, kebanyakan mereka memilih pekerjaan yang menghampiri bidang pengajian mereka, seperti pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan binaan yang mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai arkitek. Keadaan sebaliknya berlaku bagi pelajar yang mengikuti sesuatu bidang pengajian atas sebab selain minat. Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan hanya 40% daripada mereka mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai jurutera, manakala selebihnya memilih pelbagai pekerjaan lain yang tidak berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian mereka seperti menjadi doktor perubatan, peguam, ahli perniagaan dan sebagainya.

Kaunselor sekolah boleh memainkan peranan penting dalam mendedahkan kepada bidang kerjaya yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian yang diikuti oleh pelajar. Bloch (1996) dan Jenkins (1987) menyatakan salah satu tugas kaunselor sekolah ialah membekalkan maklumat dan bimbingan yang diperlukan oleh pelajar untuk membuat pilihan yang wajar, seperti kerjaya. Selain itu, Powlette dan Young (1996) menyatakan ahli teori perkembangan menganggap pilihan pekerjaan adalah satu proses yang berterusan. Oleh itu, pelajar sememangnya perlukan pengetahuan yang secukupnya untuk membuat pilihan kerjaya

CADANGAN

Berdasarkan dapatan kajian di atas, cadangan berikut dikemukakan:

1. Pihak sekolah perlu berusaha dengan lebih bersungguh-sungguh untuk menanam minat yang mendalam di kalangan pelajar dalam bidang kejuruteraan terhadap bidang pengajian mereka supaya lebih banyak di kalangan mereka mempunyai aspirasi pekerjaan sebagai jurutera selaras dengan bidang pengajian mereka.
2. Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia perlu sentiasa memantau kesesuaian kurikulum sesuatu bidang pengajian supaya selaras dengan perkembangan dalam bidang teknologi. Mana-mana bidang pengajian yang kurang relevan perlu diubahsuai kurikulumnya supaya dapat memenuhi permintaan tenaga mahir dalam sektor pekerjaan negara.
3. Pelajar yang mengikuti bidang pengajian seperti kejuruteraan perlu didedahkan kepada pelbagai jenis kerjaya yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian mereka. Matlamat ini boleh dicapai dengan mengadakan minggu kerjaya atau membawa pelajar melawat tempat kerja yang berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian mereka. Kaunselor sekolah boleh melaksanakan aktiviti ini.
4. Selain mendedahkan pelajar kepada peluang pekerjaan yang boleh mereka ceburi, pelajar juga perlu didedahkan kepada peluang untuk meneruskan pengajian pada peringkat yang lebih tinggi, terutama berkaitan dengan bidang pengajian mereka.
5. Penyelidikan yang lebih mendalam perlu dijalankan untuk meninjau sejauh mana pengetahuan dan kemahiran yang dipelajari oleh pelajar dalam sesuatu bidang pengajian di sekolah menengah teknik digunakan setelah tamat pengajian mereka. Matlamat utama kajian ini ialah untuk menjustifikasikan kewajaran peruntukan kewangan untuk penawaran bidang pengajian berkenaan.
6. Kajian juga perlu dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti sebab-sebab pelajar tidak berminat untuk menceburi pekerjaan dalam bidang kejuruteraan sedangkan mereka sendiri yang memilih untuk mengikuti bidang pengajian kejuruteraan semasa di sekolah. Selain itu, kajian juga perlu dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti sama ada pencapaian akademik pelajar dalam mata pelajaran sains, teknikal dan matematik mempunyai hubungan dengan rancangan kerjaya mereka.
7. Satu kajian juga perlu dijalankan untuk mengenal pasti sebab kenapa tidak ramai pelajar bukan Melayu yang mengikuti bidang pengajian teknikal di sekolah menengah teknik.

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Keupayaan Usahawan Bumiputera Melaksanakan Kemahiran Keusahawanan: Satu Kajian Kes

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Kata kunci: Usahawan Bumiputera, kemahiran keusahawanan, kewangan, pemasaran, pengalaman

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan meninjau persepsi usahawan Bumiputera terhadap keupayaan mereka melaksanakan kemahiran keusahawanan. Kajian ini berbentuk kajian kes ke atas 72 usahawan yang dipilih secara rawak daripada senarai ahli berdaftar dengan Dewan Perniagaan Melayu. Data dikumpul dengan menggunakan soal selidik. Usahawan bumiputera mempunyai keupayaan yang tinggi berkaitan dengan kemahiran membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik, dan menentukan keperluan pelanggan. Secara amnya usahawan bumiputera berkeupayaan sederhana tinggi dalam aspek mengendalikan kemahiran pengurusan. Walau bagaimanapun, lebih daripada 50% usahawan mempunyai persepsi bahawa mereka mempunyai keupayaan 'rendah' ke 'sederhana' untuk melaksanakan kemahiran yang spesifik berkaitan dengan kewangan dan pemasaran. Mereka tidak melihat kemahiran berkaitan dengan pemasaran sebagai kemahiran yang paling penting. Kajian ini merumuskan pengalaman usahawan tidak begitu membantu mereka menimba lebih banyak ilmu pengetahuan dalam melaksanakan aktiviti rutin dalam bidang tersebut. Cadangan telah dibuat untuk menggalakkan usahawan menukar sikap supaya lebih bersedia mengikuti program latihan keusahawanan yang releven untuk mengemas kini ilmu pengetahuan dalam menjalankan perniagaan. Agensi yang memberi latihan keusahawanan sepatutnya menggunakan strategi berbentuk pengalaman supaya menjadi lebih berkesan.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine Bumiputera entrepreneur's perception towards their ability to perform entrepreneurial competencies. This is a case study, on 72 Bumiputera entrepreneurs randomly selected from the list of entrepreneurs registered with the Malay Chamber of Commerce. Data were collected through survey method. Bumiputera entrepreneurs possess high ability to perform competencies related to establishing good human relations and determining customers' need. In general, bumiputera entrepreneurs perceived that they possess 'moderate' to 'high' ability to perform management related competencies. However, more than 50% of Bumiputera entrepreneurs perceived that they possess "low" to "moderate" ability to perform specific competencies related to finance and marketing. They did not perceive marketing competencies as the most important competencies. This study concluded that entrepreneurs' experience was not very helpful in assisting them to obtain more knowledge in performing routine activities in the field. Suggestions had been made to encourage Bumiputera entrepreneurs to change their attitude so as to increase their interest to follow relevant entrepreneurship training programs in order to update their knowledge in operating their business. Agencies offering entrepreneurial training should utilize 'experiential' strategies to ensure effectiveness.

PENGENALAN

Peningkatan pendapatan kaum Bumiputera masih belum memuaskan kerana ia masih agak ketinggalan berbanding kaum lain di Malaysia (Norasmah 2002). Berikutan itu, kerajaan Malaysia perlu memberi tumpuan kepada kaum Bumiputera untuk meningkatkan pendapatan dan taraf hidup mereka. Sehingga kini dorongan dan galakan kerajaan kepada kaum Bumiputera supaya melibatkan diri dalam bidang keusahawanan, terutamanya industri kecil dan sederhana, mewujudkan tindak balas yang positif.

Pelbagai perubahan dijangka akan berlaku dalam arena perniagaan di Malaysia. Menurut Norhashim (1994) perniagaan kecil di Malaysia telah meningkatkan jumlah peluang pekerjaan dan pembangunan usahawan. Di sini jelas bahawa perniagaan bersaiz kecil dan sederhana amat penting dalam menyumbang terhadap pembangunan negara. Aliran pertumbuhan ekonomi di Malaysia telah menggalakkan pembangunan industri kecil dan sederhana (IKS), walau bagaimanapun wujud ketidakseimbangan dalam pegangan ekonomi antara kaum di Malaysia. Humam (1992) mendapati penduduk bukan Bumiputera telah menguasai sektor ekonomi, dan matlamat Dasar Ekonomi Baru gagal dicapai sepenuhnya (Malaysia 2001). Walau bagaimanapun, hasil usaha kerajaan bersama dengan agensi sokongan kerajaan, pengagihan pendapatan keseluruhan di kalangan isi rumah di Malaysia telah bertambah baik dalam tempoh Rancangan Malaysia ke-7 (Norasmah 2002).

Pihak kerajaan telah melakukan berbagai usaha ke arah memupuk dan mengembangkan asas keusahawanan di kalangan bumiputera bagi melahirkan usahawan yang berdaya maju dan berdaya tahan. Antaranya melalui penglibatan mereka secara langsung dan aktif dalam dunia perniagaan. Pelbagai agensi telah disediakan untuk membantu usahawan Bumiputera. Banyak tabung yang bertujuan khusus untuk membangunkan usahawan bumiputera telah ditubuhkan. Antaranya ialah Tabung Usahawan Baru, Tabung Industri Bumiputera, dan Tabung Usahawan Kecil yang semuanya bertujuan membantu usahawan kecil dan sederhana (Zaidatol *et al.* 1998).

