



## **UPM-SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 Papers**

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## MESSAGE FROM CHIEF LIBRARIAN



Each year the library plan programs and activities as part of its initiatives to reach out to library clients in order to promote the services provided by the Library. One of such initiatives is the promotion of subscribed online databases, which provide users access to relevant and current information in supporting learning, teaching, research and consultation activities of the University.

UPM-SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 is a collaboration between Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and SAGE. This competition encourages young writers to write academic papers and they are required to refer to online resources provided by SAGE, one of the online database subscribed by PSAS. Five winners were selected and each take home USD 200. It is our hope that those who have participated had enjoyed the competition and at the same time gain awareness of the database services provided by PSAS. Congratulations to all winners.

As a token of appreciation to the writers who participated in this competition, all papers submitted are published in "UPM – SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 Papers". I would like to extend my sincere thanks to those that have participated in the competition and also to the judges for their fair evaluation. I would also like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to the working committee members from PSAS, UPM for their support and commitment in making this program and publication of this book a success. Special thanks to SAGE, for the collaboration and continuous support. I hope there will be more collaboration with SAGE and PSAS in the future.

Amir Hussain Md Ishak  
Chief Librarian  
Perpustakaan Sultan Abdul Samad  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

## PREFACE BY CHIEF EDITOR



UPM-SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 is a collaboration program between Research Support Division, Perpustakaan Sultan Abdul Samad (PSAS), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and SAGE Publications in promoting writing activity among postgraduate students of UPM. Participants must produce writing in the field of social sciences in English according to the format specified and submitted to the Secretariat of the Organizing Committee before December 31, 2015. All twenty one submitted papers were evaluated by judges appointed, that is Dr Noor Azlin Ismail a lecturer from Faculty of Economic and Management, Ms Kamariah Saidin and Mr Nik Khairul Azizi Nik Ibrahim both from UPM Press. Five best papers were selected as winners-and each take home USD200. Prize giving ceremony was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 to acknowledge the contribution and participation of library users in library activities including this writing competition.

The Library then decided to publish all papers sent for this competition. Authors were contacted for their consent and those agreed were asked to amend their papers according to the comments by the judges and also following the format for publishing. Fourteen authors agreed to publish with the Library. Amended papers were again checked and edited to suit the publication format. After months of hard work, finally we managed to compile the papers and published it as a book titled "UPM-SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 Papers". We hope this publication would serve as one of the important guide/information to the readers.

I would like to thank the students who have participated in the writing competition, judges who have given their fair evaluation and also authors who agreed to get their papers published in PSAS publication. Great thanks also for the committee members for their dedication and efforts in making the event and publication of this book a success. Last but not least, thanks to SAGE Publications for the collaboration and continuous effort in supporting our programs.

Salmah Abdullah

Chief Editor

UPM-SAGE Publications Young Writer's Award 2015 Papers

## Compilation of Papers



## THE GLOBAL OBESITY EPIDEMIC: PREVALENCE, PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK FACTORS AND SEQUELA

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### ABSTRACT

Obesity as an alarming public health concern globally where the extensiveness of obesity has escalated since the last three decades and it is the biggest global threat to health. Obesity has been seen as a serious health issue among all and getting to be more predominant with progressing age. Nearly 22 million children under five years of age were overweight across the entire globe. Overweight among children and adolescents also have escalated dramatically since the 1970s. The startling phenomenon is being observed world widely, including in developing countries and regions. The high prevalence of obesity is dangerous as it has been classified as a disease that causes many serious medical implications. Hence, this article will discuss on obesity by focusing on three themes; the prevalence of obesity, psychological risk factors of obesity and the sequela of obesity

Keywords: Global obesity, Overweight, Stress, Well-being, Body mass index.

### INTRODUCTION

Eating is one of life's greatest contentment. It is also often used as a coping mechanism particularly when individual are stressed, frustrated and sad. When individuals feel distressed, they turn to food not to satisfy hunger but for comfort. Such emotional eating is very dangerous as it uses food for gratifications to fill emotional needs rather

than to fill the stomach which later may lead to physical ailments including obesity. Overweight and obesity has turned into a significant wellbeing issue despite there are extensive awareness campaigns to promote physical activity and consume healthy food. World Health Organization (2003) viewed obesity as an alarming public health concern globally where the extensiveness of obesity has escalated since the last three decades and it is the biggest global threat to health. Obesity has been seen as a serious health issue among youth and getting to be more predominant with progressing age.

The high prevalence of obesity are dangerous as it has been classified as a disease that causes many serious medical implications. An estimation of 300 million adults are obese and 750 million are classified as overweight globally (Visscher, Viet, Kroesbergen & Seidell, 2006). The trend is also similar among the children where 30 to 45 million of children are reported to be obese (Lobstein, Baur & Uauy, 2004). However, in 2014, the statistic was reported to be tremendously increased where more than 1.9 billion adults ranged from 18 years and older were categorized as overweight and over 600 million were obese (World Health Organization, 2015).

This epidemic is termed as globesity since it has affected a very large percentage of the global population. The prevalence is on the rise across territories for both developed and developing nations (Caballero, 2007). Although the occurrence of obesity has been recognised due to energy imbalance where energy intake exceeds energy expenditure, both economic and social globalisation have served as important factors and created its impacts on obesity trends across the world.

This phenomenon is most notably among the middle and high income countries as compared to middle and lower income countries where overweight prevalence was greater (World Health Organization, 2011). For example, the outbreak of obesity among children and adults occurred in developed regions such as North America and Western Europe are shown to have experienced rapid increases in obesity status (Amuna & Zotor, 2008).



## THE PREVALENCE OF GLOBESITY

In 2003, 22 million children around the world, aged less than five years old were reported to be overweighted (Finer, 2003). Meanwhile, over the past one decade, a dramatic shift shown 1 billion adults were overweight and more than 115 million individuals experience the ill effects of obesity related issues (World Health Organization, 2014). The increasing trend in childhood obesity are more prevalence among the children in developing countries (Cameron, 2005). New evidence also suggested in which the patterns of obesity are changing where there are escalating rate of obesity among the populations with low socioeconomic status (Smith, et al., 2012).

Meanwhile, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) declared that the extensiveness of obesity in the United States among adults aged 20 to 74 years old escalated from 13.3 percent to 30.9 percent between 1960 to 2000 (Flegal, Troiano, Pamuk, Kuczmarski & Campbell, 1995). The trend is also similar to Australia in which the pervasiveness on obesity is assessed to be 20.8 percent of the population and it is 2.5 times greater as compared to 1981 (Cameron, et al., 2003). Statistics also proved the worrying figure for the European nations where the prevalence of obesity has increased 10 percent to 40 percent for the past 10 years (Visscher & Seidell, 2001). In Malaysia, the figure also has increased from 4.0 percent to 20.1 percent in 1996 (National Health and Morbidity Survey, 1996) and 10.0 percent to 29.7 percent respectively in 2006 (Institute for Public Health, 2008).

Suprisingly, studies by Popkin, Conde, Hou and Monteiro (2005) discovered that childhood obesities in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, China and Brazil were found to be escalated faster than adult obesity. This phenomenon was reported to be similar in Asia-Pacific countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and Singapore (Florentino, 2002). For example, the rates of obesity among children in Singapore from the year 1975 to 1993 were increased from 1.6 percent to 15.2 percent among males children and 1.1 percent to 12.9 percent for female children (Cheah, 1997). The escalating trend in childrens' obesity in Japan between 1996 to 2000 was reported

increased from 6.1 percent to 11.1 percent for males and 7.1 percent to 10.2 percent for females (Chu, 2001).

Data from Organisation for Economic Co-operation Development (2014) revealed that United State of America (USA) is the leading country where 34 percent of its adult population were obese. Furthermore, Ogden, Carroll, Kit and Flegal (2014) reported that, more than two-thirds of USA adults were overweight and obese but obesity were higher among African American and Hispanic women as compared to Caucasian women. On the contrary, obesity risks were higher for Hispanic men than Caucasian and African American men and tend to increase with age. These indicate in which racial and ethnic disparities took account of obesity.

Meanwhile, Cheng (2013) reported that Malaysia has been categorised as the fattest country in South-East Asia with its obesity rates are on the rise. The standard that has been suggested for Asians to be classified as obese when the Body Mass Index (BMI) is more than 22.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. This is in contrast to European countries where the standard for obesity is slightly higher 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and more. Men are categorised as obese if the fat content is excess of 25 percent meanwhile for women when the excess fat is more than 35 percent (Clinical Practice Guidelines Obesity and Management Malaysia 2004).

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK FACTORS OF OBESITY

Previous studies have shown that various factors can contribute to the onset of obesity risks including psychological stress. Stress is considered as a disease which is commonly experienced by everyone. It is human nature where most people encounter it on a daily basis. Stress is defined as the non-specific, tension producing response of the body to any demand for change (Selye, 1974; Neuman & Fawcett, 2002). It may occur as the reactions from being intense due to stress-provoking situations. Hence, when stressed, it is possible for an individual to feel helpless and other negative effects.

Stress has implications for both the individuals and the organisations. On the individuals level, stress may affect work performance due to decreasing in work motivation and become lethargic (Armstrong, 2009). Meanwhile, organisations will be affected from the employees' behaviour such as low in productivity, workplace accident, absenteeism and it was estimated \$200 to \$300 billion a year lost due to productivity (Goldschein & Bashin, 2011). These are some of the inevitable costs of running a business which in a long run may create liabilities and the company is at lost. Apart from the behavioral outcomes, stress can also lead to health problems such as obesity, gastrointestinal problems and asthma (Griffin, 2014).

The behavioural effects of stress may lead to destructive behaviours such as overeating, smoking and drinking alcohol. A research by U.S Department of Health and Human Services (2003) revealed that, 40 percent of people smoked, 41 percent gambled, 35 percent shopped and 27 percent drank alcohol as ways to cope with stress. Research also found that stressful individuals engaged with overeating behaviour which may contribute to obesity risks. Nearly two-thirds of employees say that they eat junk food such as snacks, chips and candy, at work once a day while another 25 percent said they did so two or more times a day (Grasz, 2013). Such behaviour is ruinous where it contributed to gather excess body fat and develop obesity risks. Other than physical and behavioral effects, stress may also trigger psychological effects. Workers who are experiencing mental pressure will encounter poor concentration, short temper, job dissatisfaction and low morale. It may also elevated the risk of mental health problems ranging from anxiety and the most significant is depression (Romito, 2013).

Apart from stress, employees who are working long hours, overtime or shift work experience higher levels of fatigue and tend to be more sedentary and engage in few leisure activities, leading to obesity risks (Yamada, Ishizaki & Truritani, 2002). A sedentary lifestyle and working shifts leads to increased sleepiness (Charles, et al., 2011) decreased alertness and a higher probability of snacking on high-calorie and low nutrient foods for energy (Kivimäki, et al., 2006).

