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Teaching Efficacy of Universiti Putra Malaysia Trainee Teachers in Teaching Malay Language as a First Language

ABD. RAHIM BAKAR, MOHD. MAJID KONTING, RASHID JAMIAN AND NOVEL LYNDON

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Keywords: Trainee teachers, teaching efficacy, teaching and learning, teaching Malay as a first language

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to assess teaching efficacy of Teaching of Malay as a First Language trainee teachers prior to their teaching practice. The specific objectives were to determine teaching efficacy of the trainee teachers in terms of student engagement; instructional strategies; classroom management and teaching with computers in the classroom; satisfaction of the trainee teachers with their teacher training program and lastly to determine the attitude of the trainee teachers' towards the teaching profession. Data was collected using questionnaire. The sample size was 53. Findings indicate that majority of the respondents had a high level of confidence with their efficacy in terms of student engagement (Mean: 3.97, S.D: 0.29), instructional strategies (Mean: 3.93, S.D: 0.38), classroom management (Mean: 3.90, S.D: 0.32) and teaching with computers in the classroom (Mean: 3.83, S.D: 0.57). Pearson correlation showed that teaching efficacy and satisfaction with teachers education program were significantly correlated with each other ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship between these two variables was highly correlated and positive. Results also showed that there are relationships between the attitude towards the teaching profession and teaching efficacy ($r: -0.231$, $p < 0.05$) but the relationships were negative.

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to assess the teaching efficacy of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) trainee teachers in the teaching of Malay as a First Language. Research suggests that teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning had an influence on their instructional practices and ability to teach students effectively (Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Education studies have highlighted that teaching efficacy refers to the belief of one's own teaching ability to bring about students' improvement and the capacity of other teachers and educational system as a whole to help students in learning (Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Ashton and Webb, 1986; Winch, 2004). Researches on efficacy of teachers suggest that behaviors such as persistence on a task, risk taking and the use of innovations are related to degrees of efficacy (Ashton, 1985; Ashton and Webb, 1986). For example, highly efficacious

teachers have been found to be more likely to use inquiry and student-centered teaching strategies, while teachers with a low sense of efficacy are more likely to use teacher-directed strategies, such as lecture and reading from the text (Flores, 2001; Hoy, 2004; Kaufman and Sawyer, 2004).

Education researches also reiterate that the efficacy of teachers to teach may influence several significant educational variables, such as student achievement (Gibson and Dembo, 1984), student motivation (Angelle, 2002), teachers' attitudes towards innovation (Guskey, 1988), superintendents' evaluation of teachers' performances (Babinski, Jones and Dewert, 2001) and teachers' management strategies (Ashton and Webb, 1986). For example, a study done by Lin and Gorrell (1999) pointed that teachers felt that teacher education programs have neglected variables of schooling such as management

strategies and teacher performance and they felt that they were alone in planning their lesson plans. Thus, they lack motivation and feel less confident about their own capabilities to enhance students' learning performances. Existing evidences show that teachers' belief in their ability to affect student learning process and achievement are related to their consequent effectiveness (Albion, 2000; Winch, 2004).

Studies on teachers' efficacy beliefs noted that teaching efficacy among pre-service teachers is a complex, pluralistic and multi-faceted enterprise. Yet, within the past several years, many researches had shown that teacher efficacy and reducing teacher isolation are two critical aspects in retaining educators in the profession. For example, in reviewing thirteen studies conducted between 1983 and 1996, Kember (1998) found that teacher efficacy in teaching and learning has been associated with such significant variables such as student motivation, teachers' adoption of innovations, superintendents' rating of teacher's competence, teachers' classroom management strategies, time spent teaching certain subjects and teacher's referrals of student to special education. This also means that teachers with high levels of teaching efficacy are more likely to expect that all students can learn and to feel responsible for learning compared to teachers with low efficacy measures (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Henson and Chambers, 2003).

Studies from various parts of the world have also shown that teachers in third world countries had moderate attitudes towards teaching profession before they go for teaching practice and it was noted that years of experiences correlated with attitudes. However, it was not a significant predictor when other variables were included in a multiple regression (Maney, Monthley and Carner, 2000; Hart, 2002; Wilkins and Brand, 2004; Dupoux, Wolman and Estrada, 2005). Jobe, Rust and Brissie (1996) highlighted that attitudes have been found to be affected by gender. A positive correlation was also found between teachers' attitudes and teachers' satisfaction with teacher training programs (Ferraiolo, Hess, Maranto and Milliman, 2004). Hess, Maranto, Milliman and Gresham (1999) in their study on teachers' attitudes and behavior found that attitudes and behavior of teachers in teaching and learning correlated with their duration in teaching practices. Malaysian

literature also show that quality teaching in the classroom can be understood as that which engages the students in an in-depth and comprehensive approach to the subject matter, that is, in an active, durable, and critical construction of knowledge integrated with their previous knowledge and put to action (Zaidatol and Zakaria, 2000; Norasmah, 2002; Zaidatol, Jamaliah and Rahil, 2005). Furthermore, research has shown that interest in teaching is a significant factor to be considered in promoting the efficacy of teachers in teaching and learning (Brennan, 2000; Zaidatol, Jamaliah and Rahil, 2005). Therefore, it is appropriate, the question as to whether trainee teachers at UPM have a high level of teaching efficacy before they go for teaching practice to be investigated.

Statement of the Research Problem

Teacher self-efficacy has been identified as an important factor in predicting student achievement and sense of competence (Chuene, Lubben and Newson, 1999). However, far less work has been done in showing the trainee teachers' beliefs about their own effectiveness in teaching and their abilities to influence the learning of their students. There are no clear guidelines for trainee teachers on how exactly to try new methods, which may result in higher achievement in students. The use of new methods may increase a teacher's sense of efficacy and willingness to continue to expand greater efforts to help students learn. Despite the amount of studies done (Lin and Gorrell, 1998; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2001; Lim, Khine, Timothy, Philip and Divaharan, 2003) none of the studies analysed issues arising from teaching efficacy of trainee teachers in terms of their efficacy in Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Studies so far have only examined the effect of teacher-self efficacy for teaching with computers on student's acquisition of computer skills or computer cognitions. Malaysian studies (Abdullah, 1997; Ong Swee, 1998; Belubau, 1998) also did not specifically assess trainee teachers in the teaching of Malay as a first language, feelings for the teacher training program and their attitudes towards the teaching profession before they go for teaching practice. This poses questions as to what extent is the attitudes of UPM trainee teachers towards the teaching profession and their satisfaction with the teacher training program at UPM? This research

therefore, tries to examine the teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers, and it intends to answer the following questions:-

1. What is the teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers?
2. What is the satisfaction of the trainee teachers with the teacher training program at UPM?
3. What is the attitude of trainee teachers towards the teaching profession?
4. What are the relationships between teaching efficacy with teacher education programs and attitude towards the teaching profession?

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sample

The respondents of the study comprised of teacher trainees who have previously taught in schools and also those who have never taught in schools. A total of 55 final year B.Ed. (Teaching of Malay as a First Language) students participated in the study. Out of 55 questionnaires, a total of 53 questionnaires (96.4%) were usable. The respondents comprised of students who have previously taught in schools (n=12) and those who have never taught in schools (n=41).

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was used to collect information on teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers in the Teaching of Malay as a First Language in terms of students' engagement, instructional strategies, classroom management and information communication and technology. The questionnaire consisted of questions pertaining to the teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers, the satisfaction of the trainee teachers with the teacher training program and the attitude of the trainee teachers towards the teaching profession. The questionnaire was written in Bahasa Melayu and the translation was validated by an English lecturer from the Department of Language and Humanities, Faculty of Educational Studies, UPM to ensure that the meaning is retained and not to lose the context of the research. Before the respondents answered the questionnaire, they were briefed about the use of the questionnaire and the time given to them to complete the questionnaire was 40 minutes. The aim was to build rapport and a conducive environment with respondents for data

collection. The questionnaire was developed at the Department of Science Education and Technical, UPM in consultation with the members of the research committee. The instrument used in the study was adapted from various instruments such as Gibson and Dembo (1984); Parasuraman *et al.* (1991) and Fullan (1993) and translated into Malay by the researcher. The instrument was revised for clarity and effectiveness in obtaining the information needed and the appropriate length of time of the interview. In this study, the data was collected from 53 trainee teachers trained in the area of Malay as a first language. Cronbach Alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. The mean of the alpha coefficients for teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers in Teaching of Malay Language as a First Language was 0.94 (efficacies in student engagement, 0.77, efficacies in instructional strategies, 0.89, efficacies in classroom management, 0.84 and efficacies to use information and communications technology, 0.96). For satisfaction of trainee teachers in the teacher education program, the alpha coefficient was 0.96. For the attitude of trainee teachers towards the teaching profession, the alpha coefficient was 0.78. The scores obtained showed a high degree of reliability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the Respondents

Twelve out of 53 or 22.6% of the trainee teachers were from PKPG program with half (58.3%) of them having less than 4 years teaching experience with a mean of 4.6 years of teaching experience. While the rest (77.4%) were fresh students without any teaching experience. The study also showed that the majority of the respondents were female (84.9%) and 15.1% of the respondents were male. This demographic profile indicated that there was an uneven distribution between the female and male students. A majority of the respondents were Malay trainee teachers. Their ages were below 25 years with a mean of 24.9 years. Majority of the respondents were in the second class upper CGPA (92.5%) with a mean of 3.1 CGPA. Out of 6 minor specialization areas, 66.0% or 35 of them choose Malay Literature as a minor, followed by Commerce (17.0%), Physics (5.7%), Pre-School Education (5.7%), Islamic Education (3.8%) and Chemistry (1.9%). The data also illustrates that a majority

of the respondents choose teaching profession as their first career choice (92.5%). Majority of them also preferred to continue to be in the teaching profession (75.5%). Only 7.5% of the respondents preferred to leave their career as a teacher if they have the opportunity to move to other fields. Majority of them (92.5%) plan to

further their education if given the opportunity. Out of 49 respondents, majority of the respondents (83.0%) in this study preferred to further their study to the PhD level. Only 17% of the respondents in this study preferred to further their studies to the Master level only.

TABLE 1
Demographic profile of respondents

Characteristic	Frequency (n=53)	Percentage
Program		
PKPG	12	22.6
Fresh Student	41	77.4
Teaching Experience of PKPG (n=12)	(Mean: 4.6)	(S.D=2.6)
Below than 5 years	7	58.3
6 to 9 years	2	16.7
10 to 13 years	3	25.0
Gender		
Male	8	15.1
Female	45	84.9
Age	(Mean: 24.9)	(S.D=1.8)
Below than 25	7	58.3
26 to 28	2	16.7
29 to 31	3	25.0
CGPA	(Mean: 3.1)	(S.D=0.3)
3.750-4.000	0	0
2.750-3.749	49	92.5
2.250-2.749	4	7.5
2.000-2.249	0	0
Ethnicity		
Malay	41	77.4
Chinese	5	9.4
Indian	4	7.5
Bumiputra Sarawak	3	5.7
Bumiputra Sabah	0	0
Minors		
Malay literature	35	66.0
Commerce	9	17.0
Physic	3	5.7
Pre-School Education	3	5.7
Islamic Education	2	3.8
Chemistry	1	1.9
Prefer teaching profession as a first choice		
Yes	49	92.5
No	4	7.5

Table 1 *Cont.*

Prefer to continue in teaching profession		
Yes	40	75.5
No	13	24.5
Prefer to further study		
Yes	49	92.5
No	4	7.5
Level of study preferred		
Master	9	17.0
PhD	44	83.0

Teaching Efficacy of UPM Trainee Teachers in Teaching of Malay as a First Language

As shown in Table 2, the general mean for teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers in Teaching of Malay as a First Language was 3.91 with a S.D of 0.33. Similar results can be seen for the teaching efficacy in terms of student engagement (Mean: 3.97, S.D:0.29) and for instructional strategies (Mean: 3.93, S.D: 0.38).

The study also shows majority of the respondents had a high level of confidence in classroom management (Mean: 3.90, S.D: 0.32) and the use of ICT in teaching (Mean: 3.83, S.D: 0.57). The mean value for teaching efficacy related to using ICT in teaching was much lower than that for teaching efficacy in terms of student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management.

TABLE 2
Teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers

Teaching Efficacy	Mean=3.91	S.D=0.33
Student Engagement	3.97	0.29
Get through to the most difficult students.	3.81	0.52
Help your students think critically.	3.91	0.45
Motivate students who show low interest in school work.	4.02	0.54
Get students to believe they can do well in school work.	4.00	0.48
Help students value learning.	4.02	0.46
Foster student creativity.	3.98	0.57
Improve the understanding of a student who is failing.	4.02	0.54
Assisting families in helping their children do well in school.	3.83	0.67
Helping your students develop more positive interactions.	4.15	0.41
Increasing the academic achievement of the students in the class that you teach a class of low ability students in your subject matter area.	3.91	0.49
Designing activities to match the individual interests and abilities of the students in your class?	4.00	0.59
Instructional Strategies	3.93	0.38
Respond to difficult questions from your students.	3.85	0.53
Gauge student comprehension of what you have taught.	3.89	0.51
Craft good questions from your students.	3.94	0.63
Adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students.	3.85	0.66
Use a variety of assessment strategies.	3.96	0.59
Provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused.	4.06	0.53
Implement alternative strategies in your classroom.	3.85	0.50
Provide appropriate challenges for very capable students.	3.91	0.69
Increase his/her attention in the next lesson, if a student did not remember information you gave in a previous lesson.	3.94	0.50

Table 2 *Cont.*

Incorporating achievement of basic skills objectives into your lesson plans to insure adequate development of students' basic skills.	3.89	0.58
Get your students to work together.	4.13	0.52
Keep students on task on difficult assignments.	3.85	0.57
Classroom Management	3.90	0.32
Control disruptive behaviour in the classroom.	3.94	0.41
Make your expectations clear about student behaviour.	3.77	0.58
Get children to follow classroom rules.	4.00	0.44
Calm a student who is disruptive or noisy.	4.00	0.44
Establish a classroom management system with each group of students.	4.02	0.50
Keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson.	3.91	0.41
Respond to defiant students.	3.79	0.57
Prevent problem behaviour on the school grounds.	3.68	0.58
Redirect quickly if a student disrupts your lesson.	4.09	0.49
Put the student on track if students stop working.	3.94	0.57
Getting through to most difficult students.	3.70	0.61
Information Communication and Technology	3.83	0.57
Continually finding better ways to teach with the ICT.	3.89	0.70
Teach effectively using the ICT.	3.81	0.79
Effective in monitoring activities that involve using the ICT.	3.87	0.76
Teach ineffectively when using the ICT.	3.64	0.74
Understand how to use the ICT.	3.93	0.62
Able to answer students' ICT questions.	3.79	0.60
Welcome student questions.	4.04	0.65
Explain to students how ICT works.	3.93	0.70
Use multimedia system to support teaching and learning.	3.79	0.72
Build learning in ICT on student intuitive understanding.	3.70	0.67
Integrating computers into instructional activities subject area.	3.89	0.67
Help students to create multimedia presentations.	3.74	0.66

The findings are consistent with those of Lin and Gorrell's (1999) study on pre-service teachers. The results of this study also supported by previous research of Bourdoncle and Robert (2000), Lin, Gorrel and Taylor (2004) who reported that most of the pre-service teachers today have a better understanding with regard to the efficacy of their actions in the classroom and their abilities to influence the learning of their students as compared to the way they use ICT in classroom learning. Gordon and Debus (2002) in their study on developing deep learning approaches and personal teaching efficacy within a pre-service teacher education context also revealed that most of the pre-service teachers have greater willingness to try new methods and tend to foster a classroom climate that is warm and supportive of student needs. A study conducted by William, Boone and

Kingsley (2004) on teachers' beliefs about educational software also supported the findings of this study by noting that most of the pre-service teachers today have high expectations about their ability to teach using ICT and have more ideas when using ICT in their teaching as compared with 10 years past, particularly with techniques that are difficult to implement and involve risks such as sharing control with students. Christine, Jaun and Jonsson, (2002) likewise indicated that most of the pre-service teachers and novice teachers today felt that they are more comfortable using ICT for teaching and over 70% of the participants in their study stated that they have access to a computer at home or at school to practice their computer skills that are now necessary to conduct an effective classroom by utilizing the latest technology.

Satisfaction of the Trainee Teachers with Teacher Training Program

Another objective of this study was to determine the satisfaction of UPM trainee teachers in Teaching of Malay as a First Language with teacher training program at UPM (See Table 3). The study showed that the mean value for the satisfaction of trainee teachers with teachers training program was 4.20 with a standard deviation of 0.34. This showed that the satisfaction level of trainee teachers with the teachers training program at UPM was high. When asked about their satisfaction with overall teacher education program at UPM, most of the trainee teachers felt that they were highly satisfied and felt confident with the program (Mean: 4.34, S.D: 0.59). This suggested that the respondents were getting services and their needs are met during their teacher training. The result of this study is consistent with those of Calderon and Green (1997) and May and King's (1997).

However, they thought many faculties believe that student evaluations towards their teacher training program are simply a popularity contest and have a relation to the curriculum, burden of the courses, focus of the courses, their participation in conferences or seminars and the personality of the instructors or the lecturers.

Calderon and Green (1997) in their study also found that most of the students were satisfied with their programs even though issues like course difficulty, the actual grade distribution, the size of the class, the focus of the study and the encouragement of the faculty to publish papers or attend conferences have been a popular contested issue raised by the students when the students were asked to measure teaching effectiveness of the lecturers and the programs offered by the faculty. Previous research findings have (Ashton and Green, 1986; Rhodes, Nevill and Allan, 2004, Bogler, 2005) been consistent with the findings of this study, which

TABLE 3
Mean and standard deviation of trainee teachers' satisfaction
with teachers training program at UPM

Satisfaction of Trainee Teachers	Mean	S.D
Satisfaction of trainee teachers with teacher training program at UPM	4.20	0.34
The education program was consistent with my academic goals.	4.28	0.53
The education program has given me the necessary skills to be an effective teacher.	4.25	0.55
The education program allowed me to integrate material from class to a real life situation.	4.13	0.48
The education program I receive is related to real work situations.	4.17	0.55
The education program I receive helps me better understand the work I am supposed to do.	4.28	0.53
I benefit a lot from teacher education program.	4.38	0.53
There are enough courses to choose from in my program.	4.17	0.57
The courses in my program are generally of high quality.	4.09	0.63
My project supervisor provides effective supervision.	4.06	0.57
My graduate/advisory committee provides useful advise.	4.19	0.68
The lecturers work hard to ensure the courses their teach are interesting.	4.21	0.63
My lecturers are very good in imparting information and lecturing.	4.15	0.57
Opportunities for teaching experience are valuable.	4.51	0.54
The objectives of the program are clearly stated.	4.30	0.54
The curriculum is up to date.	4.09	0.63
The academic workload is appropriate for this program.	4.09	0.49
Overall, my learning experiences are intellectually stimulating.	4.23	0.58
Many teaching methods and resources used in my courses worked well to help me learn.	4.19	0.48

Table 3 *Cont.*

My program has sufficient theoretical focus.	4.04	0.59
My program has sufficient practical focus.	3.93	0.68
The program fosters a sense.	4.19	0.52
The size of classes facilitated effective learning	4.21	0.53
Lectures were useful learning experience in the program	4.34	0.52
Tutorials were useful learning experience in the program	4.15	0.66
Practical were useful learning experience in the program	4.51	0.51
I have been encouraged to publish papers and/or attend conferences	4.00	0.65
I was encouraged to take an active part in teaching sessions	4.09	0.41
My program helped me to develop:		
a. Oral communication skills	4.34	0.55
b. The ability to express ideas in writing	4.19	0.48
c. Problem framing and solving skills	4.17	0.51
d. The ability to work as a member of a team	4.32	0.51
e. The confidence to work independently	4.25	0.43
f. The desire to continue learning in the future	4.28	0.57
g. A broad, base knowledge in education technology	4.21	0.45
h. An understanding of the impact of Information Communication Technology	4.17	0.58
i. A deeper knowledge of my major area of study	4.13	0.48
j. A training in scientific method	4.02	0.50
k. Planning and organizational skills (including self and time management)	4.11	0.42
l. Literacy in information technology (including the capacity to use technology in new situations)	4.09	0.66
Overall, I am satisfied with teacher education program at UPM	4.34	0.59

reported that most of the pre-service teachers felt that teacher education programs need to produce students with the kind of problem-solving capabilities and expose them to publishing papers and attending conferences in order to increase their self-confidence in their capacity to manage teaching tasks.

Attitude of Trainee Teachers Towards the Teaching Profession

The results in Table 4 reveal the attitudes of trainee teachers towards the teaching profession. The study shows that the mean value for the attitudes of trainee teachers towards the teaching profession was 2.93 with a standard deviation of 0.48. This showed that the attitude of UPM trainee teachers to the teaching profession was moderate. The study also showed that the respondents in this study have a high attitude for items "teaching profession was a very enjoyable job (Mean: 4.51, S.D: 0.51)", commitment to be a teacher (Mean: 4.23, S.D: 0.54) and low level of attitude for item "I felt bored with the teaching profession (Mean: 1.74, S.D: 0.86)". The respondents in this study also

felt that the teaching profession was a challenging one for them (Mean: 4.159, S.D: 0.644). A study conducted by Ferraiolo, Hess, Maranto and Milliman (2004) on pre-service teachers' attitudes and the success of school choice also supported the findings of the study by highlighting that almost half of the pre-service teachers have a moderate attitude to the teaching profession and have no clear picture about the teaching profession before they go for teaching practice. But, after they have gone for teaching practice their attitudes towards the teaching profession becomes higher and they feel that they truly enjoy and are committed to be teachers. Similar finding was obtained by Inman and Marlow (2004). They found that most of the pre-service teachers have low attitude towards the teaching profession because of wrong information and have no clear picture about the profession. Previous research (Thamilmani, 2000; Ediger, 2002; LaCour, 2005) has also supported the findings of this study. These studies showed that most of the pre-service teachers have a moderate level of attitude towards, teaching profession even though they feel that teaching profession is

quite interesting. This happens because of lack of preparation during their teacher training program. However, Winch (2004) believes that new teachers are more likely to feel satisfied and have positive attitudes to teaching if they received more support from parents, have better control over children's classroom behavior and having more influence on school policy and decision making.

Relationships between Teaching Efficacy with Teacher Education Program and Attitudes Towards the Teaching Profession

From Table 5, it could be seen that teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers and their satisfaction with the teacher training program was significantly correlated ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.05$).

TABLE 4
Mean and standard deviation of the attitude of UPM trainee teachers towards the teaching profession

Attitude of Trainee Teachers	Mean	S.D
Attitude of trainee teachers toward teaching profession	2.93	0.48
I felt that teaching profession was a very enjoyable job.	4.51	0.51
I felt bored with teaching profession.	1.74	0.86
I choose teaching profession because of my interest.	3.72	1.06
I choose teaching profession because of encouragement from my friends and my parents.	3.43	1.15
Teaching profession give me very little satisfaction.	2.59	1.17
I felt frustrated to be a teacher.	2.15	1.10
A lot of burden to be a teacher.	2.36	1.06
Teaching profession is too challenging for me.	4.28	0.66
I am committed to be a teacher.	4.23	0.54
I felt that teaching planning have a lot of burden, need a lot of time and commitment.	3.28	1.06
Negative impression and feedback from the society make me feel disappointed and lack of energy to teach effectively.	2.42	1.17
I felt that teaching profession has a low prestige.	2.02	1.05
I like teaching profession.	2.66	1.04
I felt that teaching profession have no ending and quite tiring.	2.17	1.05
I felt that salary offered for teachers was not suitable with their responsibility and burden of their job.	2.98	1.03
I felt that teaching profession have limited time for leisure time and sometime influence my own activities.	2.36	1.02

TABLE 5
Relationships between teaching efficacy with teachers training program and attitudes towards the teaching profession

Items	Correlation Teaching Efficacy	
	r	p
Satisfaction of Trainee Teachers with teacher training program	0.688	< 0.05
Attitude of Trainee Teachers towards the teaching profession	-0.231	< 0.05

The strength of the relationship between these two variables was highly correlated and positive. It shows that the satisfaction with the teacher training program plays a crucial role in shaping trainee teachers' efficacy in their teaching approach and their confidence in choosing what to do, sustaining amount of effort needed for attainment, believed to generate positive and skilled transfer to work environments especially in the classroom context. Therefore, it is not surprising when Cheng and Pang (1997) felt that the relation between teachers self-efficacy and satisfaction with the teacher training program should be viewed as bidirectional where trainee teachers feel more efficacious when they feel satisfied with the teacher training program and good performance from the students. In contrast, teaching efficacy of UPM trainee teachers in Teaching of Malay as a First Language was negatively correlated with their attitude toward the teaching profession ($r = -0.257$, $p < 0.05$) and the correlations were considered weak. This meant that the trainee teachers attitude toward teaching have important implications for understanding the efficacy of trainee teachers in teaching and learning.

The findings of this study are in line with previous research (Jones, 2001; Fritz, Miller-Heyl, Kreutzer and MacPhee, 2001; Gordon and Debus, 2002), which reported that teacher education program should help to increase the pre-service teachers' feelings of personal teaching efficacy and internal locus of control as a method of improving a sense of competence and satisfaction with teaching since the relationship between teaching efficacy and teacher education program was greater. The findings of this study are also consistent with the findings by Fritz, Miller-Heyl, Kreutzer and MacPhee (2001) in their study on fostering personal teaching efficacy through staff development and classroom activities which noted that the feelings of teaching efficacy and satisfaction with teacher education programs are interrelated and found that teachers with a high sense of efficacy thought that training practices in teacher training programs are important in order to foster a classroom climate that is warm and supportive of student needs.

Henson and Chambers (2003) in their study on personality type as a predictor of teaching efficacy and classroom control in emergency certification teachers also noted that one of the most important predictors of successful integration of students in the classroom and

effective teaching and learning is the attitude of pre-service teachers towards their teaching profession. The effect of this predictor is little bit lower compared with other predictors such as pre-service teacher programs, commitment to excellence in their teaching, quality classroom learning environments, parents support, knowledge of pedagogy and personality of the pre-service teachers themselves. McCoy's (2003) and Dupoux, Wolman and Estrada, (2005) likewise indicated that most of the pre-service teachers have low confidence with their sense of teaching efficacy not because of their attitude towards the teaching profession but because of pre-teaching situations which might not well provide readiness for the internship and also lack of experience in in-service education when entering the profession.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that teaching efficacy of the UPM trainee teachers in teaching of Malay as a First Language was high. A majority of the respondents had a high level of confidence in terms of student engagement, instructional strategies, classroom management and the use of ICT for teaching. The second conclusion of this study is that trainee teachers were highly satisfied with the teacher training program at UPM. The study also showed that the attitude of Teaching of Malay as a First Language to teacher trainee students of UPM was moderate. Finally, Pearson correlation showed that the teaching efficacy of the UPM trainee teachers and their satisfaction with the teacher training program were significantly correlated. The strength of the relationship between these two variables was high and positive. It showed that satisfaction with the teacher training program played a crucial role in shaping the efficacy of the trainee teachers' teaching approach and their confidence to decide what to do and sustaining the amount of effort needed for attainment and believed to be positive. In contrast, the teaching efficacy of the UPM trainee teachers was negatively correlated with their attitude toward the teaching profession but the correlations were considered weak.

RECOMMENDATION

The results of this study show that there is a significant relationship between teaching efficacy and satisfaction with the teacher training program. This implies it is important for the

Faculty of Educational Studies (FPP) to take proper measures to increase the quality of the teacher training program. From the perspective of human resource development, in order to increase the quality of the program, educators in the FPP must have proper skills and motivation in order to improve the efficacy of trainee teachers in terms of classroom management and their efficacy to teach using ICT. Teacher educators also need to support beginning teachers to apply university coursework, learn about ways former students develop as teachers and understand the needs of novice teachers. Through studies such as this, educators can learn about ways through which the novice develop during their first year and elucidate their specific needs and challenges. Teachers with the most support showed more confidence and were satisfied with teaching. Well-trained, confident, and effective teachers are undoubtedly related to student achievement. As teacher education programs continue to educate those who select the teaching profession as their chosen career, FPP must focus on ways to provide pre-service teachers with ample opportunities to visit and interact with teachers and administrators in a variety of realistic school settings in order to give them a better insight about the teaching profession. Such visits would provide opportunities for gaining greater knowledge about the kind of support each school offers to new teachers, the expectations of other teachers and the administration and the community from which the students come.

In order to ensure that the trainee teachers are satisfied with their teacher training program, the program must introduce "learning by doing" into the curriculum. Teaching practice should be the central aspects of the course from which students can learn by reflection-in-action, aided by competent practitioners (the teachers in schools and lecturers with professional practice). In addition, trainee teachers should also be able to think about and practice teaching according to different philosophies and traditions. Following this direction, reflective thinking strategies are often suggested as ways to get an ideal from differing philosophies and then used in practice. Furthermore, during the course of the program more discussions concerning the conduct of the profession should be included in order to create quality classroom learning environments.

The lecturers and the Ministry of Education should play an important role to improve the attitude of trainee teachers towards the teaching profession by providing a constant source of support for the novice teachers as they work through the challenges in their first year of teaching. The sources of support combined with the array of experiences that the teachers have over the course of the year could help them begin to develop their identities as teachers and dedicate to continue improving through professional development, reflection and ongoing communication with respected peers. A program needs to be developed (probably career exploration in teaching) to ensure that trainee teachers have positive attitudes towards the teaching profession. Without the support of the community, pre-service teachers will develop a poor attitude and a negative perception towards the teaching profession. Therefore, it is important that teachers, novices, pre-service and experienced, and school administrators furnish parents and other members of the community ample opportunities to participate in school activities, therefore providing them a more intimate experience of schooling. Parents and other adults should be encouraged to assist with classroom activities such as reading aloud to children, directing art or music activities and assisting with field days. These will allow individuals within the community to take an active part in the teacher's day.

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Relationships between Leadership Communication Practices and Organisational Commitment in a Selected Higher Education Institution

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Keywords: Leadership communication practices, organisational commitment, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment among the staff in a selected institution of higher education. The chosen organisation is located in the Klang Valley and was established 37 years ago. Stratified random sampling was used for sample selection and a total of 235 respondents participated in this study using a questionnaire survey method. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test, Pearson Product Moment correlation, and Multiple Regression using both enter and stepwise methods. With regard to the levels of organisational commitment, the study shows that the employee's affective, continuance and normative commitments are moderate. Correlation analysis showed significant relationships between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment. While communication climate tended to be a good predictor of organisational commitment. Through effective leadership communication practices, a leader is able to influence and convince employees to be more committed towards their organisation in order to achieve organisational objectives. In conclusion, this research shows that leadership communication practices can contribute towards higher staff commitment in an organisation.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership communication entails nurturing and maintaining a workplace environment in which communication flows freely and quickly in all directions (Mai and Akerson, 2003). Thus, leadership communication is one of the essential elements in management. Good communication in the workplace results in mutual understanding, harmony and action while poor communication only wastes time and resources, forestalls goal accomplishment and sours relationships. Communication is thus the key to effective leadership and without effective communication, a manager is not an effective leader (Barrett, 2006). Communication has been linked to organisational commitment in several ways. Allen (1992), for example, found that, especially in organisations involved in total quality management, communication variables explained up to 59 percent of the variance in organisational

commitment. McDonald and Gandz (1991) suggest that commitment is especially important for the human relations within the organisation. Commitment noticeably underpins contemporary management goals of organisational learning, quality management and employee empowerment and motivation (Linstead *et al.*, 2004; Tourish and Hargie, 2004; Weick, 1995). Commitment is a vital component in any effective organisation but more so in service organisations such as educational institutions. High level of commitment towards the organisation is important because committed members are viewed as stable, productive, and more likely to accomplish organisational goals (Larkey *et al.*, 1995).

Furthermore, it appears that organisational commitment is directly linked to educational success. Armon (1995) concludes that faculty commitment is one of the most important factors in the success of a higher education institution

(Oberholster and Taylor, 1999). In higher education, a leader has influence over constituents in the organisation such as faculty, staff, students, and others. Effectiveness of educational organisations depends on many factors, one of which is the interaction between leaders and staff. It is clear that good leadership communication inspires people to excel and contributes as much as 80-90 per cent to an organisation's success. This type of leadership can be exercised only through quality communication (Wells and Spinks, 1992). Leaders develop visions and strategies, and inspire commitment, which in turn, improve job satisfaction and performance, consequently increasing productivity and profitability.

Numerous studies have focused on exploring the links between organisational commitment and a number of critical in-role behaviours, including performance, absence, tardiness, and turnover. These studies consider organisational commitment to be a bond between employees and the organisation (Sulaiman, 2003). This study attempts to assess the relationship between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment.

It is hoped that the findings of this research may benefit research regarding leadership communication practices. In terms of academic research, the findings may provide and contribute to theoretical aspects of organisational communication practices. This contribution to organisational communication practices would hopefully be useful to administrators to improve leadership communication, and then monitor the quality and commitment of the staff of an educational institution.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment among staff in a selected higher education institution. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the level of evaluation by employees on the leadership communication practices in the organisation.
2. Identify the level of organisational commitment among staff in the organisation.
3. Determine the relationship between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

Leaders in higher education have been greatly criticised for their failure to apply the literature on leadership and management to maintain and advance their institutions in today's increasingly complex internal and external environments (Tucker *et al.*, 1992). Thus, in realising the relationship-oriented between the leader and member, Leader-Member Exchange theory has been rendered as one of the most extensive elaborations of leadership as a relationship in the leadership's communication (Pierce and Newstrom, 2006) and theoretical approach to understanding leadership at work (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Liden *et al.*, 1997; Schriesheim *et al.*, 1999). LMX describes how leaders, over time, develop different exchange relationship with their various followers. The relationships developed between the leader and his/her followers vary in terms of the 'quality of their exchange relationship', when a high level (quality) leader-member exchange relationship exists, followers perceive themselves as having a good working relationship with their leaders. For example, employees in higher quality relationships report higher levels of satisfaction (Graen *et al.*, 1982) and commitment to the organisation (Nystrom, 1990) compared to employees in lower quality relationships.

In communication-focused studies of LMX, Fairhurst and colleagues (Fairhurst, 1993; Fairhurst and Chandler, 1989) found that high quality relationships were characterised by communication that reflects both greater depth and breadth than compared to that of low quality relationships. For instance, communication between leaders and subordinates in high quality relationships involved convergence of values between leader and subordinate, challenging questions to the member, and/or brainstorming with the member, distinct address forms and jargon that establish common ground between leader and member, and leader's encouragement of the member to negotiate their organisational role. By comparison, interaction between leaders and subordinates in low quality relationships was relatively narrow and superficial (Sias, 2005). Understanding the LMX process can aid leaders in improving communication with subordinates, reducing unwanted turnover, and improving worker performance (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Scandura and Graen, 1984).

Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment has received substantial attention in past research due to its significant impact on work attitudes such as job satisfaction, performance, absenteeism, and turnover intentions. Employee commitment is not a singular construct; rather commitment comprises of a number of components (Meyer *et al.*, 1997; Varona, 1996). According to Cohan (1995), job commitment refers to the belief about a job and is a product of employees' job satisfaction. Anderson and Martin (1995) argue that commitment is defined as an employee's adoption of, or identification with an organisation's values, involvement and loyalty. Liou and Nyhan (1994) argue that organisational effectiveness is largely determined by employee commitment. They suggest that there are two approaches to employee commitment - attitudinal (attitude) and behavioural (behaviour exhibited by employees), the communication construct can affect empowerment of employees, which in turn affects job commitment. In addition, the way the organisational goals are communicated to employees and their role in achieving them, strongly affects job commitment (Anderson and Martin, 1995). Moreover, communication mechanisms for establishing and sustaining trust - affect commitment (Mayfield and Mayfield, 2002). Allen and Meyer (1990) identify three general themes in attitudinal conceptualisations of organisational commitment:

Affective Commitment

This refers to the extent to which an employee becomes emotionally attached, identifies with and believes in the organisation. The feelings of belonging are in turn related to personal characteristics and work experiences such as role clarity and skill variety (Hartmann and Bambacas, 2000). There is a significant positive relationship between affective commitment and job satisfaction (Mathieu and Farr, 1991; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990) and communication (Clampitt and Downs, 1993) and an inverse relationship between affective commitment and turnover, intent to leave and stress (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990).

Continuance Commitment

Continuance organisational commitment refers to the extent to which an employee feels committed to the organisation based on years of service. It is often referred to as the "perceived

cost of leaving" and a perceived lack of alternatives (Hartmann and Bambacas, 2000). Mathieu and Zajac's (1990) research suggests a positive relationship with job satisfaction and an inverse relationship with intent to leave and stress. In addition, Allen and Meyer's (1990) research suggests an inverse relationship with perceived job alternatives and a positive relationship with commitment to a particular community. Moreover, the research by Meyer *et al.* (1989) suggests an inverse relationship with perceived ability to be promoted and a positive relationship with job performance. Hence, if organisational processes associated with appraisal and/or promotion were deemed fair and achievable, then it is likely that employees would be motivated to work effectively, continuance commitment is enhanced when employees come to the realisation that they have a lot invested in the organisations and that there are a few good alternatives (Finegan, 2000).

