

## **PREDICTING MALAYSIAN TEACHERS' INTENTION TO APPLY FOR PROMOTION**

Mohamad Ibrani Shahrinin Adam Assim, Department of Social Science, Faculty of  
Social Science and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Bintulu Campus, Sarawak  
Salina Janis, SMK Baru, Bintulu, Sarawak

Aminah Ahmad, Institute of Social Science Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
Serdang, Selangor

ibrani@upm.edu.my

### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the predictors of behavior intention in career advancement, specifically the intention of applying for the 'Excellent Teacher' promotion award among teachers. Gender and self-efficacy of applicants are found to be related to intention to apply for promotion. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) we examined the relationship between the predictor variables and intention to apply for promotion, with further exploration by including self-efficacy in applying for promotion and belief towards performance appraisal system for promotion. A total of 500 teachers consisting of male (226) and female (274) teachers who are qualified to apply for promotion participated in this study. This study also aimed to determine whether gender moderates the relationship between the predictor variables and intention to apply for promotion. Expectation of others towards qualifying candidates' applying for promotion (EOQCAP) and belief towards a performance appraisal system (BPASPA) were significantly related to intention to apply for promotion. Attitude towards applying for promotion (AAP) and self-efficacy in applying for promotion (SEAP) were not significantly related. Using structural equation modeling, this study compared results between gender and concluded that not all relationships were moderated by gender. This study further explored the use of TPB by including CDSME and BTP to understand teacher intention to apply for promotion. We concluded that subjective norms and gender play vital roles in predicting teachers' intention to apply for promotion.

*Key terms: Intention, promotion, career advancement, Theory of Planned Behavior, gender*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Approximately seven years ago, Malaysian teachers were introduced to the 'Excellence Teacher' (ET) promotion award, an alternative promotion path besides promotion to management positions which are limited. The ET Award serves as a mean of motivating Malaysian teachers towards enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes. By the year of 2006, the quota for ET positions are 12,556, and this quota had increased to 19,411, as reported by the Promotion Board of Education on the 4th of May 2015 (MOE, 2015).

Studies on the ET award is still new in Malaysia is still a fairly new phenomenon. Apart from being a contested confidentiality and highly undisclosed matter, any study

on ET may pose a viably significant contribution towards the corpus of knowledge in career advancement within the Malaysian education system.

This study investigated predictors of teacher's intention to apply for promotion, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as its theoretical foundation. This theory has been used extensively by numerous researchers in various fields, particularly on the most frequently hypothesized phenomenon of how it may predict which in turn may predict behavior. When an individual behavior intention is high, the individual will be likely to perform the behavior with positive attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control.

The theory of planned behavior postulates that behavior can be predicted by attitude toward behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. One of the most cited studies by Giles and Lamour (2000), include three predictors of intention to apply for promotion. The three predictors are attitude to apply for promotion, subjective norm and self -efficacy. According to the authors, the predictor self-efficacy represents the perceived behavior control variable that refers to one's perceptions of his or her self-efficacy, specifically on whether it may facilitate or hinder intention to apply for promotion (Giles & Lamour, 2000). The scarcity of inclusion of this intrinsic factor has been widely acknowledged (Oplata & Tamir, 2009, Giles & Lamour, 2000). Therefore, the current study attempts to adapt Oplata and Tamir's work by adding another variable intrinsic individual factor, self-efficacy and another variable the extrinsic factor (controllability), belief towards a performance appraisal system for promotion application.

One of the most cited study by Khattab and Leroy (2016), indicate that a group will be positively assessed when it considers a gender wise approach. This is in line with Eagly and Diekmann's (2005) notion that a group will be positively assessed when its characteristics are recognized as aligning with that group's typical social roles. The teaching profession is known to be dominated by women and the profession is commonly associated with women described as facilitating care giving role (Evan and Diekmann, 2009).

The role congruity theory stipulates that gender affects how work behaviors and work results are perceived, interpreted and evaluated (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Huttges and Fay, 2015). Diekmann and Evans (2009), states that through the perspective of role congruity, men are labeled with agentic characteristic (strives for power, achievement, and producing outcomes) while women with communal characteristics (for instance on intimacy, affiliation, and altruism). Huttges and Fay (2015) found that women were unable to give the commitment in terms of time and energy toward career advancement. This study indicates that lack of childcare support is an example of a structural barrier, while the appraisal process is a common example of psychological processes.