Past studies also has demonstrated a link between higher weight and greater distress symptoms among youth and adults, where structured clinical interview revealed that chronic obesity has been associated with depressive disorders (Mustillo, Worthman, Erkanli & Keeler, 2003). Meanwhile, Ma and Xiao (2010) discovered that when contrasted from average weight individuals, obesity is associated with 2.18 times chances of being diagnosed with major depression. This suggests a connection between increasing rates of obesity with increasing rates of depression. Furthermore, the research also found that women in the highest quartile of waist outline had 2-3 times the rates of distress as compared to women in the lowest quartile.

There are also studies to assess distress and obesity at multiple points of time. From this study, it indicates that baseline depression is associated with the obesity where depressive symptoms were related to the increment in waist circumference (Needham, Epel & Adler, 2010). According to Ljung, et al. (2002), it may happened in subjects due to increase of central fat distribution. Robert, Strawbridge, Deleger and Kaplan (2002) found that psychological distress in obese does not exist abruptly but it occurred in 5 years later. On the contrary, research by Smyth, et al. (1998) found interesting results in subjects who felt happy where they had a lower level of cortisol than those who felt depressed where increased of cortisol will lead to the increase of abdominal fat.

The epidemiology and etiology of obesity must be concerned in order to have potential to results in a greater commitment of healthcare resources to effective obesity prevention and management strategies. High stress employees were often found to have poor eating habits, low level of physical activity, smoking, alcohol abuse and weight gain (Kouvonen, Kivimaki, Cox & Vahtera, 2005). Many research has shown that stress can affect lifestyle choices and health behaviours such as food consumption and physical activity leading to overweight and obesity (Wardle, Chida, Gibson, Whitaker & Steptoe, 2011). Although the relationship between stress and weight gain is not fully understood (Caban, et al., 2005), it is important to understand the epidemiology and etiology of stress and obesity as it may affect weight gain and the well-being of employees (Senol-Durak, Durak & Gençöz, 2006).

## THE SEQUELA OF OBESITY PHENOMENON

Apart from that, today, there are more people dying due to obesity related diseases across the world hence, it has become an important national health concern. It is estimated to cause 3 to 4 million deaths in 2010 and number of rates in obesity have escalated astonishingly for both children and adults from 857 million in 1980 to 2.1 billion in 2013 (Ng, et al., 2014). This phenomenon is alarming in Malaysia and globally since the past three decades and it is regarded as one of the most worrying public health challenges in the 21st Century (Lobstein, Baur & Uauy, 2004).

The extensiveness of obesity in Malaysia is similar to other developing countries. The number of overweight for Malaysian population is 29.1 percent and obesity is 14 percent (National Health and Morbidity Survey III, 2006). A recent report revealed more serious statistics where 49 percent of women and 44 percent of men in Malaysia were found to be obese. Malaysia was also rated as heavyweight at 45.3 percent of its population, followed by South Korea (33.2 percent), Pakistan (30.7 percent) and China (28.3 percent) (The Star, 2014). Besides being weighed down by obesity, Oxfam International pointed out a striking findings where Malaysia was ranked as the fattest country in Southeast Asia (The Straits Times, 2014).

The research on obesity must be given emphasis as it will cause various negative consequences such as mortality, physical ailments, burden on the health care expenses and diminishing quality of life (Hampel, Abraham, & El-Serag, 2005). Hossain, Kavar and El Nahas (2007) reported that, the occurrence of obesity with Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) which may lead to death is higher in developing countries. Studies have suggested that obesity among the adults will lead to mortality and various ill effects including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancers, respiratory and joint problems (Haslam & James, 2005). Meanwhile the ailment effects of obesity in adolescents can be in term of on physical, mental and social functions (Swallen, Reither, Haas & Meier, 2005).

Furthermore, Results from National Health and Nutrition Examination reported that gallbladder disease increased among obese females with 5 times and the disease risk is doubled among men (National Task Force on the Prevention and Treatment, 2000). Sleep apnea is also reported to be the physical ailment due to obesity and it is significantly associated with obesity in both males and females (Strohl, Strobel & Parisi, 1998). Study by Anderson and Felson (1988) found that individuals with BMI exceeding 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> have a significantly increased risk of osteoarthritis caused by the heavy load on weight bearing joints.

In addition to the health risks due to obesity, this phenomenon must be given attention by all as it will give economic impact due to increment in expenses. Increased in expenses can be varied from personal costs to medical costs of treatment. Credeur (2009) reported that United Airlines have imposed a new policy for obese travellers to buy a second seat if the flight is full. This is to ensure passengers' safeness where arm rest between seats must be down in its normal position and a seat belt is able to be buckled with one extension and at the same time to avoid complains from other passengers of being cramped.

Obesity also takes a toll to physical ailments and lead to financial burden due to high medical expenses for the illness treatments. In 2012, \$190 billion were reported to be the health care costs for obesity related problems in America (Begley, 2012). Meanwhile in Malaysia, the medical costs soared from RM 20 billion in 2013 to RM 23 billion in 2014 estimated to stem from obesity-related problems (Sinyang, 2014). A study by Konnopka, Bodemann and Konig (2011) reported that the medical care costs became a burden because obese respondents were more likely than non-obese respondents to spend on visiting health care professionals, inpatient treatment, outpatient treatment as well as rehabilitation.

## CONCLUSION

Psychological and behavioral factors play significant roles in both the development and consequences of obesity. With the economics growth in the developing countries since last decades, there are transitions in lifestyle particularly in food consumptions and demand. Economic growth serves as an important factor that enables the consumers to spend more on food and purchasing power. Particularly in Malaysia, the Malaysian Food Service Industry has grown by 23 percent between 2001 and 2006 (Tan, 2010). Total household expenditure for food formed the largest component, 21.8 percent by the consumers as compared to other expenditures (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2010).

Noraziah and Mohd Azlan (2012) revealed that the eating-out became a trend to the majorities since eateries operate round-the-clock. An abundance of affordable, readily available food for a busy population results in the consumption of excess calories. Individual level will dine at food premises during working days meanwhile at family level will dine out during the weekends while adolescents hanging out at the restaurants 24 hours restaurants until early mornings.

Apart from that, awareness of food selections is the key towards obesity prevention. For instance, Malaysians selection of food are high calorie content such as Nasi Lemak, Roti Canai and Teh Tarik which ranged from 233 to 600 calorie (kcal) per serving which are unhealthy food choices become the concern (Goh, 2013). It is worrisome as revolting eating habits of food with high in sugar and fat becoming a trend globally and have lead to various major health problems including obesity (Popkin, Kim, Rusev, Du & Zizza, 2006).

There is no single or simple solution to curb the obesity phenomenon. It is a complex problem where an extensive approach is needed to strategies in promoting healthy living behaviours. These strategies can be implemented through education, environmental change, social marketing and policy change. However, health education and promotion experts recognise that forming individual beliefs, attitudes

and motivation play significant impact to develop behavioural changes for supportive of weight-loss efforts (Poscente, et al., 2002).

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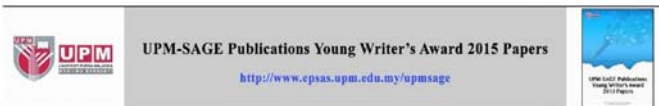
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## FACTORS AFFECTING YOUTH BANKRUPTCY IN MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to determine factors affecting youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. This study provides theoretical evidences that will benefit the financial institutions in the improvement of borrowing and lending by avoiding excessive debt among customers. In addition, it will expand the current knowledge and increase awareness of bankruptcy among youth. Thus, this research paper pursues two objectives: to provide a statistical profile of youth bankruptcy and to investigate factors affecting youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. An overview of statistical youth filing for bankruptcy was acquired from the Malaysia Department of Insolvency (MDI). The interviews were performed and questionnaires were distributed to 140 individual who filed for bankruptcy in the Malaysia Department of Insolvency (MDI) and Credit Counseling and Debt Management Agency (AKPK). There are seven hypotheses used in testing study aspects, namely gender, race, education, marital status, occupation, work experience, and loans. Hence, result of regression analysis shows that six out of seven variables are significant to the dependent variable. The lack of discipline regarding financial management is why many youth in Malaysians today carry major debts and face a high probability of going bankrupt.

Keywords: Bankruptcy, Youth, Malaysia.



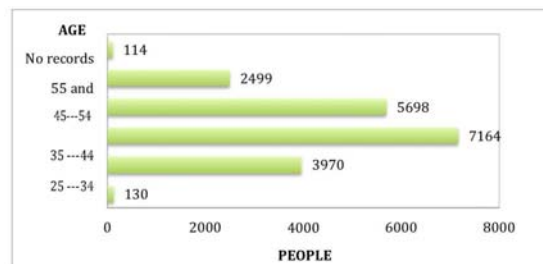
## INTRODUCTION

Bankruptcy is a legal remedy to the overwhelming financial indebtedness that can be invoked voluntarily by the debtor (Sullivan, Waren & Westbrook, 1989). According to the Malaysia Department of Insolvency, a bankrupt person is someone who has officially been declared that he unable to pay what he owes. In other words, bankruptcy is the legal status of an individual or other entity that cannot repay the debts it owes to creditors. In more jurisdictions, bankruptcy is imposed by a court order, often initiated by the debtor. In Malaysia, if the bankrupt party fails to notify the issuing bank or finance company, he will be deemed to be committed an offense under the Bankruptcy Act 1967. Based on this research, we emphasize the individual bankruptcy. An individual will declare a bankrupt to an Adjudication Order made by the High Court against the debtor if he is unable to pay his debts of at least RM 30,000.00. The court may be the result of a creditor commencing a bankruptcy proceeding by presenting a creditor's petition or a person voluntarily seeking to be made bankrupt by presenting a debtor's petition.

Today, bankruptcy cases have become a major problem in Malaysia. In an article in the *New Straits Times* dated 18 February 2013, The Finance Ministry discussed the problem with the Department of Insolvency to resolve the problems of bankruptcy among youth. About 240,000 people declared bankruptcy quarterly in 2013, one percent of them aged below 25. The government views bankruptcy among youth as a serious problem not only for the individual, but also regarding the loss to the country. Fortunately, bankruptcy is no longer a taboo subject in society. It is not unusual today to be declared bankrupt before 30 years old. The reckless spending and the pressure to obtain a luxurious lifestyle have been identified among the factors that trigger this problem. A person individually becomes more materialistic and often creates the mentality that encourages people to try to outdo each other with expensive vehicles, larger houses and the latest fashion items.

According to Chatterjee, Satyajit, Corbae, Dean, Rios and Jose (2005), having a bad

credit history not only limits a person's supply of unsecured credit, but also has a negative effect on the cost of secured debts, like a mortgage or a car loan. It even has negative consequences for job opportunities, insurance and rental costs, since the potential employers, insurance companies and landlords have access to their applicants' credit histories. Apart from loans like car and housing loans, most young adults don't pay their study loans upon graduating from university, which may lead to bad record credit or being blacklisted in Malaysia. As said by our Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Nancy Shukri, in the article in *The Star* dated 20 October 2014, "This younger generation are supposed to be the next leaders. Instead, we have those who are already facing financial difficulties at a very young age."