Normative Commitment

Normative involvement refers to a type of organisational commitment based on an employee feeling obligated to remain in the organisation because it is considered the right thing to do (Allen and Meyer, 1990). Morita *et al.* (1993) suggest that firms can predict the likelihood of employees leaving the organisation prematurely by measuring whether the employee has a high or low initial commitment, organisational commitment increases when an organisation expresses its expectations of the employees (Hartmann and Bambacas, 2000). In turn, this may increase the employees' effort and feelings of obligation. Normative involvement has received less research attention (Brunetto and Wharton, 2004). Ostroff (1992) reports that committed employees are associated with better organisational performance, have a low turnover rate, and have low absenteeism. According to Truckenbrodt (2000), it is essential, therefore, that supervisors understand the significance of building a positive relationship with their respective subordinates. Thus, enhancing the subordinate's commitment to the organisation.

Allen and Meyer (1990) Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) is used to measure employees' commitment to their organisations, and consists of 23 items of three components: affective, continuance, and

normative commitment pertaining to the respondent's level of organisational commitment. A 5-point scale ranging from (1= strongly disagree, and 5= strongly agree) was employed. The above modification was made to the original questionnaire to suit the context, in this case, Malaysian organisations.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Fig. 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the study. The independent variable of the study is leadership communication practices and the dependent variable is organisational commitment.

Based on the review of literature, three hypotheses were developed for this study:

- H1: There is significant positive relationship between leadership communication practices and affective organizational commitment
- H2: There is significant positive relationship between leadership communication practices and continuance organizational commitment
- H3: There is significant positive relationship between leadership communication practices and normative organizational commitment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using a survey research design and the study focused on a selected higher education institute which had been established 37 years ago in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. The population of the research was drawn from among academic and support staffs. According to a sampling table formulated by

Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for a population of 489, the sample size should be 217 at least. The sample distributions came from 13 schools/ departments in which stratified random sampling was employed for sample selection. The number of respondents selected from each school/ department was done proportionately according to the sample size in relation to the actual population. Then, the respondents from each sample were divided according to subdivisions so that each sub divisions was proportionately represented in the sample (Shao, 2002). Unit leaders and the researcher placed the names of the respondents in a container and the names were selected until a total of 235 respondents was obtained.

The research instrument used for the study consisted sections on demographic variables, Leadership Communication Practices and Organizational Commitment. The Leadership Communication Practices were measured based on the four dimensions of leadership communication practices namely;

- i. Satisfaction communication (Statements 3 to 7, 16, and 23). Satisfaction communication emphasizes the amount of supervision given, leadership style, communication effectiveness use of their interpersonal skills (Hunt et al., 2000).
- ii. Communication climate (Statements 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 15, 17, 21, and 24). Communication climate measures the respondents' level of transparency in communication, supportiveness and information adequacy with their jobs and their commitment to the organisation (Robertson, 2003).

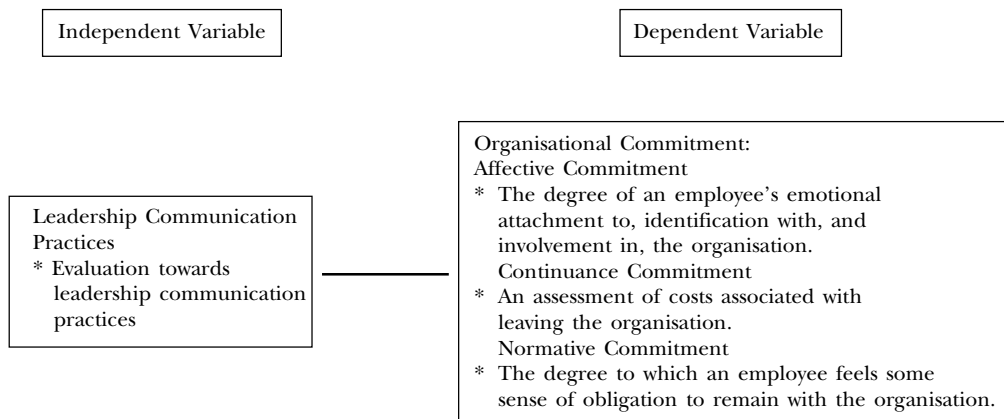


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework of the study

- iii. Job involvement (Statements 10, 11, 14, 22, and 25). Job involvement refers to the staff's personal belief and values, objectives, and behaviour of the organisation, involved in planning and goal setting, areas of responsibility (Shaffer, 1998).
- iv. Feedback process (Statements 9, 18, 19, and 20). Feedback process focuses on the respondents' level of information received with regard to performance evaluation, recognition of achievements, and quality of feedback received (Azhar, 2004).

The respondents were asked to indicate on a 5 point scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree.

The section on Organizational Commitment consisted of 23 items from which 8 items were for Affective Commitment, 7 items for Continuance Commitment and 8 items for Normative Commitment. The response relating to a person's commitment to an organisation, respondents were required to rate each item using a five-point scale (1= strongly disagree, and 5= strongly agree).

The level of Leadership Communication Practices scale was divided into three levels; low, moderate, and high. Determination of this level is based on the highest score= 5, minus the lowest score= 1, and divided by 3. Thus, the low level of leadership communication practices ranged from 1.00 to 2.32, moderate being 2.33 to 3.66, and high was 3.67 to 5.00. Whereas, the Organisational Commitment measurement were categorised into three levels based on the items and score using the equal class interval method. There were low, moderate, and high and were

calculated as follows: the minimum score for affective commitment was 8 points (1 point x 8 item) and the maximum score was 40 points (5 points x 8 items). The class interval was $(40-8)/3= 10$. The level of affective commitment was then categorised into: Low (8-18), moderate (19-29), and high (30-40).

The data were processed using SPSS for Windows Release 13.00. Statistical analyses used in the study were descriptive statistics analyses generating frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment correlation and regression. The hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

The research instrument for the study was pre-tested on 20 respondents. The results from the pre-test showed that the three variables achieved reliability scores ranging from 0.716 to 0.927. After achieving the reliability needed for the research instrument, the actual study was conducted. The reliability scores (Table 1) of the actual data ranged from 0.834 to 0.941.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the study and are organised into four sections namely; characteristic of the respondents, the level of evaluation employees of the leadership communication practices in the organisation, the level of organisational commitment among staff in the organisation, relationships between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment, and leadership communication practices predictor of organisational commitment.

TABLE 1
Reliability scores of pre-tests and actual data

No.	Variables	Cronbach Alpha (a)	
		Pre-test (n=20)	Actual Study (n=235)
1.	Leadership communication practices (25 items)	0.927	0.938
2.	Affective commitment (8 items)	0.850	0.913
3.	Continuance commitment (7 items)	0.716	0.838
4.	Normative commitment (8 items)	0.778	0.834
5.	Overall organisational commitment (23 items)	0.910	0.941

Characteristics of the Respondents

Results shown in Table 2 reveal that a majority of the respondents were females who constituted about two thirds (64.3%) and slightly more than one third (35.7%) were males. In terms of age, the results showed that the largest group were from the 26 to 30 years age group (36.6%), followed by those below 25 years age group (15.3%), and 31 to 35 years age group (14.0%).

Looking across tenure, 50.2% of the respondents had been in the institution for between 1 to 5 years, 23% had been with the institution between 6 to 10 years, below 1 year (9.4%), and 2.6 per cent had served between 16 to 20 years.

Slightly more than half of the participants (54.9%) had been in the current position from 1 to 5 years, followed by the 6 to 10 years

(23.8%), below 1 year (10.6%), 11 to 15 years (5.5%), 21 years and above (3.0%), and the lowest percentage (2.1%) had served in their current positions for between 16 to 20 years.

A total of 119 academic and 116 administrative members participated in this study, the proportion of academic and administrative staff was almost equal (50.6% academic and 49.4% administrative staff). In terms of position, about two thirds (67.2%) were in the professional group and one third (32.8%) from the support group.

Evaluation of Respondents towards Leadership Communication Practices in Organisation

In responding to the 25 items of evaluation, the results of the analysis showed that the mean score ranged from 2.49 to 4.09. The item 'Leadership communication practices strengthen

TABLE 2
Distribution of respondent by demographics
(n=235)

Demographic Factors	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	84	35.7
Female	151	64.3
Age		
below 25 years	36	15.3
26-30 years	86	36.6
31-35 years	33	14.0
36-40 years	28	11.9
41-45 years	26	11.1
46-50 years	13	5.5
above 51 years	13	5.5
Mean=33.28 S.D.=8.72		
Tenure		
below 1 year	22	9.4
1-5 years	118	50.2
6-10 years	54	23.0
11-15 years	14	6.0
16-20 years	6	2.6
above 21 years	21	8.9
Mean=7.27 S. D.= 7.41		
Current Position		
below 1 year	25	10.6
1-5 years	129	54.9
6-10 years	56	23.8
11-15 years	13	5.5
16-20 years	5	2.1
above 21 years	7	3.0
Mean= 5.63 S. D.= 5.42		
Category of Position		
Academic	119	50.6
Administrative	116	49.4

my commitment towards this organisation' had the highest mean of 4.09 (S. D.= 0.86), followed by the statement 'The leader should always discuss with the subordinate to work together to implement a task' which received a response mean of 4.05 (S. D.= 0.94). The results show that friendly climates encourage members to communicate in an open, facilitative communication (Hunt *et al.*, 2000), and reciprocal LMX relationship form the 'in-group', in group members typically experience increased job involvement and are more dedicated to the organisation, and tend not to leave (Hochwarter, 2005). Blau (1985) revealed that a consideration leadership style was found to have a greater influence than a concern for structure leadership style (or task-oriented style) on commitment. Confirmation is found in Williams and Hazer's (1986) study that found consideration leadership style to be one of their antecedents to commitment.

The important role of superiors in aspects of organisational commitment was also shown by Benkhoff (1997) who found that employees who regard their superiors as competent, trustworthy and having a good management style report, significantly more often, that they share the values of the organisation and feel proud to be members (Dick and Metcalfe, 2001). Achieving good relations between leaders and subordinates helps to embed employees, and thereby provides a disincentive for employees to quit (Morrow *et al.*, 2005). Leadership communication practices, if effective, motivate the subordinate and develop stronger employee commitment towards greater organisational achievement (Ab. Aziz Yusof, 2003). The Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory of leadership, which focuses on the two-way relationship between leaders and subordinates, establishing positive interactions between the two and a significant relationship exists between the quality of the leader-subordinate relationship and subordinates' commitment (Truckenbrodt, 2000). LMX quality and supervisory communication practices have found evidence that there is increasing quality of LMX and the communication practices of coordination and participation in higher-quality supervisor-subordinate (Yrle *et al.*, 2002). The item 'The leader and I discussed my performance in work' got the lowest mean of 2.49 (S. D.= 1.18). The overall mean score of 3.41 (S. D.= 0.70) shows that respondents moderately rated

the leadership communication practices in the organization (Table 3).

Organisational Commitment

Affective commitment: Affective commitment means the degree of an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organisation. To what extent were the respondents affectively committed to their organisation? The findings on the level of affective commitment showed that the mean scores for the eight items ranged from 2.95 to 3.65 (Table 4). One sample t-test with a test value of 3.0 found that positive tendency with a significance of $p=0.000$ among the respondents toward effective commitment.

The item 'This college deserves my loyalty' had the highest mean (3.65). This was followed by the statement 'I would be very happy to continue working in this college (mean=3.60) and thirdly by the statement 'I am proud to say that I am part of this college' (mean=3.60). The item with the lowest mean score was 'I would feel guilty if I leave the college right now' (mean=2.95). The overall mean score of 3.38 (S. D.= 0.82) demonstrated that the respondents were of moderate level of affective commitment.

Continuance commitment: Employee's continuance commitment refers to the assessment of costs associated with leaving the organisation. Table 5 illustrates the employees' level of continuance commitment. Looking across the items, the mean scores ranged from 2.80 to 3.15. The item 'For me, this college is the best college where I have worked compared to any other organisations' scored the highest mean, and the item 'I stay in my current post because I have to and not because I'm willing to' had the lowest mean. The respondents' feedback on the items related to continuance commitment were slightly low (overall mean of 2.99, S. D.= 0.79). One sample t-test with a test value of 3.0 revealed positive tendency with a significance of $p=0.000$ among staff toward continuance commitment.

Normative commitment: Normative commitment is defined as the degree to which an employee feels some sense of obligation to remain in the organisation. Table 6 presents the results on the commitment level of the respondents in terms of normative commitment. The mean scores of the items ranged from 2.94 to 3.64 (Table 6). The item 'I care about the future of this college' had the highest mean,

TABLE 3
Evaluation by respondents on leadership communication practices
(n=235)

Leadership Communication Practices	Mean	S. D.
1. Leadership communication practices strengthen my commitment towards this organisation.	4.09	0.86
2. The leader should always discuss with subordinate to work together in order to implement a task.	4.05	0.94
3. The leader must be able to accept sincere criticism from subordinate for the good of the organisation.	3.98	1.02
4. Failure in implementing the organisation's objective because of weakness in leadership communication.	3.72	1.13
5. Problem in communication practices with my leader will disrupt my involvement and work commitment	3.66	1.07
6. Communication in my organisation makes me feel a part of the organisation.	3.54	1.00
7. My leader encourages me to report any faults on the task which I do.	3.53	1.00
8. I don't have any problems in my communication practices with my leader.	3.48	1.09
9. My leader uses correct communication channel in giving instructions task to me.	3.45	1.08
10. My leader gives very clear instructions to me.	3.44	1.15
11. Willing to communicate well in handling a conflict quickly.	3.44	1.07
12. The leadership communication style of my leader supports team work and high involvement among the members.	3.40	1.15
13. My leader is very trustworthy, willing to give support, cooperate and has high commitment towards the job.	3.37	1.21
14. My leader has communication skills to communicate with subordinate regarding his/her task and organisation's objectives.	3.35	1.12
15. The leader needs to change current practices of giving instructions.	3.34	1.09
16. The leadership communication style of my leader is based on principle, sets up a high standard and path to achievement.	3.31	1.13
17. My leader always provide guidance and assistance for me in completing any given task.	3.30	1.10
18. My leader practices an open communication and is willing to share information fully.	3.29	1.20
19. My leader practices a two way communication.	3.24	1.13
20. My leader shares with me the organisation's mission and vision and this will encourage me to improve the organisation.	3.23	1.13
21. The method/technique of communication from my leader is very effective.	3.22	1.11
22. My leader has a high ability in transforming the organisation's objectives.	3.18	1.14
23. My leader makes critical decisions through consensus (collective agreement).	3.12	1.13
24. My leader is willing to communicate to distribute the resources and rewards equally.	3.09	1.16
25. The leader and I discussed my performance in work.	2.49	1.18
Overall	3.41	0.70

Based on 5-point Likert scale

TABLE 4
Affective commitment of respondents
(n=235)

Items	Mean	S. D.
This college deserves my loyalty	3.65	0.96
I would be very happy to continue working in this college	3.60	0.94
I am proud to say that I am part of this college	3.60	0.97
I am very happy because I chose to work in this college compared to other options I had before	3.55	1.08
I tell my friends, this college is an excellent college for me to work	3.41	1.09
I feel a sense of emotional connection with my college where I work	3.17	1.05
I realised that my values and the college values are the same	3.08	1.01
I would feel guilty if I leave the college right now	2.95	1.19
Overall	3.38	0.82

Based on 5-point Likert scale

TABLE 5
Continuance commitment of respondents
(n=235)

Items	Mean	S. D.
For me, this college is the best college where I have worked compared to any other organisations	3.15	1.12
I will be facing problems to adapt myself with a new job compared to working in this college	3.09	1.18
I would not leave this college to another organisation because it may not match the overall benefits I have here	3.09	1.11
There will be a lot of problems in my life if I leave the college now	3.00	1.17
I need to sacrifice a lot if I plan to leave this post now	2.93	1.11
I have a few options if I consider to leave this college	2.87	1.01
I will carry out any job in order to keep this work in this college	2.80	1.11
Overall	2.99	0.79

Based on 5-point Likert scale

TABLE 6
Normative commitment of respondents
(n=235)

Items	Mean	S. D.
I care about the future of this college	3.64	1.00
I think that people these days move from organisation to organisation too much	3.60	1.06
I am willing to give more effort than before in order to achieve success	3.56	0.95
Even though it is to my advantage, I do not feel it is right for me to leave this college now.	3.20	1.07
I feel obligated to remain with my employer now	3.15	1.07
I feel that my college's problems are my problems too	3.04	1.04
I would not leave this college because I feel a sense of obligation to the people in this organisation	2.98	1.07
It is difficult to leave this college now even though I want to do so	2.94	1.10
Overall	3.26	0.71

Based on 5-point Likert scale

and the item 'It is difficult to leave this college now even though I want to do so' had the lowest mean. The overall mean score of 3.26 (S. D.= 0.71) shows that the respondents exhibited a moderate level of commitment in relation to the statements concerning normative commitment. Once again, one sample t-test with a test value of 3.0 showed positive tendency with a significance of $p=0.000$ among the respondents towards normative commitment.

An overall analysis of organisational commitment in terms of affective, continuance, and normative commitments was conducted in order to ascertain the distribution of the respondents in terms of three levels of commitment: low, moderate, and high. The distribution of respondents in terms of organisational commitment is presented in Table 7. In terms of affective commitment, more than half of respondents (54.9%) showed moderate response levels, one third (36.2%) showed high level and only 8.9% showed a low level of affective commitment. The mean composite score of 27.0 (S. D.= 6.6) showed that the result was a moderate level of affective commitment. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents had a moderate level of commitment in 'wanting' to stay and be part of the organisation.

With regard to continuance commitment, the distribution of respondents showed that about two thirds (64.6%) of the respondents showed moderate level of continuance commitment. Only 20.4% of them showed low level followed by high

level at 15.0%. The mean composite score of 20.9 (S. D.= 5.6) showed that the respondents showed moderate level of continuance commitment. This shows that most of the respondents felt that they 'need' to stay at the organisation. The possible reasons for this might be because of the competitive benefits offered by the organisation, in-house training, and openness in communication between superiors and subordinates.

For normative commitment, the majority of the respondents (64.7%) showed moderate level of commitment, while 26.8% and 8.5% were in group of high and low commitment respectively. With a mean composite score of 26.1 (S. D.= 5.7), the data showed that the respondents had moderate level of normative commitment. The result demonstrated that the majority of the respondents felt that they 'ought' to stay at the college since they felt obligated by the contribution provided by the organisation. In conclusion, the research results showed that the respondents were more affectively committed than the other two components. This is a positive finding as the literature suggests that affective commitment is the most desirable form of commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Relationships between Leadership Communication Practices and Organisational Commitment

This study examined the relationships between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment. The results in Table 8 show positive and significant relationships

TABLE 7
Distribution of respondents by organisational commitment
(n=235)

Components	Percentage		
	Low	Moderate	High
Affective commitment Mean =27.0 Std. Dev. =6.6 Low (8-18) Moderate (19-29) High (30-40)	8.9	54.9	36.2
Continuance commitment Mean =20.9 Std. Dev. =5.6 Low (7.00-16.32) Moderate (16.33-25.66) High (25.67-35.00)	20.4	64.6	15.0
Normative commitment Mean =26.1 Std. Dev. =5.7 Low (8-18) Moderate (19-29) High (30-40)	8.5	64.7	26.8

between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment, namely, affective, continuance, and normative commitment . The strength of the relationships between leadership communication practices and the three components of commitment was different. The r-values of affective commitment $r= 0.64$ ($p= 0.000$), continuance commitment $r= 0.459$ ($p= 0.000$), and normative commitment $r= 0.595$ ($p= 0.000$) respectively showed positive and significant relationship. Therefore, based on Guilford’s rule of thumb (Bahaman and Turiman, 2002), the relationships are moderate. From the analysis, it could be concluded that leadership communication practices has significant and positive correlation with organisational commitment. This study is supported by the findings of Gerstner and Day (1997). Schriesheim *et al.* (1999) and Krishnan (2004) which noted that the quality of Leader-Member Exchange are found to be positively related to follower’s organisational commitment and can affect the entire work experience in a positive manner, including performance and affective outcomes. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) show the importance of leader communication for commitment, suggesting that “a supervisor who provides more accurate and timely types of communication enhances the work environment and thereby is likely to increase employees’ commitment to the organisation.” This is in line with the finding that communication relationship satisfaction enhances the individual’s sense of membership of the organisation (Putti *et al.*, 1990).

Testing of Research Hypotheses

The findings supported the three research hypotheses. Table 8 shows significant positive correlation between leadership communication

practices and organisational commitment. All three components of organisational commitment showed positive and significant relationship with leadership communication practices.

Leadership Communication Practices Predictors of Organisational Commitment

Another objective of this study was to determine the significant predictive power of leadership communication practices variables in explaining organizational commitment. Multiple regression analysis using both enter and stepwise methods were conducted. Table 9 presents the results of multiple regression analysis of organisational commitment with dimensions of leadership communication practices. The R-value of 0.63 shows a moderate correlation between organisational commitment and the overall predictor variables. The analysis of variance with F value of 37.35 was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significant. While four predictors collectively contributed about 39% of the variation, the analysis clearly showed that only communication climate was identified as good predictors. Communication climate provided the greatest explanation of the variance in organisational commitment with a standardised Beta of 0.28.

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was carried out to determine which predictors contributed significantly on organisational commitment. As shown in Table 10, the results revealed that only one dimension contributed significantly towards the R Square value. Communication climate was found to be the only meaningful contributor towards the R square value of 0.37. This predictor variable explained 37% of the variation in organisational commitment among the respondents. The rest

TABLE 8
Correlation between leadership communication practices and organisational commitment
(n=235)

Organisational Commitment	Overall	
	Leadership Communication Practices	
	r	p
Affective commitment	0.641	.000
Continuance commitment	0.459	.000
Normative commitment	0.595	.000
Overall organisational commitment	0.614	.000

TABLE 9
Multiple regression analysis of organisational commitment with leadership communication practices predictor variables

Method Enter				
Predictor Variables Dimensions		Dependent Variable		
		B	Beta	Sig. T
Satisfaction communication		0.11	0.13	0.206
Communication climate		0.25	0.28	0.024
Job involvement		0.18	0.19	0.107
Feedback process		0.10	0.10	0.185
(Constant)		1.05		0.000
R = 0.63	R Square=0.39	Adjusted R Square = 0.38		
F = 37.35	Sig. = 0.00			

TABLE 10
Stepwise regression analysis of organisational commitment with leadership communication practices predictor variables

Variables	Organisational Commitment				
	R	R Square	R Square Changes	Beta	P
Communication climate	0.606	0.368		0.372	0.000
Job Involvement	0.621	0.386	0.022	0.270	0.010
(Constant)					0.000

of the predictor variables of leadership communication practices failed to be included in the regression equation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This findings can be generally used for discussions regarding interpersonal communication. Leaders seeking to obtain the high LMX may have to place greater emphasis on interpersonal relationships and find innovative ways to make leader-staff relationship more closely resemble friendships. Leaders can make the management more interpersonally-oriented to staff, communicate and listen more frequently, and make communications more personal and perceptual, significantly to work-related matters and personal matters. Sias and Cahill (1998), noted the importance of discussion of non-work topics for co-worker friendship development and found that the closer the friendship, the more difficult it was for individuals to leave the jobs and organisations.

Significant relationship exists between the leadership communication practices and organisational commitment. It is essential, therefore, that leaders understand the significance of building a positive relationship with their respective subordinates, build a corporate culture in which open two-way communication occurs at all levels, open communications are necessary to establish a sense of trust in the exchange relationship, and actively encourage subordinates to provide feedback and vice-versa. For success, leaders must strategically foster these relationships and take corrective steps, monitoring and correction largely depend on a good communication system between the leader and the subordinate. The results of leadership communication practices efforts are to be clarified in order to show how something as intangible as interaction is a key factor in organisational success. Thus, linking a satisfying communicative relationship between the leader and an employee to well-known attitudes and

perceptions like person-organisation fit and commitment can underline the contribution of communication to organisations (Vuuren *et al.*, 2007). As a whole, the results reflect the importance of the existence of the good communication climate in organisation, whereby this would enhance the staff commitment towards the organisation.

It is recommended that leaders and subordinates improve communication practices as the findings show that this would strengthen staff commitment towards the organisation. An effective means of communication in the appropriate circumstances may be able to keep them in closer touch with subordinates. Development and maintenance of a mature dyadic relationship will benefit not only the leaders and the subordinates, but also the organisation as a whole in the achievement of organisational growth and success. The conclusions might help policy-making management executives and human resource specialists to support initiatives such as employee training and leadership career development, and help positively shape the organisation's future.

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Are Malay Small-Scale Agro-Entrepreneurs Ready to Face Future Challenges? An Analysis of Attitudes towards Work Values

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ABSTRACT

A vital question receiving much attention in the revitalization of the agro-food sub sector in Malaysia concerns the readiness of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs to compete in an increasingly competitive agriculture market. This study reports on the readiness of Malay small-scale commercial farmers in terms of attitude towards entrepreneurial work values. Seven hundred and eighty five Malay small-scale farm producers participated in the survey. A variation of attitudes towards performance, continuous improvement, quality, and innovation/risk-taking values were observed. Most of them had a positive rather than a very favorable attitude towards the four entrepreneurial work values. Hence, many are still vulnerable to compete in an emerging liberalized market. The results showed that the attitudes towards entrepreneurial work values significantly differed according to factor of participation in non-formal courses, participation in business networks, age, and level of education. Implications of the findings are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the readiness of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs to face the emerging challenges of a competitive agriculture market. The context of small-scale agricultural entrepreneurs in Malaysia is changing dramatically. In the 80s and 90s, the agriculture sector, including the agro-food sub-sector, was neglected and marginalized due to uneven development between the industrial and agricultural sectors. A marked decrease in the agricultural contribution to the gross domestic product from 10.2 percent in 1995 to 8.9 per cent in 2000 (Malaysia, 2001) testifies to the declining role of agriculture then.

Now the agriculture sector has bounced back with the realignment of the national development

policy. In the Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001-2005) and Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), the government has formulated and implemented a number of policies and strategies to revitalize all sectors of agriculture. In boosting the productivity and efficiency of the agro-food sub-sector, one of the strategies is to enhance commercialization and entrepreneurship of the small-scale farmers. This is because the government recognizes that, along with the private sector, small-scale entrepreneurs have a modernizing role and that the agro-food sub-sector has immense potential as a new source of growth and wealth (Malaysia, 2006).

Recognizing the pivotal role of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs in realizing the objective of increasing agro-food productivity in the country,

strategic policies and development programs have been initiated to develop more agro-entrepreneurs and to augment their competitiveness through modern and commercial-oriented practices, driven by progressive work values. Presently about ten percent of commercial farmers produce sixty per cent of the national output, while about ninety percent of small-scale farmers contribute only forty per cent of the overall output. The commitment to realize the commercialization and entrepreneurship agenda of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs is evident from the fact that the government has increased development expenditures and allocations for the agro-food sector including the entrepreneur capacity building program in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (Malaysia, 2006).

A commercialization strategy for transforming the agro-food sub-sector is imperative and timely in light of the food security issues and the increasingly high food import bill incurred by the nation. Hence, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry has set a target to increase food exports and, accordingly, reduce the trade deficit by 2010 toward surplus by 2015 (Bani, 2001). The agro-food sector is expected to contribute around five per cent to gross domestic product under the revised Third National Agricultural Policy. However, this can only be realized if the sector is transformed and developed into a modern, dynamic and viable commercial entity.

Several key challenges were identified and a number of strategic policies and programs are in place to ensure development of the agro-food sub sector. The transformation of the agro-food sub sector to a vibrant sector entails the application of appropriate modern technology and changing the mindsets of farmers and investors, in addition to enabling policy, fostering a pro-business environment and providing easy access to markets, land and capital (Malaysia, 2006).

With the opening up of the agricultural market through the implementation of AFTA and WTO, the challenges of transforming the agro-food sub sector are even more demanding. The small-scale commercial farmers in Malaysia need to increase their productivity and enhance their competitiveness in order to survive in the increasingly competitive agriculture market. One obvious consequence of the changing landscape and the development trend in the agro-food sector is the way in which small-scale agro-

entrepreneurs approach and carry out their farm operation.

Accordingly, the principal question in this report is whether Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs are ready to face the emerging and future challenges of the increasingly competitive agricultural environment. To answer the readiness issue, the present analysis examines profiles of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs in terms of work values orientation and its relationship with participation in non-formal training, participation in business networks, years of experience in agriculture, age and level of education. Readiness of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs in facing the demands and challenges of contemporary agriculture is an important issue worthy of immediate attention and examination; unfortunately however, local literature on the subject is very much lacking. The lack of research in this area is understandable given the fact that agriculture in Malaysia was not given priority in the 90s.

Review of Literature

Many have argued that the success or failure of individuals to respond to a changing environment is associated with a lack of readiness. Readiness is both a state and a process. While readiness has been defined in various ways, generally it entails willingness and ability to perform. This conceptualization, according to Dalton and Gottlieb (2003), requires that readiness be judged in terms of a fixed set of criteria or predetermined standards. In the context of the present study, readiness of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs in facing the demands of a changing agricultural environment is conceptualized as the extent to which the small-scale agro-entrepreneurs assign importance to work values assumed to characterize entrepreneurship and competitiveness. According to Garforth *et al.* (2006) and Lichtenberg and Zimmerman (1999), how strongly one attaches importance and belief to a particular object such as work values essentially reflects his or her attitudes towards the object, in this study work values.

Productivity, success and competitiveness of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs are certainly a function of a host of factors. In addition to structural and physical factors such as access to land, capital and finance, inputs and market, agro-entrepreneurs must have strong work values and competencies to survive in a competitive

environment. As the agriculture economy is increasingly knowledge-based and knowledge-driven, Malaysia must increase its knowledge base, invest in capacity building and promote utilization of appropriate modern technologies and practices of entrepreneurial work values.

The importance of work values in impacting behavior and outcomes is widely recognized. Past studies on profiles of successful or competitive farmers (Duram, 1997; Yasunobu, Yee, and Paim, 1997; Mullins, 1996; Lea and Worsley, 2006; Ulhoi, 2005) and on technology adoption (Adrian, Norwood and Mask, 2005; Rehman *et al.*, 2006) have observed that values, attitudes towards values, and personal characteristics are factors that influence farmers' behaviors. The focus of this study is on attitudes towards work values since entrepreneurship is value-based as pointed out by Moris and Schindehutte (2005). Subramaniam and Mia (2003) argued that values are essentially attributes of individuals which reflect their preferences for particular states of affairs over others. Dose (1977) viewed values as standards or criteria for choosing goals or guiding action. Accordingly, values realized in one's occupation should have implications on the way in which entrepreneurs approach a venture.

Although there have been numerous studies conducted on work values, most were on work values of managers and employees, and the relationship of work values with individual or organizational outcomes. Studies that specifically focused on the work-values of successful or competitive farm entrepreneurs are not many (Austin *et al.*, 1996; Pyysiainen, 2006; Yasunobu, Yee and Paim, 1997). In the context of this study, a review of the limited available literature and drawing on general literature on entrepreneurship suggest that concerns on performance, innovation, continuous improvement, and quality are among the key values associated with competitiveness. Gielen, Hoeve and Nieuwenhuis (2003) and Nieuwenhuis (2002) pointed out that learning, continuous improvement, and innovative capacity is essential in entrepreneurship. Lans *et al.* (2004) reported that courage and risk-taking, and being innovative and learning oriented are some of the enterprising skills required in a competitive environment. Austin *et al.* (1996) in their study found that farmers can be differentiated according to attitudes towards work values and observed that attitudes towards work values have an

influence on farm management style. They found that entrepreneur farmers had a positive attitude towards innovation, risk taking, and continuous learning. Yasunobu, Yee and Paim (1997) in their study of characteristics of successful or entrepreneur farmers found that entrepreneur farmers are highly performance and outcome oriented, innovative and learn continuously.

Being quality conscious is also an important attribute of entrepreneurs in a competitive environment. As pointed out by many researchers (Duram, 1997; Gielen, Hoeve and Nieuwenhuis, 2003; Vanslebrouck, Huylenbroeck, and Verbke, 2002) one important consequence of the liberalization of markets is that farmers are expected to meet the demand for quality products and environmentally sound production systems. While the growth in demand for agro-food creates opportunities for agro-entrepreneurs to increase production and income, the opportunity is only meaningful if producers are able to supply quality and safe products. Meeting these requirements is one of the challenges of agriculture identified by the government. Lack of concerns on the quality and safety of products together with the lack of focus on performance, innovation, and continuous improvement makes small-agro-entrepreneurs vulnerable to liberalization and increased competition. In other words, their ability to compete will be undermined if they lack competitive work values.

In this study, it was assumed that the work values orientation of small-scale agro-entrepreneurs has a bearing on their ability to cope with the emerging demands and challenges of contemporary economies. Nevertheless, little is known about the work values orientation of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs. Hence, the research question posed in this study was:

RQ: What is the attitude of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs towards concerns on performance, quality, continuous improvement, and innovation/risk-taking in agricultural production and market activities?

The survival and growth of entrepreneurs are also contingent on their ability to capitalize on available resources. In this sense, networks and networking are important. Smallborne and Welter (2001) pointed out that networks often play a key role in helping entrepreneurs mobilize resources and cope with constraints. Gielen,

Hoeve and Nieuwenhuis (2003) argued that innovation is a learning process in which knowledge networks play an important role. Rasmussen and Nielsen (2004) pointed out that in a knowledge-based agriculture one of the fundamental characteristics of entrepreneurship is connectivity to business networks. In addition to networks as a source of information and knowledge, non-formal learning is an important aspect of entrepreneurship. The role of non-formal learning in the development of a stronger entrepreneurial orientation has been underscored by some, for instance, Lans *et al.* (2004) and Ladzani and Van Vuure (2002).

Based on the literature reviewed, there is support for a relationship between participation in non-formal learning and business networks with work values orientation, but empirical evidence is lacking. The review suggests the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended project management courses and those who have not.
- H2: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended technical/production courses and those who have not.
- H3: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended entrepreneurial courses and those who have not.
- H4: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who participate actively in business networks and those who are not active.

Although the focus of the present analysis is on work values and its relationship with participation in non-formal learning and participation in business networks, a couple of demographic variables were also examined. These variables included age, years of experience in agriculture, and level of education. Many previous studies have observed that age, years of

experience in agriculture, and education level are factors associated with change, responsiveness, and adoption (Duram, 1997; Yasunobu, Yee and Paim, 1997; Mullins, 1996). Hence, it is hypothesized that:

- H5: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across age groups.
- H6: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across levels of education.
- H7: There is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across years of experience in agriculture.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The current study focuses on Malay small-scale entrepreneurs involved in cash crop, livestock, and inland fish farming. The first step taken in the sampling process was creating a sampling frame. Lists of agro-entrepreneurs were obtained from the Farmers' Organization Authority, the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Veterinary Services. The farmers were short listed by limiting those involved in cash crop, livestock and inland fish farming only. Those involved in down stream agricultural activities were excluded. The sampling frame was divided into four regions, representing agro-entrepreneurs in the north, eastern, south, and central regions of the country. The respondents were randomly selected and only those who met the criteria set in the study and gave their consent were interviewed. Out of 800 small-scale entrepreneurs contacted, a total of 785 agreed to participate in the study voluntarily.

Almost all (93.5%) of the respondents were males. Their age ranged from 24 to 67 years, with a mean of 46.5 years. A majority of the respondents (62.3%) were cash crop farmers, 28.9% were livestock farmers, and another 8.8% were fish farmers. A majority lacked formal training in agriculture with only 33.9% having formal qualifications in agriculture. A majority (81.2%) had education up to Malaysia Certificate of Education or SPM; only 18.8% had tertiary education. The respondents varied in years of experience in agriculture, from one year to 33

years (with a mean of 9.9 years). The respondents also varied in terms of their exposure to non-formal training programs and participation in business networks. The socio-demographic profile of the respondents is summarized in Table 1.

Measurement

The dependent variables are attitudes towards four values orientations- performance, quality, continuous improvement, and innovation/risk-taking oriented. Likert scales were constructed to measure attitudes towards the four work values. As pointed by Garforth *et al.* (2006), Lichtenberg and Zimmerman (1999), and Bergevoet *et al.*

(2004), an attitude is a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object. In the present study, the objects were work values. Respondents were measured by the extent to which they subscribed to the four work values orientations, and this was measured in terms of how strongly the respondents attached importance to the work values. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of Likert-items representing the four work values. The four scales were specifically developed because there are no available scales that serve the purpose of this study. Items of the scales were developed based on inputs of

TABLE 1

Distribution of respondents by gender, age, level of education, years of experience in agriculture, non-formal courses attended, and participation in business networks

Variable	Percentage (n=785)
Gender	
Male	93.5%
Female	6.5%
Age (years)	
≤ 30	5.6%
31-40	19.9%
41-50	42.9%
≥ 51	31.6%
Range	24-70
Mean (Standard Deviation)	46.5 (9.55)
Level of education	
SRP	42.0%
MCE	39.2%
STPM/Diploma	15.7%
Degree	3.1%
Formal qualification	
No formal training	66.1%
Certificate in agriculture	31.5%
Diploma/Bachelor in agriculture	2.4%
Years of experience in agriculture (year)	
< 9	57.8
10-17	29.0%
18-25	6.7%
>25	6.5%
Range	1-33
Mean (Standard Deviation)	9.9 (7.41)
Project management short course	
None	45.4%
Once	33.6%
More than once	21.0%
Technical/production short course	
None	58.9%
Once	25.6%
More than once	15.5%
Entrepreneurship short course	
None	58.7%
Once	23.3%
More than once	18.0%
Participation in business networks	
Not-active	16.1%
Somewhat active	60.0%
Active	23.9%

interviews with four Director Generals of departments under the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry. The scales were pre-tested and improved prior to actual use in data collection.