Menurut Norasmah (2002), salah satu kementerian yang berfungsi untuk membangunkan usahawan Bumiputera ialah Kementerian Pembangunan Usahawan. Kementerian ini bukan sahaja ingin membangunkan usahawan bumiputera tetapi ingin melahirkan usahawan yang berkualiti, berpotensi serta berupaya membentuk masyarakat Perdagangan dan Perindustrian (MPP) seperti yang dihasratkan dalam Wawasan 2020.

Terdapat beberapa kelemahan usahawan seperti kekurangan modal, kekurangan kemahiran pemasaran, kekurangan pengetahuan dan teknologi, kekurangan pekerja mahir, kekurangan kemahiran dan pengetahuan pengurusan dan ketidakmampuan untuk mendapat premis perniagaan yang sesuai (Zaidatol dan Habibah 1997). Dapatan Humam dan rakan-rakan (1992) menunjukkan faktor yang sama juga telah menyebabkan kegagalan perniagaan iaitu pengurusan yang lemah, masalah pemasaran dan kewangan, faktor perundangan dan peraturan serta faktor peribadi dan keusahawanan.

Walaupun sistem pendidikan secara beransur-ansur mengubah nilai dan sikap Bumiputera ke arah perubahan positif, masih terdapat beberapa golongan usahawan Bumiputera yang masih ketinggalan dari segi daya cipta, amalan perniagaan yang baik dan semangat bekerja yang gigih. Budaya niaga keusahawanan dan kesanggupan menanggung risiko masih belum dihayati sepenuhnya oleh masyarakat peniaga Bumiputera. Usaha kerajaan untuk membantu kaum Bumiputera telah banyak dilaksanakan, dan pendidikan perdagangan dan keusahawanan telah lama wujud di Malaysia (Shahril 1993). Kementerian Pendidikan juga memainkan peranan penting mewujudkan pelapis usahawan melalui program seperti Usahawan Muda dan Briged Usahawan (Zaidatol *et al.* 1998).

Sieh (1990) dalam kajiannya tentang profil usahawan Malaysia mendapati usahawan menghadapi masalah dalam bidang kewangan kerana mereka kurang pengetahuan. Pandangan yang sama diberikan oleh Timmons (1985) apabila beliau mengatakan asas pendidikan keusahawanan adalah kemahiran teknikal dan kewangan. Manakala Hess (1987) dan Kent (1990) menyarankan aspek pengurusan dan pemasaran adalah penting untuk kejayaan usahawan. Secara am, kajian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau tahap kemahiran usahawan bumiputera dalam aspek pengurusan, pemasaran dan kewangan. Memandangkan pesatnya perkembangan keusahawanan sekarang ini, adalah penting untuk dijalankan kajian bagi mengenal pasti tahap keupayaan usahawan Bumiputera di Malaysia setelah kerajaan mempergiat usaha untuk membangunkan keusahawanan. Kajian ini cuba untuk menjawab soalan kajian berikut: Sejauh manakah usahawan bumiputera mempunyai keupayaan melaksanakan kemahiran keusahawanan dari aspek pemasaran, pengurusan dan kewangan?

METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Sampel Kajian

Kajian ini berbentuk kajian kes. Subjek terdiri daripada 72 usahawan Bumiputera yang dipilih daripada senarai ahli berdaftar dengan Dewan Perniagaan Melayu di Wilayah Persekutuan dan Selangor. Data dikumpul daripada responden melalui soal selidik yang telah dibina oleh Zaidatol (1992). Soal selidik ini mengandungi beberapa item yang mengukur kemahiran keusahawanan dalam tiga gagasan iaitu pengurusan, pemasaran dan kewangan.

Instrumen dan Analisis

Untuk menentukan kesahan, soal selidik telah disemak oleh pakar dalam bidang keusahawanan, dan pekali Cronbach Alpha .95 telah diperoleh untuk mengukur kebolehpercayaan bahagian kemahiran keusahawanan. Keseluruhan 30 item kemahiran telah dibentuk untuk mengukur tahap kemahiran usahawan bumiputera.

Soal selidik yang digunakan dalam kajian ini mengandungi dua bahagian. Bahagian pertama terdiri daripada maklumat latar belakang usahawan. Bahagian kedua tentang persepsi usahawan terhadap kepentingan kemahiran keusahawanan yang terpilih dan keupayaan mereka melaksanakannya. Skala Likert 5 pilihan telah digunakan untuk mengukur aspek persepsi usahawan iaitu '1' yang menunjukkan sangat rendah hingga '5' yang menunjukkan sangat tinggi. Data dianalisis secara deskriptif dengan menggunakan pakej SPSS. Jadual 2 mengandungi senarai item kemahiran keusahawanan yang diukur.

DAPATAN KAJIAN

Profil Usahawan

Jadual 1 menunjukkan latar belakang usahawan. Jelas kelihatan seramai 41.7% usahawan mempunyai kelulusan sehingga sekolah menengah sahaja. Seramai 52.8% tidak mempunyai pendidikan yang berkaitan dengan perniagaan, seramai 47.2% pula melibatkan diri dalam perniagaan berbentuk jualan, 55.3% berpengalaman berniaga lebih daripada 10 tahun dan 72.2% mempunyai pekerja kurang daripada 20 orang.

Kajian ini mendapati seramai 70.8% daripada responden memulakan perniagaan dengan usaha sendiri, 65.3% memulakan perniagaan kerana 'minat', dan 'wang' merupakan faktor utama mengapa mereka memilih untuk memulakan perniagaan sendiri. Lebih 50% daripada usahawan ini telah mengikuti kursus pengurusan dan keusahawanan. Namun begitu bilangannya agak kurang untuk mereka yang telah mengikuti kursus yang spesifik seperti pemasaran (47.2%), kewangan (44.4%) dan perakaunan (36.1%).

Walau bagaimanapun, latihan keusahawanan yang diterima adalah dalam tempoh yang terhad iaitu kurang daripada enam (6) bulan bagi seramai 56.9% usahawan. Seramai 92% usahawan merasakan latihan keusahawanan adalah penting untuk mereka. Data yang diperoleh tentang nilai bersih perniagaan menunjukkan kebanyakan usahawan Bumiputera mempunyai nilai bersih perniagaan dalam dua kategori iaitu 44% di bawah RM50,000 dan 43% di atas RM100,000.

Keupayaan Usahawan Bumiputera

Jadual 2 menunjukkan taburan persepsi usahawan terhadap kemahiran keusahawanan. Dapatan menunjukkan kebanyakan usahawan bumiputera mempunyai keupayaan yang tinggi dalam aspek pengurusan terutama dalam membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik (69%), membentuk kemahiran komunikasi secara lisan dan tulisan (67%) dan membentuk kemahiran mengurus (62%). Didapati juga kebanyakan usahawan bumiputera berkeupayaan tinggi dalam mengira untung kasar dan bersih (67%) dan menentukan keperluan pelanggan (67%). Kurang daripada 50% usahawan bumiputera berkebolehan melaksanakan kemahiran tertentu seperti mengutip akaun boleh terima, menyediakan laporan kewangan, menjalankan kajian pasaran, dan menyediakan rancangan pasaran.

Jadual 3 pula menunjukkan min tentang persepsi usahawan Bumiputera terhadap 10 kemahiran keusahawanan yang mereka anggap paling penting dan kebolehan mereka melaksanakannya. Usahawan bumiputera melihat empat kemahiran sebagai amat penting (melebihi min skor 4.50) iaitu membentuk kemahiran mengurus, membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik, mengemas kini rekod kewangan dan menentukan keperluan pelanggan. Walau bagaimanapun skor min untuk tahap keupayaan mereka melaksanakan kemahiran yang dianggap penting ini hanya di tahap sederhana tinggi sahaja.

JADUAL 1
Pembolehubah demografi usahawan Bumiputera

Kategori Demografi	n	%
Pendidikan		
Sekolah Rendah	6	8.3
Sekolah Menengah	30	41.7
Maktab/Kolej	12	16.7
Universiti	24	33.3
Pendidikan dalam Bidang Perniagaan		
Ada Kelulusan Perniagaan	34	47.2
Tiada Kelulusan Perniagaan	38	52.8
Jenis Perniagaan		
Jualan	34	47.2
Perkhidmatan	26	36.1
Pembinaan	12	16.6
Lama Berniaga		
<10 tahun	32	44.4
>10 tahun	40	55.5
Jumlah Pekerja		
<20	52	72.2
>20	20	27.8
Bagaimana Perniagaan Dimulakan		
Mulakan sendiri	51	70.8
Mewarisi	12	16.7
Lain-lain	9	12.5
Mengapa Berniaga		
Tidak puas hati dengan kerja dahulu	14	19.4
Tradisi keluarga	10	13.9
Kehilangan Pekerjaan	1	1.4
Minat	47	65.3
Kursus diikuti*		
Pemasaran	34	47.2
Kewangan	32	44.4
Perakaunan	26	36.1
Ekonomi	16	22.2
Keusahawanan	37	51.4
Pengurusan	41	56.9
Undang-undang	22	30.5
Umur Memulakan Perniagaan		
<25 tahun	18	25.0
26 – 35 tahun	29	40.3
36 – 45 tahun	17	23.6
>45 tahun	8	11.1
Sebab Utama Memilih Perniagaan Sendiri		
Wang	31	43.0
Kebebasan	17	23.6

samb. *Jadual 1*

Kategori Demografi	n	%
Cabaran	18	25.0
Kepuasan Kendiri	6	8.3
Adakah Pendidikan Keusahawanan Penting		
Ya	66	91.7
Tidak	6	8.3
Latihan Keusahawanan		
<6 bulan	41	56.9
>6 bulan	19	26.4
Tiada Latihan	12	16.7
Anggaran Nilai Bersih Perniagaan		
<RM 50,000	32	44.4
50,000 – 75,000	2	2.8
75,000 – 100,000	31	43.1

* responden memilih lebih daripada satu kursus.