Source: Malaysia Department of Insolvency

Figure 1: Bankruptcy Cases in 2012 (Age)

Figure 1 shows the age of bankruptcy cases in 2012 gathered from the Malaysia Department of Insolvency. The age groups of young people are 44 and below, which in other words is the age group that dominates the total bankruptcy in Malaysia. The bar chart shows that the highest number of cases of bankruptcy is 11,264 people in the range age of 44 years and below. This is because, at this point in time during which an individual has started employment, marriage, undertaking business or starting families, he or she faces great commitment in life. The total participants in the oldest age group of 45 years old and above number are 8,197 people. This is followed by another 114 people who are counted as having no records and, perhaps, dead or have

fled the country.

Furthermore, youth play a role in a development country. Asnarulkhadi (2009) stated that, demographically, youth are categorized as an individual age group of 15 until 40 years old. This is significant group numerically as translated into power sources, and youth are positively influential towards nation formation, from politic (voters), social (unity) and economic (human capital) perspectives. Figure 1 shows that the youth are the most experienced in bankruptcy. This problem among youth needs to be addressed, as it might adversely affect the economic performance of the developing country in the long term. In addition, based on an article in *The Star* dated 20 October 2014 state by the Malaysia Department of Insolvency, the total cases of bankruptcy in the year 2013 were nearly 22,000, much higher compared to the year 2012 and in the first six months in the year of 2014, more than 12,300 young Malaysians declared bankruptcy. Leach, Hayhoe and Turner (1999) define that early exposure to financial management is important for the younger generation, because they have various obligations and learning how to save, budget and invest may take years. Furthermore, if they have never had substantial amounts of money previously, they may never have learned these essential financial management skills. Hence, this paper examines the factors affecting bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia. Specifically, the objectives of this research are to provide a statistical profile of youth bankruptcy in Malaysia and to investigate factors affecting youth bankruptcy in Malaysia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several views about bankruptcy that have been exposed in the past. According to Luckett (1988), the word *bankruptcy* is derived from the Latin words for "bench" and "break". Thus, the literal meaning of bankrupt is "broken bench" and previously, creditors would physically break the debtor's workbench after gathering together and dividing up the debtor's assets. The broken workbench served as both a

punishment and a warning to other debtors. Satisfaction of the claims of creditors and punishment of the debtors were the objectives of the earlier law. Bankrupt persons were often deprived of their civil rights. Other societies required bankrupt persons to dress in distinctive garb.

According to Sullivan, Warren and Westbrook (2000), bankruptcy involves people who were once solidly middle class but then fall into the lower class. Declaring bankruptcy allowed them to shed debt, recover from pressing medical bills and otherwise free up their income so that they can concentrate on their current bills as well as on their outstanding mortgages, car loans and taxes. On the other hand, Zywicki (2005) and Virmani (2002) state that bankruptcy is seen as a largely involuntary act, a "last resort" to deal with insoluble financial problems brought on by exogenous factors such as heavy indebtedness or sudden and unexpected income or expense shocks, such as unemployment, medical problems or divorce. In the traditional model, bankruptcy is a form of social insurance, allowing individuals to "smooth" unexpected income or expense shocks. Thus, increasing numbers of consumers are choosing bankruptcy as a first response to financial problems instead of seeking other options, such as reducing their spending. However, Jacoby (2006) found that bankruptcy now formally recognizes that some people who file for bankruptcy may be struggling with illness, injury, disabilities and the associated costs and even those who are presently in good health may have ongoing medical costs that should be taken into account. Many medical related bankruptcy cases involve people with chronic problems who will be facing additional consequences for years to come. Although the bankruptcy process may help some households adjust to long-term change, its one-shot nature is not necessarily the ideal approach.

Previous studies have been conducted to investigate characteristics of youth and bankruptcy, which focused on Generation Y. Warren (2003) reveals that Generation Y is the most recent cohort that has participated in increasing numbers in the working sector. Researchers agree that Generation Y was born and grew up amidst a prosperous growing economy. This generation is characterized as having more opportunities and a better quality of life as compared to previous generations. The

pressure to cope with the current trend focuses on ensuring that they can meet the social expectations and “fit in” with their peers. The situation is exacerbated by their credit mentality. This study found that many identified that the credit mentality of “own now, pay later” was spreading among young people. The study found that, when faced with a situation in which a person wanted something but could not afford it, 80 percent of the respondents would find a way to buy without thinking much about it (Urbis, Rintoul, Power & Keevy, 2008). In fact, there is evidence of many graduates who have breached the contract of The National Higher Education Loan Fund (PTPTN). These trends, coupled with lack of job security due to various factors, are certainly worrisome because they could lead to a lack of financial security, deterioration of quality of life and social problems in the future that can inhibit the process of national development. Thus, when scrutinizing the situation of youth in Malaysia, most of today’s youth have a short-term focus, and in many cases, they are protected from the realities of real-world challenges.

## DATA & METHODOLOGY

The secondary data for this study are obtained from the Department of Insolvency Malaysia. The analysis is based on time series data from the period of 2008-2013. By analyzing the statistical profile of youth bankruptcy, this research can apply the seven independent variables of gender, race, education, marital status, occupation, work experience and loans that affect youth bankruptcy. This study was performed using the primary data. Hence, the primary data was obtained through interviews and questionnaires distributed to 140 bankrupt people and to the Malaysia Department of Insolvency and Credit Counseling and Debt Management Agency (AKPK). These places were selected because they are places where people who have officially declared bankruptcy go. Based on the model below, the purpose of this paper is to explore the factors affecting youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. The models specified are estimates using the survey method (primary data). The study is used to conclude whether a relationship exists and to determine whether the independent variables

explain a significant variation towards the dependent variable. This model is derived in a conventional manner, which takes the following form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1(X1) + \beta_2(X2) + \beta_3(X3) + \beta_4(X4) + \beta_5(X5) + \beta_6(X6) + \beta_7(X7)$$

The dependent variable is set as the total amount of loans. This is because the total amount of loans is the causes that lead people to bankruptcy. For instance, the total amount of individual loans of about RM30,000 often drove an individual to declare bankruptcy. The independent variables are as follows:

- Y = Total amount of loans causing bankruptcy
- X1 = Gender (1=male and 0=female)
- X2 = Race (1=Malay, 2=Chinese, 3=Indian and 4=more)
- X3 = Education (1=Basic (UPSR, PMR and SPM), 2=STPM, diploma and certificate skills education, 3=undergraduate level (Degree) and 4=postgraduate level (Master, PhD))
- X4 = Marital Status (1=single, 2=married, 3=divorced and 4=other)
- X5 = Occupation (1=government servant, 2=private sector, 3=self-employed, and 4=other)
- X6 = Work Experience (1=less than 1 year, 2=1 – 3 years, 3=3 – 6 years, 4=6 – 9 years, and 5=more than 9 years)
- X7 = Types of Loans (1=vehicle loan, 2=housing loan, 3=guarantor, 4=credit card debt, 5=scholarship/personal loan, and 6=other)

The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

- H1: There is a relationship between gender and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.
- H2: There is a relationship between race and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.
- H3: There is a relationship between education and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.
- H4: There is a relationship between marital status and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.

H5: There is a relationship between occupation and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.

H6: There is a relationship between work experience and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.

H7: There is a relationship between loans and bankruptcy among youth in Malaysia.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### i. Statistical Profile of Youth Bankruptcy

The first objective of this research was to analyze the statistics of youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. This secondary data was obtained from the Department of Insolvency Malaysia with a period from 2008 to 2013. The youth are the biggest contributors to this country's economic development, but they commonly go bankrupt because they dream of living a lavish lifestyle and have no exposure to financial management. This is the main reason that the cases of bankruptcy among youth are increasing. Currently, no research has been conducted on this study in Malaysia. Furthermore, the Department of Insolvency in Malaysia has just been introduced in previous years. Thus, there is a limitation to getting long-term data about youth bankruptcy.

However, as shown in the table below, this research can provide insight into youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. The youth have serious debts due to their living beyond their means, using options such as higher purchase loans, credit cards and student loans. The survey revealed that most youth filed for bankruptcy as a result of student loans, because many of them did not settle their student loans upon graduation. Furthermore, guarantor cases, vehicle loans and credit cards contribute to youth bankruptcy. The excessive lifestyles among those in this population are also due to overspending on items like branded goods and electronic gadgets. Urbis *et al.* (2008) identified that the credit mentality of "own now, pay later" was spreading among young people. This shows that the youth are willing to enter into indebtedness to

satisfy their desires.

Table 1. Total Number of Bankruptcy by Age from 2008 till 2013

Group of Age	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Below 25 years	123	306	304	171	130	182	1216
25 – 34 years	2071	3176	3959	4217	3970	4908	22301
35 – 44 years	4406	5165	6417	6854	7164	6181	36187
<b>Total</b>	<b>6600</b>	<b>8647</b>	<b>10680</b>	<b>11242</b>	<b>11264</b>	<b>11271</b>	<b>59,704</b>

Table 1 shows the total rise of bankruptcy cases every year from 2008 to 2013. In 2008, there were 6600 cases; in 2009, there were 8647 cases; in year 2010, there were 10680 cases; in year 2011, there were 11242 cases; in year 2012, there were 11264 cases; and in year 2013, there were 11271 cases of youth declaring bankruptcy. It's safe to say that young Malaysians are generally not prepared to deal with the consequences of financial debts. The total number of youth bankruptcy increased year by year in every age group. This is a serious matter among the young generation in Malaysia. As stated by Jalaluddin (2009), it is a generation of post-modern knowledge, with strong personalities, great knowledge to apply to life progress and contribution to the development of the society and the nation. Stress, family pressure, and social expectations can take their toll psychologically on the affected youth facing bankruptcy. The lack of discipline regarding financial management is why many youth in Malaysians today carry major debts and face a high possibility of going bankrupt. The reason for this could be a lack of knowledge and awareness of bankruptcy regulations. However, the youth should be given second chances under the new amendment, under which they must receive education and training in financial management before having their bankruptcy status cleared to prevent future incidents.