Specifically, attitude towards performance-oriented values was measured with seven items that asked respondents about how much they agreed with statements such as "I am willing to work even at odd hours to ensure my project succeed," "I always do my work according to what was planned in my business plan," or "To me, agriculture work must be commercially oriented in order to succeed." Attitude towards quality-centered values was measured with five items which asked respondents how much they agreed with statements such as "I feel proud when I produce quality farm products," "I always treat my clients well because they are very important for my business," or "I am responsible to produce safe and environmental friendly products." Attitude towards continuous improvement values was measured with five items such as "I always seek and discuss new ideas from different sources to improve my agriculture business," "I always seek ways to reduce farm cost without lowering the quality of my produce," or "I always seek continuous improvement in the ways I carried out my agriculture work." Attitude towards innovation and risk-taking was measured with five items such as "I like to try new innovation, things and ideas," "I am willing to take risks in doing new things if it leads to increase in farm productivity," or "I am fully responsible for my own innovative action."

All items were assessed on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). A higher score on the scale indicates more favorable attitudes towards work values. All scales, the performance-oriented (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.70$), the quality-centered (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.68$), the continuous improvement-oriented (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.69$) and the innovation/risk-taking oriented (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.66$) achieved an acceptable level of reliability.

The independent variables in the present analysis were participation in a technical/production course, project management course, entrepreneurship course, and participation in business network. Respondents were asked to report how many times they had attended a

technical/production, project management and entrepreneurship course in the last three years. The responses were categorized into three: never, once, or more than once. The respondents were also asked to report how many business-related associations they joined and what was their membership status (1= ordinary member or 2= committee member). The responses to these questions provided a measure on participation in business networks. The resulting scores were categorized into three categories (active, somewhat active, or not active). In addition to these independent variables, age, level of educational attainment and years of experience in agriculture were also assessed.

Data Collection

This quantitative study employed a survey research design. The data was collected through face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. The respondents were interviewed by trained enumerators either at their residence or farm. The instrument used was pre-tested prior to the actual data collection. The actual data collection was conducted in March 2006 until July 2006. The interviews were conducted in the national Malay language. On average, each session took about half an hour.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to gain a better understanding of the readiness of Malay small-scale farmer entrepreneurs to face the challenges of contemporary agriculture in terms of their work values orientation, it would be useful to examine closely the demographic profile of the respondents.

The sample mean age for the study was almost equivalent to the national mean, and four in every ten were in the 40 to 50 years age category. This means that many of the respondents were in a productive age and have more years to stay in the farm production business. While a majority of the respondents had no formal qualification in agriculture, many were in the agricultural production business for quite sometime. The fact that they had been in business for a period of time suggests that they are successful farmers, and they must have a keen interest in and commitment towards agriculture as their career. Otherwise, they would have been out of the business a long time ago. Additionally, their field experiences should

provide them with practical knowledge on how to deal with emerging difficulties and challenges in the agricultural production business. Although most of them lack formal agricultural education, the majority had non-formal training in the past three years. This suggests that they have basic competencies (but not sufficient) for coping with the changes in the agricultural environment. Nevertheless, their readiness to respond to the emerging challenges of a competitive agricultural environment is also contingent upon their attitude towards entrepreneurship work values, which lies at the heart of the present study.

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of respondents by attitude towards work values orientation. Attitude towards work values was categorized into three groups. Those with a score equal to or less than one standard deviation below the mean were considered as having an unfavorable attitude, while those with a score equal to or more than one standard deviation above the mean were categorized as having a very favorable attitude. Those with a score within one standard deviation from the mean were categorized as having a favorable attitude. As shown in Table 2, the respondents varied in their attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement, and innovation-risk taking. It shows that these work values were weighted differently by the respondents. On a positive note, a majority of the respondents had a favorable attitude towards the four work values-performance, quality, continuous improvement, and innovation/risk-taking values (the percentage ranged from 64% to 71%). The data also revealed that about two in every ten had very favorable attitudes, particularly on continuous improvement values. This pattern of findings suggests that the majority of the samples, to some degree, have the fundamental attributes of entrepreneurs, however, the attributes need to be strengthened. In a competitive environment, entrepreneurs need to apply these work values as they are essential in entrepreneurship as argued by Lans *et al.* (2004), Gielen, Hove and Nieuwenhuis (2003), and Nieuwenhuis (2002). In the presence of these qualities, therefore, it is assumed that the majority of respondents have the capacity to respond to the challenges and demands of contemporary agriculture.

A comparative analysis across the four work values orientation revealed that, relatively, a

majority of the respondents fared better in concerns for performance, quality of products and continuous improvement. The least prominent was innovation/risk-taking oriented values. The differential focus on concerns for these values suggests that it is more informative and more practical to be specific on discussing about readiness of the agro-entrepreneur to face emerging challenges in terms of their work values. A general statement on readiness would not reveal any deficiency or gap in attitude towards performance, quality, continuous improvement or innovation and risk-taking. In the present analysis, it was observed that attitudes toward innovation/taking risks need to be improved. A weak attitude towards innovation involving risk taking would certainly limit their entrepreneurial potential and ability, and hence they would not be able to survive in the competitive market. As pointed out by Lans *et al.* (2004) and Nieuwenhuis (2002), innovation and risk-taking is necessary for competitiveness. While there are areas for improvement, many of the respondents value performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking, and therefore have the potential to compete in the changing and competitive agriculture market.

The study predicted differences in attitudes towards work values orientation between those respondents who have received training in project management with those who have not. As shown in Table 3, those who have not attended project management courses in the past three years have a lower mean rank compared with those who had all four work values studied. The difference is significant, except for continuous improvement orientation; hence, H1 (i.e. there is a difference in attitude toward concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended project management course with those who have not) is partially supported. This means that those who have received project management course training are more likely to have favorable attitudes towards concerns for performance, quality, and innovation/risk-taking.

The role of technical/production courses is even more significant. Those who have not participated in any agricultural technical/production courses have a lower mean rank compared to those who have the four work values. The difference is significant, and hence, H2 (i.e., there is a difference in attitude towards

TABLE 2
Distribution of respondents by attitude towards work values

Work values	Attitude (n=785)		c	(Sig. level)
	Unfavorable	Favorable		
Performance oriented	15.6	68.1	16.3	426.8 (.000)
Quality-centered	9.3	71.2	19.5	517.4 (.000)
Continuous improvement oriented	64.8	21.3	355.1 (.000)	
Innovation-risk	17.7	64.2	18.1	335.2 (.000)

Note.

Figures are percentages.

Unfavorable is the category with scores equal to or less than one standard deviation below the mean. Very favorable is the category with scores equal to or more than one standard deviation above the mean. Scores of one standard deviation from the mean are categorized as favorable.

concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended technical/production course and those who have not) is fully supported. The impact of exposure to technical courses is expected because agriculture is a discipline governed by precise science. As such, current technical knowledge should enhance one's advantages and competitiveness.

Contrary to expectations, there is a non-significant difference in attitudes towards the work values studied between those who have not received entrepreneurial courses and those who have. Hence, H3 (i.e., there is a difference in attitude towards concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking between those who have attended entrepreneurial course with those who have not) is not supported. The reason for this contradictory finding is unclear. The study failed to observe the expected difference probably because the course is not effective in terms of strengthening work values. Although logically, such a course should be effective, practically it had little impact on the development of work values.

H4 hypothesized that those who are connected to business networks are more likely to have more favorable attitudes towards performance, quality, continuous improvement, and innovation/risk taking values. The hypothesis is partially supported. As shown in Table 3, the test yields significant results only on attitudes towards performance and continuous improvement, but not on quality and innovation/risk taking. A possible explanation for this finding

is that those who are concerned with productivity and are committed to continuous improvement would invest time in networking with fellow agro-entrepreneurs and the relevant associations. This finding is in line with the assertion (e.g., Rasmussen and Nielsen, 2004; Smallborne and Welter, 2001) that networks often play a key role in helping entrepreneurs to mobilize resources and cope with constraints.

Attitudes towards the four work values also vary across age group. Those aged 30 and below have the highest mean rank on the performance-oriented and continuous improvement values, followed by the 31-40 age group. However, in the quality-centered and innovation/risk-taking oriented values, the 31-40 age group has a significantly higher mean rank. The difference is significant; therefore H5 (i.e., there is a difference in attitude towards concern for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across age group) is fully supported.

Similarly, attitudes towards work values also vary across different levels of education. Those who have a first degree had a higher mean rank on performance-oriented, continuous improvement, and innovation/risk taking-oriented values compared to the other groups with a lower education qualification; but not on the quality-centered values. Hence, H6 (i.e., there is a difference in attitude towards concerns on performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across level of education) is partially supported. Finally, years of experience in agriculture indicated no significant influence on attitudes towards work

TABLE 3
Mean ranks of work values by participation in non-formal training programs and business networks (n=785)

Work Values	Attended project management course			Attended agriculture-technical course			Attended entrepreneurial course			Participation in business network	
	None	Once	More than once	None	Once	More than once	None	Once	More than once	Not active	Somewhat active
Performance oriented	367.04 $\chi^2 = 14.52$	434.93 $\rho = 0.001$	379.47	368.84 $\chi^2 = 12.94$	419.72 $\rho = 0.002$	437.63	403.13 $\chi^2 = 3.03$	485.34 $\rho = 0.219$	466.85	373.19 $\chi^2 = 16.98$	391.46 $\rho = 0.000$
Continuous improvement oriented	376.01 $\chi^2 = 3.58$	404.18 $\rho = 0.167$	409.51	371.48 $\chi^2 = 9.90$	423.05 $\rho = 0.007$	420.33	392.95 $\chi^2 = 0.485$	399.42 $\rho = 0.784$	381.87	365.57 $\chi^2 = 19.85$	472.60 $\rho = 0.000$
Quality-centered oriented	363.02 $\chi^2 = 11.36$	415.50 $\rho = 0.003$	419.47	411.17 $\chi^2 = 16.50$	440.95 $\rho = 0.000$	466.53	382.89 $\chi^2 = 5.29$	425.76 $\rho = 0.071$	380.66	405.58 $\chi^2 = 1.16$	401.12 $\rho = 0.559$
Innovation/risk taking oriented	366.90 $\chi^2 = 9.36$	405.89 $\rho = 0.009$	426.50	411.05 $\chi^2 = 19.14$	430.16 $\rho = 0.000$	436.40	387.74 $\chi^2 = 0.519$	398.01 $\rho = 0.771$	400.98	411.75 $\chi^2 = 3.19$	397.95 $\rho = 0.202$

Note. The Kruskal-Wallis test of significance was used.

TABLE 4
Mean ranks of work values by age group, level of education and years of experience in agriculture (N=785)

Work Values	Age Group (years)				Level of Education				Years of Experience in Agriculture			
	≤30	31-40	41-50	≥51	SRP	SPM	STPM /Diploma	Degree	≤9	10-17	18-25	≥26
Performance oriented	496.20	466.18	364.34	365.91	372.06	400.10	407.41	489.73	366.19	400.13	409.50	382.70
		$\chi^2=34.87$	$\rho=0.0000$			$\chi^2=8.97$	$\rho=0.0003$			$\chi^2=4.595$	$\rho=0.204$	
Continuous improvement oriented	482.48	455.32	365.47	373.67	392.53	383.15	388.48	532.58	370.34	403.39	381.45	360.03
		$\chi^2=25.961$	$\rho=0.0000$			$\chi^2=9.94$	$\rho=0.019$			$\chi^2=3.84$	$\rho=0.279$	
Quality-centered oriented	426.55	440.93	383.28	368.43	377.75	399.94	402.61	447.29	375.47	381.93	434.65	355.10
		$\chi^2=11.77$	$\rho=0.0008$			$\chi^2=3.46$	$\rho=0.326$			$\chi^2=4.106$	$\rho=0.250$	
Innovation/Risk taking oriented	354.01	455.26	382.36	362.05	367.98	408.59	404.80	459.10	377.65	3843.84	421.47	336.18
		$\chi^2=17.21$	$\rho=0.0001$			$\chi^2=8.02$	$\rho=0.046$			$\chi^2=4.02$	$\rho=0.259$	

Note. The Kruskal-Wallis test of significance was used.

values. Thus, H7 (i.e., there is a difference in attitude towards concern for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking across years of experience in agriculture) is not supported. The reason for failing to find support for H7 is not known. Probably, weaknesses in the measurement used contributed to the failure to support H7.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study was carried out to ascertain the readiness of Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs to face the challenges of the competitive agricultural environment. It is assumed that agro-entrepreneurs need to subscribe to entrepreneurial work values. A favorable attitude towards performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk taking are considered essential work values in order to compete and cope with the emerging challenges. This study provides empirical evidence surrounding the work values orientation of Malay small-scale farmers in terms of concerns for performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking. Based on the level of attitudes observed, it is concluded that most of the Malay agro-entrepreneurs have the right attitude towards competitive work values, meaning that they attach importance to performance-driven, quality conscious, continuous improvement, and innovativeness including risk-taking, in which all the values are considered essential for sustainability and competitiveness in the present liberalized agricultural market.

Although most of the Malay small-scale agro-entrepreneurs have the potential to cope with the challenges of the competitive market, many fall under the category of having a favorable rather than very favorable attitude towards concerns on performance, quality and continuous improvement. The percentage of very favorable attitudes towards competitive work values is quite low, i.e. two in every ten. In this sense, many are still vulnerable in the present liberalized market. Thus, more capacity building and development programs to strengthen entrepreneurial work values need to be systematically and effectively implemented. More importantly, since many are middle-aged farmers with agricultural experience, there is potential and room for advancement and growth.

It is important to note that a substantial percentage of farmers are found to have

unfavorable attitudes towards concerns for innovation/risk taking, performance, quality, and continuous improvement. Hence, this group of farmers is very vulnerable to marginalization in the present competitive market. This group of farmers needs urgent attention and intervention programs. Who are these people? They were those who lacked participation in non-formal or formal training and lack connectivity to business networks, in particular.

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant difference in attitude towards entrepreneurial work values between those who had non-formal training in agriculture courses, particularly on the technical and production aspects as compared to those who had not attended any non-formal training programs in recent years. One important implication of this finding is that the relevant development agencies need to continue their commitment to invest in farmer development and capacity building programs. It is recommended that the relevant agencies not only provide opportunities and incentives for agro-entrepreneurs to continuously upgrade their managerial and technical knowledge and practices, but that such programs be targeted to those who were left behind in terms of participation in non-formal training development programs. At the same time, agro-entrepreneurs should be willing to pay for participation in non-formal training programs because such an investment will help them to develop competitiveness in terms of knowledge.

The study also suggests that agro-entrepreneurs need to strengthen connectivity to business networks as it was found that favorable attitudes towards performance and continuous learning are connected with participation in business networks. Thus, another recommendation is for the relevant development agencies to provide more opportunities for small-scale agro-entrepreneurs to network through more non-formal training and development programs.

The findings of this study are limited by the fact that although data were collected from Malay commercial farm producers, most were small-scale farmers. Based on the scale of operation, the samples are essentially micro-entrepreneurs. In this sense, the findings could not be generalized to other types of agro-entrepreneurs. Another limitation is the cross-sectional nature of the data, which does not allow statements about causality. Reliable and precise measurements of work values

orientation towards performance, quality, continuous improvement and innovation/risk-taking are needed. Future studies in this area should improve on the instruments used to collect the aforementioned data. Finally, since the nature of the agricultural production business varies by type of producer, future studies should also examine agro-entrepreneurs' work values accordingly.

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Persepsi Guru dan Pelajar Terhadap Persekitaran Pembelajaran Konstruktivisme untuk Mata Pelajaran Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meninjau persepsi guru dan pelajar terhadap persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme (PPSK) untuk mata pelajaran Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi (TMK) di sekolah menengah kebangsaan di kawasan Lembah Klang. Persepsi guru dan pelajar diukur dari segi lima dimensi—Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian, Suara Kritikal, Kawalan Bersama dan Perundingan Bersama. Seramai 440 pelajar dan 74 guru terlibat dalam kajian ini. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa guru dan pelajar berpendapat bahawa kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme untuk mata pelajaran TMK hanya pada tahap sederhana. Dalam erti kata lain, dapatan kajian mencadangkan bahawa konstruktivisme tidak dipraktik dengan begitu berkesan di dalam persekitaran pengajaran-pembelajaran TMK. Dapatan kajian juga mencadangkan majoriti guru dan pelajar beranggapan bahawa TMK adalah subjek yang sentiasa berubah-ubah tetapi mereka tidak mempunyai persepsi bahawa pelajar mempunyai kawalan bersama dalam pembelajaran.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess teacher's and student's perceptions of constructivist learning environments for the subject Information Technology and Communication (ICT) at national secondary schools in Klang Valley. Teacher's and student's perceptions were measured in terms of five dimensions — Personal Relevance, Uncertainty, Critical Voice, Shared Control and Student Negotiation. A total of 440 students and 74 teachers were involved in this study. The results of this study showed that teachers and students considered the existence of the constructivist learning environment to be at the moderate level. In other words, the results suggest that constructivism is not practiced so effectively in the ICT teaching-learning environment. The results of the study also suggest that the majority of teachers and students perceived ICT as a subject that is ever changing but they do not perceive that students have shared control over their learning.

PENGENALAN

Analisis peperiksaan SPM 2005 bagi mata pelajaran Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi (TMK) menunjukkan bahawa pencapaian gred cemerlang (gred 1A dan 2A) hanya 3.19 % di negeri Selangor dan 3.37 % di Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur (Unit Penilaian dan

Peperiksaan, 2006). Berbanding subjek-subjek sains dan teknologi lain, peratus pencapaian peringkat cemerlang mata pelajaran TMK adalah yang terendah di Lembah Klang. Menurut Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia (2002), antara aspek utama adalah calon-calon mata pelajaran TMK tidak dapat menjawab soalan-soalan

peperiksaan dengan baik, maka pengetahuan dalam semua bidang TMK perlu dipertingkatkan. Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2001) dalam Pembangunan Pendidikan 2001-2010 turut melaporkan bahawa kaedah pengajaran berpusatkan guru seperti *chalk and talk* menyebabkan guru cuma menjadi penyampai maklumat untuk menghabiskan sukatan pelajaran tanpa memberi pertimbangan terhadap keperluan dan potensi pelajar. Maka, pencapaian cemerlang yang kurang memuaskan dalam mata pelajaran TMK ini harus diberi perhatian yang wajar demi melahirkan pakar TMK melalui fungsi TMK sebagai disiplin ilmu.

Masalah proses pengajaran yang berpusatkan guru haruslah ditangani dengan mempraktikkan persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme, dengan menekankan pelajar-pelajar membina sendiri secara aktif pengetahuan dan konsep berdasarkan kepada pengetahuan atau pengalaman yang sedia ada dan tidak menerima pengetahuan secara pasif dari persekitaran (Vygotsky, 1978; Shelly *et al.*, 2004).

Menurut Bruner (1985) dan Von Glaserfeld (1980) konstruktivisme merupakan proses pembelajaran yang menerangkan bagaimana pengetahuan disusun dalam minda manusia dan berpegang kepada konsep melalui pengalaman sedia ada pelajar yang akan membina kefahaman masing-masing tentang perkara yang berlaku dalam kehidupan. Teori konstruktivisme (Manus, 1996) menyatakan bahawa pengetahuan dan pengalaman sedia ada atau lepas itu memainkan peranan yang signifikan dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran dengan ia membentuk asas tindakan susulan seseorang pelajar. Teori ini turut menarik perhatian pelajar dalam 'mengapa' untuk pembelajaran dan membuka pintu kepada pemikiran secara kritikal dan kritis serta pembangunan intelektual pelajar (Manus, 1996). Dengan lain perkataan, teori ini menjelaskan bahawa setiap manusia akan menjana prinsip kefahaman dalam minda sebagai model mengikut pengalaman sedia ada supaya ia boleh disesuaikan dengan pengalaman baru yang akan diterima. Ia juga melibatkan pengaplikasian kemahiran berfikir seperti menganalisis, mengintegrasikan, dan membuat refleksi serta membentuk kefahaman baru tentang sesuatu konsep dengan mengintegrasikan pengetahuan sedia ada dengan pengetahuan baru.

Persekitaran Pembelajaran Konstruktivisme

Dalam persekitaran pengajaran-pembelajaran konstruktivisme guru berperanan membantu membina kefahaman pelajar melalui kaedah yang sesuai mengikut tahap kemajuan pelajar masing-masing. Dalam persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme yang menekankan pengajaran-pembelajaran berpusatkan pelajar terus memberi peluang kepada pelajar-pelajar memainkan peranan yang aktif dalam proses pengajaran-pembelajaran (Von Glaserfeld, 1996; Neo dan Neo, 2002; Hirumi, 2002; Coombs dan Wong, 2000). Dalam pada itu, pelajar harus bertanggungjawab terhadap segala usaha untuk mencari pelbagai cara untuk memproses maklumat dan menyelesaikan masalah, di mana mereka tidak menganggap guru sebagai pembekal maklumat tetapi hanya sebagai suatu daripada sumber pengetahuan untuk membantu mencari maklumat dan menggalakkan berfikir serta berkomunikasi (Rakes, 1996; Cifuentes, 1997; Hirumi, 2002; Coombs dan Wong, 2000). Amalan pendekatan konstruktivisme dalam proses pengajaran-pembelajaran akan membolehkan pelajar melibatkan diri mereka di dalam aktiviti bilik darjah agar mereka dapat mempelajari sesuatu pelajaran dengan melakukan sendiri aktiviti tersebut. Menurut Wallace (1985), pelajar yang melakukan aktiviti di dalam kelompok atau kumpulan itu mempunyai latar belakang yang berbeza-beza antara satu sama lain. Mereka diberikan peluang untuk membuat keputusan sendiri tentang perkara-perkara yang akan mereka pelajari dan seterusnya mencapai objektif pembelajaran mereka. Akhirnya, pelajar yang dalam persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme ini dapat belajar bagaimana menyerap dan memperoleh informasi baru yang dikehendaki untuk membina pengetahuan baru berasaskan pengetahuan yang sedia ada (Wong *et al.*, 2003). Melalui proses ini, mereka akan lebih prihatin, bertanggungjawab dan melibatkan diri dalam aktiviti pembelajaran mereka.

Saunders (1992) menekan bahawa ilmu pengetahuan tidak boleh dipindahkan daripada guru kepada pelajar dalam bentuk yang serba sempurna. Ini bermakna pelajar perlu membina pengetahuan baru mengikut pengalaman masing-masing. Proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran berorientasikan konstruktivisme akan memastikan

pelajar menganalisis pengalaman mereka dan menggalakkan pelajar menjadi lebih bertanggungjawab pada pembelajaran (Saunders, 1992). Menurut beliau, pembelajaran adalah hasil usaha pelajar itu sendiri dan guru tidak boleh belajar untuk mereka. Memandangkan amalan pendekatan pembelajaran konstruktivisme dalam bilik darjah dapat melahirkan pelajar yang produktif dan berpengetahuan luas, maka mewujudkan persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme merupakan suatu usaha yang patut dilaksanakan dalam proses pengajaran-pembelajaran. Adalah diharapkan bahawa dengan pelaksanaan pembelajaran konstruktivisme dalam bilik darjah, sistem pendidikan Malaysia dapat melahirkan generasi yang penuh berdedikasi dan bersedia untuk menangani masalah dalam era globalisasi yang menuju ke dunia tanpa sempadan ini.

OBJEKTIF KAJIAN

Kajian ini adalah bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti sejauh mana persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme diamalkan dalam proses pembelajaran komputer, umumnya dan bagi mata pelajaran TMK, khususnya. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk:

1. mengenal pasti persepsi guru terhadap persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata pelajaran TMK;
2. mengenal pasti persepsi pelajar terhadap persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata pelajaran TMK.

METODOLOGI

Sampel Kajian

Sampel kajian terdiri daripada dua kumpulan. Kumpulan pertama terdiri daripada guru yang mengajar mata pelajaran TMK di kawasan Lembah Klang. Kumpulan kedua pula terdiri daripada pelajar tingkatan empat yang mengikuti mata pelajaran TMK pada sesi persekolahan tahun 2006 dari Lembah Klang juga. Dua jenis sekolah terlibat dalam kajian ini iaitu Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bestari (SMK Bestari) dan Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Harian Biasa (SMK Harian Biasa) yang menawarkan subjek TMK di tingkatan 4. Populasi guru TMK di SMK Bestari adalah seramai 14 orang dan populasi guru TMK di SMK Harian Biasa adalah seramai 104 orang. Populasi pelajar TMK di sekolah

SMK Bestari adalah 313 orang dan populasi pelajar TMK di SMK Harian Biasa adalah 2112 orang. Jadual penentuan saiz sampel Krejcie dan Morgan (1970), telah digunakan untuk menentukan bilangan sampel guru SMK Bestari, guru SMK Harian Biasa, pelajar SMK Bestari dan pelajar SMK Harian Biasa. Maka bilangan sampel untuk guru TMK di SMK Bestari dan SMK Harian Biasa adalah 14 orang dan 86 orang. Bagi sampel pelajar pula, seramai 175 pelajar SMK Bistari dan 327 pelajar SMK Harian Biasa telah dipilih. Maka, jumlah guru dan pelajar yang diperlukan dalam kajian ini seperti yang ditentukan oleh jadual penentuan saiz sampel Krejcie dan Morgan (1970) adalah seramai 100 orang dan 502 orang.

Prosedur Kajian

Tatacara pengumpulan data dalam kajian ini telah dilakukan dengan menghantar soal selidik melalui pos dan *pigeon hole* di Pejabat Pelajaran Daerah Negeri Selangor dan Jabatan Pelajaran Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur serta lawatan penyelidikan ke sekolah-sekolah pelaksana TMK yang mempunyai bilangan pelajar yang melebihi 80 orang. Kerjasama guru-guru TMK telah diperoleh untuk memastikan soal-selidik guru dan pelajar dipulangkan kepada penyelidik. Panggilan telefon dibuat kepada guru-guru sekiranya soal selidik tidak dipulangkan. Sebanyak 74 set soal selidik guru berjaya dikutip balik dan semuanya didapati lengkap diisi. Bagi set soal selidik pelajar, sebanyak 440 set soal selidik pelajar didapati lengkap dan telah digunakan untuk penganalisan data.

Instrumen Kajian

Instrumen *Constructivist Learning Environment Survey* (CLES) yang dibina oleh Taylor dan Fraser (1991) telah digunakan dalam kajian ini. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam kajian ini terdiri daripada dua set, iaitu satu set untuk guru dan satu lagi untuk pelajar. Instrumen kajian mengandungi 26 item yang diukur oleh lima skala (5-hampir selalu, 4-kerap, 3-kadang-kadang, 2-jarang dan 1-hampir tidak pernah). Item-item telah diubah suai dan diterjemahkan dari versi bahasa Inggeris kepada bahasa Melayu oleh ahli-ahli penyelidik dengan bantuan dua guru Bahasa Inggeris dan seorang guru bahasa Malaysia. Proses ini dimantapkan lagi dengan

kerjasama seorang guru dwibahasa yang menterjemahkan versi Bahasa Malaysia kembali ke versi bahasa Inggeris. Versi bahasa Inggeris asal telah dibandingkan dengan versi bahasa Inggeris yang diterjemahkan oleh seorang guru bahasa Inggeris lain. Hasil perbandingan ini, guru bahasa Inggeris tersebut telah mendapati bahawa versi bahasa Inggeris asal mempunyai maksud yang sama dengan versi bahasa Inggeris yang diterjemah dari bahasa Malaysia. Instrumen yang digunakan dalam penyelidikan ini mengandungi lima dimensi yang menilai setiap aspek pembelajaran konstruktivisme dalam persekitaran bilik darjah. Dimensi-dimensi tersebut adalah seperti berikut:

- (i) Perkaitan Individu (5 item)
Perkaitan individu merujuk kepada perhubungan antara mata pelajaran TMK yang diajar itu dengan pengalaman hidup pelajar atau pengetahuan sedia ada pelajar.
- (ii) Ketidakpastian (6 item)
Ketidakpastian digunakan untuk menilai sejauh mana peluang diperuntukkan kepada pelajar-pelajar dalam memperoleh pengetahuan TMK yang dikatakan sebagai sentiasa berubah-ubah.
- (iii) Suara Kritikal (5 item)
Suara kritikal ini adalah untuk menilai sejauh mana suasana sosiobudaya telah diwujudkan dalam proses pengajaran-pembelajaran TMK. Ia juga melibatkan kebebasan pelajar dalam mengemukakan soalan tentang pembelajaran mereka dalam mata pelajaran TMK.
- (iv) Kawalan Bersama (5 item)
Kawalan bersama turut digunakan dalam menilai sejauh mana penglibatan pelajar-pelajar dalam perancangan, pelaksanaan dan penilaian ke atas pengajaran-pembelajaran mata pelajaran TMK.
- (v) Perundingan Pelajar (5 item)
Perundingan pelajar ini adalah untuk menyelidik penglibatan antara pelajar-pelajar dalam penilaian berdaya maju terhadap idea-idea baru dalam persekitaran pembelajaran TMK. Ia juga mengenal pasti sejauh manakah interaksi antara pelajar-pelajar dalam mempertingkatkan pemahaman dalam mata pelajaran TMK.

Skor min yang diperoleh bagi setiap item dalam instrumen kajian dikategorikan kepada tiga tahap, iaitu tahap rendah bagi skor min antara 1.00 hingga 2.33, tahap sederhana bagi

skor antara 2.34 hingga 3.66 serta tahap tinggi bagi skor min antara 3.67 hingga 5.00.

DAPATAN KAJIAN

Persepsi Guru Ke Atas Persekitaran Pembelajaran Secara Konstruktivisme (PPSK) untuk Mata Pelajaran TMK

Jadual 1 melaporkan tahap kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran TMK secara konstruktivisme dari aspek belajar tentang dunia di luar sekolah (Perkaitan Individu). Dari sudut persepsi guru, majoriti berpendapat bahawa pembelajaran TMK di sekolah memang kerap dikaitkan dengan kehidupan (47.3 %), keadaan dunia di luar (43.2 %), lebih memahami tentang dunia di luar (40.5 %) dan perkara-perkara yang menarik tentang dunia di luar (47.3 %) semasa pengajaran dan pembelajaran mata pelajaran TMK berlangsung di sekolah. Namun, kebanyakan guru berpendapat pelajar kadangkala (41.9 %) sahaja mempelajari topik baru bermula dengan masalah dunia di luar, sebanyak 36.5 % guru berpendapat bahawa pelajar-pelajar kerap mempelajari topik baru dengan bermula dengan masalah dunia di luar. Skor min untuk semua item kecuali item no. 2 menunjukkan tahap persekitaran PPSK yang agak tinggi. Min skor yang agak rendah bagi item no.2 ($M=3.43$, $SP=0.83$) menunjukkan bahawa guru berpendapat bahawa pelajar tidak begitu kerap belajar tentang topik-topik baru yang diajar dalam mata pelajaran TMK dikaitkan dengan masalah di dunia luar pada awal pengajaran.

Jadual 2 melaporkan tahap kewujudan dimensi ketidakpastian. Berdasarkan Jadual 2, kebanyakan guru memberi pendapat bahawa pelajar-pelajar hampir selalu (52.7 %) dan kerap (43.2 %) mempelajari bahawa TMK itu selalu berubah. Mereka berpendapat bahawa TMK kerap (48.6 %) dipengaruhi oleh nilai seseorang. Pada masa yang sama, mereka hampir selalu (47.3 %) mempelajari bahawa TMK berubah mengikut masa kini dan terdahulu. Keadaan ini ditunjukkan oleh item-item no. 1, 2 dan 5 pada tahap tinggi dengan skor min masing-masing bernilai 4.47 ($SP=0.62$), 3.74 ($SP=0.81$) dan 4.39 ($SP=0.66$). Tiga item yang lain, iaitu item-item no. 3, 4 dan 6 pula menunjukkan tahap sederhana wujud dalam pembelajaran TMK dari segi pengaruh pendapat seseorang terhadap TMK ($M=3.26$, $SP=0.84$), perbezaan TMK mengikut budaya ($M=3.59$, $SP=0.79$) dan pembentukan teori ($M=3.26$, $SP=0.84$).

JADUAL 1
Persepsi guru terhadap PPSK dalam aspek perkaitan individu

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari tentang dunia di luar.	0 (0.0)	2 (2.7)	28 (37.8)	32 (43.2)	12 (16.2)	3.73 (0.76)	Tinggi
2. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari topik baru bermula dengan masalah dunia di luar.	0 (0.0)	9 (12.2)	31 (41.9)	27 (36.5)	7 (9.5)	3.43 (0.83)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK boleh menjadi sebahagian daripada kehidupan di luar.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	14 (18.9)	35 (47.3)	25 (33.8)	4.15 (0.72)	Tinggi
4. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar lebih memahami tentang dunia di luar.	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	29 (39.2)	30 (40.5)	13 (17.6)	3.72 (0.82)	Tinggi
5. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari perkara-perkara yang menarik tentang dunia di luar.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.1)	20 (27.0)	35 (47.3)	16 (21.6)	3.86 (0.80)	Tinggi

n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 2
Persepsi guru terhadap PPSK dalam aspek ketidakpastian

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang		Kerap		Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
			f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)			
1. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK selalu berubah-ubah.	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	2 (2.7)	32 (43.2)	39 (52.7)	4.47 (0.62)	Tinggi		
2. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK dipengaruhi oleh nilai seseorang tersebut.	0 (0.0)	5 (6.8)	21 (28.4)	36 (48.6)	12 (16.2)	3.74 (0.81)	Tinggi		
3. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK dipengaruhi oleh pendapat seseorang tersebut.	2 (2.7)	9 (12.2)	35 (47.3)	24 (32.4)	4 (5.4)	3.26 (0.84)	Sederhana		
4. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari mengenai perbezaan TMK yang digunakan dalam konteks budaya yang berbeza.	0 (0.0)	6 (8.1)	26 (35.1)	34 (45.9)	8 (10.8)	3.59 (0.79)	Sederhana		
5. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK masa kini berbeza dengan TMK terdahulu.	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	4 (5.4)	34 (45.9)	35 (47.3)	4.39 (0.66)	Tinggi		
6. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mempelajari bahawa TMK adalah mengenai pembentukan teori.	0 (0.0)	13 (17.6)	34 (45.9)	22 (29.7)	5 (6.8)	3.26 (0.83)	Sederhana		
n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)									

n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

Dari aspek Suara Kritikal, Jadual 3 menunjukkan bahawa majoriti responden guru berpandangan pelajar-pelajar diberi peluang untuk menyuarakan pendapat dan perasaan dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran TMK itu wujud pada tahap sederhana. Hanya item no. 5, iaitu pelajar-pelajar diberi peluang mengemukakan pendapat masing-masing wujud pada tahap yang tinggi, manakala item-item 1 hingga 4 itu hanya berada pada tahap yang sederhana. Item no. 2 yang memberi skor min yang terendah, 2.74 (SP = 1.10) dalam aspek suara kritikal menunjukkan bahawa guru berpendapat pelajar-pelajar jarang menyoal cara guru mengajar dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran TMK di sekolah.

Kewujudan PPSK dalam aspek Kawalan Bersama dapat ditunjukkan dalam Jadual 4, dengan semua lima item dalam skala pengukuran ini memberi tahap persekitaran PPSK yang sederhana. Bagaimanapun, majoriti responden guru TMK (38 %) berpendapat bahawa pelajar kerap membantu membuat keputusan tentang sejauh mana mereka telah mempelajari apa yang diajar (item no. 2). Dalam penentuan jumlah masa sesuatu aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran (item no. 4), taburan frekuensi yang menunjukkan masing-masing responden berpendapat bahawa pelajar-pelajar kerap (27.0 %), kadang-kadang (24.3 %) dan jarang (29.7 %) membantu mereka. Keadaan ini telah memberi skor min yang terendah sekali dalam aspek ini, iaitu hanya 2.92 (SP= 1.16) yang menunjukkan tahap sederhana.

Jadual 5 turut melaporkan tahap kewujudan PPSK dalam aspek Perundingan Pelajar iaitu belajar tentang komunikasi dari sudut persepsi responden guru. Majoriti responden berpendapat bahawa pelajar-pelajar hampir selalu (45.9%) diberi peluang dalam perbincangan sesama mereka semasa proses pengajaran-pembelajaran TMK di sekolah. Kelima-lima item dalam aspek ini melaporkan tahap yang tinggi terutamanya item no. 1 hingga 3 yang menunjukkan skor min melebihi 4.00. Ini menjelaskan bahawa guru kerap (47.3 %) memberi peluang kepada pelajar-pelajar berbincang sesama mereka terutama dalam penyelesaian masalah pembelajaran (item no. 2).