JADUAL 2
Keupayaan usahawan Bumiputera melaksanakan kemahiran keusahawanan

	Frekuensi (%)			Min	Sisihan piawai
	Tinggi	Sederhana	Rendah		
Pengurusan					
1. Membentuk kemahiran komunikasi secara lisan dan tulisan	48 (67)	16 (22)	8 (11)	3.81	1.14
2. Membentuk prosedur untuk menggunakan masa	42 (58)	20 (28)	10 (14)	3.64	1.23
3. Membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik	50 (69)	16 (22)	6 (8)	3.92	1.14
4. Menilai kemampuan dan keupayaan peribadi	38 (53)	26 (36)	8 (11)	3.55	1.09
5. Melatih pekerja	43 (60)	20 (28)	9 (13)	3.71	1.13
6. Memotivasikan pekerja	41 (57)	20 (28)	11 (15)	3.58	1.18
7. Menyerahkan tugas/ tanggungjawab	45 (62)	21 (29)	6 (9)	3.78	1.07
8. Menilai perniagaan	39 (54)	26 (36)	7 (10)	3.61	1.06
9. Membentuk kemahiran mengurus	45 (62)	15 (21)	12 (17)	3.69	1.73
10. Mencari peluang keuntungan baru	45 (62)	15 (21)	12 (17)	3.69	1.17
Kewangan					
11. Mengemas kini rekod kewangan	43 (60)	19 (26)	10 (14)	3.75	1.21
12. Mentafsir laporan kewangan	35 (48)	25 (35)	12 (17)	3.46	1.07
13. Menyediakan laporan kewangan	29 (40)	25 (35)	18 (25)	3.29	1.19
14. Mengira untung kasar dan bersih	48 (67)	16 (22)	8 (11)	3.86	1.10
15. Mengutip akaun boleh terima	28 (39)	30 (42)	14 (19)	2.54	1.25
16. Menyediakan rekod pendapatan dan perbelanjaan harian	38 (53)	21 (29)	13 (18)	3.51	1.21
17. Menyediakan penyata aliran tunai	35 (48)	21 (29)	16 (22)	3.42	1.19
18. Mengurus modal kerja	44 (61)	16 (22)	12 (17)	3.72	1.20
19. Mengawal pusing ganti inventori	41 (57)	19 (26)	12 (17)	3.59	1.18
20. Menyediakan belanjawan pengendalian	36 (50)	23 (32)	13 (18)	3.50	1.15

Samb. Jadual 2

Pemasaran					
21. Menentukan keperluan pelanggan	48 (67)	18 (25)	6 (9)	3.90	1.03
22. Mengira harga jualan produk	43 (60)	22 (31)	7 (10)	3.79	1.13
25. Menyediakan rancangan pasaran	33 (42)	23 (32)	16 (22)	3.44	1.27
26. Menentukan arah aliran produk	30 (42)	23 (32)	19 (26)	3.21	1.25
27. Menjalankan kajian pasaran	28 (39)	21 (29)	23 (32)	3.10	1.28
28. Menentukan kekuatan dan kelemahan persaingan	33 (47)	23 (32)	15 (21)	3.37	1.14
29. Memilih bakal pembekal	41 (57)	16 (22)	15 (21)	3.44	1.29
30. Memberitahu pelanggan rupa bentuk dan kebaikan produk	44 (61)	10 (14)	18 (25)	3.62	1.45

JADUAL 3
Susunan 'Min' mengikut persepsi usahawan: Kemahiran keusahawanan yang dianggap paling penting dan keupayaan usahawan melaksanakannya

Susunan Kemahiran	kepentingan kemahiran (x)	Keuoayaan usahawan melaksanakan kemahiran (x)
1. Membentuk kemahiran mengurus	4.69	3.69
2. Membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik	4.67	3.92
3. Mengemas kini rekod kewangan	4.60	3.75
4. Menentukan keperluan pelanggan	4.60	3.90
5. Mengira untung kasar dan bersih	4.56	3.86
6. Membentuk kemahiran komunikasi secara lisan dan tulisan	4.54	3.81
7. Memotivasi pekerja	4.54	3.58
8. Melatih pekerja	4.53	3.71
9. Menilai perniagaan	4.50	3.61
10. Mencari peluang keuntungan baru	4.49	3.69

NB: Skala untuk kepentingan kemahiran
5 = sangat penting 1 = tidak penting
Skala untuk keupayaan melaksanakan kemahiran
5 = sangat berkeupayaan 1 = tidak berkeupayaan

Walaupun usahawan bumiputera mempunyai keupayaan tinggi dalam aspek pengurusan, jika ditinjau dengan lebih mendalam lagi kajian ini mendapati usahawan Bumiputera mempunyai sepuluh kebolehan terendah dalam kemahiran yang berkaitan dengan pengurusan kewangan dan pemasaran seperti yang ditunjukkan dalam Jadual 4. Lima (50%) daripada kemahiran yang tersenarai adalah berkaitan dengan bidang kewangan dan lima (50%) lagi daripada bidang pemasaran. Di sini kelihatan daripada 30 kemahiran keusahawanan yang disenaraikan, sepuluh kemahiran terendah usahawan Bumiputera adalah dalam aspek pemasaran dan kewangan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan lebih daripada 58% usahawan kurang berkeupayaan dalam mengutip akaun boleh terima, menjalankan kajian pasaran, menyediakan laporan kewangan dan menentukan arah aliran produk. Lebih kurang 53% pula kurang berkeupayaan dalam menentukan kekuatan dan kelemahan pesaing, menyediakan rancangan pemasaran dan mentafsir laporan kewangan.

PERBINCANGAN

Usahawan bumiputera mempunyai keupayaan yang tinggi dalam membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik, dan membentuk kemahiran komunikasi secara lisan dan tulisan. Dapatan ini menyokong pandangan Fatley (1990) dan Mc Cannon *et al.* (2000) yang menyarankan komunikasi berbentuk tulisan dan lisan adalah penting dan menjadi asas kepada pembentukan kemahiran yang lain di tempat kerja. Womble *et*

JADUAL 4
Skor 'Min' keupayaan usahawan Bumiputera untuk melaksanakan kemahiran 'perakaunan' dan 'pemasaran' yang kritikal

Kemahiran	Skor Min keupayaan	Frekuensi Kurang keupayaan
Mengutip akaun boleh terima	2.54	44 (61%)
Menjalankan kajian pasaran	3.10	44 (61%)
Menentukan arah aliran produk	3.21	42 (58%)
Menyediakan laporan kewangan	3.29	43 (60%)
Menentukan kekuatan dan kelemahan persaingan	3.37	38 (53%)
Menyediakan penyata akaun tunai	3.42	37 (51%)
Memilih bakal pembekal	3.44	31 (43%)
Menyediakan rancangan pemasaran	3.44	39 (54%)
Mentafsir laporan kewangan	3.46	39 (54%)
Menyediakan belanjawan pengendalian	3.50	36 (51%)

Nota: (1) Frekuensi dikira dengan menjumlahkan skor keupayaan di tahap sederhana, rendah dan terendah. Hanya 50% ke atas diambil kira untuk jadual ini.
(2) Skala untuk keupayaan melaksanakan kemahiran
5 = sangat berkeupayaan, 1 = tidak berkeupayaan