## ii. Descriptive Analysis

The raw data consisting of extensive numbers will be transformed into a form of symbols that provide information to explain the set of factors involved in this study. It will describe the standard deviation, the mean and more of the data collected. Below are the quick reports of the statistics tested for this study.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
<b>Total loans</b>	140	6.00	14.00	10.37	1.56
<b>Gender</b>	140	1.00	2.00	1.37	0.48
<b>Race</b>	140	1.00	4.00	1.37	0.80
<b>Education</b>	140	1.00	4.00	2.86	1.25
<b>Marital</b>	140	1.00	5.00	1.77	0.76
<b>Occupation</b>	140	1.00	5.00	2.43	1.05
<b>Working Exp.</b>	140	1.00	5.00	3.11	1.33
<b>Loans</b>	140	1.00	6.00	3.77	1.76
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	140				

The descriptive of statistics of 140 individuals are shown in Table 2. First, total loans refer to the total amount of loans that cause bankruptcy. The mean is 10.37 within a range of 6.00 to 14.00 (RM400.00 to RM1,400,000.00). Second, the mean of gender is 1.37. Third, the mean of race is 1.37. Next, education level has a mean value of 2.86. This is followed by marital status, with the mean of 1.77. Then, occupation has a mean of 2.43. Next, working experience has a mean of 3.11. Lastly, loans that lead to the indebtedness have 3.77 as a mean. As the table outlines, N is the number of valid observations for the variable. The total number of observations is 140. Standard deviation is the square root of the variance. It measures the spread of a set of observations. The larger the standard deviation is, the more spread out the surveys are. The type of loans has the highest value of standard deviation, which is 1.76, while gender has the lowest value of standard deviation at 0.48.

## iii. Demographic Profile of Respondent

Only 140 respondents completed the interviews and questionnaires. Table 3 represents the demographic profiles of the respondents according to gender, race, education level, marital status, occupation, work experience and loans.

Table 3. Demographic Profile of Respondent

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	88	63
Female	52	37
<b>Race</b>		
Malay	112	80
Chinese	8	6
Indian	16	11
Other	4	3
<b>Education</b>		
Basic (UPSR, PMR & SPM)	36	26
Stpm, Diploma & Certs.	40	28
Degree Level	64	46
Postgraduate Level	0	0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	48	34
Married	84	60
Divorced	4	3
Other	4	3
<b>Occupation</b>		
Government Servant	12	8
Private Sector	88	63
Self-Employed	24	17
Other	16	12
<b>Working Experience</b>		
Less than 1 year	20	14
1 – 3 years	24	17
3 – 6 years	48	34
6 – 9 years	16	12
More than 9 years	32	23
<b>Loans</b>		
Vehicle Loan	24	17
Housing Loan	12	9
Guarantor	28	20
Credit Card Debt	12	9
Scholarship/ Personal	36	25
Other	28	20

## iv. Regression Analysis

Table 4.1. Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.607 <sup>a</sup>	0.369	0.335	1.26901
a. Predictors: (Constant), gender, race, education level, marital status, occupation, working experience and types of loan				
b. Dependent Variable: Total loans				

From the Model Summary (Table 4.1), the coefficient of determination of R-square is 0.369 for the examined regression line could significant account for 36.9 percent of the total variations in the totals loan. This mean that 36.9 percent of the total variation in totals loan is explained by the variation in the seven independent variables, whereas 63.1 percent remains unexplained. In general, the higher the value of  $R^2$ , the better the model fits the data. However, the remaining percentage as 63.1 percent is explained by other external forces, which the researcher has not included in the study.

Table 4.2. Anova

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	124.114	7	17.731	11.010	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	212.571	132	1.610		
	Total	336.686	139			
a. Dependent Variable: Total loans						
b. Predictors: (Constant), gender, race, education level, marital status, occupation, working experience and types of loan						

Based on Table 4.2, the F statistic obtained is 11.010 (p-value = 0.000). This shows that, the significance value at 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Because of this, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean number

and are not likely due to change but probably due to the independent variables manipulation. This means that the model is effective and a good fit for the data.

According to Table 4.3, out of seven variables operationalized in the model, six turned out to have a statistically significant impact on bankruptcy through the total amount of loans. Table 4.3 shows that gender (0.023) has a positive relationship with the total amount of loans at the 5 percent significant level. The Department of Statistics said that the population of males in Malaysia is greater than female, so the results support the claim that more males file for bankruptcy than females.

Table 4.3. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	7.546	0.797		9.473	0.000
	Gender	0.564**	0.245	0.176	2.302	0.023*
	Race	0.277**	0.155	0.142	1.783	0.077*
	Education Level	0.405**	0.105	0.325	3.868	0.000*
	Marital Status	0.028**	0.160	0.014	0.176	0.861
	Occupation	0.412**	0.112	0.279	3.669	0.000*
	Working Experience	0.480**	0.086	0.411	5.586	0.000*
	Types of loan	-0.129**	0.064	-0.146	-1.995	0.048*
a. Dependent Variable: Total loans						
b. ANOVA F-value: 11.010						

Moreover, the table above shows that race (0.077) has a positive relationship with the total amount of loans at the 10 percent significant level. This means that, even Malaysian have various races, the total of individuals filing for bankruptcy rises year by year. Miller (2013) found a positive and significant coefficient on the interaction between contact availability and the bankruptcy-filing rate of one's own racial group. This contact availability raises the probability of bankruptcy for households from racial groups with high bankruptcy filing rates. Furthermore, results regarding education level, occupation, and work experience showed (0.000) perfect significance with a positive relationship with the total amount of loans, indicating a relationship

among these three variables. Indeed, education level is important and people who have high education tend to file bankruptcy, even though they have financial skills. While someone who is well educated tends to have a career. Even though they have jobs, they still file for bankruptcy. This could be due to poor financial planning and spending habits.

It is shown that someone who is working is more likely to file bankrupt than those without working. This is possibly because they are committed to commitment. For example, those with more advanced studies tend to borrow study loans, which they might need to pay back right after graduation, so this person needs to find a career. In addition, those who have high education are sometimes sponsored by institutions, which they are bound to work for after finishing their study. Though someone who has a career can be likely to file for bankruptcy when they have work experience. Although this is a rather strange conclusion, this can illustrate that youth demand to live luxury lifestyles but cannot afford it. They may over emphasize materialism, which contributes to their bankruptcy, as society sees things more on the surface rather than trying to understand the real values. For instance, many people feel pressure to meet today's standard of living.

Lastly, the table above shows that the type of loan (0.048) has a negative relationship with the total amount of loans at the 5 percent significant level. This means that the type of loan an individual applies affects the tendency to file for bankruptcy. This is probably because, when a person applies for a loan, they are bound to a contract. Regardless of what loans they applied for, if someone makes a late payment, they are charged interest. Some financial institutions charge compound interest, too. In addition, some student loans include surcharges. This is related to the reasons youth tend to file for bankruptcy after graduation. Next, marital status shows no significant relationship to bankruptcy. This means that whether someone is single, married or divorced is not related to bankruptcy. Lastly, most individuals who experienced bankruptcy come from lower-to middle-income families, who are under pressure living in an urban area. Following the rising cost of households, it's hard for the average Malaysian wage earner to fulfill all commitments.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. 140 respondents were randomly selected to complete the questionnaire, and all of them must have declared bankruptcy. The questions represent 2 sections, demographic and individual loans. Demographic factors such as gender, race, education level, marital status, occupation, work experience and loans have been used to describe the characteristics of the respondents and these were the main variables. In addition, the total loan causes and the institutions' names were also included in this questionnaire. Statistical tools used in the analysis were frequency counts, percentage, means and standard deviation and multiple linear regressions.

In future research, researchers can enlarge the number of individual files for bankruptcy in order to enhance the accuracy and maintain perfect significance. This includes distributing the questionnaires equally among the country's region where more comprehensive results could be obtained. In addition, future researchers could include variables such as family background, which has an impact on bankruptcy and financial knowledge. Each respondent was reminded to answer honestly. Sometimes respondents can be deceptive or dishonest to maintain their good name and status. Furthermore, the agency needs to cooperate with the students. It can be difficult to get information from the agency, especially the government division, as the information may be private and confidential. Therefore, future researchers need to be well prepared in terms of learning first about the agencies before starting their research. This highly exploratory study provides new insights into youth bankruptcy in Malaysia. Further study that builds upon these insights is recommended.

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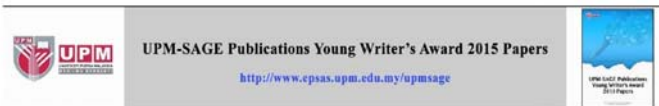
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## REFLECTION OF HISTORY IN TONI MORRISON'S BELOVED

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### ABSTRACT

Slavery as a ruthless possessiveness outlines individuals as their portable possessions, whereas rejecting to identify their distinct identity. Slavery has a very close relationship with slave's memory. *Beloved* portrays the emotional response of each character to unimaginable loss and suffering. Masterfully, Toni Morrison tries to show the Negro characters in the history which their traumatic memories are always with them. This paper tries to shed light on the reflection of history on slavery, memory and discourses in this novel in which characters have tragedy to forget their awful memories concerning the Slavery in the United States. In this way, it uses the critical views by Rigney, Mathieson and Fitzgerald.

Keywords: History, Slavery, Memory, Discourse, Trauma.

### INTRODUCTION

Toni Morrison is the African American novelist, critic and a Nobel Prize winner who was born on in 1931, in Lorain, Ohio. Morrison's fifth novel, *Beloved*, was published in 1987 and is the first novel in her proposed trilogy on Black experience. Narrative fiction has surpassed in the representation of the nature and importance of memory in human life. It has also created the tragedy of forgetting. In this fiction, memory is trapped in a struggle with forgetting. To remember is to shield an event from

encroaching forgetting and the abyss of oblivion. Milan Kundera says that "This is the great private problem of man: death as the loss of self. But what is this self? It is the sum of everything we remember. Thus, what terrifies us about death is not the loss of future but loss of the past. Forgetting is a form of death ever present within life." ("The Structure of Recollection", p.49) Memories are not limited to individuals alone. A collection of individual(s) memories become the collective memory of a community.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* focuses on the horror and sorrow of the Black Slaves and their emotional status after their freedom legally. It vividly shows the emotional reply of every character to unconceivable loss and suffering. The stories by the key characters are in fact substantiated thus making *Beloved* a historical novel intertwining with a fictional plot. The novel is not only merged with the historical and emotional evolution of the Blacks, but Morrison's strong message tribute to 'Sixty Million and more'. This honor is Morrison's sanctified compulsion to the history of her memory, nation and the race of all who suffered only because they were different – black and disapproved by the values of their enslavers.