However, within the context of the current study, literature indicates that men consistently attribute more importance than women do to power, achievement, and self-direction values (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Based on previous studies, while most of the teaching posts in primary schools were occupied by female teachers compared to those in secondary schools, interestingly, male teachers were more likely to get promotion (Draper & McMichael, 2000; Thornton & Bricheno, 2000; Wong & Wong, 2015). Traditionally, it is argued that female – dominated professions were often said to be limited in numbers and low salaried with less opportunity for promotion or a higher status, compared to male – dominated professions (Cassie & Chen, 2012). Therefore, in line with this characteristic, this study attempts to investigate the

teacher's intention to apply for promotion and factors that predicted this career advancement behavior intention, and the role of gender in this prediction.

Opltaka and Tamir (2009) have opined that female teachers are less interested in moving upward in the school hierarchy of career advancement. They noted that the main reasons for not applying for promotion varies. The feeling of overwhelm, stressful and health threatening have been previously reported as pertinent causes of anxieties (Opltaka & Tamir, 2009). In contrary to this notion, interestingly, it is noted in Malaysia that promotion in the teaching sector was not limited to moving upward within the school hierarchy of career advancement. Teachers have the opportunity to attain promotion by applying for the Excellent Teacher position that did not require them to involve directly within the administrative tasks of being part of the school management. Hoque, Abdul Razak and Zohara (2012), from their interviews with excellent teachers and those who are eligible to apply for excellent teacher (ET) positions, believed that there are a few factors that hinder the intention of teachers who are qualified to apply for the post of excellent teachers. Firstly, it is due to the fact that excellent teachers cannot return to the previous post as regular teachers. Secondly, because of relocation factor that demands them to move according to the needs of the education ministry. However, these factors have not been empirically studied.

Nonetheless, opportunities for promotion that are offered by the Ministry of Education should motivate teachers to serve with higher levels of excellence. Those who are promoted will not only be given salary increment, but no longer be involved in administrative duties. However, if the promotion will cause an increase in terms of job responsibilities and work load without benefits, this will be one of the factors impacting teachers' interest in applying for promotion (Amzat and Salim Al-Hadhrani, 2011).

#### *Predictors of Intention to Apply for Promotion*

Many studies have applied the theory of planned behavior in predicting behavioral intention and thus predict actual behavior. Theory of planned behavior is an extension of the theory of reasoned action with the efforts made by Ajzen (1991; 1975) in the process of improving the prediction of behavior and behavioral intentions. In efforts to further improve the theory of reasoned action by Ajzen (1975), perceived behavior control was added to the theory of planned behavior, with the intention to assess personnel deficiencies and external obstruction (Giles & Larmour, 2000).

#### **Attitude towards applying for promotion**

Attitude towards applying for promotion in the study of career development of women by Giles and Lamour (2000), identified six consequences in applying for promotion that enhanced job satisfaction, increased salary, enhanced job security, extra responsibility and increased personal stress or pressure. From the study, they found that employees had positive attitude towards applying for promotion, but it is unlikely that they intend to apply for promotion although given the opportunity. In this current study, based on the theory of planned behavior, it is expected that teachers with positive attitude towards applying for promotion will have the intention to apply for promotion. Accordingly, we hypothesized:

H1: Attitude towards applying for promotion has a positive association with intention to apply for promotion.

### **Expectation of others towards qualified candidates applying for promotion**

Subjective norm refers to the social environment pressure that could influence the behavior of an individual (Ajzen, 2011). In this study, the variable of expectation of others towards qualified candidates applying for promotion represents the subjective norm in the study framework. These expectations from others (supervisor, colleagues, close friends and family) influence their intention to apply for promotion. Therefore, the current study hypothesized the following:

H2: Expectation of others towards qualified candidates applying for promotion has a positive association with intention to apply for promotion.

### **Perceived behavior control**

Ajzen (1991) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) had consistently indicated that social psychological theories of attitudes, intentions, and their relations to behavior, such as the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior, are based in part in expectancy and value constructs (Rose & Sherman, 2007; Higgins, 2007). Thus, the current study adopts partly Atkinson's (1964) theory of achievement motivation within the conceptualizations of the perceived behavioral control instrumentations. Schreurs, Derous, Hooft, Proost, and Witte (2009) had emphasized the application of controllability as one of the two distinct constructs in which perceived behavioral control was pertinent in representing the interactions between environmental factors and external resources.