al. (2000) pula mendapati kemahiran interpersonal dan hubungan manusia merupakan sesuatu yang amat penting di tempat kerja hari ini. Zaidatol *et al.* (2000) juga telah mengenal pasti kepentingan kemahiran komunikasi dan hubungan manusia di tempat kerja untuk kejayaan sesuatu kerjaya. Dapatan kajian ini mendapati kemahiran keusahawanan dalam aspek pengurusan dimiliki oleh kebanyakan usahawan bumiputera dan keadaan ini amat bertepatan dengan pandangan Zaidatol *et al.* (2000) yang mengatakan bahawa perniagaan yang berjaya selalunya melibatkan beberapa kemahiran yang lain selain daripada aspek fungsian perniagaan sahaja. Luft (1986) menyarankan prinsip hubungan manusia yang diperlukan untuk kejayaan kerjaya adalah berkaitan dengan pembentukan konsep kendiri yang positif, menerima kritikan, menyelesaikan konflik, menangani perubahan, menangani diskriminasi dan prejudis dan memahami sumber nilai, nilai kendiri dan menerima nilai orang lain. Usahawan bumiputera yang dikaji telah mengenal pasti kemahiran mengurus dan membentuk hubungan manusia yang baik sebagai kemahiran keusahawanan yang paling penting dan kedua-dua kemahiran tersebut merupakan kemahiran yang paling tinggi kebolehan usahawan melaksanakannya. Walau bagaimanapun terdapat perbezaan dari segi kebolehan usahawan dalam mengendalikan aspek kewangan dan pemasaran. Walaupun secara keseluruhan didapati 47% usahawan Bumiputera telah mempunyai kelulusan dalam bidang perniagaan dan telah mengikuti kursus dalam bidang pemasaran, jelas mereka masih kurang berkeupayaan dalam melaksanakan kemahiran kewangan dan pemasaran yang mereka sendiri sedar akan kepentingannya. Jika ditinjau dari segi pengalaman, dapatan kajian menunjukkan 55% usahawan Bumiputera telahpun berkecimpung dalam dunia perniagaan melebihi 10 tahun. Walaupun perniagaan mereka merupakan perniagaan kecil-kecilan (72% mempunyai pekerja kurang daripada 20 orang), mereka masih menghadapi masalah utama untuk mengutip akaun boleh terima, iaitu seramai 61% belum mampu untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut. Di samping itu juga didapati 61% kurang berkemampuan untuk menjalankan kajian pasaran, 60% belum begitu mampu menyediakan laporan kewangan dan seramai 58% kurang berkebolehan untuk menentukan arah aliran produk. Ini membimbangkan kerana kebanyakan daripada kemahiran perakaunan dan pemasaran yang dianggap penting untuk kejayaan masih lagi belum dikuasai sepenuhnya oleh usahawan Bumiputera. Apakah faktor utama yang menghasilkan keadaan ini? Dapatan juga menunjukkan hanya 26% usahawan telah berpeluang mengikuti latihan keusahawanan selama enam (6) bulan dan lebih. Kebanyakannya (57%) hanya telah berpeluang mengikuti kursus keusahawanan kurang daripada

(6) bulan. Fenomena ini mungkin mempengaruhi persepsi mereka terhadap keupayaan melaksanakan kemahiran keusahawanan terutama dalam bidang pemasaran. Seramai 17% pula tidak pernah mengikuti latihan langsung dan hanya 44% pernah mengikuti kursus berbentuk perakaunan atau kewangan.

Ilmu pemasaran didapati amat penting untuk usahawan bumiputera. Keputusan yang dibuat dalam aspek pemasaran selalunya mempengaruhi usaha mereka dalam merancang, menjalankan dan menguruskan perniagaannya. Usahawan Bumiputera hendaklah mengoperasikan perniagaannya berlandaskan amalan pemasaran yang betul. Menurut Zaidatol *et al.* (1997) terdapat banyak syarikat yang muflis kerana pemiliknya tidak mempunyai pengetahuan yang cukup dalam menangani keadaan pasaran yang sentiasa berubah. Tambah beliau lagi perniagaan hari ini hendaklah berorientasikan pemasaran. Syarikat yang ingin membentuk dan mengeluarkan barangan tanpa mengambil kira kemudahan dan keperluan pelanggan akan menghadapi masalah. Dengan mengambil kira perkembangan perniagaan secara global aplikasi konsep pemasaran ini perlu diberi tumpuan yang lebih.

Mengikut Drucker (1963) dua fungsi utama untuk sesebuah perniagaan ialah pemasaran dan inovasi. Pandangan ini juga disokong oleh Barnes, Pynn dan Noonam (1982) bahawa kebanyakan firma gagal setiap tahun kerana mereka tidak berupaya untuk menentukan sasaran pasaran. Ini juga dipersetujui oleh Cohen dan Reddich (1981) bahawa kegagalan sesuatu perniagaan itu adalah hasil daripada cara pemasaran yang salah. Memandangkan usahawan dalam kajian ini berskala kecil, Tootelian dan Goedeka (1985) pernah menyatakan bahawa sepatutnya mereka yang berkecimpung dalam perniagaan yang begini mendapat kelebihan dalam aspek: perkhidmatan pelanggan secara peribadi, pengetahuan tentang pelanggan dan pasaran, hubungan rapat dengan komuniti, pendekatan secara peribadi dengan pekerja dan pengurusan yang anjal. Malangnya usahawan bumiputera dalam kajian ini tidak menunjukkan ciri-ciri yang positif dalam menguasai kemahiran pemasaran walaupun situasi atau persekitaran yang disediakan mampu mengarah mereka ke arah keberkesanan yang lebih tinggi. Malahan dalam senarai sepuluh kemahiran yang paling penting mengikut persepsi usahawan hanya satu kemahiran sahaja berkaitan dengan pemasaran iaitu 'menentukan keperluan pelanggan'. Pemeringkatan yang rendah kepada aktiviti pemasaran oleh usahawan menunjukkan usahawan kurang faham dan tidak memberi tumpuan yang cukup kepada usaha pemasaran yang penting untuk kejayaan.

Begitu juga dalam aspek kewangan, masalah utama usahawan Bumiputera ialah untuk mengutip akaun boleh terima. Tate (1977) juga mendapati salah satu penyebab kepada kegagalan dalam perniagaan ialah kegagalan usahawan mengutip akaun boleh terima. Pandangan ini disokong oleh Diffley (1983) yang mendapati kemahiran 'mengutip akaun boleh terima' merupakan kemahiran yang paling penting untuk usahawan di Kansas. Aspek lain yang ketara pentingnya dalam pengendalian perniagaan adalah pengurusan kewangan, belanjawan dan penyediaan penyata aliran tunai. Kesemua kemahiran ini amat diperlukan tetapi usahawan Bumiputera tidak mempunyai keupayaan yang tinggi dalam hal ini. Kemahiran-kemahiran ini adalah penting untuk menjamin kejayaan sesebuah perniagaan (Kiesner 1990).

Kepentingan kemahiran pemasaran dan kewangan ini tidak dapat dinafikan lagi. Beberapa kajian lepas seperti oleh Mc Ewen (1990), Hess (1987) dan Clouse (1990) telah merumuskan bahawa kedua-dua aspek ini berkait rapat. Misalnya Clouse (1990) menyatakan bahawa kepentingan membuat keputusan dalam pemasaran adalah amat tinggi bagi seseorang usahawan. Beliau juga menekankan kepentingan aspek kewangan terutama untuk memahami aliran tunai dan menganalisis untung dan rugi. Manakala Hess (1987) pula menyatakan aspek jualan dan pemasaran mendahului senarai utama tugas seseorang usahawan diikuti oleh kemahiran pengurusan kewangan. Kohn (1985) pula percaya kegagalan perniagaan itu disebabkan oleh kurang pengalaman usahawan dalam pengurusan, usahawan tidak kompeten, kekurangan modal, strategi pemasaran yang salah, serta rekod dan prosedur perakaunan yang tidak lengkap.

Memandangkan seramai 92% usahawan Bumiputera merasakan latihan keusahawanan adalah penting, dan mereka telah mula sedar akan kepentingan sesuatu kemahiran tertentu maka adalah lebih baik sekiranya mereka diberi peluang sewajarnya untuk mengikuti program latihan dan pembangunan usahawan yang sempurna. Program latihan itu perlulah bukan sekadar pendedahan sahaja tetapi mempelajari selok-beloknya. Program latihan keusahawanan ini perlu diubahsuai pelaksanaannya seperti menggunakan kaedah berbentuk pengalaman atau 'experiential' dan berorientasikan tindakan untuk menepati keperluan dan kehendak spesifik usahawan bagi menjadikan seseorang itu bertambah maju dan tidak ketinggalan dalam segala bidang. Kaedah ini penting kerana untuk mempelajari aspek perakaunan yang spesifik adalah lebih sukar jika kaedah yang digunakan tidak tepat. Ini semua akan dapat membantu mengecilkan jurang jumlah usahawan berjaya dan yang gagal.

Pendidikan yang bererti amat diperlukan, walaupun 47% usahawan telah mengikuti kursus pemasaran dan juga pendidikan perniagaan amnya, mereka masih tidak mampu mengendalikan aspek ini dengan baik. Adakah segala latihan yang dilalui tidak menjamin keupayaan yang lebih? Keberkesanan latihan dan pendidikan keusahawanan untuk usahawan Bumiputera perlu dinilai semula supaya agensi yang terlibat peka dengan keberkesanannya. Lagipun didapati usahawan bumiputera menceburkan diri dalam bidang perniagaan atas inisiatif sendiri (71%) dan minat (67%). Sepatutnya kemahiran keusahawanan yang penting dan perlu dikuasai dapat dipelajari secara formal atau tidak formal sebelum mula menceburkan diri lagi. Kemahiran tersebut dapat dipertingkat penguasaannya secara beransur-ansur setelah berkecimpung dalam dunia perniagaan.