#### HISTORY, SLAVERY AND MEMORY

As Ashraf H.A.Rushdy says in '*Rememory: Primal Scenes and Constructions in Toni Morrison's Novels*' recollection is a "genuine act of self-presenting (however possible), or a neurotic act of displacement or reconstruction." (300) Rushdy lists the different outlooks which are held by William Wordsworth and Sigmund Freud on memory. Memory, according to Wordsworth is "yet another agency for revival and rehabilitation" (300). For Freud, is "an agency for constructing fantasies from a phylogenetic plane in order to rid oneself of the residual neuroses of an imagined distress" (300). So Wordsworth's "primal sympathies are Freud's 'primal scenes', which later become 'primal phantasm' and Rushdy applies Freud's 'primal scenes' to Morrison's novels because he feels the narratives are concerned about the role of the recollected self or subject in prime activity, the question of 'primal scenes'" (302). But

Rushdy proposes a redefinition of the term “prime scenes” before applying the Freudian’s one to Morrison’s novels in order to demonstrate the inadequacy of the same term used by Lukacher. He argues that a primal scene is “a circumstantial construction that is predicated when there is an... interpret but, at the same time a fundamental concealment or absence of the some evidence that could definitely substantiate a particular interpretation” (Lukacher 300). In Lukacher’s explanation of the term, there is no member in the primal scene, but there is “only the verbal construct of the dismembered, ontically displaced individual” (324). So Rushdy restates a Morrison calls, “Rememory”. As Rushdy proves his words by giving an example from *Beloved* by quoting Sethe:

Someday you be walking down the road and you hear something or see something or see something going on so clear. And you think it’s you thinking it up... A thought picture... But no... It’s when you bump into Rememory that belongs to somebody else. (36)

Recollection is not personal any more, it becomes interpersonal. So Rushdy detects that “self and past” is a collective project and *Beloved* is considered as a Rememory of a subjugated culture of the African slaves (365). In Rushdy’s point of view the primal scene is appropriate for Sethe and Paul D and *Beloved* (name of the main character here) in such a novel that ceases haunting when must be said “dismembered” (317). The point is that why Paul D should think of *Beloved*. Rushdy asserts that “Paul D is supposed to remember *Beloved* even though he had no encounter with her before; because Paul D’s and Sethe’s individual primal scenes are joined by memory” (318).

Another example related to primal scene comes up for Sethe, before the assassination of *Beloved* – where she was raped by her teacher and her breast milk was stolen by him. Sethe remembers this scene at the commencement of the novel and later she tells Paul D about the sexual assault and it is considered as the commencement of the interdependency for Sethe’s and Paul D’s stories. Paul D tells Sethe about his primal scene related to rape and Halle’s meaningless acts at the churn.

"Did you speak to him? Didn't you say anything to him? Something! "

"I couldn't Sethe. I just...couldn't."

"Why!"

"I had a bit in my mouth" (69).

According to Rushdy, *Beloved* follows the interweaving of Sethe's and Paul D "Primal scenes" and "rememoried" till they shape one story. These "rememories" make them to remember the past while allowing Paul D to open the rusty lid of the tin buried in his chest where a red heart used to be. (72-73)

As Rebecca Ferguson argues in her essay, *History, Memory and Language in Morrison's Beloved*, that "memory" for many Afro-American writers has become a central anxiety in their writings since they observe that their history has been "disremembered and unaccounted for". Ferguson perceives, "theirs (the Afro-Americans) is a history of oppression, but one that must be remembered has accounted for, and while the language of the dominant culture and the writing itself have all too often been potent instruments in that oppression, not to have made of them is to be rendered impotent in ways that matter greatly" (109). So, primal memory and language are considered essential parts of the works of authors such as Alice Walker and Morrison. Memories are indispensable in order to give a reliable depiction of history, and in order to assemble this suppressed history through memories, it unavoidably requires language. So language becomes an outline which has written history and its parallel memories. This history describes events through the modality of "fabulation" (Scholes 12). Ferguson quotes Bernard Bell on that: "Unlike their writings contemporaries, (these writers) are not merely rejecting the arrogance of western forms and connections, but also rediscovering and reaffirming the wisdom of their own folk tradition: Afro-American ways of seeing, knowing expressing reality" (123). Therefore, leaving the limitations of realism and naturalism does not mean to leave, "such traditional narrative modes as myth and legend; ... does it have to entail the neglect of history". (Bell)

The fundamental anxiety in *Beloved* is history and memory and the part of the story that takes care of the reform of memory arranges in a linear and progressive chronology. Ferguson's slavery is disjointed and devastated by the perpetual entry and re-entry of the past into the present. This Rememory comes out, although it uncertainly happens through the individual remembering.

As Barbara Hill Rigney in *The Disremembered and Unaccounted For: History, Myth and Magic* suggests that Morrison's narratives are historical novels. They are both subjects of and subject to history, i.e. events in "real time" and sequence of antagonistic movements that embrace "slavery, reconstruction, depression and war" (61). Rigney argues that history in Morrison's story is a matter of "time and place" and confirms her declaration by citing place historical importance in Morrison's narratives.

Considering the elements of Myth in this novel, Rigney refers to the connection between slavery in the present and the ancient myths in which the Baby Suggs is magical and prescient, and practical. Sethe in the "African archetype" of the Great Mother who "gives life and wisdom cannot express love for her children" (60) whereas she is captured in the institution of slavery. She is a Great Mother and is "representative of the power of nature" (69), but her power is undermined conditions of or "the political realities of history" (70). Rigney observes that myth of the African Great Mother is also a reminder that history is the adversary which subverts circumstances and dispossesses "the African-American of the crucial link with Africa" (71).

*Beloved* is murdered at the age of two with no primal memory, but she remembers a "psychic racial memory of capture and transport of ships and the Middle Passage" (73). The unusual phenomenon is continual in *Beloved*'s circumstances when she is capable to designate the inhuman conditions that occurred on the ships carrying the slavery. So, Rigney echoes the Ferguson and Rushdy's vision because the memories are so traumatic and "they have to become universe shared, cosmically experienced" (75).

Morrison does not look at history as a story or record of events chronologically, but as a "recovered time" (75). To Rigney, the aim of such history as recovered time is because Morrison tries to shock the "reader in the political awareness" (76). The reader has to comprehend that, as Eliot Butler argues, "It (this work) must centralize and animate information [and] discredited not because it is not true or useful or even of some racial value, and because it is information described as love or magic or sentiment". (Mobley)

It is fruitfully and clearly shown by Barbara Offutt Mathieson in her essay "*Memory and Mother love in Morrison's Beloved*" that how *Beloved* remember and states black experience in the United States and also reveals simultaneously how "the issues of motherhood provide a female variant of (general) slave history" and at the same time brightens "the relationship of all the novel's characters, both male and female, to their pain fraught inner worlds of memory" (5).

Mathieson referred to psychoanalytic theory and states that how this love shared by a mother and child can develop into an incapacitating relationship and makes them disable to express their feeling and emotions. For Mathieson, these feelings and emotions on behalf of mother play an important role because *Beloved* charts the explosive intricacies of the preoedipal bond from the simultaneous perspective of mother and child. Morrison explores their mutual hunger for a loving union as well as the inevitable struggle for control. This powerful portrait, in turn serves as the metaphor upon which Morrison grounds her meditation on personal memory and historical self-awareness (1).

The sense of motherhood, daughterhood and sisterhood is shaped between Sethe, *Beloved* and Denver respectively. They form a pleased and content a group of three people as they sing:

I waited for you  
You are mine  
You are mine  
You are mine (217)

But how does Sethe identify and answer herself in accomplishing the growing demands of her reincarnated daughter? Here Mathieson describes her personal view as a mother of a daughter.

Many parents must feel, as I did, an immediate jolt of recognition at Morrison's moment of union and reunion. In the early hours of the morning after my own daughter's birth, fell I into a half-sleep between waves of hospital bustle and routine on the edge of waking consciousness, a vivid image of her sleeping face crystallized on my closed lids, seemingly recalled rather than seen. My daughter's face suddenly melted into the sensations of my own body. In a synesthesia of minds, her face became her face on my body.(1990)

This deeply moving vision reemerges instantly in answer to,

Morrison's fictional mother-child relationship; although deformed by extreme circumstances-- slavery and death-- and involving supernatural components of existence, Sethe's bond with Beloved encapsulates common parental experiences.  
(3)

According to Mathieson, the behavior of both Sethe and Beloved where Sethe provides food, motivation and security for Beloved and Beloved requires Sethe to create her own self and gratify her flourishing wishes are not odd. But where Sethe is seen as a prey and Beloved as a cruel predator, the enraptured love between Sethe and Beloved becomes a nightmare and this is parallel in mother-child relationship in everyday life. Mathieson quotes Freud to authenticate her point (Fitzgerald). Freud argues that,

Childish love knows no bounds, it demands exclusive possession, is satisfied with nothing less than all. But it has a second characteristic: it has, besides, no real aim; it is incapable of complete satisfaction and this is the principal reason why it is doomed to end in disappointment and give place to hostile attitude. (286)

To Mathieson, Sethe “re-tastes and ‘rememorizes’ the traumas of both motherhood and slave heritage” (5). The Legacy of the slaves heritage is narrated by Sethe because *Beloved* is “locked in the past herself... demands to be told stories about the old life, Sweet Home, and her mother’s crystal earnings that she played with as a baby” (9). *Beloved* comes back to regain whatsoever legally belongs to her but which was deprived of because of her murder. It is supposed that Sethe, Denver and *Beloved* reach to a perfect mutual understanding from each other and such a relationship leads to maturation but only Denver was successful while *Beloved* was not. As Mathieson illuminates,

Morrison explores the dangers of retreat into the past by examining the destructiveness of a prolonged mutual dependence of mother and child. Intimate union becomes a struggle for domination Sethe, in fact, obliterates the present and the possibility of development by reentering and recreating *Beloved*’s aborted infancy (11).

*Beloved* constantly lives on her past which also embraces the history of the slaves, the “middle passage” and its concurrent repulsions. Sethe’s mother tolerated the struggles of the “middle passage” in which *Beloved* experienced too. Therefore, *Beloved*’s experience moves into that of her grandmother’s where Mathieson remarks on:

Is the ultimate nightmare of memory; one child’s particular death leaves open a wound so deep that it reaches back to the moment of enslavement. Like the spirit realm across the bridge which envelopes Morrison’s world of the living, a complexly woven fabric of history enshrouds each separate new hurt and injustice. (12)

Just like finding a complete satisfaction in the mother-infant bond that is impossible, Sethe’s wish “to find a full life within the past” (14) is impossible too. Regarding such struggles, Mathieson argues relate to stepping stones towards a complete life and not as a complete world in themselves because “both maternal bonding and rememory are essential for human survival yet either, if unrestrained, devours the agent” (ibid). Concerning this sentence, Mathieson believes that Morrison is offered as a path to develop individuation, maturation and eventually liberation in *Beloved*.



This view is illustrated by Morrison that narrates the separation of Howard and Buglar from their mother. Ultimately, Denver comes out from her loneliness and starts communal bonds and finally the ghost of Beloved is casted out by her and other women of her community. Since, she starts new life outside, without the help of her mother and sister, Mathieson asserts, "Denver rediscovers what is perhaps the most successful strategy for adult development: she replaces the solitary maternal bond with a large community of adults and opens herself to an emphatic network of fellows" (16). Paul D also stops his dependency emotionally and physically to Sethe by integrating into the community. Both Paul D and Denver realizes the worth of a community and therefore they respond the feelings of the members of the community. Both Denver and Paul, as Mathieson argues, "discover the comfort and enhanced strength of existence provided by that (community) fabric" (16). In the following, the strategies assumed by Morrison related to the past is summed up by Mathieson clearly and concisely.