Persepsi Guru bagi Setiap Skala Pengukuran Jadual 6 menunjukkan skor min persepsi guru bagi setiap skala pengukuran dalam set persepsi guru yang mengukur kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata

pelajaran TMK. Dari sudut persepsi guru, tahap kewujudan tinggi bagi skala Perkaitan Individu (secara purata 3.80 setiap item), Ketidakpastian (secara purata 3.79 setiap item) dan Perundingan Pelajar (secara purata 4.11 setiap item). Manakala bagi skala Suara Kritikal (secara purata 3.36 setiap item) dan Kawalan Bersama (secara purata 3.20 setiap item) berada pada tahap sederhana. Keseluruhannya, majoriti guru TMK berpendapat bahawa persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata pelajaran TMK wujud pada tahap sederhana (secara purata 3.65 setiap skala).

Persepsi Pelajar Ke Atas Persekitaran Pembelajaran Secara Konstruktivisme untuk Mata Pelajaran TMK

Jadual 7 melaporkan persepsi pelajar terhadap persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme dari aspek Perkaitan Individu. Didapati bahawa pelajar-pelajar berpandangan mereka kerap mempelajari TMK boleh menjadi sebahagian daripada kehidupan di luar sekolah (40.2 %) dan perkara-perkara menarik tentang dunia di luar (38.2 %) dalam kelas TMK. Manakala, item-item no. 1, 2 dan 4 wujud pada tahap sederhana dengan pelajar berpendapat bahawa mereka kadang-kadang mempelajari tentang dunia di luar (41.8%), topik baru bermula dengan masalah dunia di luar (36.4%) dan juga lebih memahami tentang dunia di luar semasa proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam kelas TMK (36.6%).

Berdasarkan Jadual 8 untuk aspek Ketidakpastian, hanya item no.5 menunjukkan tahap persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme yang tinggi dengan skor min bernilai 4.32 (SP= 0.87). Lima item yang lain hanya memberi tahap yang sederhana dalam aspek ini tetapi dengan skor min yang melebihi 3.20. Majoriti pelajar berpendapat bahawa mereka kerap (34.3 %) mempelajari bahawa TMK itu selalu berubah-ubah. Pelajar turut menyatakan TMK kadang-kadang (33.6 %) dipengaruhi oleh nilai dan pendapat seseorang. Manakala, mereka turut berpandangan bahawa mereka kerap (39.3 %) mempelajari perbezaan TMK dalam konteks budaya yang berbeza. Pelajar hampir selalu (53.2 %) mempelajari TMK masa kini berbeza dengan terdahulu, ini diikuti dengan hanya kadang-kadang (39.7 %) mempelajari pembentukan teori dalam kelas TMK.

Berdasarkan Jadual 9, didapati bahawa semua item dalam aspek Suara Kritikal ini menunjukkan persekitaran pembelajaran secara

JADUAL 3
Persepsi guru terhadap PPSK dalam aspek Suara Kritikal

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, adalah OK bagi pelajar-pelajar menanyakan soalan 'Mengapakah saya perlu belajar topik ini?' kepada saya.	5 (6.8)	11 (14.9)	22 (29.7)	24 (32.4)	12 (16.2)	3.36 (1.13)	Sederhana
2. Dalam kelas TMK, adalah OK bagi pelajar-pelajar menyoal cara saya mengajar.	9 (12.2)	25 (33.8)	20 (27.0)	16 (21.6)	4 (5.4)	2.74 (1.10)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, adalah OK bagi pelajar-pelajar mengadu tentang aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang mengelirukan.	4 (5.4)	8 (10.8)	39 (52.7)	19 (25.7)	4 (5.4)	3.15 (0.89)	Sederhana
4. Dalam kelas TMK, adalah OK bagi pelajar mengadu apa sahaja perkara yang menghalang mereka daripada belajar.	2 (2.7)	8 (10.8)	31 (41.9)	25 (33.8)	8 (10.8)	3.39 (0.92)	Sederhana
5. Dalam kelas TMK, adalah OK bagi pelajar-pelajar mengemukakan pendapat mereka.	1 (1.4)	2 (2.7)	14 (18.9)	31 (41.9)	26 (35.1)	4.07 (0.88)	Tinggi

n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 4
Persepsi guru terhadap PPSK dalam aspek kawalan bersama

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar membantu saya merancang apa yang mereka akan pelajari.	7 (9.5)	10 (13.5)	31 (41.9)	15 (20.3)	11 (14.9)	3.18 (1.14)	Sederhana
2. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar membantu saya membuat keputusan tentang sejauh mana mereka dapat mempelajari apa yang diajar.	4 (5.4)	13 (17.6)	17 (23.0)	28 (37.8)	12 (16.2)	3.42 (1.12)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar membantu saya memilih aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang terbaik untuk mereka.	5 (6.8)	13 (17.6)	24 (32.4)	20 (27.0)	12 (16.2)	3.28 (1.14)	Sederhana
4. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar membantu saya menentukan jumlah masa yang digunakan untuk aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran.	8 (10.8)	22 (29.7)	18 (24.3)	20 (27.0)	6 (8.1)	2.92 (1.16)	Sederhana
5. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar membantu saya menentukan aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang mereka jalankan.	5 (6.8)	13 (17.6)	29 (39.2)	21 (28.4)	6 (8.1)	3.14 (1.02)	Sederhana

n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 5
Persepsi guru terhadap PPSK dalam aspek perundingan pelajar

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar berpeluang untuk bercakap dengan pelajar yang lain.	0 (0.0)	2 (2.7)	6 (8.1)	32 (43.2)	34 (45.9)	4.32 (0.74)	Tinggi
2. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar berbincang dengan pelajar yang lain bagaimana untuk menyelesaikan masalah.	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (6.8)	35 (47.3)	34 (45.9)	4.39 (0.62)	Tinggi
3. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar menerangkan idea mereka kepada pelajar-pelajar lain.	0 (0.0)	3 (4.1)	13 (17.6)	34 (45.9)	24 (32.4)	4.07 (0.82)	Tinggi
4. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar meminta pelajar yang lain menjelaskan ideanya.	0 (0.0)	5 (6.8)	22 (29.7)	33 (44.6)	14 (18.9)	3.76 (0.84)	Tinggi
5. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar mendengar idea pelajar yang lain dengan teliti.	0 (0.0)	2 (2.7)	19 (25.7)	34 (45.9)	19 (25.7)	3.95 (0.79)	Tinggi

n=74; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 6
Taburan skor min persepsi guru

Skala Pengukuran PPSK	Bil item	Selang mungkin	Selang sebenar	M	SP	Tahap PPSK
Perkaitan Individu	5	5 – 25	13 – 25	18.99	3.05	Tinggi
Ketidakpastian	6	6 – 30	16 – 29	22.76	2.90	Tinggi
Suara Kritikal	5	5 – 25	7 – 25	16.78	3.82	Sederhana
Kawalan Bersama	5	5 – 25	7 – 25	16.01	4.70	Sederhana
Perbincangan Pelajar	5	5 – 25	14 – 25	20.53	2.98	Tinggi
Keseluruhan			Secara purata 3.65 per skala			Sederhana

konstruktivisme wujud pada tahap sederhana untuk mata pelajaran TMK. Jadual 9 turut menunjukkan bahawa majoriti responden berpandangan bahawa mereka kadang-kadang sahaja bertanya kepentingan belajar topik tertentu (26.6%) dan menyoal cara guru mengajar (33.2%). Majoriti pelajar juga merasakan bahawa mereka kadang-kadang mengadu tentang aktiviti yang mengelirukan (32.3%) dan mengadu apa sahaja yang menghalang mereka dalam pembelajaran (31.8%). Majoriti pelajar juga memberi pendapat bahawa kadang-kadang sahaja mereka memberi pendapat dalam kelas TMK (32.5%). Peratusan pilihan 'kerap' agak tinggi juga bagi item 3, 4 dan 5 dengan masing-masing bersamaan 28.2%, 20.9% dan 27.5%. Sebaliknya, seramai 110 responden (25.0%) berpendapat bahawa hampir tidak pernah wujud keadaan pelajar menanyakan soalan 'Mengapakah saya perlu belajar topik ini?' (item no.1). Ini bermakna satu perempat daripada responden kurang mengambil tahu kepentingan mempelajari sesuatu topik dalam mata pelajaran TMK. Begitu juga dengan item no.2 menunjukkan 20.9% responden memilih 'hampir tidak pernah' bagi menyoal cara guru mengajar dalam kelas TMK.

Jadual 10 melaporkan semua item untuk aspek Kawalan Bersama mempunyai tahap persekitaran PPK yang sederhana. Majoriti responden pelajar berpendapat mereka hampir tidak pernah membantu guru menentukan jumlah masa untuk aktiviti (30.7%) dan jenis aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran dalam kelas TMK (30.5%). Masing-masing terdapat sebanyak 32.5% dan 31.8% daripada responden berpendapat bahawa mereka kadang-kadang membantu guru dalam membuat keputusan sejauh mana yang pelajar dapat pelajari dan memilih aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang terbaik dalam kelas TMK. Responden pelajar

juga jarang membantu guru dalam merancang apa yang akan dipelajari (29.5%).

Dari aspek Perundingan Pelajar, majoriti responden berpandangan bahawa mereka hampir selalu berpeluang bercakap (39.8%) dan berbincang penyelesaian masalah (38.0%) sesama mereka dalam kelas TMK (Jadual 11). Ini diikuti dengan keadaan responden kerap berpeluang bercakap (30.9%) dan berbincang penyelesaian masalah (32.3%) dalam kelas TMK. Bagi aspek menerangkan idea sesama pelajar-pelajar (item no. 24 hingga 26), majoriti responden (melebihi 30%), memberi pendapat bahawa mereka kadang-kadang sahaja berbuat demikian. Namun, lebih 20% daripada responden turut berpendapat mereka kerap memberi penerangan idea.

Persepsi Pelajar bagi Setiap Skala Pengukuran

Jadual 12 menunjukkan taburan skor min persepsi pelajar bagi setiap skala pengukuran dalam set persepsi pelajar yang mengukur kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata pelajaran TMK. Jelaslah bahawa dari sudut persepsi pelajar, kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran komputer secara konstruktivisme mempunyai tahap yang sederhana dari semua aspek, iaitu Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian, Suara Kritikal, Kawalan Bersama dan Perundingan Pelajar. Walau bagaimanapun, tahap sederhana ini turut dapat diberi urutan yang tertinggi ke terendah dengan membandingkan skor min setiap item. Hasilnya, susunan dari tahap yang paling tinggi ke paling rendah adalah Ketidakpastian (secara purata 3.55 setiap item), Perundingan Pelajar (secara purata 3.52 setiap item), Perkaitan Individu (secara purata 3.51 setiap item), Suara Kritikal (secara purata 3.02 setiap item) dan akhirnya Kawalan Bersama (secara purata 2.49 setiap item). Keseluruhannya, tahap kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme untuk mata

JADUAL 7
Persepsi pelajar terhadap PPSK dalam aspek perkaitan individu

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari tentang dunia di luar.	16 (3.6)	47 (10.7)	184 (41.8)	157 (35.7)	36 (8.2)	3.34 (0.91)	Sederhana
2. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari topik baru bermula dengan masalah dunia di luar.	16 (3.6)	89 (20.2)	160 (36.4)	128 (29.1)	47 (10.7)	3.23 (1.01)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK boleh menjadi sebahagian daripada kehidupan di luar.	3 (0.7)	21 (4.8)	124 (28.2)	177 (40.2)	115 (26.1)	3.86 (0.88)	Tinggi
4. Dalam kelas TMK, saya lebih memahami tentang dunia di luar.	6 (1.4)	76 (17.3)	161 (36.6)	138 (31.4)	59 (13.4)	3.38 (0.97)	Sederhana
5. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari perkara-perkara yang menarik tentang dunia di luar.	6 (1.4)	40 (9.1)	120 (27.3)	168 (38.2)	106 (24.1)	3.75 (0.97)	Tinggi

n=440; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 8
Persepsi pelajar terhadap PPSK dalam aspek ketidakpastian

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK selalu berubah-ubah.	15 (3.4)	49 (11.1)	137 (31.1)	151 (34.3)	88 (20.0)	3.56 (1.04)	Sederhana
2. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK dipengaruhi oleh nilai seseorang.	15 (3.4)	90 (20.5)	148 (33.6)	137 (31.1)	50 (11.4)	3.27 (1.02)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK dipengaruhi oleh pendapat seseorang.	13 (3.0)	87 (19.8)	176 (40.0)	115 (26.1)	49 (11.1)	3.23 (0.99)	Sederhana
4. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari mengenai perbezaan TMK yang digunakan dalam konteks budaya yang berbeza.	19 (4.3)	61 (13.9)	132 (30.0)	173 (39.3)	55 (12.5)	3.42 (1.02)	Sederhana
5. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK masa kini berbeza dengan TMK terdahulu.	3 (0.7)	17 (3.9)	51 (11.6)	135 (30.7)	234 (53.2)	4.32 (0.87)	Tinggi
6. Dalam kelas TMK, saya mempelajari bahawa TMK adalah mengenai pembentukan teori.	11 (2.5)	69 (15.7)	131 (29.8)	152 (34.5)	77 (17.5)	3.49 (1.03)	Sederhana

n=440; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 9
Persepsi pelajar terhadap PPSK dalam aspek suara kritikal

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	Skor Min	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
1. Dalam kelas TMK, adakah OK bagi saya menanyakan soalan 'Mengapakah saya perlu belajar topik ini?'	110 (25.0)	87 (19.8)	117 (26.6)	78 (17.7)	48 (10.9)	2.79 (1.31)	Sederhana
2. Dalam kelas TMK, adakah OK bagi saya menyoal cara guru saya mengajar.	92 (20.9)	84 (19.1)	146 (33.2)	74 (16.8)	44 (10.0)	2.76 (1.24)	Sederhana
3. Dalam kelas TMK, adakah OK bagi saya mengadu tentang aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang mengelirukan saya.	57 (13.0)	67 (15.2)	142 (32.3)	124 (28.2)	50 (11.4)	3.10 (1.18)	Sederhana
4. Dalam kelas TMK, adakah OK bagi saya mengadu apa sahaja perkara yang menghalang saya daripada belajar.	44 (10.0)	91 (20.7)	140 (31.8)	92 (20.9)	73 (16.6)	3.13 (1.21)	Sederhana
5. Dalam kelas TMK, adakah OK bagi saya memberi pendapat saya.	25 (5.7)	66 (15.0)	143 (32.5)	121 (27.5)	85 (19.3)	3.40 (1.12)	Sederhana

n=440; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 10
Persepsi pelajar terhadap PPSK dalam aspek kawalan bersama

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	Skor Min	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
6. Dalam kelas TMK, saya membantu guru merancang apa yang saya akan pelajari.	91 (20.7)	130 (29.5)	128 (29.1)	78 (17.7)	13 (3.0)	2.53 (1.09)	Sederhana
7. Dalam kelas TMK, saya membantu guru membuat keputusan tentang sejauh mana saya dapat mempelajari apa yang diajar.	68 (15.5)	113 (25.7)	143 (32.5)	97 (22.0)	19 (4.3)	2.74 (1.09)	Sederhana
8. Dalam kelas TMK, saya membantu guru memilih aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang terbaik untuk saya.	127 (28.9)	87 (19.8)	140 (31.8)	61 (13.9)	25 (5.7)	2.48 (1.20)	Sederhana
9. Dalam kelas TMK, saya membantu guru menentukan jumlah masa yang digunakan untuk aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran.	135 (30.7)	106 (24.1)	120 (27.3)	63 (14.3)	16 (3.6)	2.36 (1.16)	Sederhana
10. Dalam kelas TMK, saya membantu guru menentukan aktiviti pengajaran-pembelajaran yang mereka jalankan.	134 (30.5)	115 (26.1)	117 (26.6)	60 (13.6)	14 (3.2)	2.32 (1.14)	Sederhana

n=440; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 11
Persepsi pelajar terhadap PPSK dalam aspek perundingan pelajar

	Hampir tidak pernah	Jarang	Kadang -kadang	Kerap	Hampir selalu	M (SP)	*Tahap Persekitaran PPSK
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
11. Dalam kelas TMK, saya berpeluang untuk bercakap dengan pelajar-pelajar yang lain.	2 (0.5)	29 (6.6)	98 (22.3)	136 (30.9)	175 (39.8)	4.03 (0.96)	Tinggi
12. Dalam kelas TMK, saya berbincang dengan pelajar-pelajar yang lain bagaimana untuk menyelesaikan masalah.	8 (1.8)	19 (4.3)	104 (23.6)	142 (32.3)	167 (38.0)	4.00 (0.97)	Tinggi
13. Dalam kelas TMK, saya menerangkan idea saya kepada pelajar-pelajar lain.	23 (5.2)	70 (15.9)	144 (32.7)	131 (29.8)	72 (16.4)	3.36 (1.09)	Sederhana
14. Dalam kelas TMK, saya meminta pelajar-pelajar yang lain menjelaskan idea mereka.	33 (7.5)	74 (16.8)	154 (35.0)	115 (26.1)	64 (14.5)	3.23 (1.12)	Sederhana
15. Dalam kelas TMK, pelajar-pelajar lain mendengar idea saya dengan teliti.	32 (7.3)	122 (27.7)	157 (35.7)	91 (20.7)	38 (8.6)	2.96 (1.06)	Sederhana

n=440; *Skor min: 1.00-2.33 (Rendah); 2.34-3.66 (Sederhana); 3.67-5.00 (Tinggi)

JADUAL 12
Taburan skor min persepsi pelajar

Skala Pengukuran PPSK	Bil. item	Selang mungkin	Selang sebenar	M	SP	Tahap PPSK
Perkaitan Individu	5	5 – 25	6 – 25	17.56	3.49	Sederhana
Ketidakpastian	6	6 – 30	6 – 30	21.28	3.72	Sederhana
Suara Kritikal	5	5 – 25	5 – 25	15.09	4.35	Sederhana
Kawalan Bersama	5	5 – 25	5 – 25	12.44	4.54	Sederhana
Perundingan Pelajar	5	5 – 25	7 – 25	17.58	3.62	Sederhana
Keseluruhan			Secara purata 3.22 setiap item			Sederhana

pelajaran TMK berada pada tahap sederhana sahaja (secara purata 3.22 setiap item).

PERBINCANGAN

Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme (PPSK) untuk mata pelajaran TMK di Lembah Klang wujud pada tahap sederhana sahaja mengikut persepsi guru dan pelajar. Dapatan ini adalah sama dengan dapatan kajian tahap penggunaan model konstruktivisme 5-fasa Needham (Noriah Abd. Rahman, 2000) dan tahap penggunaan teori konstruktivisme di sekolah-sekolah rendah, daerah Marang (Zakiah Salleh, 1997) yang turut melaporkan proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran di peringkat sederhana sahaja. Dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan keputusan yang lebih positif daripada dapatan kajian yang diperoleh oleh Osman Arshad (1998) yang mengenal pasti amalan teori konstruktivisme dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran mata pelajaran teknik dan vokasional dalam kalangan guru di daerah Temerloh dan Maran, Pahang yang melaporkan bahawa ciri-ciri asas teori konstruktivisme tidak diamalkan, hanya unsur-unsur teori tersebut yang dipraktikkan tetapi tidak ketara dan ditekankan oleh guru-guru yang terpilih.

Jika diperhatikan dengan lebih teliti bagi setiap aspek dalam skala pengukuran persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme, didapati bahawa bagi persepsi pelajar, kesemua lima skala pengukuran iaitu Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian, Suara Kritikal, Kawalan Bersama dan Perundingan Pelajar wujud di peringkat sederhana sahaja. Ini menyokong dapatan kajian Dryden dan Fraser (1998) yang menggunakan instrumen yang sama untuk mengenal pasti persepsi pelajar untuk menilai kejayaan projek *Urban Systemic Initiative* (USI). Kajian Dryden dan Fraser (1998) melaporkan tahap sederhana

diperoleh untuk skala Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian, Suara Kritikal dan Perbincangan Pelajar. Seperti yang diperoleh dalam kajian ini, skala Kawalan Bersama mempunyai skor min yang terendah, ini turut menyokong dapatan kajian Dryden dan Fraser (1998) yang melaporkan tahap yang rendah dalam skala ini untuk kedua-dua subjek biologi dan sains integrasi. Dapatan kajian bagi skala Kawalan Bersama ini turut menyokong dapatan kajian Maunsaiyat (2002) yang menunjukkan ciri-ciri konstruktivisme jarang wujud di dalam bilik darjah yang dikaji di sekolah vokasional, Thailand melalui instrumen yang sama. Ini bermakna tahap berkongsi membuat keputusan tentang kurikulum, cara pengajaran dan penilaian antara guru dan pelajar memang kurang wujud dan pada tahap yang agak rendah dalam persekitaran pengajaran dan pembelajaran dalam kelas sains dan teknologi.

Walaupun dapatan kajian ini menunjukkan kewujudan persekitaran pembelajaran konstruktivisme masih pada tahap sederhana dengan skor min bagi kedua-dua pihak guru dan pelajar masing-masing 3.65 dan 3.22 untuk setiap skala. Skor min bagi persepsi guru adalah lebih tinggi berbanding persepsi pelajar memberi maksud bahawa guru-guru berpendapat bahawa persekitaran pembelajaran secara konstruktivisme lebih kerap berlaku berbanding pandangan pelajar dalam kelas TMK. Bagi persepsi guru, terdapat tiga skala pengukuran iaitu Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian dan Perbincangan Pelajar wujud pada tahap tinggi. Dari sudut pandangan pelajar pula, kesemua lima skala pengukuran iaitu Perkaitan Individu, Ketidakpastian, Suara Kritikal, Kawalan Bersama dan Perbincangan Pelajar wujud di peringkat sederhana.

Bagi skala pengukuran Kawalan Bersama yang merupakan skor min yang terendah dalam kajian, iaitu 2.49 bagi persepsi pelajar dan 3.20

bagi persepsi guru menunjukkan guru dan pelajar kurang berkongsi bersama dalam tanggungjawab, membuat keputusan dalam pelaksanaan dan perancangan pengajaran dan pembelajaran dan seterusnya pelajar-pelajar tidak melibatkan diri dengan lebih aktif dan autonomi. Maka, guru perlu mengambil inisiatif dalam mewujudkan pembelajaran bilik darjah konstruktivisme kerana ini adalah berfaedah kepada kedua-dua pihak guru dan pelajar (Gray, 1997).

Pendek kata, guru juga bertindak sebagai penyelidik perlu sentiasa menilai proses pengajaran-pembelajaran secara empirikal iaitu dengan instrumen penilaian tahap kewujudan pembelajaran konstruktivisme. Hal ini perlu diberi perhatian demi mengenal pasti cara bagaimana ilmu pengetahuan dapat distrukturkan supaya ia lebih mudah difahami dan akan digunakan oleh pelajar. Guru-guru TMK perlu menyediakan suasana pembelajaran konstruktivisme dengan persekitaran fizikal dan interpersonal dalam membina pengetahuan TMK yang bermakna, baru dan seterusnya suasana demokrasi diwujudkan dalam suasana proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran untuk mata pelajaran TMK.

CADANGAN DAN RUMUSAN

Kaedah pengajaran konstruktivisme adalah satu pendekatan yang dianggap dapat meningkatkan tahap pengetahuan dan kemahiran pelajar di bidang komputer (Robiah Sidin *et al.*, 2003). Amalan ciri-ciri pembelajaran konstruktivisme dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran TMK patut dipraktikkan dengan sewajarnya kerana ciri-ciri PPSK ini memang terkandung dalam huraian sukatan pelajaran TMK yang mengamalkan strategi SeDAAP (*Self-Directed, Self-Accessed, Self-Assessed* dan *Self-Paced*) yang menggalakkan pembangunan pelajar-pelajar yang berpembelajaran sendiri, perhubungan kerja yang produktif sesama ahli kumpulan dan mempertingkatkan disiplin pelajar (Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, 2006). Maka, tahap kewujudan PPSK sepatutnya bukan sahaja pada tahap sederhana seperti yang dikenal pasti dalam kajian ini sekiranya guru-guru TMK menghayati huraian sukatan pelajaran TMK yang disyorkan oleh KPM. Tahap kewujudan PPSK seharusnya pada tahap yang lebih tinggi dalam kelas TMK di Lembah Klang mengikut strategi pembelajaran yang telah disyorkan. Walau bagaimanapun, keadaan ini tidak berlaku berkemungkinan

disebabkan huraian sukatan pelajaran untuk mata pelajaran TMK ini hanya diperkenalkan tahun 2006 dengan guru-guru TMK masih di peringkat permulaan dalam mempraktikkan strategi baru ini dalam kelas TMK.

Maka, kajian lanjutan perlu dilakukan untuk mengkaji kekuatan dan kemampuan pembelajaran komputer secara konstruktivisme di sekolah yang boleh memanfaatkan guru dan pelajar dalam jangka masa panjang. Dapatan ini terbatas kepada sampel yang merangkumi populasi guru TMK dan pelajar TMK di Lembah Klang sahaja. Maka penyelidikan yang sama perlu dikembangkan kepada sampel yang lebih besar kepada negeri-negeri lain di seluruh Malaysia.

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News Media Socialisation and Ethnic Tolerance among Malaysian Youth

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ABSTRACT

Strengthening ethnic tolerance among the youth involves educating them about the cultural differences and issues of interethnic relations through the mainstream news media. It is predicted that exposure to public affairs news would sensitize the youth to the complexity and challenges of living in a multiethnic society and accordingly enhance their level of ethnic tolerance. A total of 2,906 youths aged between 15 to 25 years participated in a survey. The survey observed varying levels of ethnic tolerance with many of the respondents in the moderate and high category. The respondents scored better in the cognitive and attitudinal component compared to the behavioural dimension of ethnic tolerance. The respondents also vary in their level of exposure to public affairs news with six in every ten being in the moderate category. Regression analysis showed that exposure to public affairs news, cognitive and attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance are significant predictors and accounted for 16.5 percent of the variance in the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance. Cognitive component of ethnic tolerance is a better predictor, followed by attitudinal component, and exposure to public affairs news. This paper discusses the implication of the findings in relation to nation building.

INTRODUCTION

Based on the premise that ethnic tolerance is a necessary (but not a sufficient) factor of harmonious interethnic relations in Malaysia, and that the news media plays an important role in nation-building, this paper addresses the question of what is the level of ethnic tolerance, measured in cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural terms, and the level of exposure to news on public affairs in the mainstream media among 15 to 25 years old youth, and examines the relationships of news on public affairs in the mainstream media with cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural component of ethnic tolerance.

While Malaysia has been highly respected as a successful multiethnic, multicultural, multi-

religion society, Malaysians should not be complacent of the achievement in light of scores of interethnic relations issues emerging as a result of development, modernization and globalization. It is important to consider that the response of Malaysians to an increasingly dynamic multiethnic society is not unchanging. It could change in either direction. It is for this reason that Malaysians have been continuously reminded to sustain the harmony and unity that has been achieved thus far which is fundamental for political and economic stability. Yong Tiam Kui (2004) in an article on Malaysia's competitiveness reported that the peaceful and harmonious feature of the Malaysian society is one of the country's strongest selling points.

Malaysia, nevertheless, needs to further strengthen its multiethnic society in order to realize the goal of becoming a fully developed harmonious civil society in 2020.

Review of Literature

Growing interdependence of economic, political and social activities, and growing competition for development resources are common features of today's modern multicultural, multiethnic societies. Larson, Wilson and Mortimer (2002) in reviewing global trends on the implications of macro-level and micro-level changes in the society noted that increased interdependency and the confluence of diverse people puts a premium on development of knowledge, attitudes and skills to relate and cooperate across boundaries of ethnicity, religions and social class. This observation means that in today's multiethnic society, ethnic tolerance, as social competency, is more important than ever before.

Within the realm of interethnic relations, different but overlapping concepts were offered to describe positive value relations between ethnic groups. Among them are concepts like ethnic tolerance and multiculturalism. In essence, they have been mostly used for describing desired states to which societies or nations should aspire. The term tolerance, in a general sense, is an ideology as well as values for dealing with diversity and differences. The theme of tolerance is very prominent in Malaysia's national unity and integration agenda. As pointed by Zainul Arif Hussain (2003), in the following excerpt of Mahathir Mohamad's speech, the former prime minister, the theme of tolerance is distinct:

"... building a nation out of a diverse people with differing historical, ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural backgrounds is something more than just fostering consensus on the basic character of a nation. It involves the fostering of shared historical experiences, shared values, a feeling of common identity and shared destiny that transcends ethnic bounds, without undermining ethnic identity ... p. 538"

This description means that ethnic tolerance essentially entails the idea of cultural differences, and memberships should not only be acknowledged and considered but also respected. Viewed in this sense, it is not very different from the concept of multiculturalism as conceived by Richeson and Nussbaum (2004) and Verkuyten and Martinovic (2005).

Weldon (2006) argued that tolerance, like liberty and equality, is a principle of democratic creed. It requires citizens to uphold and secure the right of groups, even those they find objectionable, to participate fully in political, social and economic life. In describing the domain of tolerance in relation to citizenship principle, Weldon (2006) proposed two dimensions of tolerance: political tolerance and social tolerance. Political tolerance involves basic political liberties. Social tolerance, on the other hand, refers to the right to express cultural differences. While there are several ways to conceptualize the ethnic tolerance construct, the present analysis argued that tolerance towards others of different ethnic groups involved cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural tolerance. In this sense, the cognitive component of ethnic tolerance refers to readiness to get at in-depth understanding of the cultural differences and of the contentious interethnic relations issues. The attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance refers to the willingness to accept the right of the other of different ethnicity and views the interethnic relations issues positively or constructively. The behavioural component of ethnic tolerance refers to practices that manifest openness, sensitivity and accommodation towards differences, divergence, and conflicts.

Ethnic tolerance among the 15 to 25 years old youth in Malaysia, as an important social phenomenon, warrants continuous attention of scholars and policy makers for four reasons. Firstly, youth in this age category make up a substantial portion of the population and they carry greater responsibility towards further progress in the country and in ensuring a progressive harmonious and united civil society, as envisioned in Vision 2020. Secondly, the public including the youth today are increasingly confronted with contentious multicultural issues. Thirdly, contemporary youth might have a different level of attitude towards multiculturalism compared to that of their parents because they were brought up in different environments. Fourthly, sustainability and future social, economic and political stability in the country depend on the degree to which present day youths show tolerance towards fellow citizens of other ethnic group. The latter point is important because national policies, development plans and activities are necessarily tempered with ethnic consideration, as pointed out by Zainul Arif Hussain (2003).

Despite the greater inter-ethnic economic cooperation among ethnic groups, the issue of distribution of resource allocation remained foremost (Jesudeson, 1997). In addition, concern over the distribution of economic and political resources, the availability of new communication technology and the appeal of increased democratic freedom, which has resulted in a greater awareness of the ethnic, religious and linguistic rights of Malaysians regardless of ethnicity, can place the current climate of ethnic accommodation at risk. Sriskandarajah (2005) noted that there are signs that ethnic accommodation is under threat or that interethnic relations are under stress. Kum Hor (2006) and Mansor Mohd Noor *et al.* (2005), based on a review of past ethnic relations studies in the country, concluded that ethnic polarization which has plagued the country for a long time, is not about to go away. Given such complexity, Malaysia clearly needs to continually foster greater ethnic tolerance.

In the context of promoting and enhancing ethnic tolerance in a multiethnic society, two communication models of interethnic relations are applicable — the information model and the meta-cognitive model. Both models assume that individuals understanding, attitudes and behaviour can be influenced or changed by providing them with relevant information that they lack. Ben-Ari (2004) asserted that the central premise of these communication approaches to inter-group relations is that ignorance and lack of information create a fertile ground for the development of inter-group prejudice and negative stereotyping.

As an agent of change and a partner to national development, the role of news media in imparting ethnic tolerance cannot be minimized. It is generally accepted that the news media define various events in society not simply by presenting the objective reality but rather through their interpretation of the events. An individual's subjective reality is contingent on the individual's dependence upon the media as a source of information. Learning and understanding about cultural differences from the media should facilitate and deepen understanding of the issues, challenges and dynamics of a multiethnic society, and in turn fosters greater ethnic tolerance and openness towards multiculturalism as argued by many, for instance, Khan *et al.* (1999) and Soen (2002).

The socialization and educational role of the news media in fostering and strengthening ethnic tolerance involves imparting the right knowledge and attitude and behaviour that are in line with the ideas of civility and harmonious coexistence. The mass media in the country ought to uphold their the social responsibility in promoting greater ethnic tolerance, meaning greater openness and acceptance towards multiculturalism. In fact, the news media regulations in the country stresses on the developmental role of the news media in strengthening unity and harmony of the various ethnic groups (Faridah Ibrahim and Mus Chairil Samani, 2000). Thus, in theory and in practice, coverage of diversity, differences and interethnic relations issues in the news media must aim at helping the public in understanding the dynamics of interethnic relations and responding to emerging interethnic relations issues accordingly. The news media is a tool for transmitting democratic messages and values, reconciliatory and integration messages, facilitating tolerance and open-mindedness and changing negative stereotypes. However, despite the obvious developmental role of the news media, in a high choice environment, news on public affairs constantly competes with entertainment.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Given the value of ethnic tolerance, the significance of youth in nation building, and the lack of empirical evidence on the role of news media in influencing knowledge, attitude, behaviour components of ethnic tolerance, this present study was carried out with the following three objectives: (i) to determine the level of cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural components of ethnic tolerance, (ii) to determine the level of exposure to news on public affairs in the mainstream media among youth in the 15 to 25 years age group, and (iii) to ascertain the relationship and contribution of exposure to news on public affairs in mainstream media to cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural components of ethnic tolerance.

METHODOLOGY

The study reported here is part of a cross-sectional survey on ethnic tolerance among Malaysian youth. The study focused on the level of ethnic tolerance and the influence of exposure

to news on public affairs in local mainstream media on ethnic tolerance. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the respondents and participation was voluntary. The data were collected in the months of March-May 2005. The survey questionnaire, written in Malay, took approximately twenty-five minutes to complete.

Samples

A total of 2,906 Malay, Chinese and Indian youths participated by completing a self-administered questionnaire. An effort was made so that the samples adequately represent the ratio of Malay, Chinese and Indian population in the country. The Indian youth sample constituted about 10.0%, while the Malay and Chinese samples constituted 54.5% and 35.5% of the total samples, respectively.

Females constituted 51.6%, and 48.4% were males. Muslim respondents constituted 54.5% of the samples, while non-Muslims were 45.5%. The age of the respondents ranged from 15 to 25 years, with an average age of 18.9 years ($SD=2.75$). A majority of the respondents attended national schools for their primary and secondary education, while those attending national-type and religious schools contributed 20.9% and 3.8% respectively.

Instrument

The cognitive component of ethnic tolerance scale consisted of seven items formatted as 5-point Likert items, ranging from (1) not willing to put efforts to understand cultural differences and interethnic relations issues as expressed in the statement to (5) put much efforts to understand cultural differences and interethnic relations issue as expressed in the statement. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was 0.69. A higher score on the measure meant higher willingness to learn and understand the cultural differences and issues of interethnic relations. The attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance scale consisted of seven items formatted as 5-point Likert items, ranging from (1) not willing to accept the opinions or views on life in a multiethnic society and ways in promoting interethnic integration as expressed in the statements to (5) readily willing to accept the opinions and views as expressed in the statements. The reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.67. A higher score meant a more favourable attitude towards the cultural differences, issues

and challenges of multiethnic society. The behavioural component of ethnic tolerance scale consisted of eight items formatted as 5-point Likert items. The eight items were identified as behavioural indicators of ethnic tolerance. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they practiced tolerant behaviour in dealing with diversity, differences and conflicts. The response categories ranged from (1) not at all practiced to (5) very frequently practiced. A reliability analysis of the scale yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.77.

The respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they used television, newspaper, radio, news magazine, and internet to obtain news on a 4-point scale (1=never, 2= seldom, 3=somewhat frequently, and 4=very frequently). The respondents were also asked to indicate how much attention they paid to the news on public affairs in the media on a 3-point scale (1= not at all, 2= some attention, 3= very much attention). The news media used score was multiplied with news attention score to create an overall index of general exposure to news on public affairs. The higher the score, the greater is the exposure to the news media used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before moving to the multivariate analysis, we first examined the level of ethnic tolerance. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by level of ethnic tolerance across the three components of tolerance: cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural. The most obvious finding was more of the respondents were in the high category for cognitive and attitudinal components of ethnic tolerance. On the contrary, for the behavioural component more respondents were in the moderate category. These findings suggest that, on the one hand, (i) the respondents seem readily willing to understand the cultural differences and the social, economic and political rights of others of different ethnic groups and the ethnicity issues, and (ii) the respondents generally had a favourable view towards others of different ethnic groups and accept the various mechanisms in placed by the government to foster harmonious interethnic relations. On the other hand, there seems to be a gap in expressing ethnic tolerance in behavioural terms, suggesting that real or full integration among the various ethnic groups studied is still much to be desired. The findings provide support for the concern

on the lack of full integration among the ethnic groups as observed in earlier studies (Hazril Jamil *et al.*, 2004; Fatimah Daud and Abdul Hadi Yaacob, 2006).

On the question of level of exposure and attention to public affairs news, the findings are summarized in Table 2. The respondents varied in their level of exposure to public affairs news with a majority of the respondents (six in every ten) in the moderate category. The findings clearly indicate that the respondents were not indifferent towards news on public affairs in the country. Despite the large number of entertainment programs in the mass media, the respondents do pay attention to news on public affairs albeit not extensively.