RUMUSAN DAN CADANGAN

Secara amnya, usahawan bumiputera mempunyai kemahiran yang sederhana tinggi dalam aspek pengurusan tetapi hanya mempunyai kebolehan yang sederhana rendah dalam melaksanakan kemahiran keusahawan berkaitan dengan 'pemasaran' dan 'kewangan'. Keupayaan untuk melaksanakan kemahiran tersebut adalah sederhana rendah bagi lebih daripada 50% usahawan. Usahawan mempunyai asas pendidikan dan latihan yang sederhana dalam bidang perniagaan. Peluang untuk mengikuti latihan perlu ditingkatkan terutama untuk mempelajari dengan mendalam aspek kewangan dan pemasaran yang dianggap penting untuk terus berjaya. Pendidikan yang diterima masih belum mencukupi. Walaupun usahawan Bumiputera telah lama menceburkan diri dalam bidang perniagaan secara amnya kemahiran keusahawanan mereka tidak tinggi tetapi bertaraf sederhana sahaja. Ini menggambarkan bahawa pengalaman sahaja tidak memadai dalam meningkatkan pengetahuan usahawan. Pengalaman dan pendidikan yang dipunyai oleh usahawan Bumiputera tidak menjamin pertambahan ilmu dalam mengendalikan perniagaan mereka secara berkesan. Ini terbukti apabila didapati lebih 50% usahawan tidak mempunyai kemahiran yang tinggi dalam melaksanakan kemahiran yang dianggap 'routine' dalam menjalankan sesebuah perniagaan. Keberkesanan agensi yang menyediakan program dan pakej latihan keusahawanan terutama yang melatih usahawan perlu dikemas kini dan dinilai. Memandangkan 92% merasakan latihan keusahawanan ini penting untuk mereka maka pelaksanaan dari segi kaedah penyampaian dalam program pembangunan usahawan hendaklah berbentuk 'experiential' dan berorientasi tindakan. Usahawan Bumiputera hendaklah mengubah sikap supaya sentiasa menambah usaha dan kesanggupan untuk mengemas kini ilmu pengetahuan dalam bidang kewangan dan pemasaran. Walaupun bidang ini sukar dipelajari, keinginan untuk menguasainya hendaklah sentiasa dipupuk. Di samping menambah usaha mempertingkat ilmu pengetahuan bercorak teknikal, usaha untuk membentuk sikap dan personaliti usahawan yang unggul hendaklah diberi pertimbangan terutama bagi melengkapkan diri dengan ciri-ciri keusahawanan yang penting untuk kejayaan.

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Students' Perception of the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Business Studies Programs

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ABSTRAK

Satu kajian telah dijalankan untuk meneliti persepsi pelajar tentang keberkesanan pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam program pengajian perniagaan di Universiti mereka. Seramai 1552 pelajar mendaftar secara sepenuh masa di tiga universiti awam tempatan di Malaysia terlibat dalam kajian ini. Tiga faktor digunakan untuk mengukur persepsi pelajar tentang pengajaran dan pembelajaran yang efektif. Faktor tersebut ialah Faktor Pensyarah, Metodologi Pengajaran dan Kerelevanan Kursus. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan sejumlah besar responden sederhana setuju bahawa pensyarah mereka memiliki dan mempamerkan kualiti seperti yang dijelaskan dalam konstruk. Penjelasan item terpilih yang menggambarkan trend berkaitan telah dibincangkan dalam kertas ini. Ujian t dan ANOVA menunjukkan wujud perbezaan yang signifikan tentang persepsi pelajar dalam ketiga–tiga faktor megikut jantina, latar belakang etnik, kelayakan akademik tertinggi dan skor CGPA terkini. Juga terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam persepsi pelajar tentang faktor pensyarah keseluruhan berdasarkan pengalaman bekerja lepas belajar, dan persepsi tentang metodologi pengajaran dan kerelevanan kursus berdasarkan tahap penguasaan bahasa Inggeris.

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to examine students' perceptions of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in business studies programs in their universities. About 1552 students enrolled as full time students in three public universities in Malaysia participated in the study. Three factors were employed to measure students' perceptions of effective teaching and learning. The factors were Lecturers' Factor, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance. Findings showed that a majority of respondents moderately agreed that their lecturers possessed and exhibited qualities described in all three constructs. Individual item description highlighted some interesting trends discussed in this paper. T tests and ANOVA showed significant differences in students' perceptions of all three factors based on their gender, ethnic background, highest academic qualification, and current CGPA scores. There were significant differences in the perceptions of Overall Lecturer Factor based on students' previous work experience, and in the perceptions of Teaching Methodology and Relevance of Courses based on their level of English Language proficiency.

INTRODUCTION

This research aimed to examine the quality of teaching and learning factors in business programs in public universities in Malaysia. As the Malaysian Education Act for Higher Institutions of Learning of 1996 devolved authority for the control of institutional development, performance standards, and financial accountability to the institutions, it is therefore incumbent upon universities to evaluate their own effectiveness in delivering educational services, in particular, teaching and learning to their clients. This report however, was part of a wider study on the level of service quality offered in business programs in public universities in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The conceptual framework of quality teaching is drawn from the larger discipline of Service Quality. Service quality is defined as the gap between expectations and perceptions of a service (Boulding *et al.* 1993), in this case, the teaching service in higher education. Service quality research often encompasses overall organizational factors. Parasumaran, Zeitmal, and Berry (1985) identified 10 determinants of service quality which are Reliability, Responsiveness, Competence, Access, Courtesy, Communication, Credibility, Security, Understanding and knowing the customer, and Tangibles such as facilities and equipment. Wright's (1996) research identified 8 major service quality factors for higher education: diversity of educational experience (diversity of coursework and student body), access and use of facilities (location, atmosphere and hours of university facilities), personalized interaction (interaction between student and faculty), student quality (quality of students at the university), educational process (requirements and ability to fulfil requirements), faculty quality (academic and professional background of faculty), and professor's years of teaching experience.

However, the measure of quality teaching and learning needs to focus on the dimensional factors that directly influence the process delivery of instructional design and the course outcomes. Quality teaching in university can be defined as one that engages the student in an in-depth and comprehensive approach to the subject matter, that is, in an active, durable, and critical construction of knowledge integrated with his or her previous knowledge and put to action (Entwistle and Ramsden 1983). Pennington and O'Neil (1994) proposed eight principles that underscore effective teaching. These are: (1) enhancing students' general capabilities and work-related skills (2) using student experience as a learning resource (3) encouraging active and co-operative learning (4) promoting responsibility in learning (5) engaging with feelings, values and motives (the affective domain) as well as with intellectual development (6) fostering open, flexible, reflexive and outcome - based assessment (7)evaluating teaching and learning to encourage reflective teaching, and (8) developing organization-wide strategies to establish congruence of policies to enhance physical and material learning environment. Hill, Lomas, and MacGregor (2003) reported in their study that students' perceptions of quality learning included experiences that helped them to link theory with the real world, assignments relevant to real work place, discussions leading to new perspectives of thinking, and curriculum that took account of the students' group experiences and imparted added value to students. Hill also reported the emergence of three major teaching strategies which were highly rated by students in higher education: delivery strategy and techniques in the classroom; feedback to students in the classroom and in assignments; and relationship with students in the classroom.

In higher education, customer satisfaction begins with the expectations created upon the service by various parties to be delivered to or experienced by the customer. One of the expectations is the quality of the teaching staff. Lammers and Murphy (2002) in their research of quality teaching in US universities concluded from their study that lecturers' enthusiasm, knowledge ability in the subject, and effective classroom management are highly valued skills which interact with other physical factors such as course design to produce effective teaching and learning. Morton-Cooper (1993) in a research on lecturer traits valued by students cited responsiveness and trustworthiness as the major traits. Trustworthiness included the element of reliability and consistency. Lecturer enthusiasm was also a vital trait that encouraged learning (Hill *et al.* 2003; O'Neil 1995, Ramsden 1988).

On curriculum content, qualitative research by Hill *et al.* (2003) on students' perceptions of quality in higher education showed that students valued a curriculum that was flexible, took account of the student group experiences, made links between theory and the real world, and was up to date. The effectiveness in the teaching curriculum needs to be understood in the context of their contribution to the development of the students' character and competence within the respective disciplines. Indeed, customer satisfaction in higher education involves how closely the delivered service has added value to the skills and competence of customers to gain better job market or career advantage (Rowley 1997). Thus, course outcomes drive the policies and motivation in university teaching. They rightfully ought to form the basis of the evaluation of the construct, content, and teaching-learning experience students undergo during their enrolment in the courses.

Rowley (1997) however, reminds us that ever too often the measurement of service quality has been taken from the customers' view point, not the service providers. Nor have service quality measures made concerted attempts to acknowledge the impact of external expectations from other stakeholders such as employers, governmental policy making agencies, parents, and subsequent training and learning institutions on the standards of service delivery and service outcomes even when it is generally known that these agents exert considerable influence in forming the expectations of the direct clients, i.e. the students. While this present research acknowledges Rowley's comments, it is however beyond the scope of this project to cover the areas of external influence on the expectations of the customer. In this research report, the focus has deliberately been on factors that are immediately within the control of the lecturers (the service providers). These factors are the Lecturer Factor, Teaching Methodology employed, and Course Relevance and Design. The evaluators are the students who are the main service recipients.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify students' overall perceptions of the quality teaching and learning factors in the business studies program;
2. To identify students' perceptions of Lecturer Factors, Teaching Methodology, and the Relevance of their Course;
3. To examine if there are significant differences in the students' overall perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning factors in the business studies program based on their demographic variables; and
4. To examine if there are significant differences in students' perceptions of Lecturer Factor, Teaching Methodology, and the Relevance of their Course based on their demographic variables.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive correlational method. This study was part of a wider nationwide study on students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning in business programs in public universities. The independent variables were service quality factors in teaching and learning which comprised five measures: Lecturer factor, Teaching methodology, Course Relevance, Facilities, and Support services and the dependent variable was the overall student satisfaction with the teaching and learning experience. In this report, analysis was done only on the quality of teaching and learning using the measures for Lecturer factor, Teaching methodology, and Course Relevance since these factors were assumed to be directly under the control or influence of the Faculty and lecturers. Any recommendations made in the discussion session would therefore contribute in more immediate and specific ways to the faculty.