To comprehend that past, Morrison invokes the complex range of maternal emotion. This most deep-seated of human feelings must have been violently stretched, tested and deformed in the lives which preceded our own. At the same time, mother love serves as a metaphor for the memory of the past. The alternatives of preoedipal suffocation and reciprocal adult relations also suggest the preoccupation and submergence, or a tenacious awareness which carries remembrance into the present as an essential component of an emancipated future (19).

To Jennifer Fitzgerald, "Selfhood and Community: Psychoanalysis and Discourse in Beloved" commences by describing Paul D as a psychotherapist because he invites Sethe to "work through" her past traumas whereas impelled her to "go as far inside as you need to. I'll hold your ankles. Make sure you get back out." (46) Fitzgerald looks at Paul D from a Freudian vision like other critics' point of views. But she feels that Freud and any other critics like him have tried to generalize too due to assuming, A model which is both, normative and universalized. As a result, psychoanalysis isolates

psychic experience from the diversities of ethnicity and class ... as if this existed as a free standing relation independent of the economic, political or social conditions which affect the circumstances of parenting (699).

Such universalized theory or model related to African Americans where family history has been formed in a different way problematizes the whole issue rather than illumination the Afro-American history. Fitzgerald argues, "At the same time, how not to draw on psychoanalysis in discussing a novel which explores the aftermath of appalling hints, the psychic as well as material damage inflicted by slavery" (670). She suggests the contrast theory where "the psyche is constructed within a wide system of relationships, offering a model of how social, cultural and political forces become internalized" (ibid). Such a tactic to *Beloved* looks contrast to Freud's relation theory, especially between the mother and child.

Slavery in *Beloved*'s character meaning is interpreted and considered as one of a series of positions. Consequently, the main attention to psychoanalysis and the discourse on slavery become one and this is not just coincidence as she feels when she says to Henriques, "the systematic character of a discourse includes its systematic articulation within other discourses" (148-149) Therefore, Fitzgerald looks at the story through many discourses involving the repressed pre-Oedipal discourse.

#### DISCOURSES IN *BELoved*

According to classical psychoanalysis, a mother and child finally accept each other's autonomous identity under a normal condition. But such universalizing declaration should be kept critically at a distance as Fitzgerald states,

Ultimately, then, the responsibility for Seth's confusion lies in slavery, which positioned her as object and denied her the experience of bonding with her on mother through which she could arrive at a separate subjectivity and which precipitated her entry into good motherhood, whose practices equally denied a sense of self (678).

Fitzgerald surveys the similarities between the discourse of slavery and classic psychoanalysis when she argues that just as pre-Oedipal requirement which rejects the independence of others. Slavery in ruthless possessiveness outlines a group of individuals as the portable possessions of another, whereas rejecting to identify their separate identity. Accordingly Morrison states, "Slavery's greediness – like the pre-oedipal child's – is all consuming" (684). Moreover, White functions as a metaphor for indiscriminate uniting as one observes in the confusion of *Sethe* and *Beloved*. Fitzgerald states, neither the Whites nor *Sethe*, who unified herself into *Beloved*, do not know where to stop.

By comparing a psychoanalytic discourse with other discourses of slavery, masculinity and good mother, Fitzgerald has persuasively "highlighted their shared significations" (685). Her reading demonstrates that *Beloved* shapes a mixture of various discourses which impact on each other in order to construct influential framework which helps to make easy a meaningful reading of Afro-American history. There are some discourses in which Fitzgerald highlights them in short such as, the dominant discourse of slavery that rejects the meaning of humanity, autonomy and familial relationships. In the discourse of *Beloved's* slavery, the protagonists are objects and attempt to become the subject in other discourses, they experience "the return of the repressed: as each protagonist confronts a crisis which evokes psychic trauma, he or she articulates infantile reactions in the practices of this discourse, projecting emotions onto others as external objects and introjecting the resultant images as part of themselves" (672).

The next discourse is the discourse of the good mother, "conceives of the (usually biological) mother as so instrumental to the child's well-being as to allow her no separate interest" (671). Therefore, *Sethe's* anxiety is "for the life of her children's mother" (30). Fitzgerald proposes an interesting clarification for *Sethe's* behavior. All good mothers, according to classic psychoanalysis, learn to depart from their children's lives to teach them how to form themselves to the standards of expected behavior. Fitzgerald feels that *Sethe's* mind is preoccupied with *Beloved* "because,

slavery denies parental claims, Sethe insists upon her role as mother.... Practices which signify motherly devotion active memories of her own babyhood" (Fitzgerald 200). Accordingly, she "refutes her position as object in the discourse of slavery by asserting her position as subject in the discourse of good mother" (677). Fitzgerald steps into a new phase when she asserts that Sethe's maternal discourse results in another set of meanings. Memories of her own babyhood are stimulated by Sethe's maternal discourse and "a psychic trauma of infantile abandonment" (ibid). Fitzgerald also argues that "the discourse becomes hopelessly entangled; her excessive investment in mothering is an impossible attempt to make up for her own loss as a daughter" (ibid).

The other discourse is known for discourse of masculinity. Fitzgerald refers to Paul D's subject position which is threatened by Beloved's seduction. In this case, Paul D decided to show his desire to Sethe by offering her to make her pregnant to "document his manhood" (128). Paul D, as a discourse of masculinity, indicates "practices of free will and self-control" (679), because such a discourse integrated into self-control as Fitzgerald suggests, "positions him as a subject, contradicting his dehumanizing position as object in the discourse of slavery" (679). Paul D portrays a huge amount of self-control when he suppresses torments into a "tobacco tin" embedded in his heart. But Beloved, through her temptation of Paul D, subverts his masculinity when she destroys his fortifications of self-control and free will. Beloved also undermines Paul D's identity and leads him in the discourse of slavery, i.e. he becomes the object once again. He feels himself falling apart as his unified subjectivity fragments. "His tobacco tin, blown open, spilled contents that floated freely and made him their play and prey" (218).

The last but not least discourse is the discourse of black solidarity in which slaves and ex-slaves put themselves in peril for each other. Baby Suggs plays a key role in forming member's identity. She encourages both a collective sense of self-appreciation on people who scarred and mother tendencies among the Blacks. The meaning of other discourses such as masculinity and Sethe's discourse are challenged by Baby Suggs' discourses of communal self-love. The discourse of masculinity is changed into the

discourse of family when Suggs says, "A man ain't nothing but a man ... But a son? Well, now, that's somebody" (23).

Fitzgerald argues that Sethe's "good mother discourse makes pretension to an overweening responsibility, which includes overreacting rights" (682). Sethe separates herself from her community and by this force upon herself and keeps herself away the care and support of the community and "self-love by means of which individuals in the African American community receive the mothering of which politics or circumstances may have deprived him or herself" (683). The next discourse is the good mothers who learn to depart from their children's lives to teach them how to form themselves to the standards of expected behavior.

## CONCLUSION

Morrison's *Beloved* centers on the fear and sorrow of the Negro slaves and also their expressive status after their freedom legally. This fear is writer's blessed urge to her memory, nation and the black race who disapproved by the values of their enslavers. Memories are not limited to individuals alone. Memories are essential in order to give a trustworthy portrayal of history, and in order to bring together this suppressed history of Blacks through their memories. Rigney knows that Morrison's historical novels are both subjects of and subject to history that embrace slavery, reconstruction, depression and war. The writer does not see history as a story or series of events, but as a recovered time, and Rigney claims that the purpose of such history is because the writer makes an attempt to shock us in the political awareness.

Mathieson mentions that Sethe tries to re-taste and memorize two traumas: trauma of motherhood and trauma of slave heritage. He says that Morrison in order to comprehend that past invokes the maternal emotion; a mother and child finally accept each other's self-sufficient identity under a normal condition. Another critic is Fitzgerald who says that the psyche is created within relationships of the characters.

She reviews the similarities between slavery and classic psychoanalysis through pre-Oedipal requirement which rejects the independence of others.

Fitzgerald highlights some discourses such as, the dominant of slavery that rejects the meaning of humanity, autonomy and familial relationships. In the discourse of *Beloved's* slavery, the main characters are objects and try to become the subject in other discourses, and each protagonist experiences a crisis which evokes psychic trauma in the story. Another one is maternal discourse in which memories of Seth's babyhood are stimulated by her maternal discourse and a psychic trauma. Next is the discourse of masculinity which Fitzgerald refers to Paul D's subject position that is endangered by Beloved's temptation. The last one is the discourse of black solidarity in which slaves put themselves in danger for each other.

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## THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY IN THE RELATION BETWEEN PARENT-ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIP AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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### ABSTRACT

Factors influencing academic performance among adolescents are the hot topic of all time. The present study investigated the relationships between parent-adolescent relationship, academic self-efficacy and academic performance among adolescents in Malacca, Malaysia. One step ahead, the present study further examined the mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance. For this purpose, a total of 446 secondary school students were recruited to participate in the present study. The findings revealed significant association between academic self-efficacy and academic performance. Although Pearson correlation analysis also revealed significant association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance, but the association was no longer existed after controlling for academic self-efficacy. In addition, Sobel test and bootstrapping also confirm indirect effect of parent-adolescent relationship on academic performance. Clearly, the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance was fully mediated by academic self-efficacy. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research were provided.

**Keywords:** Academic self-efficacy, Parent-adolescent relationship, Academic performance

## INTRODUCTION

Getting good results in examinations is always of great interest to all students. Sadly, the current education system in Malaysia put heavy merit on academic achievement among the students (Malaysian Bahá'í Community, 2012). Adolescents who achieve good grades in examinations are believed to have better opportunities for higher achievement than those who perform badly in examinations. Moreover, existing evidences pointed that lower academic performance is significantly associated with various problematic behaviors (Choi, 2007; Li and Armstrong, 2009) and higher chance for teenage pregnancy (Kirby, 2002). For this reason, many parents are pushing their children to extra after-school classes to "ensure" they achieve good grades in examinations. Fuels by the excessive academic expectations from parents, many adolescents are competing with each others in term of examination grade. Most adolescents perceive academic failure as a nightmare which is unpleasant and undesirable.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Parent-Adolescent Relationship and Academic Performance

From the wide pool of literature, parent-adolescent relationship can be considered as one of the most notable contributing factors for adolescents' academic performance (Brkovic, Keresteš & Levpušek, 2013; Chen, Liu & Li, 2000; Gavazzi, 2011). It is generally accepted that the relationship quality between adolescents and their parents can greatly affect their development. That is, warm and close relationship with parents will help adolescents to perform better academically. By contrast, conflicting relationship with parents will increase the risk for academic failure among adolescents (Nebel-Schwalm, 2006). Attempting to confirm the association, Dotterer, Hoffman, Crouter and McHale (2007) conducted a longitudinal study involving 168 families with adolescent offspring. The results showed that parent-adolescent conflict in Time 1 is negatively correlates with academic achievement in Time 2 (two years later).