#### *Belief towards performance appraisal system (PAS) for promotion application*

Much research has been conducted to highlight the importance of justice and procedural fairness of a performance appraisal system (Giles, Findley & Field, 1997). Moreover, Tan and Lau (2012) argued that the positive belief towards a performance appraisal system may affect intention to apply for promotion. Thus, based on these premise, the current study attempts to examine the following hypotheses:

H3: Belief towards a performance appraisal system for promotion application has a positive association with intention to apply for promotion.

#### *Self-efficacy in Applying for Promotion*

Ajzen (1991) emphasized on perceived behavioral control as more compatible to self-efficacy, in line with Bandura's (1977, 1987) perspective. Motives of individual behavior can be influenced by self-efficacy, as well as the impact on the development and subsequent patterns of thought and emotional reaction. The constructs of self-efficacy belief or perceived behavior control in theory of planned behavior were described within the general framework of the relationships between beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behavior. In the study of extended theory of planned behavior in testing psychological variables mediate sex differences in alcohol consumption by Zimmermann and Sieverdeng (2011), self-efficacy was applied as one of the variable as the concept of perceived behavioral control, in relation to Bandura's (1977) self-concept. Schreurs et al (2009), emphasized that controllability reflects individual perceived control towards external resources while self-efficacy individual perceived control over internal resources. To be more precise in predicting intention behavior within career development field, study by Sandler (2000) incorporating the construct of career decision making self-efficacy in the theory of planned behavior. Thus, in this current study expected positive relationship of the construct of self-efficacy in applying

for promotion towards intention to apply for promotion among teachers especially. Accordingly, we hypothesized:

H4: Self-efficacy in applying for promotion has a positive association with the intention to apply for promotion.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Design of the Study*

This study employed the survey method by using a self-administered questionnaire. The questions were first developed in English and translated to Malay and then back translated. The questions were in both the Malay and English languages.

### *Participants*

Participants of the survey conducted in the current study consisted teachers who are qualified to apply for the excellent teacher (ET) position, as per determined by the requirement set by the Malaysian Education Board of Inspectorate. To reduce bias in the sample population an attempt was made to utilize teachers from both genders who teach different areas of subjects and with different educational background, experiences in applying for promotion and total years of work experience in their current school. Participants were randomly identified from 15 locations that consists both male and female teachers in the respective schools in the states of Melaka (Alor Gajah), Perak (Taiping, Larut and Selama), Selangor (Klang, Puchong, Puchong Perdana), Sabah (areas of Kota Kinabalu city, Inanam, Likas), Sarawak (areas of the North Kuching city, Bachok, and Pasir Mas).

### *Sampling Procedures*

The present study utilized the cluster sampling method where the total population is divided into mutually exclusive subgroups or clusters, a sample of the clusters is selected and all elements within a selected cluster are measured. Based on Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, (2009), heterogeneous characteristics of a study population should be emphasized as much as the heterogeneities of geographical or physical units of population counties, states, districts, blocks or buildings. Hence, this study divided the teachers into separate clusters according to teachers in the respective areas and states and then randomly selected sample from the population.

### **Sample Size, Power, and Precision**

The sample size of the present study was calculated using Cochran's sample size formula. The population of sampled teachers were totalled **10809**, who were grouped within the framework of databases of qualified excellent teacher candidates, gathered and documented by the Ministry of Education (as in January 2013 via the Department of Curriculum Development) in the all pre-determined locations from five states (Melaka, Perak, Kelantan, Selangor, Sabah and Sarawak) results in a minimum required return sample size of 371. With 75% of the anticipated response rate, sampling procedures were calculated and yielded a number of 495 teachers. Kline (2011), recommended a minimum sample size of 200 or 100 cases per group for multigroup modelling. A total of 500 teachers participated in the study is sufficient for SEM analysis.

The second stage of cluster sampling among the 15 locations using simple random sampling. Five areas were selected with a total of 500 teachers in the areas of Taiping, Klang, Kota Kinabalu, Alor Gajah, and Bachok.

The third stage of cluster sampling is proportionate stratified sampling which provides equal or better precision of sample size, in which are homogeneous and it guards against an “unrepresentative” sample (Jackson, 2011). Using stratified sampling 226 males and 274 female teachers was selected from fifteen schools in five areas, each having three sampled schools.