The Lecturer factor consisted of 8 constructs that were Appearance, Fairness, Helpfulness, Care, Friendliness, Communication, Reliability and Credibility. Teaching Methodology factor consisted of two constructs, which were the Individual Lecturer's Teaching Competence, and the Overall Course Delivery. The third service quality factor for teaching and learning was Course Relevance whose constructs were Content Relevance and Course Design.

Due to the small number of students enrolled in business studies programs, and the project requirement that only students who had undergone industrial training were selected, it was decided that respondents were taken from all final year students in the business programs. At the stage of this report, a total of 1552 students from three public universities participated in the study although the project aims to cover all public universities in Malaysia that offer business studies programs. Data were collected by the researcher using survey questionnaires that were administered for durations of twenty to thirty minutes at pre-arranged meetings with the students. The data was collected between January and May 2003, following a pilot test in November 2002 in one public university involving 70 students.

The measurement of items in the survey questionnaires was based on 5 Likert scale, with 1 denoting "Strongly disagree"; and 5 denoting "Strongly agree". Five experts in the area of university teaching and learning validated the instrument. In the analysis however, the five point Likert Scale was then re-coded to three scales with 1 denoting "Low Agreement", 2

"Moderate Agreement" and 3 "High Agreement" to give more distinct focus for the interpretation of students' perceptions of the factors affecting the quality of teaching and learning in business studies programs in public universities. Data was analyzed using SPSS PC-10 package, for descriptive and inferential statistics.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the student respondents. Table 2 shows the reliability coefficients of each construct for the factors, and Table 3 shows the overall mean for each factor.

Lecturers' Appearance

The overall mean for the Appearance construct was 2.84, SD 0.29, which suggests that the student highly agreed to the level of Lecturers' Appearance. Table 4 illustrates the distribution of percentages for Lecturers' Appearance.

The table shows that all students highly agreed to the quality of lecturers' Appearance. In comparison to the mean scores of other constructs in the Lecturer Factor, this Lecturer Appearance construct shows the highest mean score. This suggests that the students held positive satisfaction that lecturers teaching in the business studies programs possessed and exhibited good qualities.

Lecturers' Fairness

Table 5 illustrates the percentage and mean distribution of students' perceptions on Lecturers' Fairness. In this construct, the highest mean was 2.88 for the item "Lecturers prepare

TABLE 1
Students' demographic profile

		N	%
Race	Malay	1054	67.9
	Non-Malay	494	31.8
Gender	Female	1119	72.1
	Male	429	27.6
Working Experience	Yes	577	37.2
	No	962	62.8
Highest academic qualification	Diploma	323	21.1
	Matriculation	566	37.0
	STPM (equivalent to A level)	614	40.2
	Others	26	1.7
English Grade at MCE	Credit / Distinction	1129	72.7
	Others	396	25.5
Grade Point Average	> 3.00	640	41.2
	< 3.00	910	58.6

TABLE 2
Reliability coefficients for service quality factors

Factor	Constructs	Construct reliability	Factor reliability
Lecturer Factor	Appearance	.76	.94
	Fairness	.86	
	Helpfulness	.86	
	Care	.88	
	Friendliness	.91	
	Communication	.81	
	Reliability	.72	
	Credibility	.78	
Teaching Methodology	Competence	.94	.85
	Course Delivery	.60	
Course Relevance			.84

TABLE 3
Mean and standard deviation for service quality factors in teaching

	Construct	'Mean	S.D.	Overall
Lecturer factor	Appearance	2.84	.29	Mean =2.67 S.D. = .28
	Fairness	2.74	.33	
	Helpfulness	2.76	.37	
	Caring	2.63	.40	
	Friendliness	2.57	.41	
	Communication	2.73	.33	
	Reliability	2.48	.31	
	Credibility	2.64	.34	
Teaching Methodology	Competence	2.77	.30	Mean = 2.68
	Course Delivery	2.59	.31	S.D. = .26
Course Relevance		2.81	.29	

TABLE 4
Lecturer appearance

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
1.	Lecturers show a positive attitude when teaching	2.87	.36
2.	Lecturers are well groomed	2.94	.26
3.	Lecturers are courteous when interacting with students	2.84	.40
4.	Lecturers come across as a person as well as a teacher	2.81	.44
5.	Lecturers respect students as individuals	2.84	.42
6.	Lecturers' voice level, rate of speaking and behavior are conducive to learning	2.75	.49

TABLE 5
Lecturer fairness

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
7.	Lecturers set standards and due dates for assignments that are clear, fair and reasonable	2.82	.43
8.	Lecturers use oral, written and other forms of assignments to assess students' progress	2.77	.48
9.	Lecturers treat all students fairly and in an equitable manner	2.64	.60
10.	Lecturers' evaluation method and examination questions are clear and fair	2.81	.44
11.	Lecturers are fair in grading students	2.67	.57
12.	Lecturers' method of giving grades is consistent and clearly understood	2.70	.55
13.	Lecturers prepare examination questions that cover the important aspects of the course	2.88	.37
14.	Lecturers give freedom to students to choose their own group members	2.66	.58

examination questions that cover the important aspects of the course", while the lowest mean score was 2.64 for the item "Lecturers treat students fairly and in an equitable manner". The two items are of opposite polarities: the first item measured students' perception of the 'structural' aspect of fairness as opposed to the 'soft' perception of fairness in the latter item. Although students highly agreed that the lecturers were fair, there were obvious variations in response to specific dimensional characteristics of fairness. This finding suggests that fairness was perceived on two levels: technical (structural) and discretionary and the results showed that lecturers were perceived to exhibit more technical fairness but comparatively lesser discretionary fairness.

Lecturers' Helpfulness

The highest mean score of 2.89 was for the item "Lecturers are willing to help students" while the lowest mean score was 2.64 for the item, "Lecturers provide sustained feedback by asking probing questions, giving clues and allowing for more response time." This finding suggests that while lecturers in the business studies programs were perceived to be helpful, they need to be more sensitive as to how they can constructively help students to learn better. The overall mean of this construct was 2.76 (SD .37) suggesting that students in the sample highly agreed that their lecturers were helpful. Table 6 shows the distribution of percentages.

Lecturers' Caring Disposition

The results in this construct echoed somewhat the results from the previous construct on Lecturers' Helpfulness. Students' mean score of agreement was relatively lower to items that described the level of their lecturers' helpful and caring disposition towards specific problems and difficulties students faced in their studies and in learning. Table 7 illustrates the percentage distribution.

TABLE 6
Lecturer helpfulness

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
15.	Lecturers provide feedback that encourage students' progress	2.77	.48
16.	Lecturers provide sustained feedback by asking probing questions, giving clues and allowing more time for response	2.64	.57
17.	Lecturers are willing to help students	2.89	.36
18.	Lecturers use various teaching methods that are appropriate	2.74	.49

TABLE 7
Lecturer caring disposition

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
19.	Lecturers are concerned for students' well being	2.57	.58
20.	Lectures recognize when students fail to comprehend lectures	2.39	.64
21.	Lecturers encourage students to ask questions	2.88	.38
22.	Lecturers are concerned about students' study problems	2.53	.60
23.	Lecturers are concerned about the progress of students in the courses they are studying	2.65	.56
24.	Lecturers assist students to be successful regardless of their background	2.72	.56
25.	Lecturers assist students to learn as much as they can	2.64	.56

TABLE 8
Lecturer friendliness

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
26.	Lecturers try to understand students' personal problems	2.10	.68
27.	Lecturers are concerned with the problem of students' absence	2.68	.57
28.	Lecturers are friendly with students	2.62	.57
29.	Lecturers encourage informal conversations with students	2.47	.65
30.	Lecturers are willing to meet students without appointments	2.39	1.28
31.	Lecturers make students feel comfortable	2.61	.58
32.	Lecturers and students have mutual respect for one another	2.86	.40
33.	Lecturers respect all students regardless of who they are	2.77	.50

Lecturers' Friendliness

Table 8 illustrates the percentage distribution of students' perception of Lecturers' Friendliness. The highest mean score was 2.86 for the item "Lecturers and students have mutual respect for one another", while the lowest mean score was 2.10 for the item "Lecturers try to understand students' personal problems'. The lower mean scores tended to cluster around items that described lecturers' readiness to engage in more personalized relationship with the students, such as items "Lecturers try to understand students' personal problems" (mean =2.10); "Lecturers are willing to meet students without appointments" (mean =2.39)", and "Lecturers encourage informal conversations with students" (mean =2.47).The cluster of lower mean scores around these items suggest that from the students' perceptions, lecturers tended to be distant, even while being friendly.