Echoing from the early findings, one recent study in Malaysia also found adolescents with poor academic achievement reported higher level of parental rejection than high academic performance counterparts (Abdullah, Lim & Ooi, 2015). Hence, there is reason to believe the positive association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance.

Yet, the association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic achievement remains questionable. It is worth noting that adolescence is a stage where parent-adolescent relationship restructures, where many adolescents will strive for autonomy and detach from their family (Fleming, 2005; Williams, 2003). There is no doubt that the journey to autonomy is accompanied by increased parent-adolescent conflicts and reduction in the quality of parent-adolescent relationship (Mann, Harmoni & Power, 1989). Even under such circumstances, many adolescents still manage to maintain excellent academic performance despite the weakened relationship with parents. In the light of this consideration, it is probable that parent-adolescent relationship alone is insufficient in explaining the deviation in adolescents' academic performance. In an attempt to understand this deviation, the present study hypothesized that academic self-efficacy mediates the relationship between the parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance.

#### The Mediating Role of Academic Self-Efficacy

Academic self-efficacy refers to the confident level of an individual in achieving various academic tasks (Ferla, Valcke and Cai, 2009). Theoretically, academic self-efficacy is a tool for adolescents to evaluate the academic tasks they faced. More precisely, adolescents with high academic self-efficacy tend to feel confident in their academic skills and view the academic tasks as challenges (Hayashi, 2012). The positive attitude will motivate them to develop strategies to overcome the academic tasks. By contrast, adolescents with low academic self-efficacy tend to doubt on their academic skills and view the academic tasks as threats. Hence, they tend to be demotivated by the "threats" and arouse avoidance in academic tasks.

Given the nature of academic self-efficacy, there is considerable research which agreed on the positive association between academic self-efficacy and academic performance (Byrne, 1996; Guay, Marsh & Boivin, 2003). As reported in a meta-analysis conducted by Valentine, DuBois and Cooper (2004), adolescents with high academic self-efficacy are prone to engage in achievement-related behaviors and strive for academic achievement. For instance, they may put more efforts in completing homework and doing revision. These behaviors will enhance their academic skills, which will directly improve their academic performance.

Referring to the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), adolescents' self-efficacy is highly influenced by the social factors. That is, adolescents tend to learn from their environment through role-playing and mimicry. Given the family context as the initial source of self-efficacy for adolescents, warm relationship with parents will provide better environment for adolescents to sharpen and master academic skills. For instance, supportive parents might provide proper guidance to help the adolescents in completing school works. Mastery in academic skills will generate a sense of confidence in handling various academic tasks. Moreover, encouragements and appraisals from parents will further strengthen adolescents' confidence in their academic skills. Conversely, adolescents with loose and conflicting relationship with parent might be less confidence and have doubt in their academic skills. For instance, conflicting home environment will distract and demotivate adolescents to study.

Based on the above rationale, it seems reasonable for academic self-efficacy to mediate the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance. In other words, the lack of supportive home environment will jeopardize adolescents' confidence in completing challenging academic task, which will ultimately lead them to poor academic performance (Dotterer et al., 2007). On this account, the present study aimed to investigate the mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance.

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants and Procedure

Participants of the present study were 446 secondary school students from Malacca, Malaysia. More specifically, the age of the participants ranged from 13 to 19 years old, where the average age was 16.34 years old (standard deviation = 1.893). As far as the participants' gender is of interest, the gender breakdown of the current study was 211 males (47.3 percent) and 235 females (52.7 percent).

Upon acquiring permissions for collecting data in secondary schools from Ministry of Education Malaysia and Malacca Education Department, permission for entering secondary schools to collect data were requested from four randomly chosen secondary schools. Following that, trained enumerator was sent to the secondary schools who agreed to participate in the present study. Prior to distributing of the questionnaire, the objectives of the present study were explained to the potential participants. Besides, informed consents were sought from all potential participants. All questionnaires were collected on the spot at the same day.

### Instrumentation

The questionnaire of the present study was designed in three sections. The first section required the respondents to provide detail of personal background, which include gender and age. Besides, the respondents were required to report the average score during the last examination. This item was designed as 7-point likert item, where higher rating indicates better academic performance.

Parental Attachment Questionnaire developed by Kenny (1990) was implemented to measure parent-adolescent relationship among the respondents. This instrument consisted of 55 items designed in 5-point likert scale. The respondents are required to rate their relationship with parents. There are three subscales under this instrument, namely affective quality of relationship, parents as facilitators of independence and

parents as source of support. The sum of total score from all subscales will yield general parent-adolescent relationship, where higher total score indicates more positive relationship with parents. Examples of item are "In general, my parents are persons I can count on to provide emotional support when I feel troubled" and "When I go to my parents for help, I feel confident that things will work out as long as I follow my parents' advice". This instrument is generally reliable, where the Cronbach's alpha was 0.916.

Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire developed by Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade (2005) was implemented to measure academic self-efficacy. This instrument consisted of 27 items which required the respondents to rate their confident level in achieving the stated academic tasks. The response was designed in 11-point likert scale, where 0 indicates "not confident" and 10 indicates "extremely confident". There are four subscales under this instrument, which are interaction at school, academic performance out of class, academic performance in class and managing work, family and school. Summing up the total score from all subscales will yield general academic self-efficacy. Examples of item of this instrument are "Preparing for exams" and "Asking questions in class". The reliability test showed that this instrument is reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .942)

## RESULTS

### Correlation between Variables

Pearson correlation was performed in order to analyze the relationships between parent-adolescent relationship, academic self-efficacy and academic performance. The result was displayed in the Table 1. In general, academic performance was positively associated with parent-adolescent relationship ( $r = 0.143$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and academic self-efficacy ( $r = 0.304$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). In addition, significant positive relationship was found between parent-adolescent relationship and academic self-efficacy ( $r = 0.429$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlations		
			PA	ASE	AP
PA	191.657	26.940	1		
ASE	150.087	43.756	0.429***	1	
AP	3.877	1.454	0.143**	0.304***	1

Note: N = 446

SD = Standard Deviation; PA = Parent-Adolescent Relationship; ASE = Academic Self-Efficacy; AP = Academic Performance

\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

#### Academic Self-Efficacy as Mediator

The mediating effect of academic self-efficacy was tested with PROCESS macro. PROCESS macro uses ordinary least squares (OLS) regression in measuring the coefficients (Hayes, 2012). The result of the mediation analysis was displayed in the Table 2. First, the effect of parent-adolescent relationship (predictor) on academic self-efficacy (mediator) was tested. The result showed that parent-adolescent relationship was a significant predictor for academic self-efficacy ( $b = 0.697$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

The second model is to test on the effect of parent-adolescent relationship (predictor) on academic performance (dependent variable). The result displayed significant predictive power from parent-adolescent relationship to academic performance ( $b = .697$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

Parent-adolescent relationship and academic self-efficacy was simultaneously entered into the regression against academic performance in the third model. The result showed that academic self-efficacy was significant predictor for academic performance ( $b = 0.010$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). In addition, the predictive power of parent-adolescent

The mediating role of academic self-efficacy in the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance

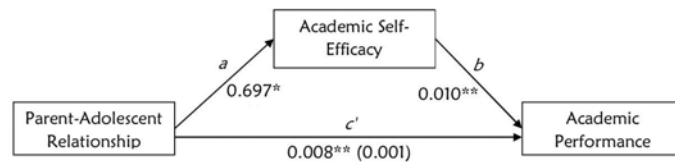
relationship on academic performance is no longer existed ( $b = 0.001$ ;  $p = .771$ ). This indicated that the association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance was weakened after controlling for academic self-efficacy. Altogether, the mediation analysis proposed a potential mediating role of academic self-efficacy on the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance. A graphical presentation of mediation model was displayed in the Figure 1 for better clarity.

Table 2. Standardized and unstandardized coefficients

Model	b	Standard Error	t
Model 1 PA $\rightarrow$ ASE	0.697***	0.070	10.014
Model 2 PA $\rightarrow$ AP	0.008**	0.003	3.035
Model 3 PA $\rightarrow$ AP	0.001	0.003	.291
ASE $\rightarrow$ AP	0.010***	0.002	5.952

Note: b = Unstandardized coefficients; Beta = Standardized coefficients; PA = Parent-Adolescent Relationship; ASE = Academic Self-Efficacy; AP = Academic Performance

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$



Note: \*\*  $p < .1$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Figure 1. Mediation model



Sobel test was conducted to test the mediation model. The result indicated academic self-efficacy mediate the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance ( $z = 5.098$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

In advance, the present study used bootstrapping to further test on the mediating effect. The number of bootstrap sample was set as 5,000 samples. Results of the bootstrapping confirmed the indirect effect from parent-adolescent relationship to academic performance, where the effect size is 0.007 with 95 percent BC confidence interval between 0.004 and 0.010. However, the direct effect is not statistically different from zero, where the effect size is 0.291 ( $p = 0.772$ ) with 95 percent BC confidence interval between -0.005 and 0.006. Hence, the result revealed that academic self-efficacy fully mediates the relation between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance among adolescents.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Consistent with findings of Pajares, Britner and Valiante (2000), the current study confirmed the association between academic self-efficacy and academic performance among adolescents. This might due to adolescents with high academic self-efficacy are more likely to engage in achievement-related behaviors while actively develop strategies to fulfill the academic tasks (Valentine et al., 2004). In contrast, adolescents with low academic self-efficacy tend to avoid from challenging academic tasks. Thus, it is conceivable that adolescents with higher academic self-efficacy tend to perform better academically than their lower academic self-efficacy counterparts.

On the other hand, while many of the past literatures agreed on the positive association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance, findings of the present study showed that the mentioned association is spurious. More precisely, the association between parent-adolescent relationship and academic performance is indirect and fully mediated by academic self-efficacy. That is, positive relationship with parents will help adolescents to develop stronger academic self-

efficacy, which will in turn improve their academic performance. This finding is supported by the concept of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986), where parents are an important source of self-efficacy for adolescents. Warm and supportive home environment allow adolescents to be more focused in their study. Proper guidance and encouragement from parents will give a boost on adolescents' academic self-efficacy. Conversely, conflicting and non-responsive home environment will distract adolescents from learning and hence undermine their confidence in academic skills (Dotterer et al., 2007). Having established the mediating role of academic self-efficacy, parents who hope their adolescent-age children to perform better in academic should maintain close relationship with their children, while providing supports and encouragements to improve the children's academic self-efficacy. Rather than blindly pushing children to after-school classes, improve their academic self-efficacy seems to be a wise and effective strategy to improve their academic performance. For instance, parents shall encourage and praise their children when they perform well in certain academic tasks, which will help to fortify their academic self-efficacy. As the consequent from improved academic self-efficacy, the children will be more motivated in overcoming the challenging academic tasks, which will in turn improve their academic performance.