### FINDINGS

Table 1 presents the personal background of the 500 respondents who participated in this study. The mean age of the respondents was 42.20 years. The youngest was 27 and the oldest 54. As depicted in Table 1, for the age group of 30 to 39 years old and 50 years and above, the proportions for both were above one-third. The proportion of male and female teachers was close to equal, with 52.8% female and 45.2% male.

Personal Characteristics Category	Frequency	%	M	SD	Min	Max
Age (years)						
20-39	65	12.9	41.80	9.56	27	54
30-39	182	36.5				
40-49	94	18.8				
50 and above	159	31.8				
Gender						
Male	226	45.2				
Female	274	52.8				

Table 1: Sample Composition by Personal Characteristics (n=500)

#### *Measures and Covariates*

Construction of items in the questionnaire was mainly based on the study by Giles and Lamour (2000), Giles, Findley, & Field, (1997) and Taylor and Betz (1983). To assess the moderating role of gender, 0 was assigned to a male and 1 to females. Personal characteristics examined included age, ethnicity, marital status, religious and education level.

#### *Intention to Apply for Promotion (IAP)*

3 items were developed to measure the intention to apply for promotion based on the theory of planned behavior constructing questionnaire manual by Francis et al (2004). A sample item is “I intend to apply for promotion when the next opportunity becomes available”.

#### *Attitude towards Applying for Promotion (AAP)*

Item development for attitude towards applying for promotion is based on Giles and Lamour (2000) study and the theory of planned behavior constructing questionnaire manual by Francis et al (2004). The measurement consists of 6 items with a Likert-type scale. The subscales include enhanced job satisfaction, increased salary, enhanced job security, extra responsibility and increased personal stress or pressure. A sample item is "Applying for promotion when the next opportunity becomes available, would increase my salary".

#### *Expectation of Others towards Qualified Candidates' Applying for Promotion (EOQCAP)*

Four items were developed based on the study of Giles and Lamour (2000) that include the expectation from supervisor, colleagues, close friends and family. A sample item is "Generally speaking, I want to do what my supervisors think I should do"

#### *Self-Efficacy in Applying for Promotion (SEAP)*

To measure self-efficacy, this study employed career decision making, self-efficacy, short form version by Taylor and Betz (1983), that consists of 25 items. The variable includes five dimensions 1) self-appraisal, 2) occupational information gathering, 3) goal selection, 4) future planning and, 5) problem solving. A Sample item is "Make a plan of your goal for the next five years". A seven-point scale ranging from no confidence to complete confidence was used in the study to measure each of the categories. However, since the study were more related in career development, specifically promotion, some items were found unsuitable. A total of 14 items was used in the study and modified to suit for teachers to answer the questions.

#### *Belief towards Performance Appraisal System (PAS) for Promotion Application (BPASPA)*

For the construct of belief *towards the performance appraisal system*, this study had adapted the pre-developed questions from the study by Giles et al (1997). The system consists of five categories that are: 1) system commitment, 2) system openness, 3) system complexity, 4) system formality, and 5) multiple input. A sample item is "Excellent teacher candidate has the right to challenge their performance evaluation when they feel the rating is inaccurate". All items were measured using seven-point scale ranging from disagree to most agree. The items were modified to suit the study context.

#### Test of the Measurement Model

The purpose of the measurement model test is to examine the measurement properties of the variables under study. The study conducted this test for group and multigroup modeling for males and females.

All items had acceptable factor loadings ranging from .62 to .98 (preferably a minimum of .70 by Hair et al. 2008). The composite reliabilities of the constructs were: .90 (AAP), .95 (EOQCAP), .82 (SEAP), .81 (BPASPA) and .88 (IAP)

#### *Goodness-of-fit*

Hair et al. (2008) recommended a value greater than or equal to .90 for the fit indicators as a guide to acceptance of good fit to a model. The proposed model had an acceptable value for the fit indicators NFI (.93); RFI (.91), IFI (.94), TLI (.93) and

CFI (.94) with  $\chi^2$  value of 599.15,  $\chi^2/df$  5.5, and hence the model fit the data well. RMSEA values for this model is .10 that indicates mediocre fit as suggested by Ho (2006).