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationships and contribution of exposure to news on public affairs to ethnic tolerance. Partial correlation analysis revealed that all the variables were significantly and positively correlated. The correlation coefficients of exposure to public affairs news with cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural components of ethnic tolerance were 0.18 ($p=0.000$), 0.10 ($p=0.000$), and 0.23 ($p=0.000$), respectively, as shown in Table 3. The findings suggest that the more one is exposed to news on public affairs, the more readily and willing one is to learn, understand and accept the cultural differences and the rights of other ethnic groups, the emerging ethnicity

issue, and the various strategies used in promoting interethnic harmony and unity, as well as practicing the appropriate tolerant behaviour in managing the interethnic relations challenges. The findings lend support to the previous claims (Ben-Ari, 2004; Khan *et al.*, 1999; Soen, 2002) of a positive relationship of exposure to relevant intergroup relations information with positive orientation towards intergroup relations.

A series of multiple regression analyses was performed. In the first regression analysis, cognitive component of ethnic tolerance was the dependent variables and exposure to news of public affairs was the independent variable (gender, age and attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance were included as control variables in the regression model). In the second regression analysis, the attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance was the dependent variable with exposure to news on public affairs as the independent variable (gender, age and cognitive component of ethnic tolerance were included as control variables in the regression model). In the third regression analysis, the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance was treated as the dependent variable, and cognitive and attitudinal ethnic tolerance, and exposure to news of public affairs as the predictors (gender and age were also included as control variables in the model).

TABLE 1
Distribution of respondents by level of tolerance (N=2,906)

Level of Tolerance	Cognitive	Attitudinal	Behavioural
Low	2.5	1.0	5.3
Moderate	46.1	41.3	58.6
High	51.3	57.7	36.1

Note. All figures are percentages

TABLE 2
Distribution of respondents by level of exposure to public affairs news (N=2906)

Level of Exposure	Percentage
Low	13.7
Moderate	63.9
High	22.4

Note. All figures are percentages

TABLE 3
Correlation coefficients of exposure to public affairs news with cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural components of ethnic tolerance (N=2906)

	Components of Ethnic Tolerance		
	Cognitive	Attitudinal	Behavioural
Exposure to Public Affair News	0.18 (.000)	0.10 (.000)	0.23 (.000)

Note. Figures in parentheses are the level of significance.

The findings of the three regression analyses are presented in Table 4 and the theoretical linkages of the key variables studied are summarized in Fig. 1. As expected, cognitive and attitudinal components of ethnic tolerance and exposure to news on public affairs are significantly and directly correlated with the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance. The three predictors collectively explain 16.5 percent of the variance in the level of behavioural component of ethnic tolerance. The cognitive component of ethnic tolerance is a better predictor ($\beta = 0.214$), followed by the attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance ($\beta = 0.196$) and exposure to news on public affairs ($\beta = 0.125$).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The harmony and unity among the main ethnic groups in the country acknowledged thus far could be superficial given the findings that a majority of the respondents had a moderate level behavioural component of ethnic tolerance, although a majority scored high in the level of cognitive and attitudinal components of ethnic tolerance. Nevertheless, on a positive note, a foundation for harmony and unity is there and strong since a majority of the respondents were observed to have a high level of ethnic tolerance, in terms of knowledge and attitude towards cultural differences and the issues related to interethnic relations and ethnic rights.

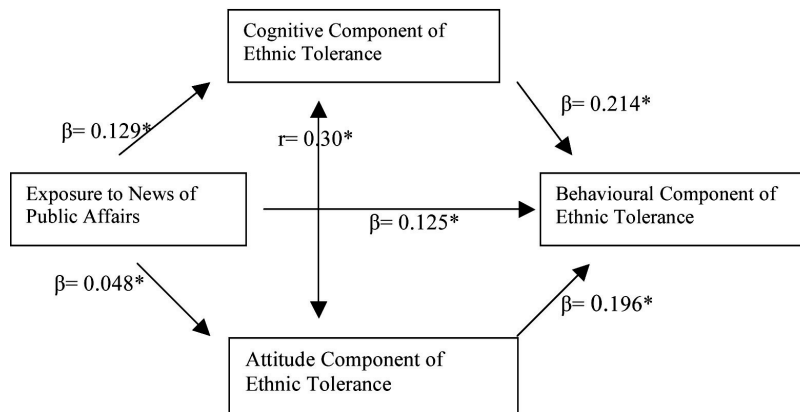


Fig. 1: Summary of the multiple regression analyses for variables
Predicting the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance

Note: * = Significant at $p = 0.05$; β = Standardize Beta

Regression 1. Dependent variable= Cognitive component of ethnic tolerance; Independent variable= exposure to news on public affairs, with attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance, gender and age as control variables. $R^2=0.124$, $F=137.162$, $p=0.000$

Regression 2. Dependent variable= Attitudinal component of ethnic tolerance; Independent variable= exposure to news on public affairs, with cognitive component of ethnic tolerance, gender and age as control variables. $R^2=0.114$, $F=93.621$, $p=0.000$

Regression 3. Dependent variable= Behavioural component of ethnic tolerance; Independent variables= exposure to news on public affairs, cognitive and attitudinal components of ethnic

TABLE 4
Results of regression analysis predicting cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural dimension of ethnic tolerance

Predictor	Cognitive			Attitudinal			Behavioural		
	r	β	t-value	r	β	t-value	r	β	t-value
Cognitive	-	-	-	0.30	0.313	17.542*	0.31	0.214	11.412*
Attitudinal	0.30	0.313	17.542*	-	-	-	0.28	0.196	11.260*
Exposure to Public Affairs News	0.18	0.129	7.945*	0.11	0.048	2.669*	0.23	0.125	3.386*
Age	0.14	0.066	3.790*	0.10	0.069	3.880*	0.09	0.073	4.510*
Male (dummy)	0.05	0.015	0.858	0.13	0.118	6.913*	0.14	0.069	4.243*
R-square	0.124			0.114			0.165		
F-value	137.162			93.620			143.24		
ρ	0.000			0.000			0.000		

Note. r = correlation coefficient; β = standardized beta; * significance at $\rho = 0.05$ level.

The findings support the assumption that knowledge and attitude directly influence the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance, as purported by Ben-Ari (2004). Accordingly, the study provides empirical support on the importance of learning and understanding the culture of others of different ethnic group and developing positive attitude towards the differences and challenges associated with ethnicity. Attitude towards and knowledge of cultural difference and interethnic relations issues are significant predictors of the behavioural component of ethnic tolerance with knowledge as a better predictor compared to attitudinal factor.

The level of ethnic tolerance in terms of practicing tolerant behaviour in dealing with ethnic difference and its related issues could also be predicted from the level of exposure to news on public affairs. The findings are consistent with those provided by previous studies (Khan *et al.*, 1999; Soen, 2002), and provide support for the premise of the information model and meta-cognitive model in explaining inter-group relations advocated by Ben-Ari (2004). As observed in the present analysis, those who are more exposed to news on public affairs had a higher level of behavioural component of ethnic tolerance. Thus, it could be inferred that the mainstream news media in the country to some extent had played their role in inculcating tolerant behaviour in relating with others of different ethnic through its coverage of interethnic relations news. Assuming this is right, one implication is the relevant institutions responsible for citizenship education and in promoting national integration should use news reports in their educational activities to educate the young people about ethnicity, ethnic differences and interethnic relations issues with the agenda of further strengthening unity and harmony among the various ethnic groups in the country.

While acknowledging the contribution of this study, some conceptual and methodological limitations in this study need to be highlighted. Firstly, the study employed one-short cross-sectional survey. Thus the findings on the influence of exposure to news on public affairs on ethnic tolerance are not very conclusive. A longitudinal research design is required to strengthen the validity of the claim. Secondly, the present study overlooked the possible

confounding influence of interpersonal communication sources and interethnic contact in predicting ethnic tolerance. Thus, it is unclear to what extent exposure to news in the mainstream news media explains ethnic tolerance if the influence of interpersonal sources and interethnic contact is accounted for.

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The Global Youth Anti-Culture: Realities, Trends and Implications for Malaysian Youth Research

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Keywords: Youth, globalization, social ills, youth culture, youth research, youth development, modernization, youth identity development

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to highlight some of the key issues pertaining to the advent of what is been coined “global culture,” and its impact on youth both in Malaysia and around the world. Global culture has become a reality in Malaysia due to the rapid globalization process that has burgeoned over the past two decades. This piece focuses particularly on the plight of young people within a dramatically changing world, with a particular emphasis on implications for youth research. Some of the topics covered include: the universal nature and rise of social ills among youth; the deteriorating state of the family in societies including Malaysia and its impact on youth; how youth are viewed and targeted by multinational corporate entities in an ever-increasing materialistic and consumerist world culture; the traditional status of youth in Western and Eastern societies and how that status is changing; and how today’s global culture impacts young peoples’ ability to carve out an identity for themselves. The paper concludes with general suggestions for the potential role of youth research as the primary mechanism for explaining the intricate issues facing young people as they attempt to grow and succeed in the modern world.

INTRODUCTION

Any discussion on priority areas for youth research must begin with a correct understanding of the present age and context in which young people live. We cannot hope to fully understand the breadth of youth issues without knowing where modern global culture is taking young people. To provide some insight into critical issues currently affecting youth, we must also understand the pace in which the world is changing, and the impact such changes are having on everyday life. This paper attempts to highlight some current needs in youth research relating to the phenomenon of youth social ills and their relation to the ascendancy of ‘global culture’.

Young people today are living in a time unlike any before. For the first time in history, the lifestyle of a young person in Malaysia can be directly influenced by the trends of his counterparts on the other side of the world.

Youth of today are citizens of a global culture – a culture that does not stop at the local *kampung*, state, or nation, but one that stretches across continents. This culture must be understood, for it is not value-neutral. It is fueled by human desires, whims, and the economic ‘bottom-line’, and as such, transforms youth into a vulnerable group.

When considered in connection with youth-related priorities such as leisure-time activities or participation in decision-making, it becomes apparent that many information and communications technology (ICT) and media-related factors have contributed enormously to the development of the global media-driven youth culture. The effects of this emerging culture are increasingly identifiable in the lives of many young people and are altering socialization patterns, processes and experiences. The magnitude and implications of this trend make it imperative that a closer look be taken at

what it means to grow up in the current global youth culture and what this means for local researchers (UN, 2005).

Violence and the Culture of Meaningless

The string of violence that has occurred in Western schools over the past several years has set off alarms in communities everywhere. Perhaps not so much the violence itself, but the fact that such crimes are being committed in 'developed' countries by supposedly 'normal' young people, has left leaders and concerned stakeholders bewildered and determined to act. There crimes such as the now infamous mass murder shooting committed by two teens in Columbine High School (Colorado, U.S.) eight years ago and the most recent tragedy, the Virginia Tech shootings committed by a lone Korean student, unlike any other crimes previously perpetrated by young people, continue to leave an indelible mark on the collective conscience of America. To many concerned adults, these unthinkable crimes and the violent culture that borne them are a clear message that adults must get in touch with what young people are feeling, thinking and going through in this complex era.

Though eight years have passed, the Columbine High School murders provided much of adult society their first glimpses into a mysterious, dark, and disconnected youth sub-culture that is yet to be fully grasped. According to Garbarino (1999), one of the shared characteristics of such violent juvenile offenders, is what he refers to as a 'crisis of meaninglessness.' He says, "Because of this spiritual vacuum, kids live with the simple creed, 'I am born; I live; I die.'" At best, the only value that many young boys receive from the culture at large is materialism or the pursuit of physical pleasure. The understood purpose for existence is the accumulation of 'things.' This, says Garbarino, is not enough to anchor young people. This lack of meaning leads to despair and plays an important role in the lives of violent juveniles. Without a sense that their lives have some higher purpose, which is predominantly grounded in religious faith, these young people see no point in restraining offensive or violent behavior (Garbarino, 1999, p. 154-155).

Once described as producers of cultures that oppose an oppressive societal order, urban youths are now being portrayed as much more

prone to engage in socially destructive acts of violence. They appear to be producing what can be aptly described as a youth culture of hostility (Hemmings, 2002). According to Hemmings (2002), the phrase "youth culture" was coined by Talcott Parsons (1964) to refer to the distinctive patterns of behavior adolescents express during the transitional phase between childhood dependence and adult independence. Today, violence, materialism, sectarianism, cultural ambiguity, and an increased sense of 'meaninglessness', color the modern global youth culture. Conversely – and often a source of confusion for many – is that it is also a world rich in information, resources and opportunities. Nevertheless, incidents like Columbine and Virginia Tech have awoken people to the realization that the modern world, with its emphasis on economics and material success, is taking its toll on the human soul.

From Violence to Social Ills

Social ills everywhere are now reaching alarming proportions. For example, on a daily basis in Malaysia, there are newspapers reports about incest, murder, drug abuse, AIDS, crime, and others. Social ills in the West have been a major problem for decades, but now Asian countries, as well as others where certain social ills were once unheard of twenty years ago, are facing similar circumstances. According to the United Nations (2005), countries with economies in transition have witnessed a dramatic rise in juvenile delinquency rates. Since 1995, juvenile crime levels in many of these countries have increased by more than 30 per cent.

The global age, with its emphasis on material success, has created an environment that defines people in terms of their economic productivity and value – as resources, rather than human beings. No group is more affected by this than the youth, who are especially targeted in terms of their "future earning potential," and their expected role in the nation-building process. Historically, this was also the role of youth in such periods as the Industrial Revolution in the West, where (very) young people worked as manual laborers, contributing to the building of the Western industrial nations. The current post-industrial information age is much the same, with youth being valued as resources that will one day determine the economic competitiveness of their countries.

The trend of nations toward a greater emphasis on economic competitiveness and development is not without costs to society and youth. Along with what is printed in the newspapers, young people are facing an ever growing uncertain era, with political, economic and social instability on the rise throughout the world. Thus, the depth and full nature of problems affecting youth today are still largely unknown. As such, there must be an effort made by those with the insight, ingenuity, and general caring for the well being of youth to reverse the ongoing dehumanization and sense of meaninglessness that threatens to further engulf young hearts and minds.

Youth Social Ills Across the Globe – Behind the Numbers

Typically, research is conducted to answer specific questions about a given phenomenon, event, behavior or population. The current pace of modernization and change occurring in societies throughout the world has opened up a wide variety of research possibilities in the area of youth studies. Education, work, health, recreation, religion, family relations, gender relations, race relations, and lifestyle – all are important areas for researchers to pursue.

Within this plethora of opportunities for research, researchers must make themselves relevant by attempting to understand and explain the world of youth through the eyes of young people themselves. The global age compels us to gauge young people for the simple reason that they are key players in it, particularly from an economic perspective. For example, multinational corporations now openly target youth as a major consumer group with considerable spending power. As such, much of the behavior around buying and selling of products, including marketing, is driven by youth wants and needs. According to research, by the age of eight a child acquires all the skills needed to become an independent consumer, and these skills come from three main sources: parents, peers, and TV (Abdul-Lateef Abdullah, 2001).

Businesses now listen and watch youth more than ever because of their value as consumers and resources. By 1998, nine- to 19-year-olds living in Canada, for example, spent an astonishing \$13.5 billion (Clark and Deziel, 1999). The impact of this is the creation of a global, consumer-driven culture where youth are

bombarded by products and advertisements encouraging them to feel good, look good and act in a certain way, a way that is defined primarily by 'pop' culture.

As developing countries face the insurgence of global culture and its profit-driven values, they are witnessing the rapid devaluation and practice of traditional customs and values. The vast increases in wealth that have resulted from globalization, have increased the value and emphasis placed on materialism (Cheu, 1997). With this rise in materialism, many believe that traditional cultures grounded in religious and spiritual values have lost their influence on peoples' lives. Modern society enjoys mobility and wider access to multimedia and new technologies, and these factors have played a major part in shaping youth today. But, so, too, have the erosion of families and the breakdown of traditional communities. Young people have suffered as families have become less stable (Carlowe, 2007).

Change in the developing world is taking place at a breath-taking pace. The level of economic development and technological advancement that has occurred over the last generation has caused major structural changes in the social fabric of many nations. For example, though related members of different generations continue to live with one another in the family context, family structures are undergoing profound changes. There has been a shift from extended to nuclear families and an increase in one-person households. The age at first marriage has risen to the mid- to late twenties in many areas, often owing to extended educational careers and delayed entry into the labour market, particularly for young women. There is also a trend towards later childbearing and having fewer children (United Nations, 2005).

In addition, rapid globalization, which has cleared the way for use of electronics and computerized communication for the dissemination of information, values and beliefs, and the rapid spread of global culture through the media, have all had far-reaching effects on the development of human communities and youth. In the transitional phase from childhood to adulthood, young people establish their own identities, adopting the cultural norms and values of their parents and adapting them to their own social and cultural environments. The globalization of media has expanded the scope

of norms and values upon which young people draw in creating their identities. Young people are increasingly incorporating aspects of other cultures from around the world into their own identities (United Nations, 2005).

A plethora of research has shown how dramatic structural changes have had a deleterious effect on the critical social institutions within society (Thomas, 1999a). For example, according to Fagan (1998), by 1990, in the U.S. parents were, on average, available to their children 10 hours less per week than they were in 1980 and 40 percent less than they were in 1965 (Thomas, 1999a). Today, this trend is extending to the developing world, such as in Malaysia, where women have entered the workforce in large numbers and parents in general are spending more time away from their children.

As societies continue to materialize and grow economically, they must rely more on a labor force comprised of both men and women for the production of goods and services. This results on added strains and pressure on families and family life. Thus, the primary support mechanism, the hub of the social safety net, the family, is weakened and risks eventual disintegration, as has happened in many Western countries, where divorce rates among married couples is commonly known to be over 50% and where, in the U.S. at least, traditional marriage has ceased to be the preferred living arrangement in the majority of US households (United States Census Bureau, 2005). As the family weakens, it loses its ability to influence, control and shape its young, as both parents direct less attention and energy toward them. This can leave a vacuum in a child's life that is all too easily filled with negative peer group and 'pop' culture influences. If not monitored, negative behaviors will result, dramatically impacting the character of a young person (Beal *et al.*, 2001). Without a restraining and moral value-promoting way of life, a young person can easily be lured into the traps of a lifestyle guided by materialistic and 'spiritually-void' behaviors and goals.

Whether the explosion of social ills in the developing world are mere growing pains or the problems lie much deeper, the current age is seeing an epidemic that is strikingly similar across countries and cultures. The late 1980s and early 1990s saw an increasing trend in both developed and developing nations towards promoting

national youth policies and programs through specific government ministries or youth departments. By 1993, nearly 100 countries throughout the world had developed such government ministries or departments (United Nations, 1993). Today, that number is even greater, indicating the universal need to address the declining health and well being of youth.

Despite the energy and resources being spent to make nations more "youth-friendly," policy makers must have accurate and revealing research to understand the depth of problems affecting youth today, and the role of current cultural trends. Thomas (1999) claims that according to research, the three main causes of violence committed by juveniles are: spiritual emptiness, "toxic" society (high prevalence of violence), and family instability. According to Thomas, these three causes are aided by a global 'pop' culture that is hostile toward religion and spiritual values. Veith (1999) further describes today's youth culture as 'anti-culture', pointing out that the prime task of every society is socializing its children. He says the young members of society have to be taught its beliefs, customs and values so that they can take their place in that society as adults. While this is the primary task of the family, Veith reported that the larger society also has an interest in its children turning out right. The problem, according to Veith, is that the values taught to youth by the larger society today work against that socializing process:

"Today's mass-marketed youth culture is more of an anti-culture. It appeals to the anti-social, destructive, and self-destructive impulses that are bound up in the heart of a child. Today's popular music manufactured for the youth market generally scorns authority, lauds illicit sex, and lifts up pleasure as the only good. In many cases now, it goes even further, wallowing in overt evil" (Veith, 1999, para. 9).

Veith continues, "Our society seems blithely unaware that, in its refusal to acculturate children in a positive way, it is committing cultural suicide" (Veith, 1999, para. 13). Thus, according to many youth experts in the West, the current social and cultural environment is anything but conducive to the health and well being of youth. This, moreover, is the same culture that has made steady inroads since the post-war 1950s and 60s via globalization and mass media such as TV, music and the Internet. According to Carlowe (2007, p. 19),

"The teenage question of the mid-1950s soon became overshadowed by the development of 'youth culture' in the 1960s. Dr Warren says that The Beatles, drugs, sexual liberation, the impact of television and student culture were significant factors."

In the early 1990s, research indicated that by the time the average child in the U.S. left elementary school (approximately 10 years old), he or she had witnessed 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on the television screen (Smith, 1993). Ten years later, in one of several major studies conducted by Columbia University and the New York State Psychiatric Institute (U.S.) on the link between television and violence, where researchers studied more than 700 people for 17 years, the results overwhelmingly showed that teenagers who watch more than an hour of television a day during early adolescence are more likely to be violent in later years (Associated Press, 2002). Through this growing phenomenon, the link between youth "anti-culture," and youth social ills becomes clearer.

Youth Development Realities in the New Global Culture

The underlying goal of the state according to classical Western educational philosophy is the development of the 'Perfect Citizen,' which has its roots in the thought and works of Plato. Conversely, according to the classical Islamic worldview, the goal of the state is the development of the 'Perfect Man' (Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 1998). The fundamental difference in these two traditions, in reference to educational philosophy, illustrates the distinction between a God-centered society and a secular one. With the demise of the last Islamic Sultanate, the Ottoman Empire, at the end of the First World War, the Muslim world has experienced a sharp intellectual decline and subsequent deviation from its classical scholarly traditions. Consequently, it has adopted a worldview toward education that places importance on nation building over the development of intellectually strong, well-rounded individuals. Likewise, much of the world today has been influenced by the Western notion of developing 'good citizens,' rather than 'good human beings.' Developing good citizens, by definition, emphasizes developing 'good workers' to support the economic health of the capitalist

state. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (1993):

"The purpose of seeking knowledge is to inculcate the goodness or justice in man as man and individual self, and not merely in man as citizen or integral part of society: it is man's value as real man, as the dweller in his self's city, as citizen in his own microcosmic kingdom, as spirit, that is stressed, rather than his value as a physical entity measured in terms of the pragmatic or utilitarian sense of his usefulness to state and society and the world" (p. 141).

The Western philosophy toward educational development is consistent with the capitalist worldview, which ultimately ranks and categorizes man according to his 'utilitarian sense of usefulness' (Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 1993). In turn, when youth are valued as potential citizens and workers rather than human beings, the spiritual component within them becomes irrelevant. Collectively over time, spiritual values and goals lose their recognition and overall importance to the society and its primarily materialistic goals. Directing the development of youth solely toward the realm of economic success also denies youth their individuality, and the age of youth is a time specifically where youths are trying to discover who they are — a developmentally sensitive period that seeks the answers to predominantly spiritual queries such as "who am I?", "what is my purpose?", "does God exist?", and "what do I want to become?" Thus, the fundamental growth and development of a young person, including spiritual, moral, and intellectual development, especially at such a critical time in life, is undermined (Henzell-Thomas, 2002). As a result, mental, spiritual and physical health problems can result, weakening the state and society as a whole.

According to Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (in Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 1998), most of the dominant religions in the world have always placed their focus on the development of young people as individuals, as the correct and most effective strategy for building societies of good human beings. Popular global culture, however, is grounded in a state-centered approach, which solely aims to prepare young people to function and adapt successfully to the goals of their respective societies. In this way, educational and socializing objectives are derived from, and seek to strengthen the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and skills valued and

accepted by the social group. However, as the needs and interests of the society change, the needs and education of individuals must also change according to the circumstances, since 'society' will always receive primary importance above self. Thus, the inherent needs of youth are, although not totally neglected, secondary vis-à-vis adult societal needs and interests, or defined in relation to society, regardless of the degree of moral, intellectual and spiritual degradation the society has undergone.

The impact of this society-centered culture on young people is now evident as nations everywhere are spending millions trying to respond to the damage caused by social ills. More traditional cultures that once valued youth as human beings, regardless of their economic potential, are being replaced by a new unilateral, market-driven culture. The effects of this are evident in Malaysia, where the extent of youths' contribution to nation-building and international economic competitiveness tends to define their needs. Meanwhile, as the public lashes out at young people for being lazy and unmotivated, social ills continue to rise. Are youth really receiving what they need in order to develop into moral, healthy, intelligent and productive human beings? Are we defining what young people need according to proven religious and cultural traditions, developmental needs and sound research or by that which fits within the plan for economic success and international competitiveness? If so, where do these two converge and diverge? These are some of the important questions that are being neither asked nor answered.

Interestingly, the views of youth themselves tell a story that is not entirely consistent with popular perception. In an attempt to understand youth social ills, researchers have begun to enter the world of young people to try to understand them using a variety of research methods. Contrary to the assumptions and claims of policy makers, youth may not be as "anti-tradition" and "anti-establishment" as is commonly believed. According to the United Nations (1998), in general, studies of youth in developing countries reported that young people place more emphasis on family and tradition than on personal achievement. Further, a 1996 global poll included in the Braungart study of 25,000 middle-class high-school students aged 15-18 years on five continents found them to be more similar than

different. Personal achievement and a desire "to make something of themselves" was a pervasive value among 80 per cent of the world's youth, and respect for family was strong. The surveys also showed that youths are most concerned about issues concerning family, education and work. Overall, many share similar worries — from fears of illness in the family to worries about nuclear war and environmental destruction (United Nations, 1998). These studies, although not specific to Malaysia, clearly show that popular perception is not always accurate and that we still have much to learn about youths.

Research on youths over the past decade has included important efforts such as defining what 'youth' entails given its variation across cultures, and the determining factors in youth transition to adulthood. The more recent research agenda on youths has expanded to focus on youth needs, in particular as they relate to the transition from childhood to adulthood. As pointed out by Bynner (1997),

"The youth phase has been described by the psychologist, Erikson (1977) as offering a "moratorium" on adulthood, when experimentation in leisure life especially, enables young people to decide in what direction their adult life should go." He continues, "Youth can therefore be seen as the period of transition between dependent childhood and independent adulthood, during which the family continues to be the main source of continuity and support (Jones and Wallace, 1992; Coles, 1995), while the peer group and 'youth culture' take on an increasingly important role" (Broadening the Perspective section, para. 1).

In his paper, Bynner talks about the influence of the current youth culture as it relates to youth identity development:

"While international media contribute to the homogenization of youth culture (Brake, 1985) and foster ideas of 'consumer-citizenship' (Jones and Wallace, 1992), they also heighten consciousness of scarcity and unequal access to resources and prompt mobility (Furst-Dilic, 1991). Youth culture and lifestyle can have the positive benefits associated with experimentation and a 'moratorium' on taking the full weight of adult responsibility (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966). They can also be associated with inter-group conflict and may provide the underpinnings for delinquency, drug taking, alcoholism, mental illness and even suicide" (Robins and Rutter, 1990) (Social Construction of Identity, para. 1).

Bynner points out an important aspect of global youth culture which is the contradiction of youth as important players in the global economic machine in their roles as consumers, while simultaneously having limited access to job markets, employment, and policy-formation processes. Such contradictions also stretch into the political and social domains of society as well. Thus, a great deal of confusion results as young people are given high expectations, yet little means to be valued members of society and contributors to the larger community. This contradiction tells youth that they are valued for what they can consume and what they are expected to produce, yet gives them little sense of meaning and purpose in their present period of 'moratorium'.

To get at the core issues surrounding social ills, youth research must go deep into understanding how youths form their identity in this complex age. An important aspect to understanding youth identity is uncovering how youths answer the question, "who am I becoming?" In order to answer this, youths must be able to formulate some sort of life plan, based on conscious choices (Leccardi, 1999). To be able to do this, according to Leccardi (1999), two conditions must exist: 1) an adequate knowledge of the available options; and 2) clear actions-guidance criteria.

There is an important connection between the presence of these two criteria, the role of choice, and the definition of identity. The existence of the above conditions permits a selection of possibilities for youth. Identity, in its turn, is conceived as the result of this selection and of the exercise of choice (Leccardi, 1999). According to Erikson (1968; in Leccardi, 1999), for example, choices and identity proceed together: the way towards identity coincides with the need to make new choices, on the basis of a personal 'system of relevance.' That system of relevance, however, must be guided by actions-guidance criteria. In the case of the religious Muslim youth for example, the criteria is provided by Islam, which provides guidance and purpose in all aspects of life. However, for those without religion, there must be some other actions-guidance criteria to fill the void. If one is not present, the identity development process will be tumultuous and most likely guided by a confused or harmful personal philosophy.

Thus, it is by means of choices, and the self-directed change they imply, that one's continuity is confirmed; that one's being oneself, despite the changing trajectory that leads from the past to the future, is recognized (Leccardi, 1999). According to Leccardi, full knowledge of what is available to youth coupled with actions-criteria guidance, ultimately determines the direction of youth identity through the function of choice. However, it is the confused, problematic nature of the choices and the unavailability of clear guiding principles for so many youth, even those who may subscribe to religion but do not practice it as a way of life, that today – unlike in past eras – give rise to doubts and confusion in youth (Leccardi, 1999).

For those youth that become hooked into pop culture, the process of identity formation can cause confusion, personal unrest or an identity that values materialism and all the comes with it. As society changes and societal norms change, a young person in the process of forming his or her identity, although they may have knowledge of the choices available, may look to 'pop' culture for actions-guidance criteria. Perhaps being weak in religious faith or not strongly attached to the family, the young person might be heavily influenced by negative subcultures. As a result, he or she will make choices based on its values. Inevitably, this might lead to life choices that are not made according to religious or spiritual teachings, but according to the superficial worldview of popular culture and 'keeping up with the Jones', potentially leading to spiritual emptiness and a sense of meaninglessness.

The Substantive Role Research Can Play

Youth researchers are in a very unique and important position. No other profession has more opportunity and objective standing than the research community to elucidate the dilemmas of youth and the challenges they are facing. This is a role that should not be taken for granted, and an opportunity that cannot be wasted.

The hope of research is to build an understanding of our current times and point the way to appropriate solutions for what ails us. Research has traditionally been an instrument capable of transcending politics and personal agendas to help people understand the world better. Thus, researchers must ask tough

questions and go beyond the superficial. The primary aim of research is to seek truth, thus, researchers must rise above political rhetoric and simplified explanations to unmask the unknown and determine what must be done to improve the lives of young people.

As the influence of global culture continues to infiltrate the developing world, the research community must be able to sound the alarm and alert everyone to what is coming. Based on the wealth of research from the West, as has been touched on in this paper, many researchers are beginning to uncover the harm associated with the excessive aspects of global culture.

Globally, the youth research field is seeing a heightened focus on health and health-related issues. Social ills, as threats to young people's overall health and well-being are now seen as a major factor influencing the health of young people. Youth lifestyle and how young people spend their time "in transition" is now being investigated in relation to health and mental health related illnesses. Youth unemployment, also a major concern even among developed nations, is another current major focus of transition research (Russell and O'Connell, 2001).

The transition phase of youth is no longer seen as a 'moratorium' period per se, but is understood as a substantive time in young peoples' lives that has important ramification on their lives as adults. Thus, researchers are delving more and more into the process of 'transition' and how it occurs, not only among the extremes – drug addicts, at-risk youth and the like – but among 'average' youth as well. Shildrick and MacDonald (2006, p. 136) wrote about the British experience in this regard:

"Empirically, there has been an overemphasis on 'spectacular' music, dance and style cultures as definitive of contemporary youth culture.... As in the 1970s, it is still the case that the majority of young people in Britain don't come near the sort of subcultures/post-subcultures that are described in most, prominent youth culture research."

Understanding transitional factors juxtaposed with youth biographies helps researchers not only understand cultural trends, but how individual young people experience them.

According to Forbes (2006), the current trend in postmodern analysis of popular youth culture is to study how youth attempt to resist

dominant meanings and construct their own. Some argue that this type of research into youth subcultures and how they are formed is, in effect, more applicable to Western culture and, arguably, does not easily translate or apply to the Malaysian and other developing world contexts. On the other hand, technology, multimedia and materialistic factors are prevalent in Malaysia as well and are also having a profound effect on the society. New subgroups are popping up all the time (e.g. illegal bike races), and adults are struggling to make sense of the trends. Contemporary young people's identities, claim many critics, are dominated by unstable individualized cultural trajectories that cross-cut a variety of different groups rather than attaching themselves substantively to any in particular. At the very least, youth cultural groupings – even in Malaysia – must still be regarded as diverse, ephemeral and loosely bounded, something that would appear to make research difficult and unpredictable (Hodkinson, 2005). From this vantage point, research on how various elements of modernity are influencing the formation and propagation of different youth subcultures is indeed relevant to Malaysia and one of the major challenges for Malaysian youth researchers.

Directions for Malaysian Youth Research

Along these lines, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) has been active through its engagement in research related to youth culture. UPM's youth development research team has undertaken several projects to reveal the lifestyles and thinking patterns of contemporary Malaysian youth including studies related to understanding youth subculture, their religiosity status, their level of ethnic sensitivity, and benchmarking youth participation in nation building. Research has also been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of selected nationwide youth development programs (Hamzah, 2005).

Basic and Applied Research

Basic research includes evaluation of programs in Malaysia, developing key youth-related indicators; Malaysia-specific youth development and youth work competencies; and benchmarks for youth and youth-related institutions such as the family, schools, community and health systems. Such foundational research efforts would be based on identified needs and gaps, as determined by data gathering efforts and

expertise of youth themselves as well as youth-related professionals and affiliates. Basic research would form an important aspect of a national research arm, such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports' Malaysian Institute for Youth Development Research, and would also inform applied research efforts in more specific, priority research areas. The findings and data resulting from the 'basic research' initiative would provide baseline information for policy makers at all levels in their formulation of youth policies (Hamzah, 2005).

There should also be greater efforts to engage in more qualitative grounded theory and exploratory research to build a knowledge base that is specific to the Malaysian context around these and other issues. Current youth research is still very much at the descriptive level and most studies are quantitative in nature. There is a need to get beyond descriptives toward the development of new models to explain youth cultural trends and socialization patterns.

Applied research comprises more specific youth-related research areas, particularly areas of concern to the nation. Applied research would also incorporate more theoretical modelling and higher-order analyses, rooted in Malaysia-specific descriptive data from the basic research initiative just mentioned. Some examples of applied research efforts would be in the following areas: youth socialization and culture; ICT; inter-ethnic understanding and integration; youth empowerment; youth unemployment; youth entrepreneurship; strengthening of youth organizations; inculcation of spiritual values and ethics; youth health trends and issues; youth and the media; youth culture and sub-culture formation and others. Once the foundations from data gathering and basic research have been established, large-scale applied research efforts could be undertaken. It is in this area where national youth research-focused organizations aim to contribute most to the areas of policy development and technical assistance to government and organizations (Hamzah, 2005).

CONCLUSION

Youth researchers, like the poets of former times, must play the role of storytellers, painting a vivid picture of the state of Malaysian youth. Simply transferring and superimposing foreign models on to the Malaysian context, however, cannot

accomplish this. Doing so simply perpetuates the cultural hegemony that is taking place in other aspects of society, and will not yield results that help understand Malaysian youth. Work has to be done from the grassroots and up to build a research-based foundation of knowledge for the Malaysian way of life, culture and people. Thus, research must play the role of storyteller and truth-teller. It must help policy makers understand that the gravity of problems youth are facing threaten our entire way of life and the future of the nation, and that appropriate action must follow.

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Kesan Terhadap Peserta yang Mengikuti Projek ICT di Luar Bandar

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Kata kunci: Projek ICT, pembangunan luar bandar, masyarakat berpengetahuan (society), impak ICT

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini ialah untuk meneliti kesan projek-projek ICT luar bandar yang dibangunkan dan diuruskan oleh pelbagai organisasi kerajaan dan bukan kerajaan ke atas pengetahuan dan kemahiran peserta projek. Data dikumpulkan melalui temu bual peribadi yang melibatkan 1250 responden dari semua negeri di Malaysia. Secara umumnya, responden mengakui bahawa mereka memperoleh pengetahuan dan kemahiran komputer selepas menyertai program yang dianjurkan oleh pusat projek ICT luar bandar. Didapati bahawa 77.1% responden menyatakan bahawa mereka kini tahu bagaimana menggunakan komputer selepas mengikuti program tersebut di kawasan mereka. Begitu juga, hampir dua pertiga responden menyatakan bahawa mereka kini tahu bagaimana menggunakan komputer selepas mengikuti program yang dianjurkan oleh pusat projek ICT luar bandar. Hasil keputusan juga menunjukkan bahawa kebanyakan responden mempunyai peningkatan dari segi pengetahuan berkaitan perkakasan, perisian dan aplikasi terpilih. Dengan demikian, pusat projek ICT luar bandar perlu diperkukuh dalam menyediakan perkhidmatan kerana responden menyatakan bahawa pusat-pusat tersebut telah membawa impak yang positif berhubung dengan pengetahuan dan kemahiran komputer.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effect of rural ICT projects established and managed by various government and non-government organizations on the knowledge and skills of project participants. Data were collected through personal interview involving 1250 respondents from all states in Malaysia. Generally, the respondents admitted that they had gained computer knowledge and skills after participating in the programs organized by the rural ICT project centre. It was found that 77.1% of the respondents said that they now know how to use computer after going through the program in their locality. Likewise, almost two third of the respondents said that they now know how to use the internet after going through the program organized by the rural ICT project centre. The results also showed that most respondents had an increase on knowledge concerning hardware, software and selected application. Thus, rural ICT project centres need to be further strengthened in providing services because the respondents stated that the centres had brought positive impact with regard to computer knowledge and skills.