Lecturers' Communication Skills

The findings in Table 9 show that the students in the business programs in the universities highly agreed to their Lecturers' Communication Skills. The highest mean score was 2.86 for the item "Lecturers use simple language". The two lowest mean scores were 2.54 for the item, "Lecturers allow students to interrupt during lectures" and 2.59 for the item "Lecturers have a sense of humour". This suggests that, while on the whole, students perceived their lecturers as being effective in communicating and interacting with students, they nevertheless agreed also that their lecturers generally tolerated lower opportunities for students to interrupt during lectures and had lesser sense of humor.

Lecturers' Reliability

Table 10 shows the results of students' perceptions of Lecturers' Reliability. The highest mean score was 2.88 for the item "Lecturers adhere to the policies and regulations prescribed for teaching". On the other hand, there were also clusters of lower mean scores around items that described professional or personal reliability. These items were item 49 (mean=2.06); item 56 (mean =2.13); and item 52 (mean =2.16).

These findings indicate that lecturers are mostly perceived as being more reliable in terms of compliance to "structured" or rule governed aspect of teaching. The mean scores were lower when more items of professional and personal reliability are introduced. The trend of the findings was similar to those in Lecturers' Fairness construct, where the mean scores were relatively lower when items of discretionary fairness were introduced.

Lecturers' Credibility

The mean scores of Lecturers' Credibility are shown in Table 11. The mean scores indicate that the students agreed that their lecturers were reliable with respect to the descriptions given in the items. It was interesting to note that the mean scores for items 59 and 60 were relatively lower. Items 59 and 60 signify that lecturers perhaps do not necessarily regard behavioral control as a professional duty at the university level. Item 61 perhaps indicates the relatively lower priority given by lecturers to record keeping, and suggests the lack of time for administrative tasks.

TABLE 9
Lecturer communication skills

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
34.	Lecturers interact effectively with students	2.73	.49
35.	Lecturers are approachable for dialogues	2.67	.54
36.	Lecturers communicate proficiently	2.80	.45
37.	Lecturers use simple language	2.86	.38
38.	Lecturers encourage two way communication with students	2.85	.40
39.	Lecturers are willing to accept students' views and comments	2.75	.52
40.	Lecturers allow students to interrupt during lectures	2.54	.63
41.	Lecturers have a sense of humor	2.59	.60
42.	Lecturers have good listening skills	2.80	.47

TABLE 10
Lecturer reliability

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
43.	Lecturers have teaching materials and equipment ready at the start of the lesson	2.80	.46
44.	Lecturers start and finish class on time	2.65	.55
45.	Lecturers are firm on the duration of time given to students to complete a task	2.87	.36
46.	Lecturers adhere to the policies and regulations prescribed for teaching	2.88	.35
47.	Lecturers follow planned lesson progression	2.78	.48
49.	Lecturers often make up classes earlier to the date of their absence	2.06	.77
50.	Lecturers make arrangements to replace classes missed on public holidays	2.41	.92
51.	Lecturers ask students to do individual work when classes are cancelled	2.16	.80
52.	Lecturers are in the office regularly and not only on lecture days	2.16	.76
53.	Lecturers always walk around the class to monitor students' performance	2.27	.70
54.	Lecturers are prepared to discuss academic matters with students	2.74	1.19
55.	Lecturers are prepared to carry out non-instructional duties	2.30	.69
56.	Lecturers often cancel classes without informing students earlier	2.13	.78

TABLE 11
Lecturer credibility

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
57.	Lecturers have a set of rules and procedures to handle classroom routine administrative matters in the lecture room	2.73	.51
58.	Lecturers have a set of rules and procedures to monitor students' level of verbal participation in the class	2.71	.51
59.	Lecturers stop inappropriate students' behavior promptly and consistently	2.65	.58
60.	Lecturers frequently monitor the behavior of students during class	2.66	.54
61.	Lecturers update records on students' performance accurately	2.65	.57
62.	Lecturers use sufficient materials to support instruction	2.74	.49
63.	Lecturers acknowledge students' response during lectures	2.75	1.17
64.	Lecturers often condense several missed lessons into one lesson	2.17	.74
65.	Lecturers improve on their teaching material	2.73	.51

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The overall mean for Teaching Methodology was 2.68 (SD .26). This shows that the students in the business program expressed moderate agreement that they experienced quality Teaching Methodology. The findings in this quality factor will be reported according to two constructs: Individual Lecturers' Teaching Competence and Overall Course Delivery.

Lecturers' Teaching Competence

Table 12 illustrates the mean scores. Again, the table shows that the students agreed on the competence of the lecturers in the business studies program in their universities.

Overall Course Delivery

In Table 13, the highest mean score was 2.75 on the items "The degree of inter-relatedness of the material covered in this program is consistently high" (mean =2.75) and "The courses on this program encourage students to do research to prove certain facts" (mean = 2.75). The lowest mean score of 2.36 was for the item "The program incorporates experiential learning e.g. field trip, simulations, etc". This suggests that although the business program in public universities strongly emphasized research work, it gave lower emphasis however, on hands-on fieldwork research.

Course Relevance

The mean scores for items showed that the majority of the students were highly satisfied

TABLE 12
Lecturer competence

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
66.	Lecturers begin lessons with a review of previous lessons	2.61	.62
67.	Lecturers specify the learning objectives for every lesson	2.75	.52
68.	Lecturers provide suitable examples, demonstration and illustrations of concepts and skills	2.82	.44
69	Lecturers assign task which students can complete with a high rate of success	2.73	.53
70.	Lecturers ask questions that are appropriate to the students' level of ability	2.77	.49
71.	Lecturers vary the pace of instructional activities	2.66	.55
72.	Lecturers make transitions between lessons and instructional activities	2.71	.51
73.	Lecturers make sure that instructions for assignments are clear	2.85	.90
74.	Lecturers summarize the main points at the end of each lesson	2.70	.53
75.	Lecturers are knowledgeable on the subject matter	2.85	.41
76.	Lecturers are skillful in presenting their lessons	2.79	.45
77.	Lecturers stimulate students' thinking through problem solving techniques and asking challenging questions	2.78	.47
78.	Lecturers are competent in handling students' questions	2.80	.46
79.	Lecturers are prepared to teach	2.89	.34
80.	Lectures give assignments of good quality to students	2.85	.41

TABLE 13
Overall course delivery

Item No.	Item	Mean	SD
17.	Most of the examination questions in the courses test on what I had memorized rather than what I had understood	2.58	.60
19.	The degree of inter relatedness of the material covered in this program is consistently high	2.75	.48
20.	This program incorporates experiential learning e.g. field trip, simulations etc.	2.36	.71
21.	The content of the courses in this program is too heavy	2.57	.59
22.	The difficulty level of the content of the courses in this program is suitable to my level of ability	2.70	.52
29.	The courses in this program often require students to solve problems in text books rather than do research	2.43	.64
30.	The courses in this program encourage students to do research to prove certain facts	2.75	.50

that the course content and design were relevant to their needs in the business program. The lowest mean score was for the item "The industrial training in the program was well planned and beneficial" (mean = 2.76). This suggests that although the students believed that the quality of the practical content in their courses was good, they nevertheless perceived that their industrial training experience was in comparison, insufficiently organized. This raises the issue as to whether the practical content in business courses ought to be instituted as a more formal requirement in universities so that better coordination for industry training can be done. Table 14 shows the results for Course Relevance.

T-TESTS AND ANOVA

The t-test showed a significant difference in the perception on Lecturers' Factors, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance between male and female students ($t= 5.41$ $p <.05$); ($t= 2.94$ $p<.05$); and ($t= -2.72$ $p<.05$) respectively. The mean scores indicated that more female students expressed more agreement for the quality of Lecturer Factors, Teaching Methodology, and Relevance of the Course. The t-test results are in Tables 15-17.

One-way ANOVA test shown in Tables 18-20 revealed there were significant differences in students' perceptions of the quality of Lecturer Factors, Teaching Methodology, and Course

TABLE 14
Course relevance

Item No	Item	Mean	SD
18.	The industrial training in this program is well planned and beneficial	2.76	.50
23.	The content of the courses in this program is relevant to my future employment	2.79	.48
24.	The actual content of the courses correspond to their descriptions in the synopsis	2.85	.39
25.	The content of the courses in this program is current	2.80	.46
26.	The quality of practical content in the program is good	2.81	.45
27.	The core courses in this program are important to me	2.81	.46
28.	I like my chosen field of specialization	2.88	.37

TABLE 15
t-test between gender and lecturers' factor

	Item	Lecturers' Factor			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
Gender	Male	429	2.61	t =-5.41	.000
	Female	1119	2.70		

TABLE 16
t-test between gender and teaching methodology

	Item	Teaching Methodology			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
Gender	Male	428	2.65	t =-2.94	.003
	Female	1116	2.69		

TABLE 17
t-test between gender and relevance of the courses

	Item	Relevance of the Courses			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
Gender	Male	427	2.78	t =-2.72	.007
	Female	1110	2.83		

TABLE 18
ANOVA between ethnic group and lecturers' factor

	Item	Lecturers' Factor			
		N	'Mean	F value	Sig.
Race	Malays	1058	2.73	58.31	.0001
	Chinese	369	2.50		
	Indians	59	2.66		
	Bumiputera Sabah & Sarawak	11	2.75		
	Others	11	2.59		

TABLE 19
ANOVA between ethnic group and teaching methodology

Item		Teaching Methodology			
		N	'Mean	F value	Sig.
Race	Malays	1055	2.73	53.51	0.001
	Chinese	369	2.52		
	Indian	58	2.71		
	Bumiputera Sabah & Sarawak	50	2.76		
	Others	11	2.59		

TABLE 20
ANOVA between ethnic group and course relevance

ITEM		Course Relevance			
		N	'Mean	F value	Sig.
Race	Malays	1049	2.86	39.31	.0001
	Chinese	368	2.65		
	Indian	58	2.88		
	Bumiputera Sabah & Sarawak	50	2.86		
	Others	11	2.86		

Relevance amongst students of different ethnic groups.