*Structural Model*

Hypotheses				Estimate	$\rho$	$\beta$	Decision
H1	IAP	<---	AAP	.299	.411	.257	Not Supported
H2	IAP	<---	EOQCAP	.685	.040	.589	Supported
H3	IAP	<---	BPASPA	.010	.036	.008	Supported
H4	IAP	<---	SEAP	.191	.122	.164	Not Supported

Table 2: Regression Weight, Standardized Regression Weights, and Squared Multiple Correlation

Table 2 shows that among all four paths that link Intention to IAP, only EOQCAP and BPASPA have significant association towards IAP. The positive direction indicates that the higher EOQCAP, the higher the intention among teachers to apply for Promotion ( $\beta = .589$ ). BPASPA were found had a small significant with IAP ( $\beta = .008$ ). Nonetheless, the other two variables; AAP ( $\beta = .257$ ), SEAP ( $\beta = .164$ ), were not significantly related to teachers' intention to apply for promotion. However, based on the results of the squared multiple correlation, the predictors of AAP, EOQCAP, SEAP and BPASPA accounted for 88.4% of the variances in IAP. Thus, this indicates that only 11.6% of the variance in IAP are unexplained.

**DISCUSSION**

The Theory of Planned Behavior has been applied widely in the previous career development research. The theory has been shown to be successful in predicting intention. Theory of Planned Behavior is a framework that enables us to interpret the actions of individuals by identifying, measuring beliefs associated with individuals and groups. It also allows us to understand the reasons behind cause of the behavior of interest (Glanz, Rimer and Viswanath, 2008). Glanz, Rimer and Viswanath (2008) argued that only a few studies applied perceived control by measuring more specific constraint or facilitator of control belief. This is because most of the research applied direct measures of perceived control.

*Belief towards Performance Appraisal System for Promotion Application does have important implication in predicting Intention to Apply for Promotion*

As per requirement in getting promotion for teachers in Malaysia, performance appraisal system has been used in the process of evaluation for the Excellent Teachers candidate. This study determines to investigate whether belief towards a performance appraisal system can act as the specific facilitators of control belief in the Theory of Planned Behavior to predict intention to apply for promotion among Malaysian teachers.



The moderate relationship between BPASPA and IAP indicates that teachers BPASPA used in the evaluation for the promotion application do influence the intention of Malaysian teachers to apply for promotion (e.g.: the excellent teachers post). The positive direction of relationship indicates that the intention to apply for promotion might increase when their belief towards a performance appraisal system increase. This indicates that the teachers' belief towards a performance appraisal system can be one of the factors that contribute in motivate most of the qualified teachers for the post of excellent teachers to apply for the position.

Hoque, Razak and Zohora (2012), based on their interviewed information a few factors were found demotivate qualified teachers for the post of Excellent Teachers that are: 1) the Excellent Teachers were not allowed to return as regular teacher 2) they can be transferred as per requirement from the Ministry of Education. These two factors were found by interviewing regular teachers, however, there were no further research were done to show the significance of the relationship towards the behavior. In this study, however by including BPASPA as one of the predictor of intention to apply for promotion, it has been shown that BPASPA is one of the contributors in predicting intention to apply for promotion among teachers in Malaysia generally.

#### *Self-efficacy in Applying for Promotion towards intention to apply for promotion*

A previous study has recognized self-efficacy as one of the reliable predictors of intention to apply for promotion. The finding from research by Giles and Lamour (2000), which they prove that self-efficacy had a great association towards intention to apply for promotion. It is also known that self-efficacy is related in individual belief of their own capabilities in performing certain task in this case involving career development (Betz & Luzzo, 1996). However, in this study the construct of self-efficacy in applying for promotion that represent the self-efficacy belief indicate a nonsignificant association to intention to apply for promotion. The result of this research could not support the finding of previous research in terms of self-efficacy belief.

#### *Teachers' perception of significant others pertaining their career development*

Living in a society make an individual more aware of others concerning their behavior in the society. In this study, subjective norm component is referred to teacher's perception about significant others opinion about the teacher's career development prospect. So EOQCAP was shown as a predictor that has a great impact IAP. Male teachers were found slightly higher association compared to female teachers. This situation indicates that the teacher's intention to apply for promotion will be motivated when there are positive encouragement or suggestion that the teachers get from their superior, colleagues and family. The result is in line with the Role Congruity Theory that suggested male are more likely to be preferred in career progress or career advancement. Promotion was not the priority, but mostly to fulfill the society and environmental factor requirement. With high relationship between EOQCAP and IAP, EOQCAP was found as the important role among other variables in the prediction of teacher's intention to apply for promotion. This finding shows how society and our working environment and family give a great impact towards individual performance or behavior. Individuals will behave in congruence to what the society expects us to behave. Thus, as the conclusion from this finding, it is believed that the intention to apply for promotion will increase if the expectation of others towards qualified candidates applying for promotion also increase. Teachers will apply for promotion

when significant others support and suggest them to apply for promotion and this will give them motivation to apply for promotion.