PENGENALAN

Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk berkongsi hasil kajian tentang projek ICT di luar bandar yang telah dilakukan pada pertengahan tahun lepas. Secara lebih khusus artikel ini akan membentangkan dapatan kajian dari segi kesan yang didapati oleh mereka yang telah mengikuti aktiviti atau program yang dianjurkan oleh projek ICT berkenaan. Perkongsian hasil kajian ini

dengan pihak yang terlibat dalam melaksanakan projek ICT di luar bandar serta mereka yang berminat untuk tahu tentangnya amat penting dilakukan kerana dapat memberikan maklum balas untuk perancangan selanjutnya.

Bagi memudahkan perbincangan, artikel ini dibahagikan kepada empat bahagian. Bahagian pertama akan mengutarakan latar belakang, pernyataan masalah dan objektif kajian. Manakala

bahagian kedua akan membincangkan tentang kaedah kajian. Ini diikuti dengan pemaparan hasil kajian di bahagian ketiga. Akhir sekali, bahagian keempat akan membuat perbincangan tentang hasil kajian dan merumuskannya.

LATAR BELAKANG, PENYATAAN MASALAH DAN OBJEKTIF KAJIAN

Cabaran keenam dalam usaha untuk menjadikan Malaysia negara maju menjelang tahun 2020 ialah mewujudkan masyarakat saintifik dan progresif, masyarakat yang mempunyai daya perubahan tinggi dan berpandangan ke depan, yang bukan sahaja menjadi pengguna teknologi tetapi juga penyumbang kepada tamadun saintifik dan teknologi masa depan. Bagi mencapai hasrat ini, kerajaan telah merangka pelbagai aktiviti dan menyediakan dana yang secukupnya.

Dalam Rancangan Malaysia Kelapan 2001 – 2006, kerajaan telah memperuntukkan RM5.2 bilion untuk program dan projek yang berkaitan dengan ICT. Daripada jumlah ini, sebanyak 20% telah dikhaskan untuk mengurangkan jurang digital yang wujud antara kawasan bandar dan luar bandar. Antara projek yang telah dirancang dan dilaksanakan bagi tujuan ini termasuklah Infodesa, Internet Desa, Pembekalan Khidmat Sejagat dan prasarana komputer untuk sekolah-sekolah di luar bandar (Malaysia, 2001).

Bagi memastikan rancangan kerajaan ini mendapat sambutan penduduk, beberapa kempen kesedaran ICT telah dijalankan. Pihak media massa telah memperkenalkan lagu IT dan kempen “Satu rumah satu komputer” dijalankan. Di samping itu, bagi memudahkan penduduk memiliki komputer, kerajaan telah membenarkan para pekerja mengeluarkan wang caruman mereka dalam Kumpulan Wang Simpanan Pekerja (KWSP), perbelanjaan membeli komputer mendapat rebat cukai pendapatan dan pinjaman komputer dengan faedah bayaran balik yang rendah juga telah diperkenalkan (Musa, 2002).

Usaha murni kerajaan ini telah disokong oleh pihak swasta dengan mewujudkan kafe siber untuk orang ramai mendapat peluang dan pendedahan berjinak dengan komputer. Agensi kerajaan dan pihak NGO juga turut terlibat bagi memastikan penduduk mendapat peluang untuk celik ICT. Sebagai contoh, di Selangor terdapat Kelab IT Selangor, di Melaka kerajaan negeri mengadakan program ICT untuk peserta dan suri rumah, Ketengah di Terengganu

membangunkan pusat e-komuniti, dan Jabatan Penerangan melalui Kumpulan Penonton, Pendengar dan Pembaca (K3P) telah menyediakan komputer untuk ahli-ahli kumpulan mendapat pendedahan.

Daripada pelbagai program dan projek ICT yang dianjurkan dan dikelolakan oleh pelbagai pihak, agak sukar untuk mengetahui kesan atau impak program atau projek ICT berkenaan. Agak sukar juga untuk mengetahui setakat mana program atau projek tersebut telah mendatangkan manfaat kepada masyarakat setempat. Oleh yang demikian, kajian ini ingin mencari jawapan kepada dua persoalan berikut: Pertama, setakat manakah sambutan masyarakat terhadap projek ICT di tempat mereka? Dan kedua, apakah kesan dari segi pengetahuan dan kemahiran terhadap mereka yang menyertai program atau projek ICT?

Secara amnya, objektif kajian ini ialah untuk mengetahui tahap sambutan dan kesan program dan projek ICT dalam kalangan penduduk luar bandar. Adalah diharapkan maklumat yang diperoleh daripada kajian ini akan dapat dimanfaatkan oleh pihak yang mengendalikan program dan projek ICT. Di samping itu, perkongsian hasil kajian ini juga diharapkan dapat menyuntik idea baru untuk sama-sama belajar bagi memperbaiki lagi perkhidmatan serta kemudahan ICT yang disediakan. Dalam artikel ini, perkataan program dan projek ICT digunakan untuk merujuk kepada perkara yang sama.

Bagi memastikan sesuatu projek ICT masyarakat memberikan kesan yang positif Colle dan Roman (2002) memberikan tiga faktor utama: (i) kandungan yang relevan dengan masyarakat setempat, (ii) komitmen daripada pihak kerajaan dari segi sokongan pembiayaan, dan (iii) menjadi rakan kongsi dengan institusi lain. Sementara itu, UNESCO (2003) menggariskan 10 langkah untuk memastikan penubuhan pusat ICT masyarakat kekal lebih lama. Langkah-langkah tersebut adalah: (i) permulaan yang baik; (ii) mengadakan perjumpaan dan perbincangan dengan masyarakat setempat; (iii) pengurusan; (iv) tenaga kerja; (v) perkhidmatan dan program; (vi) bangunan dan perkakasan/peralatan; (vii) proses perancangan; (viii) pengurusan kewangan; (ix) prosedur operasi; dan (x) perkhidmatan pelanggan serta isu promosi. Berhubung aktiviti atau program, Mody (1999) menyatakan bahawa sesebuah pusat ICT masyarakat perlu memberi pendedahan dan tunjuk ajar yang berkaitan dengan komunikasi,

maklumat, pendidikan, hiburan dan juga perniagaan kepada masyarakat setempat.

KAEDAH KAJIAN

Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah tinjauan dengan beberapa pendekatan untuk mendapatkan data bagi memastikan gambaran yang menyeluruh tentang sambutan dan kesan program dan projek ICT diperoleh. Kaedah pengumpulan data utama yang digunakan adalah borang soal selidik serta temu bual dengan penyelia projek, peserta projek dan ahli masyarakat tempatan yang tidak menyertai projek ICT. Di samping itu, pemerhatian berstruktur terhadap aktiviti-aktiviti di lokasi projek ICT, penelitian catatan, rekod dan laporan kegiatan projek (jika ada) juga dilakukan.

Kajian ini dijalankan di seluruh negara mengikut zon: Zon Utara (Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang), untuk Zon Tengah (Perak, Selangor, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur), Zon Selatan (Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Johor), Zon Timur (Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang), Zon Sabah dan Zon Sarawak.

Dari setiap negeri dalam zon berkenaan tiga projek ICT telah dipilih secara rawak daripada senarai yang diperoleh daripada agensi yang terlibat dengan projek ICT. Agensi yang memberikan senarai sebagai kerangka rujukan adalah Kementerian Penerangan, Kementerian Pembangunan Luar Bandar, NGO, Kementerian Teknologi, Komunikasi dan Multimedia, Pusat Komuniti IT, dan INFRA. Selain itu kumpulan penyelidik juga berusaha mendapatkan senarai projek ICT di luar bandar secara berterusan bagi projek ICT persendirian yang tidak berdaftar di bawah kementerian tertentu. Projek ICT yang dipilih mesti memenuhi kriteria yang ditetapkan dalam kajian ini iaitu projek ICT telah beroperasi selama lebih kurang satu tahun, boleh diakses oleh orang ramai, mempunyai komputer sama ada disambungkan ke internet atau tidak dan mempunyai peserta serta di bawah seliaan sekurang-kurangnya seorang penyelia.

Bagi setiap projek ICT di luar bandar yang telah dikenal pasti, responden kajian telah ditentukan secara rawak. Mereka terdiri daripada penyelia yang terlibat secara langsung dengan projek ICT, 25 peserta yang pernah menyertai projek ICT dan 15 penduduk tempatan yang tidak pernah mengikuti projek ICT. Kedua-dua kumpulan responden ini terdiri daripada pelbagai golongan dan peringkat umur. Bagi

artikel ini, hasil kajian daripada peserta projek dan data daripada borang soal selidik sahaja akan dibincangkan.

Angkubah utama dalam kajian ini adalah kesan terhadap peserta yang mengikuti projek atau program ICT. Kesan ditakrifkan sebagai perubahan dalam pengetahuan dan/atau kemahiran menggunakan aplikasi ICT setelah seseorang itu mengikuti sesuatu kursus atau latihan. Oleh yang demikian, responden telah diminta untuk menyatakan tahap pengetahuan dan tahap kemahiran mereka tentang ICT sebelum menyertai projek atau program ICT, dan menyatakan sekali lagi tahap pengetahuan dan kemahiran mereka menggunakan ICT setelah mengikuti kursus atau program anjuran projek ICT. Perubahan ini boleh jadi satu peningkatan atau penurunan dan ia tertakluk kepada pengakuan dan tanggapan responden sendiri.

Bagi perubahan pengetahuan perkakasan komputer ia diukur dengan menggunakan skala 1 hingga 4: 1 = tidak tahu, 2 = tahu sedikit, 3 = sederhana tahu dan 4 = sangat tahu.

Manakala untuk kemahiran tahu menggunakan perisian atau aplikasi yang sering digunakan, ia diukur dengan menggunakan skala 1 hingga 5: 1 = tidak tahu, 2 = tidak mahir, 3 = sederhana mahir, 4 = mahir, dan 5 = sangat mahir.

Prauji kajian telah dijalankan di beberapa lokasi terpilih untuk menilai kesesuaian borang soal selidik, kefahaman responden terhadap soalan dan bagi memastikan data yang dikehendaki akan diperoleh. Tempat prauji yang dipilih adalah MID e-Gulang, Tanjong Karang, Kampung Raja Musa, Selangor dan Kampung Belimbing Dalam, Melaka (K3P). Di setiap projek ICT yang dipilih, sejumlah 10 peserta dan 10 bukan peserta diambil sebagai responden kajian untuk prauji. Berdasarkan prauji kajian ini, nilai alpha Cronbach bagi pengukuran pemboleh ubah yang menggunakan skala Likert untuk kesan adalah 0.7654 dan sikap adalah 0.7138.

Pengumpulan data telah dilakukan oleh 33 enumerator yang dilantik mengikut zon. Ia telah dilaksanakan dalam bulan April dan Mei 2003. Kerja-kerja pengumpulan data telah dilakukan secara temu bual bersemuka berbantuan borang soal selidik. Bagi memastikan semua enumerator menjalankan tugas dengan efektif, kumpulan penyelidik turut sama memantau mereka dari semasa ke semasa. Pemprosesan data dimulakan

selepas semua borang soal selidik diterima daripada enumerator. Setelah pemprosesan dilakukan data telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan program SPSS 11.0 dengan menumpukan kepada statistik deskriptif seperti kekerapan, peratusan, purata dan sisihan piawai bagi menjawab objektif kajian.

HASIL KAJIAN

Hasil kajian ini akan dipersembahkan dalam dua bahagian. Bahagian pertama akan menyatakan tentang responden yang meliputi profil, pemilihan komputer, kemahiran menggunakan komputer dan internet, maklumat tentang projek ICT, dan penyertaan dalam kursus anjuran Projek ICT. Manakala bahagian kedua akan membincangkan kesan dari segi pengetahuan dan kemahiran terhadap responden atau peserta yang mengikuti program atau projek ICT di luar bandar.

Latar Belakang Responden Kajian

Seramai 1250 responden yang merupakan peserta 51 projek ICT luar bandar telah ditemu bual untuk mendapatkan data kajian. Dalam kalangan mereka ini sebanyak 31.4% dari kawasan timur, 23.0% dari kawasan selatan, 22.2% dari kawasan tengah, 13.4% dari kawasan utara, 5.9% dari Sarawak dan 4.0% dari Sabah. Responden terdiri daripada mereka yang berumur dari 7 hingga 80 tahun (min = 27.06, s.p. = 13.90). Sebanyak 42.4% dalam kalangan mereka yang berkelulusan SPM/SPVM dan 40.4% yang lain tamat sekolah rendah dan sekolah menengah rendah. Dari segi pekerjaan pula, 54.7% menyatakan mereka tidak mempunyai kerja tetap dan 26.6% menyatakan mereka bekerja dengan kerajaan. Sungguhpun demikian, purata pendapatan bulanan responden adalah RM1,081.21 (s.p. = 772.82). Kebanyakan mereka (61.8%) adalah bujang dan 36.0% telah berkahwin. Sebanyak 74.8% responden menjadi ahli projek ICT di tempat masing-masing. Taburan dari segi lama menjadi ahli projek ICT adalah: 1 tahun (69.9%), 2 tahun (16.9%), 3 tahun (9.1%), 4 tahun (2.9%), dan 5 tahun dan lebih (1.2%).

Berkaitan dengan pemilihan komputer dan kemahiran komputer, sebanyak 43.4% responden menyatakan mereka mempunyai komputer di rumah. Dalam kalangan mereka yang memiliki komputer di rumah, ada yang telah memiliki selama lebih daripada 10 tahun (min = 37.66 bulan, s.p. 26.61). Di samping itu, sebanyak 63.2% responden menyatakan yang mereka

pernah mengikuti kursus/latihan berkenaan komputer. Sebanyak 61.6% responden mengaku pernah menggunakan komputer sebelum menyertai projek ICT. Tahap kemahiran penggunaan komputer mereka adalah 65.8% di tahap asas (pemprosesan kata dan menaip dokumen), 30.6% di tahap pertengahan (asas + persembahan multimedia), dan 3.8% pada tahap tinggi (asas + pertengahan + pengaturcaraan). Dari segi kemahiran internet pula, 53.4% responden menyatakan mereka tahu tentang internet dan 36.8% mengaku pernah menggunakan internet sebelum menyertai projek ICT. Tahap kemahiran penggunaan internet mereka adalah 65.2% pada tahap asas (melayari laman web, emel dan *chat*), 29.5% di tahap pertengahan (asas + muat dan turun fail), dan 5.3% pada tahap tinggi (asas + pertengahan + membina laman web, *e-group*).

Bagi mendapatkan gambaran tentang cara responden mendapat tahu tentang projek ICT di tempat masing-masing, mereka telah diminta untuk menyatakan sumber maklumat berkenaan. Kajian ini mendapati kebanyakan responden mendapat tahu tentang projek ICT di tempat mereka melalui rakan, ahli keluarga, jiran, taklimat yang diberikan seperti yang disenaraikan dalam Jadual 1.

JADUAL 1
Taburan responden mengikut sumber maklumat projek ICT (=1250)

Sumber maklumat	Kekerapan	Peratus*
Rakan-rakan	654	52.3
Ahli keluarga	345	26.7
Jiran	263	21.0
Kain rentang	209	16.7
Taklimat di balai raya	202	16.2
Risalah	193	15.4
Taklimat di sekolah	178	14.2
Taklimat persatuan	170	13.6
Surat khabar	162	13.0
Televisyen	138	11.0
Radio	103	8.2
Papan iklan	89	7.1
Majalah	79	6.3
Laman web	70	5.6
Agensi kerajaan	34	2.7
Masjid/surau	33	2.6
Pejabat Kemas	25	2.0
Ketua kampung	9	0.7
AJK pusat ICT	2	0.2

* Boleh beri lebih daripada satu sumber maklumat

Maklumat dalam Jadual 1 menunjukkan bahawa sumber antara perseorangan merupakan sumber maklumat yang banyak disebut oleh responden. Di samping itu, media setempat, taklimat umum dan media massa juga tidak kurang pentingnya.

Bagi memastikan setiap responden benar-benar tahu tentang projek ICT di tempat masing-masing, mereka telah ditanya beberapa maklumat projek ICT. Kebanyakan responden telah dapat memberikan jawapan seperti yang dipaparkan dalam Jadual 2.

Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa beberapa kursus telah dijalankan oleh pihak projek ICT luar bandar. Projek yang dijalankan boleh jadi dikendalikan sendiri oleh pihak projek ICT tersebut atau dilaksanakan bersama dengan pihak lain. Bagi menyertai projek berkenaan, sesetengah projek mengenakan yuran penyertaan dan ada yang diberi secara percuma. Antara kursus asas yang telah dinyatakan oleh responden termasuklah: (i) literasi ICT (8.8%); (ii) asas internet (2.5%); (iii) asas menaip (1.8%) dan (iv) asas perkakasan (0.4%). Manakala kursus berkaitan perisian adalah: (i) pemprosesan kata (15.7%), (ii) Windows (7.2%) dan (iii) Excel (1.7%). Sementara itu, kursus berkaitan aplikasi

yang telah disebut responden adalah: (i) persembahan (2.6%), ii) pembinaan laman web (0.3%) dan iii) *trouble shooting windows* (0.2%). Daripada data ini bolehlah dikatakan bilangan peserta yang mengikuti kursus-kursus ini tidaklah begitu menggalakkan.

Kesan Terhadap Peserta yang Menyertai Projek ICT

Secara keseluruhannya, penyertaan responden dalam projek ICT telah mendatangkan kesan yang baik. Ini dapat dibuktikan daripada pengakuan dalam kalangan responden yang tidak menggunakan komputer, sebanyak 77.1% mengaku telah tahu menggunakan komputer selepas menyertai projek ICT di tempat mereka. Begitu juga dalam kalangan responden yang tidak tahu menggunakan internet, sebanyak 26.9% mengaku telah tahu menggunakan internet selepas menyertai projek ICT di tempat mereka.

Bagi memastikan pengakuan responden tentang kesan yang mereka telah dapati daripada penyertaan dalam projek ICT, tahap pengetahuan mereka berkaitan perkakasan komputer sebelum menyertai projek dan setelah menyertai projek telah diukur. Jadual 3 menerangkan hasil kajian ini.

JADUAL 2

Taburan responden mengikut maklumat projek ICT yang diketahui di tempat masing-masing (n=1250)

Maklumat projek	Kekerapan	Peratusan*
Mempunyai rekod pengguna	852	68.2
Kemudahan boleh diguna setiap hari	840	67.2
Mempunyai jadual masa penggunaan	836	66.9
Mempunyai laman web	479	38.3
Mempunyai kalendar aktiviti		
Bulanan	458	36.6
Tahunan	209	16.7
Mempunyai yuran keahlian		
Ya	620	49.6
Tidak	613	49.0
Perancang aktiviti		
Agensi dan penyelia	312	25.0
Penyelia	190	15.2
Agensi, penyelia dan peserta	188	15.0
Agensi	97	7.8
Penyelia dan peserta	36	2.9
Agensi dan peserta	10	0.8
Peserta	4	0.3
Tidak tahu	459	36.7

* Peratusan tidak boleh dicampur

JADUAL 3
Taburan responden mengikut tahap pengetahuan perkakasan terpilih
sebelum dan selepas mengikuti pojek ICT

Perkakasan dan tahap pengetahuan	Peratus	
	Sebelum	Selepas
Monitor (n=1214)		
Tidak tahu	37.2	5.0
Tahu sedikit	27.7	16.4
Sederhana tahu	18.8	30.0
Sangat tahu	16.8	48.5
Tetikus (n=1214)		
Tidak tahu	30.6	4.6
Tahu sedikit	26.9	13.4
Sederhana tahu	20.0	27.9
Sangat tahu	22.4	54.1
CPU (n=1211)		
Tidak tahu	45.0	10.5
Tahu sedikit	27.9	18.5
Sederhana tahu	14.8	35.3
Sangat tahu	12.3	35.7
Papan kekunci (n=1211)		
Tidak tahu	31.7	5.6
Tahu sedikit	26.8	13.6
Sederhana tahu	21.0	29.1
Sangat tahu	20.6	51.7
Mikrofon (n=1195)		
Tidak tahu	42.6	11.2
Tahu sedikit	25.4	20.8
Sederhana tahu	15.1	28.0
Sangat tahu	17.0	39.9
Pembesar suara – speaker (n=1204)		
Tidak tahu	35.5	8.1
Tahu sedikit	23.3	15.5
Sederhana tahu	20.1	28.0
Sangat tahu	21.2	48.4
<i>Uninterrupted power supply</i> (n=1200)		
Tidak tahu	66.9	31.6
Tahu sedikit	18.1	24.8
Sederhana tahu	9.2	25.5
Sangat tahu	5.8	18.1
Pengimbas – scanner (n=1202)		
Tidak tahu	60.1	25.3
Tahu sedikit	21.4	22.6
Sederhana tahu	10.7	28.5
Sangat tahu	7.8	23.7
Pencetak – printer (n=1209)		
Tidak tahu	41.4	10.8
Tahu sedikit	25.2	16.1
Sederhana tahu	17.5	31.7
Sangat tahu	16.0	41.5
Pemacu CD ROM (n=1203)		
Tidak tahu	51.9	17.8
Tahu sedikit	22.3	21.8
Sederhana tahu	13.5	27.8
Sangat tahu	12.4	32.7

samb. Jadual 3

Perkakasan dan tahap pengetahuan	Peratus	
	Sebelum	Selepas
Pemacu cakera liut (n=1204)		
Tidak tahu	53.9	20.1
Tahu sedikit	20.3	21.4
Sederhana tahu	13.1	27.2
Sangat tahu	12.7	31.4
Modem (n=1199)		
Tidak tahu	71.0	39.4
Tahu sedikit	16.3	21.5
Sederhana tahu	7.8	22.3
Sangat tahu	4.8	16.8
Kabel internet (n=1203)		
Tidak tahu	69.2	38.5
Tahu sedikit	17.4	22.6
Sederhana tahu	8.5	23.4
Sangat tahu	5.0	15.5

Data dalam Jadual 3 jelas menunjukkan bahawa terdapat peningkatan dalam pengetahuan dalam kalangan responden pada semua perkakasan ICT yang terpilih. Peningkatan ini adalah pada kesemua tahap pengetahuan iaitu dari yang tidak tahu menjadi tahu, yang tahu sedikit, bertambah lebih tahu, yang sederhana tahu menjadi sangat tahu, dan bilangan mereka dalam kalangan sangat tahu telah meningkat. Peningkatan pengetahuan yang paling ketara dalam kalangan mereka yang tidak tahu sebelum menyertai projek adalah pada CPU, *uninterrupted power supply* dan pengimbas. Manakala peningkatan jumlah responden di tahap sangat tahu sebelum menyertai projek adalah pada monitor, tetikus dan papan kekunci.

Setelah mendapat gambaran tentang peningkatan pengetahuan berkaitan perkakas terpilih, lihat pula peningkatan kemahiran terhadap perisian dan aplikasi terpilih. Hasil kajian mendapati sama seperti pengetahuan tentang perkakasan, responden menunjukkan peningkatan dalam kemahiran menggunakan perisian dan aplikasi. Jadual 4 memberikan maklumat yang lebih lengkap tentang perkara ini. Data yang dipaparkan adalah mengikut pengakuan responden sendiri dan kumpulan penyelidik tidak menguji responden untuk menentukan tahap kemahiran masing-masing.

Data dalam Jadual 4 menunjukkan bahawa dalam kalangan responden yang tidak tahu tentang perisian atau aplikasi berkaitan telah

menurun bilangannya setelah mereka menyertai projek ICT. Ini adalah untuk semua perisian dan aplikasi yang disenaraikan. Bagi mereka yang tidak mahir, hasil kajian mendapati bilangan mereka juga telah menurun setelah mengikuti projek ICT. Penurunan yang paling ketara adalah pada perisian pemprosesan kata. Sementara itu, perisian atau aplikasi pemprosesan kata dan hiburan menunjukkan peningkatan ketara dalam kalangan mereka yang mahir sebelum menyertai projek ICT luar bandar.

Bagi mendapatkan gambaran secara menyeluruh tentang kesan terhadap responden yang menyertai projek ICT, mereka telah diminta untuk menyatakan tahap persetujuan mereka pada lima kenyataan yang telah disediakan. Kenyataan-kenyataan ini merupakan pendapat dan pengalaman mereka setelah menyertai projek ICT. Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa responden memberikan respons yang positif terhadap kenyataan tersebut. Jadual 5 memberikan taburan responden mengikut tahap persetujuan mereka pada kenyataan berkenaan.

Secara amnya, kebanyakan responden berpendapat bahawa setelah menyertai projek ICT mereka telah menyedari tentang pentingnya ICT, kefahaman dan kemahiran mereka tentang ICT telah bertambah, telah mula menggunakan ICT dalam kerja harian, dan mereka tidak begitu kluatir tentang pertambahan perbelanjaan disebabkan oleh penggunaan ICT. Hasil kajian ini memberikan gambaran bahawa projek ICT

JADUAL 4
Taburan responden mengikut tahap kemahiran terhadap perisian/aplikasi
terpilih sebelum dan selepas mengikuti pojek ICT

Perkakasan dan tahap pengetahuan	Peratus	
	Sebelum	Selepas
Pemprosesan kata (n=1205)		
Tidak tahu	44.1	6.0
Tidak mahir	28.1	16.5
Sederhana mahir	19.1	38.4
Mahir	8.0	33.4
Sangat mahir	0.7	5.7
Reka cipta grafik (n=1194)		
Tidak tahu	58.2	24.7
Tidak mahir	23.0	21.7
Sederhana mahir	13.9	33.3
Mahir	4.3	17.4
Sangat mahir	0.6	2.9
Persembahan (n=1199)		
Tidak tahu	60.7	30.3
Tidak mahir	22.9	19.2
Sederhana mahir	12.9	32.0
Mahir	3.3	16.5
Sangat mahir	0.2	2.0
Multimedia (n=1188)		
Tidak tahu	75.1	48.5
Tidak mahir	15.9	22.7
Sederhana mahir	6.6	20.3
Mahir	2.1	7.4
Sangat mahir	0.3	1.1
Internet (n=1196)		
Tidak tahu	63.9	41.1
Tidak mahir	18.4	17.0
Sederhana mahir	11.9	22.5
Mahir	5.2	15.8
Sangat mahir	0.7	3.5
Analisis statistik (n=1194)		
Tidak tahu	81.2	58.7
Tidak mahir	15.7	21.1
Sederhana mahir	4.8	14.5
Mahir	1.3	5.0
Sangat mahir	0.0	0.8
Pangkalan data (n=1195)		
Tidak tahu	73.0	48.4
Tidak mahir	17.3	22.1
Sederhana mahir	7.1	19.7
Mahir	2.2	8.5
Sangat mahir	0.4	1.3
Penerbitan elektronik (n=1188)		
Tidak tahu	80.6	57.7
Tidak mahir	13.4	22.1
Sederhana mahir	4.7	14.3
Mahir	1.3	5.1
Sangat mahir	0.1	0.7
Hiburan (n= 1199)		
Tidak tahu	48.7	24.6
Tidak mahir	18.4	11.5
Sederhana mahir	18.8	28.5

samb. Jadual 4

Perkakasan dan tahap pengetahuan	Peratus	
	Sebelum	Selepas
Mahir	10.4	25.4
Sangat mahir	3.7	10.0
Pendidikan (n=1195)		
Tidak tahu	63.3	39.4
Tidak mahir	18.0	17.6
Sederhana mahir	11.5	24.7
Mahir	6.5	15.0
Sangat mahir	0.7	3.2
Anti virus (n=1197)		
Tidak tahu	69.3	42.4
Tidak mahir	16.0	20.8
Sederhana mahir	9.2	21.8
Mahir	4.9	12.4
Sangat mahir	0.5	2.6

JADUAL 5

Taburan responden mengikut tahap persetujuan terhadap kenyataan terpilih setelah menyertai projek ICT (N=1250)

Kenyataan	setuju	t/p*	Peratus	min	s.p.
			t/setuju*		
Menyedari tentang pentingnya ICT	79.9	14.4	5.7	4.31	0.97
Kefahaman ICT bertambah	70.2	21.1	8.7	4.01	1.03
Kemahiran ICT bertambah	68.1	22.1	9.8	3.95	1.04
Guna ICT dalam kerja harian	42.3	28.5	29.2	3.22	1.30
Perbelanjaan bertambah	36.5	27.3	36.2	2.96	1.35

*t/p – tidak pasti; *t/setuju – tidak setuju

di luar bandar memang telah mendatangkan kesan yang positif terhadap peserta yang telah menyertainya.

PERBINCANGAN DAN RUMUSAN

Usaha pihak tertentu mengadakan kemudahan untuk orang awam mengenali, berjinak dan mendapat pendedahan kepada ICT telah mula mendatangkan kesan yang menggalakkan. Ini terbukti dengan peningkatan pada pengetahuan berkaitan perkakasan ICT terpilih dan peningkatan terhadap kemahiran menggunakan perisian atau aplikasi ICT terpilih. Tetapi sambutan terhadap kursus anjuran projek ICT tempatan perlu dipertingkatkan kerana setakat ini sambutan adalah agak dingin.

Perbincangan dengan peserta dan penyelia projek ICT banyak menyatakan bahawa peserta kursus inginkan sijil setelah mengikuti sesuatu

program latihan. Kalau boleh sijil ini diiktiraf oleh pihak tertentu agar ia boleh menjadi satu petanda yang menunjukkan peserta telah mempunyai kemahiran dan kebolehan ICT yang setimpal dengan kursus yang diikuti. Ketiadaan pengiktirafan berkenaan mungkin menyebabkan tidak ramai ahli projek menyertai kursus berkaitan.

Penggunaan pelbagai kaedah untuk mempromosikan projek ICT di kawasan setempat nampaknya mendatangkan hasil. Gabungan antara komunikasi antara perseorangan, media kecil seperti kain rentang dan risalah serta disokong oleh media massa dapat menyebarkan mesej kepada kumpulan yang lebih ramai. Usaha yang sama patut digunakan bagi menarik lebih ramai orang awam menyertai kursus yang bakal dianjurkan oleh projek ICT.

Jika dilihat tujuan penubuhan projek ICT berkenaan, ia adalah sekadar untuk menyediakan kemudahan bagi orang ramai mendapat

pendedahan awal terhadap komputer dan internet. Malah ada projek yang mempunyai satu komputer dan ia tidak disambung ke internet kerana sukar untuk mendapatkan pihak ISP membuat sambungan. Ini ditambah pula dengan kekurangan tenaga pelatih atau guru yang kekal untuk membantu peserta mendapatkan pengetahuan dan kemahiran secara berterusan. Sungguhpun demikian, dengan bilangan keahlian projek ICT yang ada dan sambutan orang ramai terhadap projek berkenaan, maka ini menunjukkan bahawa telah ada kesan terhadap kehadiran projek ICT dalam kalangan masyarakat setempat.

Ada projek ICT yang mempunyai pihak pengurusan yang amat bersemangat untuk memajukan projek masing-masing dan mereka ini patut diberi perhatian oleh pihak yang berkenaan agar usaha mereka tidak menjadi sia-sia. Mereka amat yakin projek ICT di kawasan mereka akan dapat membawa perubahan. Tambahan pula apabila melihatkan ramai anak muda yang menggunakan kemudahan yang ada. Pendedahan ICT yang awal kepada kumpulan ini amat penting bagi menyediakan masyarakat celik ICT dan masyarakat berpengetahuan pada masa akan datang.

Hasil kajian ini jelas menunjukkan para peserta projek ICT luar bandar telah mendapat kesan dan manfaat yang baik daripadanya

walaupun tidak semua. Ini merupakan satu petanda awal untuk pihak berkuasa meningkatkan usaha dan menambah kemudahan yang ada agar usaha ini tidak dilihat sebagai melepaskan batuk di tangga atau satu usaha *public relation* antara agensi kerajaan dengan rakyat.

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Measuring the Unmeasurable: Maternal Piety Scales

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop an instrument that measures maternal spiritual characteristics. Particularly, the instrument aims to measure a domain of spirituality which is commonly regarded as "the un-measurable" i.e. Maternal Piety. The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase was a longitudinal study of a focus group from an Islamic Integrated Primary School (IIPS). In, this phase Cronbach's alpha was employed to assess the reliability index. Accordingly, Principal Component Analysis was employed to explore the underlying dimensions of Maternal Piety. The second phase was an ex-post facto study that involved 12 IIPS in the Klang Valley area. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was utilized to examine the construct validity of the instrument. Finally, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to investigate the relationship between Maternal Piety (MP) and Maternal Quality Relationship (MQR) as supporting evidence for the criterion-related validity. The results provided evidence that the instrument achieved sound psychometrics properties. This instrument succeeded the standard Cronbach's alpha > 0.70 for internal consistency and the proportion of variance explained was > 50 % for the three dimensions of Maternal Piety. The goodness-of-fit measures GFI, AGFI, IFI, TLI, and CFI were > 0.90 and RMSEA was < 0.08 which were evidences for construct validity. Moreover, the findings supported the postulation that MP positively influenced MQR as evidence for the criterion-related validity. In short, Maternal Piety Scales is a reliable and valid instrument. From the practical standpoint, it suggests that spirituality is no longer remaining aloof in theoretical forms and neither exclusive for theologians only.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Some children are lucky to be blessed with parents whose personality meshes well with theirs, or some are even luckier to have parents who are able to appreciate their children's personality even though there are temperament clashes. Others however are not so lucky. They have parents who mainly disapprove them and demand them to be different and better. Still others have parents who largely ignore them, parents who pay attention to their children only

when the children fulfil their needs. The children of these demanding, distant or self involved parents often grow up with the feeling that they are not good enough to merit their parents' love. These children tend to constantly criticize themselves and hoping to improve in order to gain their parents' attention and approbation (Hillman, 1992).

Nevertheless, the fate of the children may be planned by mothers. These well intending mothers not only understand the children's

needs but are also willing to learn and adapt their personality. Winnicott (1987), a British Psychoanalyst, coined the term “good-enough mother” to describe a mother who though far from perfect is able to consistently and appropriately give enough attention to her children’s needs. He posits that, “There is no question of perfection here. Perfection belongs to machines: what the infant needs is just what he usually gets, the care and attention of someone who is going on being herself ” (Davis and Wallbridge, 1990; p. 107). These children grow up with the feeling that the mother is there when she is needed, and view the world as a good place where the children can be their authentic self and where their needs can be met. She is not only setting appropriate limits, guiding and supporting, but also being able to let go—giving her child both roots and wings.

In view of the aforementioned concern, there has been limited research on the relationships between maternal characteristics and the attachment patterns of mother and child. Sensitive mothering has been described as the maternal characteristic that promotes a child’s emotional, social and cognitive growth (Clarke-Stewart, 1978; Belsky, 1984). Carranza and Killmann (2000) investigated links between perceived parents’ characteristics and attachment variables for young women from intact families. They rated both parents using items derived from Secunda’s (1992) descriptions of parental characteristics. The study revealed positive correlations between secured attachment, self-concept and doting mother characteristics. An insecure attachment pattern is associated with lower self worth, less Interpersonal trust, distant and demanding absent maternal characteristics. A preoccupied attachment pattern is linked to demanding maternal characteristics. Collectively, positive maternal characteristics relate more strongly to a secured attachment pattern.

Statement of the Problem

The aforementioned Secunda’s framework of parental characteristics may not be relevant to Malaysian Muslim society that embraces religion as a way of life. The dimension of spirituality of one’s life may not simply be ignored. Instead, it is the focal point of an individual. Religion, past and present, may affect attitudes and practices in almost all aspects of life, including childcare and recreational activities (Wilcox, 2002).

Previously, religion and psychology were two separate domains (Badri, 2000). However, a growing body of empirical research has associated spirituality and religion with a wide array of salutary characteristics (Sidek Mohd Noah, 2006; Hodge, 2005). Nevertheless, to date, little efforts have been made to empirically substantiate the Islamic perspectives of maternal spiritual characteristics. Therefore, this study intends to develop an inventory for maternal spiritual characteristics based on the Islamic literature and legacy.

Maternal Spiritual Characteristics

Specifically, in a Muslim population context, religiosity and spiritual dimension of an individual is of cardinal characteristics that shape a person’s personality (Mohd. Noon, 2002; Kassim, 1985). An individual’s personality is very much determined by faith in God the All-watching and the All-hearing. In other words, a person’s spiritual connection to God determines their characteristics and deeds.

The character is said to be good, when the state of soul produces virtuous action. On the contrary, when the state of soul is such that is consistently and spontaneously produces evil actions, the character is termed evil or bad (Alhabshi and Ghazali, 1994). Al-Ghazali, in his magnum opus *The Revival of Religious Knowledge*, listed good characteristics to include sincerity, patience, and truthfulness (Karim, 1982). Accordingly, there are many Muslim writers who apply and extend these characteristics into other specific domains such as management, education and family sciences.