Post hoc Tukey test revealed that the Malay, Indian, and Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak students tended to have a higher agreement of the quality of Lecturer Factor, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance than the Chinese students. The positive orientation amongst the Malays, Indians and the Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak students towards Lecturer, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance factors in the business program could be due to the awareness campaign driven by government policies to develop more numbers of entrepreneurs and businessmen amongst the these ethnic groups by 2020. Table 21 shows the Tukey test results.

Tables 22-24 display the ANOVA results for significant differences in the perception of quality factors amongst students with different academic qualifications.

Posthoc Tukey tests showed that the Diploma and the Matriculation groups of students tended to express more agreement on the quality of Lecturers, Teaching Methodology and Course Relevance than the STPM students and students with other types of qualifications. These differences could perhaps be attributed to the fact that the Matriculation and Diploma students have undergone pre-university programs in other institutions, and their experience could have

TABLE 21
Posthoc Tukey test of ethnic and quality factors

Ethnic	Chinese					
	Lecturer Factor		Teaching Methodology		Course Relevance	
Ethnic	Mean difference	Sig	Mean difference	Sig	Mean difference	Sig
Malay	.23	.00	.21	.00	.21	.00
Indian	.16	.00	.19	.03	.22	.00
Bumiputera Sabah & Sarawak	.25	.00	.23	.00	.20	.00

TABLE 22
ANOVA between academic qualification and lecturers' factor

Item		Lecturers' Factor			
		N	Mean	F value	Sig.
Academic Qualification	Diploma	327	2.71	22.57	.000
	Matriculation	570	2.73		
	STPM (equivalent to A Level)	616	2.61		
	Others	26	2.71		

TABLE 23
ANOVA between academic qualification and teaching methodology

Item		Teaching Methodology			
		N	Mean	F value	Sig.
Academic Qualification	Diploma	325	2.71	18.68	.000
	Matriculation	570	2.72		
	STPM (equivalent to A level)	615	2.62		
	Others	26	2.75		

TABLE 24
ANOVA between academic qualification and course relevance

Item		Course Relevance			
		N	Mean	F value	Sig.
Academic Qualification	Diploma	323	2.84	11.61	.000
	Matriculation	566	2.86		
	STPM (equivalent to A level)	614	2.76		
	Others	26	2.87		

TABLE 25
Tukey test on students academic qualifications and quality factors

	STPM/HSC					
	Lecturer Factor		Teaching Methodology		Course Relevance	
	Mean difference	Sig	Mean difference	Sig	Mean difference	Sig
Diploma	.10	.00	.09	.00	. 08	.00
Matriculation	.12	.00	.10	.03	.09	.00

influenced their orientation towards Lecturer Factors, Teaching Methodology and Course Relevance. Table 25 shows the results.

In Tables 26-28, t-tests showed a significant difference in the perceptions of students who scored CGPA of >3.0 and those who scored <3.0 in Lecturer Factors (t= 7.79 p<.05), Teaching Methodology (t=8.25 p<.05) and Course Relevance (t=5.01 p<.05). This means that students who scored less than CGPA 3.0 tended to agree with the quality of their Lecturers, Teaching Methodology and Course Relevance in their business courses.

The results indicate that the lesser the CGPA scores, the more dependent the students are on the conditions prevailing in their courses. On

TABLE 26
t-test between CGPA scores and lecturer factor

Item		Lecturers' Factor			
		N	'Mean	T value	Sig.
CGPA Scores	>3.0	640	2.61	t =-7.79	.000
	<3.0	720	2.72		

TABLE 27
t-test between CGPA scores and teaching methodology

Item		Teaching Methodology			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
CGPA	>3.0	637	2.61	t =-8.25	.000
	<3.0	719	2.73		

TABLE 28
t-test between CGPA scores and course relevance

Item		Course Relevance			
		N	'x	t value	Sig.
CGPA	>3.0	636	2.77	t =-5.01	.000
	<3.0	713	2.85		

the other hand, students with higher CGPA scores may be less dependent on Lecturer Factors and Teaching Methodology employed in the classroom as they have a higher capacity to explore more independent learning means.

The t-test in Table 29 showed a significant difference in the perceptions of the quality of Lecturer Factors ($t=2.998$ $p<.05$) between students with working experience and without working experience. Those students with no previous work experience showed more agreement to the quality of Lecturer Factors. Perhaps those who already have working experience had already attained more experience and maturity in terms of occupational relationships and this could have influenced their judgment of their Lecturers.

The t test in Tables 30-31 showed there were significant differences between perceptions of students with high and low English Language proficiency on Teaching Methodology and Course Relevance. Students with low language proficiency tended to give more favorable response to the quality of their Lecturers and Teaching Methodology employed. This relatively positive perception from the lower proficiency students could have been influenced by the general practice of bilingual instruction employed by many university lecturers in Malaysia to enable as many students as possible to understand their lectures. The lower proficiency group also expressed high moderate agreement to Course Relevance, although this could possibly be attributed to their limited language proficiency which made them highly dependent on the breadth of topics covered by the lecturers during class.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the analysis from the study were heartening. The survey suggests that the majority of the student sample in the business studies programs in the three public universities in Malaysia were highly satisfied with the overall service quality for teaching and learning based

TABLE 29
t-test between working experience and lecturer factor

Item		Lecturers' Factor			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
Working Experience	Yes	577	2.65	t =-2.99	.003
	No	962	2.69		

TABLE 30
t-test between English language proficiency and teaching methodology

Item		Teaching Methodology			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
English Language Proficiency	High	1125	2.67	t =-2.47	.014
	Low	396	2.71		

TABLE 31
t-test between English language proficiency and course relevance

Item		Course Relevance			
		N	'Mean	t value	Sig.
English Language Proficiency	High	1120	2.80	t =-2.05	.040
	Low	394	2.84		

on Lecturer Factor, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance.

From the descriptive statistics, however, it was shown that the students' satisfaction was relatively lower with the level of practical experiential learning experience offered in the business courses. Business faculties therefore need to have more proactive management of relevant field experiences for their students.

Students also reported a lower agreement on the item of whether they were informed much earlier when classes were postponed or cancelled. Since this perception affects the reliability of lecturers, it is recommended that faculties develop a more efficient system of communication to enable students to be informed of class cancellations.

Students' response generally highly agreed on the fairness and caring attitudes of their lecturers, but the response became relatively more reserved for items which described "actual personal contact to help with personal problems", and "actually taking the initiative to help students with their study problems". It would be beneficial if faculties were to take counsel as to whether "taking care of the consumers" ought to be re-defined in terms of providing better support networks to assist students in more concrete and specific ways to overcome their personal and study- related problems.

Significant differences in the perceptions of Lecturers, Teaching Methodology and Relevance factors were attributed to students' gender, race, academic qualification, and CGPA scores. The female students appeared to have more positive perceptions of all three quality factors in the business studies program. It is recommended that a review of course design and course delivery needs to be undertaken so as to boost the course appeal to both male and female students. While the academic environment may appeal more to females, it is possible that a more field-based course design will increase active learning on the part of male students. Students from the Malay and the Bumiputera Sabah and Sarawak ethnic groups were also shown to be more positive in their perceptions of these quality factors. More in-depth studies, preferably qualitative studies need to be carried out to probe the reasons for the positive affiliation of these gender and ethnic groups towards quality factors in the business studies program in public universities. Students who scored a CGPA of <3.0, students with work experience, and students with either Diploma or Matriculation academic qualifications also showed more positive perceptions towards the quality of Lecturer Factor, Teaching Methodology, and Course Relevance. More dialogues with these groups of students need to be carried out by faculties so that a sharper evaluation of teaching and learning factors, course design, and course relevance can be constructed relevant to the needs of the students.

CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to examine the quality of teaching and learning in business programs in three public universities in Malaysia. The findings indicate that students in the public university had high perceptions of the quality of their Lecturers, the Teaching Methodology employed in the program, and the Relevance of their Courses. However, more in-depth, and qualitative studies need to be carried out to examine the details pertaining to the differences of perceptions on all three quality factors based on gender, ethnic background, academic qualification, and academic achievement.

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