*There were slightly different between male and female in predicting Malaysian teacher's intention to apply for promotion*

The present finding has provided a strong support that gender moderates the relationships between self-efficacy decision making and intention to apply for promotion. Although there was a significant difference in the regression weight between male and female. Usually compare for male and female, male was the concern of significant others or the society's perception towards their career achievement. Evans and Diekman (2009), career for man are perceived as facilitating improvement in their status goals. In other words, promotion can be some sort of positive achievement and will contribute to enhancing the male teacher status in society. Through the finding of the study, males were found to be more concerned about the society's perception of career development. Both males and females indicated a slightly different in IAP. This study found that AAP has a nonsignificant correlation with IAP, as the male and female teachers were not influenced by the possible consequences in applying for promotion. The results for BPASPA also differ between female teachers and male teachers. The female was more affected to apply for promotion compared to the male teachers. Their belief in BPASPA is positively affecting their intention to apply for promotion. In the evaluation process for promotion, the teachers might not feel familiar with the system because of the confidentiality of the instrument used in assessing the candidate for promotion. Less information provided in the process of promotion evaluation might be one of the reasons hindering teacher's intention to apply for promotion. However, when the teachers are more familiar to the appraisal system, it will eventually motivate them to apply for promotion. It can be concluded that the increase of belief towards a performance appraisal system for the promotion application might eventually motivate and increase both female and male teacher's intention to apply for promotion when the opportunity arises.

*The theory of planned behavior is applicable in predicting the intention to apply for promotion among teachers in Malaysia*

This study has adapted the Theory of Planned Behavior and a few variables chosen based on the basic guideline of the theory. The independent variables were attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. For attitude variable, this study was represented by the attitude towards applying for promotion (AAP), subjective norm was represented by expectation of others towards qualified candidates in applying for promotion (EOQCAP), perceived behavioral control was represented by self-efficacy in applying for promotion (SEAP) and belief towards a performance appraisal system in a promotion application (BPASPA). SEAP was selected to assess the intrinsic value of the individual meanwhile BPASPA was to evaluate the external value of the individual as a performance appraisal system is used in the process of evaluation of promotion application. SEAP in the theory of planned behavior was not a new predictor of intention. SEAP as a variable is based on the self-efficacy belief and application of the original root of perceived behavioral control which was proposed initially as self-efficacy by Bandura (1986). However, this study included belief towards a performance appraisal system for promotion application as an external factor that might contribute in influencing a teacher intention towards promotion. Nonetheless, a body of literature indicates that performance appraisal system is not a

new phenomenon to study. There exists a growing corpus of knowledge in career development, focusing on performance appraisal system. However, the current study attempts to include performance appraisal system as one of the predictors within the framework of the theory of planned behavior.

Thus, the findings of the current study indicate that the framework of the theory of planned behavior is applicable in predicting intention to apply for promotion. With the combination of structural equation modeling, this study had able to compare the result between gender. Notwithstanding, due to only two variables that showed significant differences between gender, the authors concluded that the gender variable had slightly moderate the relationship between independent and dependent variables under study.

### **Implication of the Study**

Based from the findings of the study, two predictors that were EOQCAP and BPASPA had a significant relationship with the dependent variable IAP. This study concludes that both of the predictors are important in its relationship with the variable of intention to apply for promotion. With these highly plausible findings, BPASPA variables is considered as a compatible and in congruence with the perceived behavioural control variable as per modelled within the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen (1991). This also highlighted the notion that the Theory of Planned Behaviour is a theory and can be applied in career development research. The researcher could investigate further with a more specific problem or current concern in their field of study by applying the Theory of Planned Behavior. Nonetheless, as per highlighted on the major findings of the study, gender was revealed as a moderator between a relationship of independent and dependent variable of the study. For female and male teachers, EOQCAP and BPASPA were found to be the predicting variables pertaining the relationship between EOQCAP and BPASPA. While for male teachers, EOQCAP has the most affect towards intention to apply for promotion compare to others predictor. This finding indicates that the theory of planned behaviour is reliable to investigate the moderating effect of the study. Furthermore, data analysis by using multiple group analysis in SEM makes it possible to compare the relationship of predictors and intention to apply for promotion between the male and female teachers.