In the family science literature, Schleifer (1986) suggested that there are two characteristic aspects of a mother: that which aligns itself to responsibility, and that attributed to natural, God-given qualities, including both the physical exertion of childbirth and the expression of positive emotion. These two aspects are not mutually exclusive but rather supportive of each other, thus enhancing a state of equilibrium, which is the desired atmosphere in a Muslim household. There are two most important qualities of a mother, namely affection and generosity (Schleifer, 1986; Mansor *et al.*, 1998). However, this does not mean that other qualities are not important. In addition, it is important to note that cardinal characteristic for Muslim personalities is piety (*taqwā*) be it in the

professional or non-professional arena (Langguglung, 1988). Therefore, the present study focuses on Maternal Piety, the cardinal characteristic of a Muslim mother.

Piety (Taqwá)

The root of the word *taqwá* has two interwoven meaning: to fear and to protect oneself. The basic meaning from the Qur'anic verses is to stand in awe of God, to fear the consequences of acting against Him, and to do everything in one's power to protect oneself from these consequences. The term implies observing the religion meticulously, sincerely, and with full presence of mind. Hence, *taqwá* is an individual characteristic established in relationship to God (Chittick, 2000).

Consistently, al-Nawawi (1983) describes the meaning of *taqwá* as to "abstain and refrain from committing sin". According to the *hadith* and *Al-Qur'an*, it means the state of mind in which the omnipotence and omnipresence and watchfulness of Allah is creating and developing a person to distinguish between good and bad. *Taqwá* leads the person towards virtues and against vices.

Al-Qurtubi (1937) explained that calling for good and forbidding evil are the characteristics of real believers. *Al-Qur'an* (Ali-Imran: 110) explicitly stated that, those who possess these three characteristics, calling for good, forbidding vices and having faith towards Allah, are the best among all human race. Hence, the degree of nobility towards Allah is the degree of piety (Al-Hujurat: 13). Al-Tabari (1904) defined calling for virtues and forbidding evil as encompassing all aspects of life that have been prescribed in *syāriah Islamiyyah* (Islamic law).

Based on Hanafi Mohammed's (1995) works, *taqwá* means to safeguard oneself from His punishment and anger by obeying His command and avoiding His prohibition. According to *al-Qur'an*, this concept of *taqwá* encompasses several dimensions and carries several meanings: a) *Taqwá* means to be fearful of Allah (Al-Baqarah: 41). b) *Taqwá* means to obey Allah (Ali-Imran: 50). c) *Taqwá* means God-wariness (Al-Baqarah: 233). According to the Sufis, *taqwá* means to protect oneself from sinful acts. *Al-Imam* Al-Ghazzali explains that the word *taqwá* is derived from the root word *wiqāya*, which means shield or armour. Hence, with *taqwá* one is protected from evil due to a strong will power to avoid sin. The *salaf* scholars define *taqwá* as follows.

Abdullah Ibn Abbas (r.a) defines *Muttaqin* (one who has the characteristics of *taqwá*) as one who is careful in his words and actions in order to avoid His anger and punishment and is hoping for His blessings by enjoining His command. Accordingly, Abu Darda' explains that *taqwá* is to avoid sin, however small, and *shubhah* (something that is not clear between permissible or prohibited). Thalq ibn Hubayb describes *taqwá* as to obey His command, by following His guidance, longing for His pleasure and avoiding sinful acts. Musá ibn Ayun illustrates *taqwá* as avoiding oneself from *shubhah* due to fear of falling into *haram* (prohibited).

In short, *taqwá* means having faith in life hereafter and living this life as to seek the pleasure of Allah through enjoining good and forbidding evil. In the context of a mother, she is being consistent and committed to raise her children to become the persons Allah decrees. Her role is to remind her children there is life in the hereafter and to enjoy for virtues and forbid vices among them.

Development of Maternal Piety Scales

Scale construction began with conceptualising Maternal Piety via preparation of a blueprint table of specification. According to Thorndike (1997) and Mohammad Sahari (2002), it is necessary for the blue print table to be comprehensive in order to establish its content validity. In addition, several steps have to be taken to help improve the validity of the instruments in general (Norah, n.d; DeVellis, 1991). The steps are: (1) defining the objective of the questionnaires; (2) itemizing the questionnaires; (3) trying out the questionnaires; (4) statistically analysing the items, and (5) revising the questionnaires.

In addition to these steps, to ensure the highest validity, this instrument was reviewed by four independent experts. Two of them are content experts and the other two are methodology experts. The content experts are scholars who specialize in Islamic studies. Professors in Educational Psychology of Measurement and Evaluation and Quantitative Research and Statistics are the methodology experts. The experts are from three different universities in Malaysia. Additionally, the instrument has been presented in an International Symposium of Measurement and Evaluation in 2005 and at the Structural Equation

Modelling Workshop in 2006, organized by Prof. Mohamad Sahari Nordin, at the International Islamic University Malaysia.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at developing a psychometrically sound multi-dimensional measure of Maternal Piety Scales. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- (1) assess the reliability of the developed instrument
- (2) explore the underlying dimension of maternal piety
- (3) test the construct validity of the instrument
- (4) examine the criterion-related validity of the instrument

METHODOLOGY

Phase I

This phase was conducted to assess the reliability of the developed instrument and to explore the underlying dimensions of Maternal Piety. The first phase was a longitudinal study of the focus group from an Islamic Integrated Primary School (IIPS). In this phase a purposive sampling was employed. The duration of this phase was two years. Due to the mortality rate (15/105), which is a common problem in longitudinal studies, such as changes of schools and absentees during the data collection period, there were only 90 valid respondents, 40 girls and 50 boys aged between 11-12 years involved in this phase. At time 1 (T 1), data was collected when the respondents were in Year 4, Time 2 (T 2) was during mid-year examination week of Year 6. At Time 3 (T 3), data was collected during the final national examination week of Year 6, which was during phase 2 of the study.

Respondents completed a 36-item instrument, 12 out of 36 items were for the domain of Maternal Piety. They indicated how each statement was true to them on a 7-points Likert type scale. Response categories were 7 for always true, 6 for almost always true, 5 for often true, 4 for sometimes true, 3 for seldom true, 2 for almost never true and 1 for never true. The items were reverse scored when the statements were negatively worded.

Phase II

Having found evidence of multi-dimensionality for Maternal Piety, Phase II was to confirm these underlying dimensions by employing

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This phase also aimed to test other psychometrics properties for criterion-related validity. Adopting the work of Hanafi Mohamed (1999) and Chittick (2000), the hypothesis of Maternal Piety was formulated to test for the construct validity.

H1: Maternal Piety is a second order latent construct for the three-dimensional measurement model, which includes Faith in Hereafter (Faith), Call for Virtue (Virtue) and Forbid Vices (F-Vices).

As mentioned earlier, maternal characteristics influence substantially the attachment between mother and child (Winnicott, 1957, 1987). Hence, the following hypothesis was formulated to test for the criterion-related validity.

H2: Maternal Piety positively influences Maternal Quality Relationships.

Sample

The respondents of this phase consisted of students from Islamic Integrated Primary Schools in the Klang Valley. Initially, a total of 200 students were systematically selected from 12 participating schools. This size is considered an optimum size to run SEM (Arbuckle and Wothke, 1999; Bentler and Mooijaart, 1989). Upon checking the outliers via Mahalanobis distance test, 5 respondents were eventually dropped from the respondent's list.

More than half of the respondents (55.6%) were female and the rest male. A majority of the respondents (62.8%) had 4-6 siblings. More than half (63.7%) were either the first or the third child in the family. In terms of maternal employment, 30.1% and 29.6% of mothers were professional workers and homemakers, respectively. Accordingly, respondents' mothers were non-professional workers. Finally, 14.8 % were business owners and directors of companies.

Instruments

There were two sets of questionnaires involved in Phase II. The data were collected using the following measures:

- 1) *Maternal Piety*. A 10-items questionnaire of Maternal Piety Scales. The details of the collected data from this instrument were discussed earlier for Phase I.
- 2) *Maternal Quality Relationship*. An adapted maternal version of Inventory of Parents and Peer Attachment (IPPA; Amruden and Greenberg, 1987) which comprises of 11-

items was used. The items were grouped into three subscales. The first subscale, named Trust, consists of 4 items. The second subscale, named Communication, consists of 4 items as well and finally, the last subscale named Alienation consists of 3 items. This adapted version of IPPA is named M-IPPA. Similar to Maternal Piety Scales, M-IPPA response categories were 7 for always true, 6 for almost always true, 5 for often true, 4 for sometimes true, 3 for seldom true, 2 for almost never true and 1 for never true. The items were reverse scored when the statements were negatively worded. In this study, the score for each subscale was cumulative scores of the items. These cumulative scores were represented as observed variables in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

RESULTS

Phase I

(i) Reliability

The reliability analyses were conducted three times (T1, T2, and T3) to ensure the internal consistency was at least maintained if not improved after item revisions over time. The results indicated that the internal consistency for the three different times was maintained ($\gamma > 0.70$). At T1, T2 and T3, Cronbach's $\gamma = 0.847$, 0.840 and 0.850

respectively. Table 1 shows *Alpha if item deleted* for all of the items did not exceed *alpha standardized item*. The results indicated that all of the items are reliable and stable.

(ii) Dimensionality

In order to determine the underlying structure, Maternal Piety items were factor analyzed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation. However, it is imperative to test the multivariate assumptions to ensure the appropriateness of the technique employed. In order to justify the use of Principal Component Analysis, one of the important assumptions to be assessed is the intercorrelation among the items. Some degree of multicollinearity is desirable, because the objective is to identify the interrelated sets of variables (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

Prior to conducting the PCA, several statistical assumptions were tested in order to justify the relevancy of PCA. A visual inspection of the correlation matrix and Bartlett Sphericity Tests were conducted. The results indicated that Maternal Piety was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (630) = 1304.82$, $p = 0.001$ for its multicollinearity. Besides that, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was 0.707 . Thus, the overall Measurement Sampling Adequacy (MSA) fulfilled the requirement of at least 0.50

TABLE 1
Item reliability analysis for maternal piety scales

	T1	T2	T3
	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
msc1	0.829	0.827	0.841
msc2	0.836	0.842	0.849
msc3	0.835	0.828	0.838
msc4	0.826	0.811	0.820
msc5	0.827	0.813	0.822
msc6	0.832	0.827	0.843
msc7	0.836	0.827	0.841
msc8	0.828	0.839	0.845
msc9	0.845	0.820	0.830
msc10	0.834	0.823	0.840
msc11	0.848	0.839	0.848
msc12	0.842	0.838	0.843
Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	0.848	0.841	0.850

In conducting PCA, certain criteria have to be set *a priori* by the researcher in order to resolve for the factors solution. Items were retained when the loading was greater than 0.40, the difference of cross loading was greater than 0.1, and at least three items were loaded in each component. The rotation method of Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was selected due to the goal of the researcher to reduce a larger number of variables to a smaller set of uncorrelated variables for subsequent use.

At time 1 (T1), Maternal Piety domain contained 12 items, but after several Varimax rotations were conducted three factors emerged. Upon scrutinizing each item that was loaded in a factor, the first dimension was labelled as Faith in Hereafter (Faith), the second dimension was labelled as Call for Virtue versus Vices (Virtue vs. Vices), and the third dimension was labelled as Commitment. Instead of two separate dimensions as conceptualised for Virtue and Forbid Vices, the items were lumped together in a single factor. On the other hand, the dimension of commitment in performing Muslim obligations (Commitment) emerged to be conceptually sound as well. These three factors accounted for 59.15% of total variance explained.

Similarly, at time 2 (T2) the results yielded for three- factors solutions with 59.80 % proportion variances were explained with loadings ranging from 0.40 to 0.85. However, a clearer label of the dimensions was expected in the second phase of the study. This was due to the larger sample size and also the randomised sampling of a bigger population. In addition, these dimensions were subjected to construct validity by employing CFA. Hence, the itemized details are elaborated in the final analysis reported in Phase 2.

Phase 2

(i) Construct Validity

Phase 2 was conducted to test the construct validity and to examine the criterion-related validity of the developed instrument. Confirmatory Factorial Analysis (CFA) is one of the most commonly employed tool to test the construct validity of the developed

instrument (Hair *et al*, 2006). In this study, a second order CFA that is embedded in Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed. In *Fig. 1*, the shaded part is the measurement model for Maternal Piety. P represents Maternal Piety, the second order latent construct for the three underlying dimensions of call for virtue (virtue), faith in hereafter (faith) and forbid vices (f-vices).

The results shown on *Fig. 1*, $\gamma^2 (61) = 85.986$, $p = 0.019$, suggested that there is no significant difference between the hypothesized and observed models. Hence, the results indicate that the hypothesized model was admissible. Maternal Piety (MP) was hypothesized to be a second order latent construct for three underlying dimensions, namely Faith in Allah and the Hereafter (Faith), Call for Virtue (Virtue) and forbidding F-Vices (F-Vices) was supported.

In *Fig. 1*, the middle shaded ellipse (Faith), was *a priori* set to be the reference indicator due to the conceptually sound indicator of Maternal Piety. Hence, the p-value was not estimated because Faith was presumed a significant indicator of Piety. In addition, the constraint was needed for model identification where the unstandardized regression weight was set at 1. A presumed indicator is needed in order to run SEM using AMOS 4.0 (Arbuckle and Wothke, 1999). This was evident when the estimated parameter found that Piety accounted for 96 % of the total variance in Faith ($\gamma_{21} = 0.98$, $R^2 = 0.96$). The second highest explained variance by the second order construct of Maternal Piety was forbid vices ($\gamma_{31} = 0.69$, $R^2 = 0.47$, $p = 0.001$). Maternal Piety explained 47% of the variances in the forbid vices dimension. Finally, the third indicator was named Virtue ($\gamma_{12} = 0.61$, $R^2 = 0.37$, $p = 0.001$), which was found to be statistically significant as well. Maternal Piety explained 37% of the variances for the Virtue dimension.

In addition to the unobserved constructs, this model was also tested for the statistically significant loadings (standardized regression weight) of each item. Table 2 describes statements for the item; standard error (S.E.) critical ratio (C.R) and statistical significant probability values (p) were summarized for

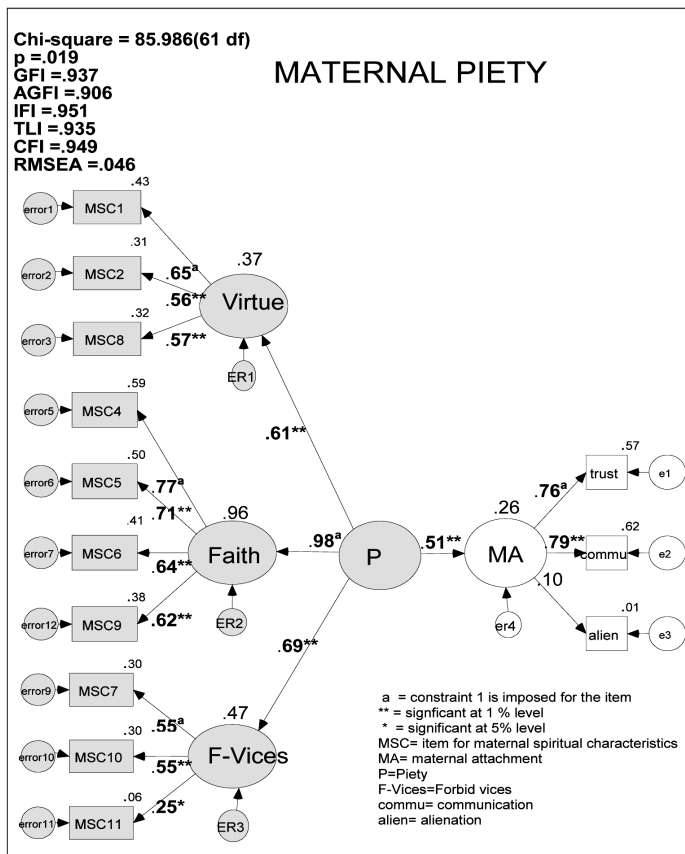


Fig. 1: Structural equation modelling for maternal piety

the measurement model of Maternal Piety. All items were found to be statistically significant at 1% level, with loading greater than or equal to 0.4 except for item MSC11. This item was statistically significant at 5% level with loading only 0.25. This item was not dropped due to the minimum of three items per factor was suggested by Stevens (1996) and Hair *et al.* (2006).

In summary, the hypothesized Maternal Piety as a second order construct for tri-dimensional measurement model fits the data. Faith in hereafter (Faith) was found to be the best indicator for Maternal Piety followed by forbid vices (F-Vices) and then calls for virtue (Virtue). Faith was best indicated by item MSC4, *mom reminds about hereafter*. F-Vices was best indicated by item MSC7, *mom forbids watching indecent TV programs*. Finally, Virtue was equally best

indicated by items MSC2 and MSC8, *congregational prayer* and *reading Al-Quran* respectively.

- (ii) Criterion-related Validity of Maternal Piety
Criterion-related validity is an empirical relationship between test scores and another valid criterion measure (Thorndike, 1997). There are two types of criterion validity, namely, concurrent validity and predictive validity. Concurrent validity is the relationship between a test and the criterion when evidence is obtained at approximately the same time. In this study, criterion – related validity of the instrument Maternal Piety Scales, was assessed employing Pearson correlation and structural equation modeling (SEM). From Table 3, Piety scores correlated significantly with Maternal Quality Relationship (MQR) and the two subscales, Trust and Communication. Hence, this

TABLE 2
CFA results of loadings, standard error, critical ratio significant p- value and item description for Piety

Construct	Item	Statements	Loadings	S.E.	C.R.	P
Virtue	MSC1	pray five times a day	0.64	*	*	*
	MSC2	pray congregationally	0.56	0.24	4.71	0.00
	MSC8	read <i>Al-Qur'an</i> every night.	0.57	0.25	4.71	0.00
Faith	MSC4	reminds me about the hereafter	0.77	*	*	*
	MSC5	reminds me about our purpose of life	0.71	0.11	8.84	0.00
	MSC6	reminds me that satan is our enemy	0.64	0.11	7.85	0.00
	MSC9	reminds me to thanks Allah	0.62	0.11	7.65	0.00
F-Vices	MSC7	forbids me to watch indecent ...	0.55	*	*	*
	MSC10	forbids me to portray ..	0.55	0.26	4.32	0.00
	MSC11	forbids me to uncover my ...	0.25	0.155	2.52	0.01

*The value was not estimated due to the required constraint for model identification where unstandardized regression weight of the item is fixed to default 1.

TABLE 3
Correlations maternal piety and quality relationship constructs

	VIRTUE	FAITH	F-VICES	PIETY	TRUST	COMMU	ALIEN	MQR
VIRTUE	1.000							
FAITH	0.437**	1.000						
VICES	0.251**	0.399**	1.000					
PIETY	0.752**	0.868**	0.631**	1.000				
TRUST	0.126	0.323**	0.207**	0.297**	1.000			
COMMU	0.097	0.378**	0.228**	0.322**	0.594**	1.000		
ALIEN	0.035	-0.082	-0.019	-0.037	0.199**	0.009	1.000	
MQR	0.092	0.399**	0.229**	0.332**	0.682**	0.802	-0.455**	1.000
Mean		14.450	20.970	18.720	54.140	23.600	22.130	17.560
28.160								
SD	3.820	4.960	2.640	8.858	4.394	4.6951	5.038	9.054

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

correlation table provides a preamble to the criterion related validity of Maternal Piety. Nevertheless, it is yet to be tested via SEM as discussed in the following.

As shown in *Fig. 1*, Piety accounted for 26% of the variance explained for maternal attachment (MA) with the standardized regression weight at 0.51 and significant at 1 % level ($\lambda_{14} = 0.51$, $R^2 = 0.26$, $p = 0.001$). The subscale Trust with loading at 0.76, significantly indicated MA and 0.57 squared multiple correlations. Using the default setting of AMOS 4.0, the first defined observed variable was taken as a significant reference indicator. Secondly, the subscale Communication significantly indicated MQR with loading at 0.79 and squared multiple

correlation was 0.62 at 1% significant level ($\lambda_{42} = 0.79$, $R^2 = 0.62$, $p = 0.001$).

In summary, the findings provided evidence to support the postulation that Maternal Piety significantly influences Maternal Quality Relationship (MQR). A mother with the highest Maternal Piety is indicated by her consistency in inculcate faith in the hereafter in her children. Second, Maternal Piety is reflective of a mother who strongly enjoins her children for virtue and third by forbidding vices in the children. Accordingly, these three significant indicators of Maternal Piety contribute positively towards open communication and mutual trust in a mother-child relationship.

DISCUSSION

A psychometrically sound instrument is the one that provides evidence of high reliability and validity. Therefore, a rigorous effort has been put in developing Maternal Piety Scales. There were two phases of the study. Phase 1 was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the instrument. Reliability tests were conducted at three different times within two years period of the longitudinal study. According to Hair *et al* (2006) and Thorndike (1997) the generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach's alpha is 0.70. In this study, Cronbach's alpha exceeded 0.80 at all times (T1, T2 and T3). The results indicated that Maternal Piety Scales is a highly reliable instrument.

Next, Principal Component Analysis was conducted in the first phase to explore the underlying dimension of Maternal Piety. The results indicated that there are three dimensions of Maternal Piety Scales. The three dimensions accounted for almost 60 % of total variance explained at T1 and T2. Moreover, the entire item loadings were greater than 0.40 and deemed sufficient for total variance explained. Therefore, the conceptualisation of Maternal Piety Scales as a multidimensional instrument was supported. In order to confirm which items belong to what constructs, i.e., to test the construct validity of Maternal Piety Scales, Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted in Phase 2. Findings indicated that Maternal Piety as a second order measurement model was supported. According to Hair *et al.* (2006) and Arbuckle and Wothke (1999), the goodness-of-fit measures GFI, AGFI, IFI, TLI, and CFI were > 0.90 and RMSEA was < 0.08, and this provided evidence for the construct validity of Maternal Piety Scales.

Finally, the results of Structural Equation Modelling supported the postulation that Maternal Piety positively influences Maternal Quality Relationship. The regression weight of 0.51 provided evidence for criterion-related validity for the instrument. In short, the findings implied that Maternal Piety Scales is a reliable and valid instrument.

Implications

Theoretical Implication

In Islamic literature, piety is considered as the core value for all other values. According to Langgulung (1988), spiritual, moral, educational,

economic, social and political values emanate from piety. This pivotal value, i.e. piety, helps evaluate one's feeling, thinking and intentional behavior, which is known as attitude (Hanafi Mohamed, 1999; Chittick, 2000). Therefore, attitude that is based on piety leads an individual towards certain observable actions and behaviors. These observable actions and behaviors are the signs that act as indicators for piety measures. It is worth noting that, the present instrument developed is meant to measure these observable indicators of piety but not the real state of piety.

The Holy Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him), time and again reminded his companions about the indicators for hypocrites (*munāfiq*) as opposed to believers in his *ḥadīth* narrated by Bukhari (Khan, 1983). These indicators of *munāfiq* are observable behaviors such as lying, not honouring one's promise, corrupting one's trust, and arguing excessively. These indicators are merely guidelines as the real state of hypocrisy in a person can only be judged by Allah alone. Thus, the signs that were explained by Allah's acted as a barometer for his companions to check upon their own level of faith (*imān*) toward Allah. Similarly, the indicators of piety are of observable actions that may be tapped in the present instrument.

Though it is not possible to be a perfect mother as suggested by Winnicott (1957), being a "good enough" mother is crucial. A "good enough" mother is consistently available to meet her children's needs. She is always there to guide and to set limits to her children to live their lives. Concomitantly, Bowlby (1973) postulates consistent maternal care leads to secure attachment between a mother and child. On the hand, maternal deprivation leads to an insecure pattern of attachment. Therefore, this study implies that Maternal Piety is the cardinal characteristic for a "good enough" Muslim mother. This characteristic would positively influence the quality of the relationship between a mother and child.

Practical Implication

Maternal Piety Scales are useful in conducting diagnostic assessment for family counselling. The instrument gauges maternal spiritual characteristics, particularly, maternal piety. Results of the assessment would enable the family

counsellor to plan and conduct family counselling intervention. To illustrate this, piety is observed in the mother's daily interactions with her children. As results show, a mother is to always remind her children about life in the hereafter, she enjoins her children for virtues and forbids vices, she is responsible for her children under her guardianship to practice the teachings of Islam. In addition, a mother's responsibility is to ensure her children perform their obligatory 5 daily prayers correctly and on time. Likewise, to forbid vices such as watching XXX-rated movies are incumbent upon mothers.

As a result of seeking the pleasure of Allah through the calling for good, forbidding evil and believing in life in the hereafter, a mother may strengthen her relationship with her children as well. It is also pertinent for parents to enjoin their children to go to the mosque together since they are young, instead of the parents going alone to the mosque (Norah, 1999). The proximity during congregational prayers between a mother and her children may lead to the feeling of closeness. As the saying goes "family that prays together stays together". Therefore, open communication is made possible and mutual trust is established between the mother and child.

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Rukun Negara Teras Pembinaan Modal Insan: Satu Komentari®

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ABSTRAK

Dalam proses mencapai negara maju bukan sahaja dari segi fizikal tetapi aspek kerohanian menjelang tahun 2020, Malaysia kini menghadapi pelbagai masalah yang kompleks. Masalah atau penghalang tersebut wujud dalam pelbagai aspek, bentuk dan tahap terutama isu moral, jenayah, hubungan etnik, masalah keluarga, kesan globalisasi dan gejala negatif yang lain. Di antara pelbagai usaha yang dilaksanakan oleh kerajaan, pembinaan modal insan merupakan salah satu agenda yang penting dan sarat dengan nilai murni bercirikan kerohanian. Agenda tersebut adalah signifikan untuk mewujudkan insan berkualiti yang bersepadu dan berminda kelas pertama supaya mampu bersaing dalam era globalisasi. Dalam hal ini, wujudnya persoalan tentang sejauh manakah keberkesananannya setelah usaha pembinaan modal insan dilaksanakan? Keberkesanan sesuatu dasar adalah bergantung pada asasnya supaya dasar-dasar yang berkaitan dengan pembinaan modal insan dapat dilaksanakan dengan lebih efektif dan bertahan lama. Oleh itu, makalah ini mencadangkan agar ideologi negara, iaitu Rukun Negara dijadikan teras pembinaan modal insan oleh semua pihak. Tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa wujud masalah dalam usaha menyemai ideologi negara dalam kalangan rakyat Malaysia secara bersepadu. Maka, beberapa cabaran seperti kekurangan sistem pemantauan dan pengaruh politik yang negatif akan dibincangkan dalam karya ini. Akhir sekali, beberapa cadangan moderat diberikan mengikut keadaan semasa untuk memperkukuhkan pelaksanaan Rukun Negara sekali gus membentuk insan yang berminda dan berwawasan kelas pertama.

ABSTRACT

In the process of achieving the status of a developed nation physically as well as spiritually by 2020, Malaysia is confronted by various complex issues. The issues come in various aspects, forms and levels like the moral issues, crime, ethnic relations, family, and the impact of globalization amongst others. In all the endeavours made by the government, the effort of human capital development can be considered spiritually and morally important. This agenda is significant in the formation of human capital with high quality and a first class mentality in the competitive era of globalization. Therefore, it is important to examine the effectiveness of all the human capital development efforts. The effectiveness of a policy very much relies upon the foundation that supports the policy to ensure its continuity. In line with this, this paper proposes that the national ideology, the Rukun Negara become the foundation of human capital development. It is expected that there will be problems in the integrated effort to inculcate the national ideology amongst Malaysians. Therefore, some challenges like the lack of monitoring system and the negative political influences will be discussed. Finally, several moderate proposals will be provided to strengthen the implementation of Rukun Negara towards the formation of human capital with a first class mentality and vision.

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PENGENALAN

Dalam abad ke-21, Malaysia telah memasuki era baru pembangunan bertujuan mencapai taraf negara maju menjelang 2020. Dari perspektif sejarah, idea pembangunan yang bermula di Eropah berjaya menawan imaginasi umat manusia khususnya mereka di negara-negara terbelakang sejak Perang Dunia Kedua. Kebanyakan negara bekas jajahan kolonial British termasuk Malaysia telah banyak menyumbang kepada Revolusi Industri abad ke-18 dan ke-19 yang dipelopori oleh Barat tetapi tidak menikmati hasil daripadanya secara langsung. Walau bagaimanapun, negara-negara ini telah memasuki era zaman moden melalui transformasi bersejarah yang dibawa oleh hasil revolusi itu. Selepas meraih kemerdekaan, negara-negara tersebut telah menjadikan pembangunan sebagai agenda utama bagi merintis jalan kemajuan masing-masing (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2007, hlm. 27).

Menjelang tahun 2020 kelak, wawasan Malaysia bukan sahaja bermatlamat mencapai negara maju dari segi fizikal tetapi juga keroohanian. Berbanding alaf lepas, kini Malaysia semakin membangun dan perlu proaktif untuk bersaing dalam mendepani ketidaksamaan, globalisasi dan liberalisasi perdagangan. Pada masa yang sama, kedudukan pembangunan dan kemajuan Malaysia dibuktikan dalam buku tahunan *World Competitiveness 2004*, dengan Malaysia meraih tempat ke-16 dalam dunia dan tempat kelima dalam Asia Pasifik selepas Singapura, Australia, Hong Kong dan Taiwan.

Selain itu, Malaysia merupakan negara yang keempat terbuka dalam ekonomi di dunia. Kedudukan Malaysia dari segi keterbukaan ekonomi dan juga persaingan amat berkaitan dengan latar belakangnya. Keupayaan Malaysia bersaing dalam ekonomi dunia amat bergantung pada keadaan masyarakat asalnya. Dari segi ekonomi, Malaysia amat bergantung pada *Foreign Direct Investment* (FDI). Walhal pada alaf baru ini, Malaysia mengalami persaingan yang hebat dari negara China yang menawarkan kos tenaga buruh yang amat murah secara relatif.

Malaysia mempunyai prasarana kelas pertama yang terdapat di banyak tempat, ikon-ikon global wujud di sana sini dan negara kita semakin terintegrasi dengan hampir seluruh dunia melalui udara, laut, telekomunikasi dan internet. Kita mempunyai pusat pentadbiran baru, Putrajaya, dengan bangunan dan

kemudahan canggih atau *state-of-the art* yang menjadi impian banyak negara membangun lain. Banyak syarikat transnasional melabur di sini manakala sejumlah syarikat konglomerat Malaysia sudah melebarkan sayapnya beroperasi di luar negara (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2007, hlm. 28).

Dalam usaha Malaysia meningkatkan daya bersaing dan menarik minat pelaburan asing, kita perlu meningkatkan keupayaan pasaran buruh yang berpaksikan bidang sains dan teknologi (S&T) serta memberi tumpuan kepada perkembangan penyelidikan dan pembangunan (R&D). Dalam lain perkataan, bumi Malaysia perlu menyediakan tenaga buruh yang mempunyai nilai tambah yang tinggi, terutama mempunyai kemahiran dalam bidang S&T seperti *biotechnology*, *photonic* dan *nanotechnology*.

Namun, sementara negara menumpukan perhatian kepada perkembangan aspek S&T dan R&D, pembinaan modal insan juga harus mementingkan aspek kemanusiaan yang lain kerana negara Malaysia sedang dilanda pelbagai masalah sosial yang boleh menakutkan pelabur asing. Walaupun pada masa kini masalah sosial belum lagi mengancam ketenteraman aturan sosial secara serius dan masih terkawal, masalah tersebut semakin membimbangkan.

Memang tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa kerajaan Malaysia amat peka dan insaf ke atas perkara tersebut. Dalam pembentangan Rancangan Malaysia Ke-Sembilan (RMK-9) pada tahun 2006 oleh YAB Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, salah satu perkara penting yang diorientasikan ialah pembinaan modal insan yang bersifat holistik, iaitu menghasilkan rakyat Malaysia yang bukan sahaja mempunyai kemahiran saintifik yang canggih tetapi juga nilai moral dan keroohanian yang tinggi lagi “berminda kelas pertama”.

Penulis amat bersetuju dengan wawasan yang murni tersebut. Namun, perkara tersebut sukar dicapai dengan sempurna jika kita tidak mempunyai satu ideologi di belakang pelaksanaannya, terutama dalam aspek penanaman nilai yang murni dan moral yang tinggi kepada individu. Pada hemat penulis, matlamat akhir pembangunan bukan untuk tujuan pertumbuhan semata-mata. Sebaliknya pertumbuhan adalah cara dan alat untuk mencapai kualiti hidup yang lebih baik dan meningkatkan tamadun manusia. Makalah ini mengupas masalah pembinaan modal insan pada masa kini yang masih belum seimbang kerana

penekanan yang diberikan lebih menjurus kepada kemajuan dalam ilmu sains fizikal dan bukannya sains sosial. Dalam hal ini, penulis mencadangkan Rukun Negara sebagai satu ideologi yang bersepadu perlu diberikan perhatian dan disemai dalam pemikiran rakyat Malaysia bukan sekadar sebagai satu “memori” atau penghafalan, akan tetapi sebagai prinsip konsensus yang difahami secara mendalam dan diguna pakai dalam kehidupan harian.

PEMBANGUNAN YANG TIDAK SEIMBANG

Apakah fakta sosial yang boleh menunjukkan pembangunan negara sedang menghala ke arah yang tidak seimbang? Fakta utama yang nyata berlaku dalam masyarakat Malaysia ialah masalah kemunduran budaya (*cultural lag*). Secara umumnya, *cultural lag* adalah satu konsep sosiologi yang digunakan untuk merujuk kepada keadaan apabila perkembangan atau perubahan budaya material (*material culture*) yang lebih maju dan perkembangan budaya bukan material (*nonmaterial culture*) ketinggalan (Henslin, 2005, hlm. 58-59). Dalam konteks pembangunan negara, penyediaan kemudahan *hardware* atau material adalah jauh lebih maju jika dibandingkan dengan perkembangan *software* atau *nonmaterial* (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2006).

Kemampuan ekonomi semakin meningkat dalam kalangan rakyat sementara Malaysia mencapai pembangunan ekonomi yang lebih baik. Perkembangan sains dan teknologi yang semakin canggih membolehkan rakyat menikmati penggunaan barangan elektrik yang moden terutama alat komunikasi dan media. Kesan negatif yang dibawa oleh alat media seperti televisyen telah lama muncul setelah digunakan secara ketara pada abad yang lalu. Rancangan yang disiarkan mendedahkan penontonnya kepada pelbagai nilai termasuk yang boleh menjahanamkan minda rakyat terutama unsur keganasan dan seksual kepada penonton yang muda. Di Amerika Syarikat, kajian Biagi (1998) menunjukkan bahawa orang Amerika menonton televisyen sekurang-kurangnya 4 jam sehari dan ada yang menonton melebihi 7 jam sehari. Secara umumnya, masa yang digunakan oleh kebanyakan remaja yang berumur 16 tahun untuk menonton televisyen adalah melebihi masa mereka belajar di sekolah. Pada pemerhatian penulis, keadaan di Malaysia adalah tidak jauh beza dengan keadaan yang berlaku dalam kalangan masyarakat di Amerika Syarikat.

Kini, pengaruh negatif dari media dan alat komunikasi menjadi semakin ketara setelah penggunaan internet diperkenalkan pada dekad yang lalu. Di bawah inovasi baru yang canggih ini, ruang sosial menjadi tidak mempunyai sempadan (*borderless*). Maklumat atau informasi memenuhi ruang tanpa kawalan dan pemantauan yang berkesan. Segala maklumat yang terdapat di dalam internet sama ada yang baik atau yang buruk boleh dilihat dan dibaca sekiranya seseorang itu akses kepadanya. Sehingga hari ini, Malaysia belum lagi mempunyai mekanisme yang berkesan untuk mengawal maklumat internet. Masalah utama yang boleh ditimbulkan oleh internet ialah tentang seks. Perkataan ‘seks’lah merupakan perkataan yang paling kerap dicari oleh pengguna internet dalam enjin pencarian seperti Yahoo. Ribuan laman web yang menawarkan informasi tentang seks yang tidak bermoral seperti pornografi, homoseksual atau lesbian boleh menjejaskan minda penggunaan internet yang tidak matang pada bila-bila masa dan di mana-mana sahaja.

Selain daripada penyampaian nilai yang negatif, teknologi yang canggih seperti kemudahan penghantaran maklumat melalui emel dan khidmat pesanan ringkas (SMS) juga tidak digunakan dengan betul. Kemudahan tersebut yang sepatutnya merupakan satu inovasi yang amat berguna dalam komunikasi kehidupan moden turut sering disalahgunakan sehingga menimbulkan masalah yang boleh membahayakan keharmonian masyarakat. Misalnya, peristiwa yang berlaku pada bulan November 2006 tentang isu penghantaran mesej telefon bimbit yang membangkitkan kacau bilau dalam kalangan masyarakat di Ipoh, Perak iaitu terdapat mesej palsu yang mengatakan seramai 600 orang pelajar Muslim di Politeknik Ungku Omar akan menjalankan upacara pembaptisan Kristian di Gereja *Our Lady of Lourdes*. Khabar angin seperti itu bukan perkara yang baru kerana pada tahun 1998 terdapat pengedaran maklumat palsu tentang pemberontakan bersenjata orang Indonesia di Chow Kit. Begitu juga pada tahun 2003, terdapat pengedaran maklumat palsu “Outbreak SARS” yang amat mengganggu ketenteraman masyarakat dan mengancam industri pelancongan negara.

Pembangunan modal insan yang hanya menumpukan S&T boleh menyebabkan masalah akibat *cultural lag* seperti yang dibincangkan.

Memang tidak dapat dinafikan bahawa dalam konteks globalisasi, pembangunan dari segi S&T adalah penting untuk ekonomi negara. Namun aspek penyelidikan sosial juga harus dipentingkan supaya pembangunan modal insan yang seimbang boleh diteliti dan dijamin tercapai. Pada hakikatnya, pembangunan sains sosial semakin diabaikan.

Dalam ucapan dasar MSC5 yang disampaikan oleh Shamsul A.B. pada Ogos 2006, beliau telah menimbulkan satu fakta yang harus kita pertimbangkan, iaitu peruntukan bantuan penyelidikan sosial telah dikurangkan dan semakin diketepikan. Menurut Shamsul A.B., pada dekad yang lepas, kurang daripada 10% daripada jumlah peruntukan kewangan (lebih kurang satu bilion ringgit) diagihkan untuk R&D sains sosial. Lebih daripada 90% adalah untuk bidang sains dan teknologi. Walhal ahli sains sosial turut dikategori bersama-sama ahli sains tabii lain sebagai ahli sains (*scientists*) di bawah Majlis Sains Kebangsaan Malaysia (*Malaysian National Science Council*).

Selain daripada itu, untuk melahirkan tenaga kerja yang mempunyai minda kelas pertama, berpengetahuan, kreatif dan berinovasi, pendidikan merupakan agen utama yang memainkan peranan penting dalam sistem transformasi. Pendidikan yang bersepadu, integratif serta holistik yang mementingkan nilai-nilai agama, budaya dan peradaban perlu dijadikan teras dalam pembinaan kurikulum pendidikan negara. Namun pada hakikatnya, untuk memenuhi keperluan pembangunan ekonomi negara, iaitu berubah dari P-ekonomi ke K-ekonomi dan menyelesaikan masalah pengangguran, reka bentuk pendidikan semakin menuju ke arah yang mengutamakan pasaran (*market driven*). Dalam suasana pembangunan yang mengutamakan pasaran, muncul persoalan bahawa apakah pendidikan lebih memainkan peranan untuk meningkatkan kelayakan sijil (*credential*) atau untuk mendidik seseorang insan secara holistik?

Generasi muda pada masa kini berhasrat masuk ke universiti dengan minda yang *calculative*. Mereka lebih berminat masuk ke jurusan yang boleh mendatangkan pulangan kewangan yang lebih lumayan secara relatif. Mentaliti seperti ini turut menyebabkan matlamat utama penglibatan mereka dalam pendidikan hanyalah untuk mendapat markah yang tinggi dalam peperiksaan supaya keputusan PNGK

(CGPA) yang lebih baik. Mereka juga hanya menumpukan kepada mata pelajaran yang berkaitan langsung dengan jurusan profesional mereka dan menyumbang kepada PNGK. Bahkan trend seperti ini turut disambut oleh pihak institusi pendidikan tinggi, tidak kira di institusi pendidikan tinggi awam (IPTA) ataupun swasta (IPTS).

Malahan, dalam sistem pendidikan peringkat tinggi di Malaysia, mata pelajaran yang penting untuk melatih pemikiran dan minda pelajar supaya boleh berfikir secara kritis dan bernas, iaitu disiplin falsafah belum lagi ditekankan dan dimantapkan. Bahkan, tiada satupun universiti di Malaysia yang menubuhkan jabatan dan pusat untuk mengkaji disiplin falsafah secara menyeluruh. Apa yang ada pada masa sekarang ialah pengetahuan falsafah dicantumkan dalam satu atau dua mata pelajaran untuk sesuatu kursus. Pada pendapat penulis, ini adalah tidak mencukupi untuk melatih minda para pelajar yang bakal menyumbang tenaga ke pasaran tempatan dan global.

Maka, jika dilihat dari aspek pembangunan, pemimpin dan pembuat dasar negara memang sedar akan ketidakseimbangan dalam pembangunan negara. Matlamat negara kita untuk mencapai taraf negara maju pada tahun 2020 telah mengenal pasti sembilan cabaran yang harus ditangani. Antara cabaran tersebut, didapati lapan daripada sembilan cabaran bersifat budaya, politik dan sosial, hanya cabaran kesembilan berkaitan dengan ekonomi. Penekanan tersebut menunjukkan bahawa pembangunan yang seimbang harus dicapai pada kedua-dua aspek *material* dan *non-material*. Penekanan tersebut juga membuktikan bahawa pembangunan dari segi *non-material* adalah amat kekurangan dalam proses pembangunan negara pada hari ini. Namun, dari segi pelaksanaan dasar Wawasan 2020, kerajaan hanya mengutamakan ekonomi dan S&T kerana kekayaan dan tuntutan pasaran.

Sejak kebelakangan ini, setelah peralihan kuasa pentadbiran negara kepada YAB Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, pelbagai program dan dasar seperti Dasar Sosial Negara, Pelan Integriti Nasional dan Institut Integriti Malaysia, Misi Nasional dalam RMK-9 telah dilaksanakan untuk menangani kesemua cabaran dalam Wawasan 2020 secara keseluruhan. Pada hemat penulis, Rukun Negara yang digubal sejak sekian lama perlu diangkat martabatnya semula sebagai dasar dan teras demi mencapai tujuan tersebut.

Rukun Negara sebagai Teras Pembinaan Modal Insan

Secara umumnya, ideologi negara, iaitu Rukun Negara yang diisytiharkan pada 31 Ogos 1970 selepas Peristiwa 13 Mei 1969 membuktikan pihak kerajaan menyedari bahawa penumpuan pembangunan negara sebelum itu terlalu menitikberatkan aspek fizikal. Peristiwa 13 Mei 1969 ternyata memberi kesan yang mendalam kepada semua pihak. Keamanan serta kesejahteraan masyarakat perlu dipelihara (Tunku Abdul Rahman, 1969).

Melalui buku Rancangan Malaysia Kedua (RM2), kita mengetahui terdapat pemecahan dan pemisahan yang wujud dalam masyarakat. RM2 telah menyatakan dengan tegas dan jelas bahawa perpaduan nasional merupakan tujuan pencapaian terpentingnya, mengatasi dua objektif Dasar Ekonomi Baru (DEB), iaitu pertama membasmi kemiskinan dan kedua menyusun semula masyarakat.

Kerajaan mula berusaha ke arah mengisi kekosongan dalam kehidupan masyarakat di Malaysia supaya dapat membina satu bangsa Malaysia yang bersatu padu dan membangkitkan semangat cintakan tanah air. Badan yang bertanggungjawab atas penggubalan Rukun Negara ialah Majlis Perundingan Negara (MPN). Draf Rukun Negara telah dibincangkan dan dibuat pindaan beberapa kali oleh MPN sebelum diluluskan oleh Majlis Gerakan negara (MAGERAN).

Setelah Rukun Negara digubal, ia telah disampaikan kepada rakyat Malaysia, terutama generasi muda melalui pendidikan dan media massa. Pelajar sekolah dipastikan boleh menghafal lima prinsip Rukun Negara dan berikrar untuk mematuhi sebelum memulakan aktiviti pelajaran harian dan semasa perhimpunan mingguan. Rukun Negara dipaparkan di pelbagai medium seperti di muka belakang buku latihan sekolah, poster di dinding pejabat dan juga di tembok bangunan awam dan swasta. Selain itu, ia juga digubal dalam bentuk lagu untuk mempopularkan peri penting dan manfaat mematuhi.

Namun, sejauh manakah rakyat Malaysia benar-benar memahami dan menghayati ideologi negara tersebut secara murni? Penghafalan Rukun Negara sahaja adalah tidak mencukupi. Lebih-lebih lagi, penghafalan pelajar adalah tidak lengkap dan boleh mengelirukan. Pada pengetahuan dan pengalaman penulis,

penghafalan Rukun Negara semasa di sekolah bermula dengan bahagian tengah inti sarinya, iaitu bermula dengan bahagian "Maka kami rakyat Malaysia berikrar akan mencapai cita-cita tersebut..." dan seterusnya lima prinsip Rukun Negara. Penghafalan yang bermula dengan bahagian tersebut menyebabkan pelajar tidak tahu atau tidak ingat apakah tujuan utama Rukun Negara dan cita-cita yang ingin dicapai. Maksud lima prinsip Rukun Negara juga tidak diterangkan dengan jelas. Mata pelajaran yang memainkan peranan penting dalam menyampaikan pengetahuan tersebut seperti Sivik atau Tata Rakyat sentiasa diabaikan dalam kurikulum sekolah. Hal tersebut disebabkan pihak pelajar dan juga sekolah lebih mementingkan subjek yang menyumbang kepada keputusan dalam peperiksaan utama seperti Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR), Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) dan Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM). Perkara ini menyebabkan penghafalan Rukun Negara dan berikrar di perhimpunan awam hanyalah satu obligasi sebagai rakyat dan *ritual* yang tidak bermakna. Oleh itu, boleh dikatakan bahawa ideologi negara yang ideal ini belum lagi disemai dengan betul dan turut tidak berakar dan berkembang dalam kalangan jiwa rakyat Malaysia.

Walaupun penggubalan Rukun Negara adalah akibat Peristiwa 13 Mei 1969, Rukun Negara seharusnya dilihat pada perspektif yang lebih luas dan dijadikan teras utama untuk pembinaan modal insan yang seimbang. Rukun Negara merupakan satu ideologi yang penting kerana ia merangkumi aspek penting kehidupan seseorang insan dalam masyarakat terutama dari segi perpaduan, keadilan, demokrasi dan kebebasan. Reka bentuknya sesuai untuk semua kumpulan etnik dan setiap lapisan dalam masyarakat. Secara umumnya, prinsip Rukun Negara memberi panduan kepada rakyat dalam setiap aspek kehidupan seperti sosial, ekonomi dan politik. Menurut Nazaruddin Hj. Mohd Jali *et al.* (2003), lima prinsip Rukun Negara menjelaskan tingkat-tingkat tanggungjawab rakyat Malaysia yang sebenarnya dibendung oleh tuntutan daripada pelbagai tahap autoriti, iaitu daripada Tuhan pada peringkat alam semesta sehinggalah di peringkat diri sendiri sebagai individu yang bertanggungjawab kepada diri sendiri.

Prinsip pertama, iaitu kepercayaan kepada Tuhan menekankan tanggungjawab individu

sebagai makhluk Tuhan dan harus mematuhi ajaran agama. Melalui konviksi atau ikatan keagamaan, manusia memahami apakah itu dosa dan pahala dan akibat jika melakukannya, menyedari tentang doa dan usaha serta mengetahui tentang hal hidup-mati. Melalui ajaran agama, manusia menyedari bahawa sebagai insan Tuhan, mereka seharusnya bertimbang rasa, bersyukur, berkeyakinan dan bersikap sederhana dalam hidup. Nilai-nilai murni dalam ajaran agama, tidak kira sama ada yang percaya kepada tuhan ataupun set nilai etika sahaja, mengarah kepada pembentukan kehidupan yang harmoni.

Perkongsian harmoni atau *co-existence*, nilai-nilai agama Islam dan nilai agama lain di Malaysia yang mempunyai banyak persamaan dari segi nilai-nilai sejagat yang diterima dan diamalkan, merupakan asas yang kukuh untuk membina sebuah masyarakat bersatu padu. Kadang-kadang kita lupa bahawa kejayaan material yang telah dicapai di Malaysia perlu digenapkan dengan nilai-nilai yang bukan material, khususnya, nilai-nilai keagamaan. Dengan cara ini diharapkan wujud nanti pembangunan modal insan yang seimbang.

Prinsip kedua, iaitu kesetiaan kepada raja dan negara menekankan tanggungjawab manusia sebagai rakyat kepada negara supaya mencintai dan melindungi Malaysia. Prinsip ini mementingkan kesetiaan rakyat kepada ketua negara dan negeri yang menjadi lambang kedaulatan negara dan lambang tumpuan taat setia. Prinsip ini juga bertujuan melahirkan rakyat yang bertanggungjawab, patriotik dan sanggup berkorban serta menyumbang masa dan tenaganya untuk negara demi keamanan dan kemajuan. Dengan itu, sekali gus menghindar perasaan prejudis perkauman kerana ada perkongsian nilai, iaitu mengutamakan kebaikan masyarakat dan negara.

Prinsip ketiga, iaitu keluhuran perlembagaan menekankan tanggungjawab insan masyarakat sebagai warganegara demokrasi berperlembagaan. Orientasi prinsip ini adalah supaya rakyat dapat menerima, mematuhi dan mempertahankan kemuliaan Perlembagaan Negara kerana perlembagaan berfungsi memberi perlindungan dan hak kepada setiap anggota masyarakat di dalam negara. Perlembagaan merupakan kontrak sosial di antara semua kaum yang sama-sama berpeluang menyumbang terhadap penggubalannya. Antara aspek utama dalam

perlembagaan yang perlu dipatuhi ialah konsep Raja Berperlembagaan, kedudukan Bumiputera dan bukan Bumiputera dalam pembangunan sosioekonomi terjamin, Bahasa Melayu sebagai bahasa kebangsaan di samping perkembangan bahasa lain tidak dihalang, agama Islam sebagai agama rasmi di samping kebebasan beragama diamalkan, hak asasi rakyat terjamin, hak kerakyatan dan sistem pemerintahan. Sekiranya semua pihak mematuhi Perlembagaan Negara ini dipercayai bahawa masalah hubungan etnik yang bakal mengancam ketenteraman negara dapat diselesaikan.

Prinsip keempat, iaitu kedaulatan undang-undang menekankan tanggungjawab insan sebagai ahli masyarakat madani yang seharusnya mematuhi undang-undang dan peraturan. Undang-undang berkedudukan tinggi dan tidak boleh dipersendakan. Sebaliknya, ia mesti dihormati dan dipatuhi. Undang-undang memastikan setiap individu di dalam negara ini terjamin kebebasan asasi mereka. Setiap rakyat adalah sama tarafnya dari segi undang-undang dan tertakluk ke atasnya. Oleh itu, kedaulatan undang-undang perlu dipertahankan bagi menjamin fungsinya untuk melindungi rakyat di satu pihak dan menghukum pesalah di pihak lain.

Prinsip yang terakhir, iaitu kesopanan dan kesusilaan bertujuan memupuk sahsiah mulia agar setiap rakyat bersopan dan beradab, bermaruah serta tertib dan bersusila yang bermaksud berakhlak dan berhemah mulia. Prinsip ini menekankan tanggungjawab insan sebagai individu yang bertanggungjawab. Prinsip ini juga mementingkan perkembangan personaliti dan tingkah laku seseorang rakyat dalam hubungan antara perseorangan. Sebagai manusia yang berbudaya, rakyat hendaklah sentiasa tertib dan mengikut peraturan serta berakhlak dan berhemah tinggi. Sifat mulia ini bermula dengan diri sendiri. Berdisiplin dan hormat kepada diri sendiri menjadi asas bagi hubungan yang baik dengan orang lain. Hubungan baik juga boleh terjamin sekiranya rakyat sentiasa berakhlak mulia, menghormati orang lain, mengelakkan diri daripada menyentuh hal yang sensitif dan perkara yang telah dipersetujui majoriti.

Nilai yang murni dalam setiap prinsip Rukun Negara harus dijadikan teras pembinaan modal insan. Seperti yang disarankan oleh Abdul Rahman Embong (2006), kemahiran yang tinggi

dan pengetahuan yang banyak tidak semestinya dapat menjamin seseorang rakyat menyumbang kepada pembangunan negara dan kesejahteraan masyarakat. Bahkan kita sering membaca dan mengetahui bahawa orang yang berpendidikan dan berpengetahuan boleh menjadi perosak masyarakat, penjenayah, perasuah, penipu serta manusia yang rakus dan angkuh. Dia juga boleh menjadi seorang yang sempit pandangannya, buruk prasangka, tidak jujur, dan tidak toleran terhadap pandangan orang lain dan tidak bertanggungjawab. Nilai dan sikap yang murni seperti yang terdapat dalam ideologi negara kita adalah penting untuk membina modal insan yang lebih unggul. Tanpa set nilai tersebut, ilmu pengetahuan dan kemahiran tidak semestinya mendatangkan manfaat kepada masyarakat dan negara.

KESIMPULAN

Tanpa memahami dan memiliki ideologi negara, iaitu Rukun Negara, pembinaan modal insan umpama pembinaan rumah di atas pasir yang tidak kukuh. Jika dilanda sebarang ancaman luaran mahupun dalaman, rumah tersebut mudah runtuh dan berkecai. Maka, pada hemat penulis, adalah penting rumah dibina di atas dasar yang kukuh supaya tahan lasak dan dapat terus berdiri secara teguh.

Pemeriksaan Rukun Negara penting bukan setakat diperkenalkan kepada rakyat pada tahap superfisial sahaja. Penghafalan yang tidak lengkap tanpa pemahaman dan konviksi yang mendalam tidak dapat memastikan ia dimiliki oleh setiap rakyat dalam negara ini. Tahap penerimaan dan peringkat pemahaman dalam kalangan masyarakat segenap lapisan, keberkesanan alat dan agen yang digunakan untuk menyebarkan ideologi tersebut harus sentiasa dipantau dan diselidik supaya memastikan prinsip Rukun Negara tersemai secara mendalam dan tersebar luas kepada semua rakyat negara. Pembinaan

modal insan seharusnya berteraskan Rukun Negara. Pemahaman secara mendalam dan pemilihan ideologi tersebut sebagai panduan dalam kehidupan adalah amat penting untuk setiap individu dalam masyarakat Malaysia.

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Pertanika

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Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

(Manuscript Preparation & Submission Guidelines)

Revised January 2009

*We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing.
We value and support our authors in the research community.*

Please read the guidelines and follow these instructions carefully; doing so will ensure that the publication of your manuscript is as rapid and efficient as possible. The Editorial Board reserves the right to return manuscripts that are not prepared in accordance with these guidelines.

About the Journal

Pertanika is an international peer-reviewed journal devoted to the publication of original papers, and it serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to tropical agriculture and its related fields. Pertanika Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science began publication in 1978. In 1992, a decision was made to streamline Pertanika into three journals to meet the need for specialised journals in areas of study aligned with the interdisciplinary strengths of the university. The revamped, Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (JSSH) aims to develop as a pioneer journal for the Social Sciences with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. Other Pertanika series include Pertanika Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science (JTAS); and Pertanika Journal of Science and Technology (JST).

JSSH is published in **English** and it is open to authors around the world regardless of the nationality. It is currently published two times a year i.e. in **March** and **September**.

Goal of Pertanika

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

Quality

We aim for excellence, sustained by a responsible and professional approach to journal publishing. JSSH is an international award winning journal indexed in SCOPUS (Elsevier) and EBSCO.

Future vision

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

We also have views on the future of our journals. The emergence of the online medium as the predominant vehicle for the 'consumption' and distribution of much academic research will be the ultimate instrument in the dissemination of the research news to our scientists and readers.

Aims and scope

Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities aims to provide a forum for high quality research related to social sciences and humanities research. Areas relevant to the scope of the journal include: Accounting, Agricultural & resource economics, Anthropology, Communication, Community and peace studies, Design and architecture, Disaster and crisis management, Economics, Education, Extension

education, Finance, Gerontology, Hospitality and tourism, Human ecology, Human resource development, Language studies (*education, applied linguistics, acquisition, pedagogy*), Language literature (*literary & cultural studies*), Management, Marketing, Psychology, Safety and environment, Social and behavioural sciences, Sociology, Sustainable development, and Ethnic relations.

Editorial Statement

Pertanika is the official journal of Universiti Putra Malaysia. The abbreviation for Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities is *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. Hum.*

Guidelines for Authors

Publication policies

Pertanika policy prohibits an author from submitting the same manuscript for concurrent consideration by two or more publications. It prohibits as well publication of any manuscript that has already been published either in whole or substantial part elsewhere.

Editorial process

Authors are notified on receipt of a manuscript and upon the editorial decision regarding publication.

Manuscript review: Manuscripts deemed suitable for publication are sent to the Editorial Advisory Board members and/or other reviewers. We encourage authors to suggest the names of possible reviewers. Notification of the editorial decision is usually provided within to eight to ten weeks from the receipt of manuscript. Publication of solicited manuscripts is not guaranteed. In most cases, manuscripts are accepted conditionally, pending an author's revision of the material.

Author approval: Authors are responsible for all statements in articles, including changes made by editors. The liaison author must be available for consultation with an editor of *The Journal* to answer questions during the editorial process and to approve the edited copy. Authors receive edited typescript (not galley proofs) for final approval. Changes **cannot** be made to the copy after the edited version has been approved.

Please direct all inquiries, manuscripts, and related correspondence to:

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Fax: + (603) 8947 2075
ndeeps@admin.upm.edu.my

or visit our website at <http://rmc.upm.edu.my/pertanika> for further information.

Manuscript preparation

Pertanika accepts submission of mainly four types of manuscripts. Each manuscript is classified as **regular** or **original** articles, **short communications**, **reviews**, and proposals for **special issues**. Articles must be in **English** and they must be competently written and argued in clear and concise grammatical English. Acceptable English usage and syntax are expected. Do not use slang, jargon, or obscure abbreviations or phrasing. Metric measurement is preferred; equivalent English measurement may be included in parentheses. Always provide the complete form of an acronym/abbreviation the first time it is presented in the text. Contributors are strongly recommended to have the manuscript checked by a colleague with ample experience in writing English manuscripts or an English language editor.

Linguistically hopeless manuscripts will be rejected straightaway (e.g., when the language is so poor that one cannot be sure of what the authors really mean). This process, taken by authors before submission, will greatly facilitate reviewing, and thus publication if the content is acceptable.

The instructions for authors must be followed. Manuscripts not adhering to the instructions will be returned for revision without review. Authors should prepare manuscripts according to the guidelines of *Pertanika*.

1. Regular article

Definition: Full-length original empirical investigations, consisting of introduction, materials and methods, results and discussion, conclusions. Original work must provide references and an explanation on research findings that contain new and significant findings.

Size: Should not exceed 5000 words or 8-10 printed pages (excluding the abstract, references, tables and/or figures). One printed page is roughly equivalent to 3 type-written pages.

2. Short communications

Definition: Significant new information to readers of the Journal in a short but complete form. It is suitable for the publication of technical advance, bioinformatics or insightful findings of plant and animal development and function.

Size: Should not exceed 2000 words or 4 printed pages, is intended for rapid publication. They are not intended for publishing preliminary results or to be a reduced version of Regular Papers or Rapid Papers.

3. Review article

Definition: Critical evaluation of materials about current research that had already been published by organizing, integrating, and evaluating previously published materials. Re-analyses as meta-analysis and systemic reviews are encouraged. Review articles should aim to provide systemic overviews, evaluations and interpretations of research in a given field.

Size: Should not exceed 4000 words or 7-8 printed pages.

4. Special issues

Definition: Usually papers from research presented at a conference, seminar, congress or a symposium.

Size: Should not exceed 5000 words or 8-10 printed pages.

5. Others

Definition: Brief reports, case studies, comments, Letters to the Editor, and replies on previously published articles may be considered.

Size: Should not exceed 2000 words or up to 4 printed pages.

With few exceptions, original manuscripts should not exceed the recommended length of 6 printed pages (about 18 typed pages, double-spaced and in 12-point font, tables and figures included). Printing is expensive, and, for the Journal, postage doubles when an issue exceeds 80 pages. You can understand then that there is little room for flexibility.

Long articles reduce the Journal's possibility to accept other high-quality contributions because of its 80-page restriction. We would like to publish as many good studies as possible, not only a few lengthy ones. (And, who reads overly long articles anyway?) Therefore, in our competition, short and concise manuscripts have a definite advantage.

Format

The paper should be formatted in one column format with the figures at the end. A maximum of eight keywords should be indicated below the abstract to describe the contents of the manuscript. Leave a blank line between each paragraph and between each entry in the list of bibliographic references. Tables should preferably be placed in the same electronic file as the text. Authors should consult a recent issue of the Journal for table layout.

There is no need to spend time formatting your article so that the printout is visually attractive (e.g. by making headings bold or creating a page layout with figures), as most formatting instructions will be removed upon processing.

Manuscripts should be typewritten, typed on one side of the ISO A4 paper with at least 4cm margins and double spacing throughout. Every page of the manuscript, including the title page, references, tables, etc. should be numbered. However, no reference should be made to page numbers in the text; if necessary, one may refer to sections. Underline words that should be in italics, and do not underline any other words.

Authors are advised to use Times New Roman 12-point font. Be especially careful when you are inserting special characters, as those inserted in different fonts may be replaced by different characters when converted to PDF files. It is well known that 'µ' will be replaced by other characters when fonts such as 'Symbol' or 'Mincho' are used.

We recommend that authors prepare the text as a **Microsoft Word** file.

1. Manuscripts in general should be organised in the following order:
 - **Page 1: Running title.** (Not to exceed 60 characters, counting letters and spaces). This page should **only** contain your running title/ full title of your paper. In addition, the **Subject areas** most relevant to the study must be indicated on this page. Select one or two subject areas (refer to the *Scope Form*).
A list of number of **black and white / colour figures and tables** should also be indicated on this page. Figures submitted in color will be printed in colour. See "5. *Figures & Photographs*" for details.
 - **Page 2: Author(s) and Corresponding author information.** This page should **repeat** the title of your paper with name(s) of all the authors, institutions and corresponding author's name, institution and full address (Street address, telephone number (including extension), hand phone number, fax number and e-mail address) for editorial correspondence.
Authors' addresses. Multiple authors with different addresses must indicate their respective addresses separately by superscript numbers:
George Swan¹ and Nayan Kanwal²
¹Department of Management, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, USA
²Research Management Centre, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia.
 - **Page 3:** This page should **repeat** the title of your paper with only the **Abstract** (the abstract should be less than 250 words for a Regular Paper and up to 100 words for a Short Communication). **Keywords** must also be provided on this page (Not more than eight keywords in alphabetical order).
 - **Page 4 and subsequent pages:** This page should begin with the **Introduction** of your article and the rest of your paper should follow from page 5 onwards.

Abbreviations. Define alphabetically, other than abbreviations that can be used without definition. Words or phrases that are abbreviated in the introduction and following text should be written out in full the first time that they appear in the text, with each abbreviated form in parenthesis. Include the common name or scientific name, or both, of animal and plant materials.

Footnotes. Current addresses of authors if different from heading.

2. **Text.** Regular Papers should be prepared with the headings **Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusions** in this order. Short Communications should be prepared according to "8. *Short Communications*." below.
3. **Tables.** All tables should be prepared in a form consistent with recent issues of *Pertanika* and should be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. Explanatory material should be given in the table legends and footnotes. Each table should be prepared on a separate page. (Note that when a manuscript is accepted for publication, tables must be submitted as data - .doc,

.rtf, Excel or PowerPoint file- because tables submitted as image data cannot be edited for publication.)

4. **Equations and Formulae.** These must be set up clearly and should be typed triple spaced. Numbers identifying equations should be in square brackets and placed on the right margin of the text.
5. **Figures & Photographs.** Submit an original figure or photograph. Line drawings must be clear, with high black and white contrast. Each figure or photograph should be prepared on a separate sheet and numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. Appropriate sized numbers, letters and symbols should be used, no smaller than 2 mm in size after reduction to single column width (85 mm), 1.5-column width (120 mm) or full 2-column width (175 mm). Failure to comply with these specifications will require new figures and delay in publication. For electronic figures, create your figures using applications that are capable of preparing high resolution TIFF files acceptable for publication. In general, we require **300 dpi or higher resolution for coloured and half-tone artwork** and **1200 dpi or higher for line drawings**. For review, you may attach low-resolution figures, which are still clear enough for reviewing, to keep the file of the manuscript under 5 MB. Illustrations may be produced at extra cost in colour at the discretion of the Publisher; the author could be charged Malaysian Ringgit 50 for each colour page.
6. **References.** Literature citations in the text should be made by name(s) of author(s) and year. For references with more than two authors, the name of the first author followed by 'et al.' should be used.
Swan and Kanwal (2007) reported that ...
The results have been interpreted (Kanwal et al. 2009).
 - References should be listed in alphabetical order, by the authors' last names. For the same author, or for the same set of authors, references should be arranged chronologically. If there is more than one publication in the same year for the same author(s), the letters 'a', 'b', etc., should be added to the year.
 - When the authors are more than 11, list 5 authors and then et al.
 - Do not use indentations in typing References. Use one line of space to separate each reference. For example:
 - Mellers, B. A. (2006a). Choice and the relative pleasure of consequences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 910-924.
 - Mellers, B. A. (2006b). Treatment for sexually abused children and adolescents. *American Psychologist*, 55, 1040-1049.
 - Hawe, P. (2005). Capturing the meaning of "community" in community intervention evaluation: Some contributions from community psychology. *Health Promotion International*, 9, 199-210.
 - Braconier, H. and Ekholm, K. (2006). Swedish multinationals and competition from high and low wage location. *Review of International Economics*, 8, 448-461.
 - In case of citing an author(s) who has published more than one paper in the same year, the papers should be distinguished by addition of a small letter as shown above, e.g. Mellers (2006a); Mellers (2006b).
 - Unpublished data and personal communications should not be cited as literature citations, but given in the text in parentheses. 'In press' articles that have been accepted for publication may be cited in References. Include in the citation the journal in which the 'in press' article will appear and the publication date, if a date is available.
7. **Examples of other reference citations:**
Monographs: Kalimapour, Y.R. (2004). *Images of the U.S. Around the World: A Multicultural Perspective*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
Chapter in Book: Bjork, R. A. (2007). Retrieval inhibition as an adaptive mechanism in human memory. In H. L. Roediger III & F. I. M. Craik (Eds.), *Varieties of memory & consciousness* (pp. 309-330). Hull: Hull University Press.

- **Proceedings:** Amir Awang. (2006). Counseling, human resources development and counseling services. In Sulaiman M. Yassin, Yahya Mat Hassan, Kamariah Abu Bakar, Esah Munji and Sabariah Mohd. Rashid (Eds.), *Proceedings of Asia Pacific Conference on Human Development* (p. 243-246). Serdang: Universiti Putra Malaysia.
8. **Short Communications** should include **Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusions** in this order. Headings should only be inserted for Materials and Methods. The abstract should be up to 100 words, as stated above. Short Communications must be 5 printed pages or less, including all references, figures and tables. References should be less than 30. A 5 page paper is usually approximately 3000 words plus four figures or tables (if each figure or table is less than 1/4 page).

*Authors should state the total number of words (including the Abstract) in the cover letter. Manuscripts that do not fulfill these criteria will be rejected as Short Communications without review.

STYLE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Manuscripts should follow the style of the latest version of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). The journal uses British spelling and authors should therefore follow the latest edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.

SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

All articles submitted to the journal **must comply** with these instructions. Failure to do so will result in return of the manuscript and possible delay in publication.

The **four copies** of your original manuscript, four sets of photographic figures, as well as a CD with the **electronic copy in MS Word** (including text and figures) together with a **cover letter, declaration form, referral form A, scope form** need to be enclosed. They are available from the Pertanika's home page at <http://rmc.upm.edu.my/pertanika> or from the Executive Editor's office upon request.

Please do **not** submit manuscripts directly to the editor-in-chief or to the UPM Press. All manuscripts must be **submitted through the executive editor's office** to be properly acknowledged and rapidly processed:

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fax: + 603 8947 2075

Authors should retain copies of submitted manuscripts and correspondence, as materials can not be returned.

Cover letter

All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter detailing what you are submitting. Papers are accepted for publication in the journal on the understanding that the article is original and the content has not been published or submitted for publication elsewhere. This must be stated in the cover letter.

The cover letter must also contain an acknowledgement that all authors have contributed significantly, and that all authors are in agreement with the content of the manuscript.

The cover letter of the paper should contain (i) the title; (ii) the full names of the authors; (iii) the addresses of the institutions at which the work was carried out together with (iv) the full postal and email address, plus facsimile and telephone numbers of the author to whom correspondence about the manuscript should be sent. The present address of any author, if different from that where the work was carried out, should be supplied in a footnote.

As articles are double-blind reviewed, material that might identify authorship of the paper should be placed on a cover sheet.

Note When your manuscript is received at Pertanika, it is considered to be in its final form. Therefore, you need to check your manuscript carefully before submitting it to the executive editor (see also **English language editing** below).

Electronic copy

Preparation of manuscripts on a CD or DVD is preferable and articles should be prepared using MS Word. File name(s), the title of your article and authors of the article must be indicated on the CD. The CD must always be accompanied by four hard-copies of the article, and the content of the two must be identical. The CD text must be the same as that of the final refereed, revised manuscript. CDs formatted for IBM PC compatibles are preferred, as those formatted for Apple Macintosh are not acceptable. Please do not send ASCII files, as relevant data may be lost. Leave a blank line between each paragraph and between each entry in the list of bibliographic references. Tables should be placed in the same electronic file as the text. Authors should consult a recent issue of the Journal for table layout.

Peer review

In the peer-review process, three referees independently evaluate the scientific quality of the submitted manuscripts. The Journal uses a double-blind peer-review system. Authors are encouraged to indicate in **referral form A** the names of three potential reviewers, but the editors will make the final choice. The editors are not, however, bound by these suggestions.

Manuscripts should be written so that they are intelligible to the professional reader who is not a specialist in the particular field. They should be written in a clear, concise, direct style. Where contributions are judged as acceptable for publication on the basis of content, the Editor or the Publisher reserves the right to modify the typescripts to eliminate ambiguity and repetition and improve communication between author and reader. If extensive alterations are required, the manuscript will be returned to the author for revision.

The editorial review process

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

1. The executive editor and the editorial board examine the paper to determine whether it is appropriate for the journal and should be reviewed. If not appropriate, the manuscript is rejected outright and the author is informed.
2. The executive editor sends the article-identifying information having been removed, to three reviewers. Typically, one of these is from the Journal's editorial board. Others are specialists in the subject matter represented by the article. The executive editor asks them to complete the review in three weeks and encloses two forms: (a) referral form B and (b) reviewer's comment form along with reviewer's guidelines. Comments to authors are about the appropriateness and adequacy of the theoretical or conceptual framework, literature review, method, results and discussion, and conclusions. Reviewers often include suggestions for strengthening of the manuscript. Comments to the editor are in the nature of the significance of the work and its potential contribution to the literature.
3. The executive editor, in consultation with the editor-in-chief, examines the reviews and decides whether to reject the manuscript, invite the author(s) to revise and resubmit the manuscript, or seek additional reviews. Final acceptance or rejection rests with the Editorial Board, who reserves the right to refuse any material for publication. In rare instances, the manuscript

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is Indexed in
Scopus &
EBSCO**

Pertanika is an international peer-reviewed leading journal in Malaysia which began publication in 1978. The journal publishes in three different areas — Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science (JTAS); Journal of Science and Technology (JST); and Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (JSSH).

JTAS is devoted to the publication of original papers that serves as a forum for practical approaches to improving quality in issues pertaining to tropical agricultural research or related fields of study. It is published twice a year in **February** and **August**.

JST caters for science and engineering research or related fields of study. It is published twice a year in **January** and **July**.

JSSH deals in research or theories in social sciences and humanities research with a focus on emerging issues pertaining to the social and behavioural sciences as well as the humanities, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. It is published twice a year in **March** and **September**.

Call for Papers

Pertanika invites you to explore frontiers from all fields of science and technology to social sciences and humanities. You may contribute your scientific work for publishing in UPM's hallmark journals either as a **regular article**, **short communications**, or a **review article** in our forthcoming issues. Papers submitted to this journal must contain original results and must not be submitted elsewhere while being evaluated for the Pertanika Journals.

Submissions in English should be accompanied by an abstract not exceeding 300 words. Your manuscript should be no more than 6,000 words or 10-12 printed pages, including notes and abstract. Submissions should conform to the Pertanika style, which is available at www.rmc.upm.edu.my/pertanika or by mail or email upon request.

Papers should be double-spaced 12 point type (Times New Roman fonts preferred). The first page should include the title of the article but no author information. Page 2 should repeat the title of the article together with the names and contact information of the corresponding author as well as all the other authors. Page 3 should contain the abstract only. Page 4 and subsequent pages to have the text - Acknowledgments - References - Tables - Legends to figures - Figures, etc.

Questions regarding submissions should only be directed to the Executive Editor, Pertanika Journals.

Remember, *Pertanika is the resource to support you in strengthening research and research management capacity.*



Why should you publish in Pertanika Journals?

Benefits to Authors

PROFILE: our journals are circulated in large numbers all over Malaysia, and beyond, in Southeast Asia. Recently, we have widened our circulation to other overseas countries as well. We will ensure that your work reaches the widest possible audience in print and online, through our wide publicity campaigns held frequently, and through our constantly developing electronic initiatives through e-pertanika and Pertanika Online.

QUALITY: Our double-blind peer refereeing procedures are fair and open, and we aim to help authors develop and improve their work. Pertanika JTAS is now over 30 years old; this accumulated knowledge has resulted in Pertanika JTAS being indexed by Scopus (Elsevier).

AUTHOR SERVICES: we provide a rapid response service to all our authors, with dedicated support staff for each journal, and a point of contact throughout the refereeing and production processes. Our aim is to ensure that the production process is as smooth as possible, is borne out by the high number of authors who publish with us again and again.

LAG TIME & REJECTION RATE: the elapsed time from submission to publication for the articles in Pertanika averages 6-8 months. A decision of acceptance of a manuscript is reached in 1 to 3 months (average 7 weeks).

Our journals have a 30% rejection rate of its submitted manuscripts, many of the papers fail on account of their substandard presentation and language (frustrating the peer reviewers).



Mail your submissions to:

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