### **CONCLUSION**

Over the past years, the Ministry of Education has sought to elevate the teaching profession in Malaysia. Teachers had the option to apply for promotion within five years serving in their initial salary grade. Consequently, this option will eventually offer the teachers to shortened the years to qualify for promotion from eight years with a minimum of five years. Hence, as a direct impact to these current practices of promotion procedures, teachers could apply for the position of Excellent Teachers and other positions offered by the ministry. In line with this current change in the human resource development of the teaching sector, this study had attempted to examine the relationship between potential predictors and the intention to apply for promotion among teachers in Malaysia. The current study had also explored the moderating effect of gender on the predictor-intention linkage. From this study, teachers were found to be primarily influenced by two predictors, which are expectation of others towards applying for promotion, and belief towards applying for promotion. The finding of this study suggests that teachers may benefit from the effort of Malaysia's

government initiatives in enhancing career advancements via the Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, this study also determined that teachers should be more diligent in information seeking particularly for their opportunities in career development. A large body of literature consistently suggests that positive career development and success in career advancement does have their implications of creating satisfaction in performing tasks, and therefore, will eventually contribute to the teaching profession, as a whole. This study also indicates that teachers should realize that promotion opportunity was mainly, and constantly viewed as channelled for the teachers own benefit. Teachers are directly implicated as to not rely totally only by others' opinion, particularly on their capabilities, and specifically on the qualification to apply for their own promotion.

Ministry of Education in Malaysia had introduced Excellent Teachers (ET) position to create opportunities for teachers to get promoted without having to get them involved in administrative tasks, as required by previous promotion procedures and practices. Currently, the application for Excellent Teachers candidate will be evaluated and thoroughly assessed by the Ministry of Education's Board of Inspectors and Quality Assurance. Therefore, the current study, proposed that the current performance appraisal system administered by the Ministry of Education, to be systematically reviewed and, to a certain extent, revised indefinitely, particularly within the various processes in awarding promotion for teachers. The most apparent implication of the current study may shed the need to explore the findings in which indicate that female teachers are more motivated to apply for promotion compared to male teachers. Moreover, pertinent findings on the escalating of the teachers' belief towards a viable performance appraisal system such as the complexity of the system, the openness of the system, had suggested that teachers will eventually lead to greater their intention to apply for promotion. Notwithstanding, the main objective in introducing excellent teacher position was to enhance the quality of teaching and learning process, some of the major implications of the current study of the policies involved are beneficial to all teaching sectors, particularly in the Malaysian educational system. Nonetheless, more information is required, particularly regarding the appraisal system. Thus, as suggested by the findings, this may attract and trigger the innate interest among teachers, especially female teachers to apply for their much-qualified promotions. However, interestingly and intricately, gender does play a role in the career development of professionals, particularly males. It is postulated that for male teachers, the increase in their extent of belief towards the performance appraisal system would not be enough to motivate them to apply for promotion. It is further argued that the lack of encouragement from their environmental factors might decrease their chances to apply for their own promotion and career advancement opportunities.

### **Limitation and future studies**

The sample of the study is limited to secondary school teachers who were qualified to apply for an Excellent Teacher position. The criteria required the teacher to attain service confirmation, achieved the required performance level based on the annual performance evaluation report for the last three years (85% score and above in annual performance target), at least five years of teaching, including three years of teaching expert subject. The small sample size of the study may contribute to the strength of a significant relationship from the data. Moreover, the sample of the study may not ensure a representative distribution of the population and the findings of the study might not be generalized towards other profession. Self-reported data by

questionnaires were common method variance that can contain potential sources of bias when the responses were socially desirable. Cross-sectional study is carried out over a short period might significantly limit the ability to infer causality.

It is suggested that, based on the result future study should investigate further the effect of performance appraisal system on intention for promotion or whether it may or may not contribute as a factor in motivating application for a promotion. Future research also needs to explore the possibility of investigating indicators or factors of the performance appraisal system that has a negative or positive relationship towards intention to apply for promotion.

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