At this point, it would be important to highlight some limitations of the present study. Most importantly, all participants of the present study are secondary school students enrolled in Malacca, Malaysia. Hence, implication of the findings beyond this scope should be given extra care. In addition, as the present study was designed as cross-sectional study, the causality among the variables is unclear. Longitudinal studies are most welcome to investigate in this issue.

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## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS, AND ENTREPRENEURIAL TRAINING ON ENTREPRENEURS' SUCCESS IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

There is no consensus among scholars on the specific determinants of entrepreneurs' success. The success rate of entrepreneurs is very controversial, due to its subjectivity and objectivity therefore the parameters to measure success were explored empirically. Literally, studies have argued for and against the relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurial training on entrepreneurs' performance at their enterprises. In order to explore on these controversies, this study was guided by human capital theory, while primary source of data collection was carried out by the researcher. The gathered information were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to explain the relationship among the variables under study. Thus, the finding depicted that there is significant relationship between the demographic factors on entrepreneurs' success among the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $\beta = .214$ ,  $p = .028$ ). Similarly, entrepreneurs experience is the most predictor of demographic factors in the study ( $\beta = .650$ ,  $p = .012$ ). However, the study shows that there is no relationship between entrepreneurial training and entrepreneurs' success among the sampled SMEs ( $\beta = -.014$ ,  $p = .852$ ). Therefore, this study suggest for further empirical studies in Nigeria to ascertain the determinants of entrepreneurial success, perhaps using other variables such as personal qualities, management competencies, and environmental factors.

Keywords: Age, Demographic Factors, Education, Experience, Entrepreneurs' Success, Entrepreneurial Training

## INTRODUCTION

The success rate of entrepreneurs is very subjective and objective in nature because of the parameter to measure success is highly contentious. Although, there is misinterpretation of what constitute success sometimes among scholars. Entrepreneurs' success is the rate of success of an entrepreneur over a set of firms and during a given period of time (Barreto 2013). For instance, if a firm goes on after first five years, then it is a successful firm (Cooper et al. 1988; Maharati & Nazemi 2012). There is no consensus among scholars on the specific determinants of entrepreneurs' success. This is as a result of wide range of fields involve in entrepreneurship studies, such as economic, management, psychology, organisational behaviour, education, sociology, political science among others. The multidisciplinary natures of the study of entrepreneurship lead to different perspective of what actually determine entrepreneurial success (Amit et al. 1993; Maharati & Nazemi 2012; Raduan Che et al. 2006; Solymossy 1998). The different in discipline of scholars in entrepreneurship give room for many perspectives on entrepreneurial success determinants.

For instance, Ucbasaran, Westhead, Wright, & Flores (2010) examined human factors like knowledge, experience and competencies as a determinants of entrepreneurs' success; Ramana, Aryasri, & Nagayya (2008) looked at the environmental factors such as capital market, changes in government policies and regulations, strategies adopted by the competitors, economy conditions to mention few as a determinants of entrepreneurs' success; Deniz, Boz, & Ertosun (2011) examined the relationship of entrepreneurs cognitive and emotions on entrepreneurial success while Duchesneau & Gartneir (1990) and Sharir & Lerner (2006) investigated personal factors of entrepreneur such as education, experiences on their success rate.

Literally, studies have argued for positive relationship between demographic factors such as entrepreneurship education-training (EET) and entrepreneurs experience on the performance of enterprises (Dickson et al. 2008; Martin et al. 2013; Sánchez 2013; Bechard & Gregoire 2007). However, most of these studies are conducted in developed economies, while scanty research has been carried out in emerging economies like Nigeria. It is on the basis of foregoing, that this study aims to determine the relationship between demographic factors of entrepreneurs as a predictor of success among small businesses. Thus, age of the business owners, education, training and previous experiences are considered necessary as demographic factors for this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This part of the paper shall dwell on human capital theory as the grounded theory for this study. At the same time explain the concept of entrepreneurs' success as discuss by different scholars. Similarly, the dimensions of demographic factors will be extensively discussed while the relationship between these dimensions as explained by earlier researchers would not be left out.

### Human Capital Development Theory

The questions that often disturb scholars and practitioners alike are why are some businesses surviving and others are disappearing into a thin air? Entrepreneurship scholars are curious to know the rationale behind successfulness and failure of some enterprises taking into consideration non availability of criteria for measuring the performance of business across globe. Thus, to answer this question requires a theoretical postulation on the determinants of entrepreneurial success.

Theory is a statement of invariant relationship among a measurable phenomenon with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomenon (Asika 2000). Therefore, the explanation of entrepreneurial success in this study is drawn from



management school paradigms. Although, economic and strategic foundations predicts that individuals or groups who possess greater levels of knowledge, skills and other competencies will achieve greater performance outcomes than those who possess lower levels (Polyhart and Moliterno, 2011 as cited in Martin et al., 2013).

Similarly, the managerial school view success of entrepreneurs from good general management skill, appropriate training and experience, accurate record keeping and political involvement (Zimmerman & Chu 2013). Meanwhile psychological traits, social networks and environmental conditions are also a determinant of a successful entrepreneurs (Kara et al. 2010; Tang & Hull 2012). However, for the purpose of this study entrepreneurial success determinants shall be view from managerial perspective using investment in human knowledge, experience and education as a yardstick for entrepreneurial success. Thus, human capital is an investment in individual skills and knowledge which will enable entrepreneurs to perform exceptionally at the time of discharging their responsibilities.

According to Becker (1964 as cited by Obschonka, Silbereisen, Schmitt-rodermund, & Stuetzer, 2011) adequate training will enable the entrepreneurs' to understand the industrial conditions, maintaining accounting records and increases the entrepreneurs' drive for independence through investment in human. Benzing, Chu, & Kara (2009) in their study concluded that investment in human capital, it is resultant effect will lead to reputational honesty, charisma/friendliness, hard-working, good customer relationship and provisions of quality products which are all key factors of entrepreneurs' success. Human capital encompasses all of the experiences, skills, judgement, age, abilities, knowledge, contracts, risk taking and the wisdom of the entrepreneurs that are associated with the business. The human capital development framework views employees, as an asset to the enterprise whose value will be enhanced by the development (Coleman 2007; Rauch et al. 2005).

Martin et al. (2013) see human capital as the trained and generally literate working force, skilled artisans and members of the learned professions, the entrepreneurs, and the skilled government administrators. They stressed that the basic requirements for

the faster development of the nations of the world is more education and training at all levels. Thus, age, entrepreneurship training, educational level of the entrepreneurs and experience should be seen as some of the basic requirements of starting and running successful business (Ladzani & van Vuuren 2002). These four dimensions of human capital investment namely age, education, experience and training are discussed further in the subsequent section of this paper to show the correlation between the variables, particularly on the entrepreneurial performance such as growth in sales, growth in profit, growth in personal income among others after these investment has been acquired.

#### Entrepreneurs' Success and its Relationship with Demographic Factors

The conceptualisation of Entrepreneurs' Success among scholars is very controversial and highly debated in literature. Although, many parameters have been used to measure the success rate of entrepreneurs but these parameters are still contentious. For instance, Kirchhoff cited in Nickels et al (2010) argued that there are misinterpretations on what was considered failure rate of entrepreneurs because what is refers to as a failure might be changed in business form which were tagged as "failure" category-even though they have not failed at all. Therefore, argued that there must be standard criteria to measure the success rate of entrepreneurs rather than using different indices by different scholars.

Rosni (1994) refers to entrepreneurs' success as the respondents scored card with reference to net profit, expenses, sales, and client served per year in comparison to previous years. This definition sees entrepreneurs' success from both financial and non-financial measurement, whereby success was recorded from organisational performance angle (Genty, Idris, Wahat, et al. 2015). The financial parameter of success can be measured using indices such as growth rate of sales, growth in employees, profitability rate, return on assets (ROA), return on sales (ROS), return on employees (ROE), return on investment among others (Maharati 2010; Raduan Che et al. 2006; Solymossy 1998; Wang & Ang 2004). The non-financial success measurement on the other hand, is attributed to the changes in the position of the

venture after its operation for more than 5 years, which can be measured in term of survival rate, creation of value to customers, self-achievement, being recognised, and sustainability of the venture to mention few (Jo & Lee 1996; Maharati 2010; Yang 1998).

Entrepreneurs' success seems to be related to the amount of initial capital (Cooper et al. 1988). Thus, firms that have more than initial capital tend to be more successful according to the scholars. Rauch & Frese (2000) sees entrepreneurs' success as that individual level of analysis using personality, human capital, goals, strategies, and environment of the individual owner profitably to success in these firms. The profitability and the degree of growth in these contexts are based on the following parameter namely return on assets (ROA), return on sales (ROS), return on employees (ROE), growth rate of assets (GRAS), and growth rate of employees (GREP). This analysis emphasized that the degree to which the firm has utilised and grow in terms of assets, sales as well as employees determine the entrepreneurs' success (Erofeev 2002; Jo & Lee 1996; Lau 2002; Maharati 2010; Solymossy 1998; Rauch & Frese 2000).

Generally speaking, "success attended to those entrepreneurs who were involved in a founding team, who had education and relevant experiences, who had owned previous businesses, who started business similar to those they had left, who are matured in age, who came from large firms, and who had more initial capital" (Cooper et al. 1988). Therefore, it can be argued that demographic factors such as age, education, training and experience are some of the determinants of entrepreneurs' success. It should be noted that for entrepreneurs' success to be achieved their must be an integrative propose model for the combination of behavioural characteristic, competencies skills, and experience from the side of entrepreneurs (Choo 2006). Choo (2006) further argued that successful entrepreneurs' experiences cannot be replicated but can be used to build a theory which if nascent entrepreneurs adopt might promote success in their new ventures. Based on the foregoing, we hypothesized that:

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*H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Demographic factors and entrepreneurs' success among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria.*

#### Age

The concept of age is very difficult to define most especially while linking it to the performance of individual like entrepreneurs. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary refers to age as the number of years that a person has lived or a thing has existed. That is, a particular period of person's life or object. Therefore, it can be argued that the way an individual lives his or her life is a function of the person's age. This is so because age is a process of growing.

Age constitutes a vital demographic parameter in describing among others, the characteristics of the population (Wahab 2003). Thus, age attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. It is that human characteristics, capability and productivity impetus which enhances knowledge and skills. The human capital theory has undergone a rapid development. Within its development, greater attention has been paid to age related aspects. Though, this is much related to individual perspective.

Basically, the performance and success of individual's is facilitated by the acquired education, training, experience and environment but this is often propel by individual age (Akingbola 2009). Human capital investment is any activity which improves the quality of the workers. No wonder Bontiss et al as cited in Oloba (2009) define human capital as the human factor in the organisation. Therefore, the combined intelligence, age, skills, and expertise that give the organisation its distinctive character are the elements of human capital.

Conclusively, human capital as a phenomenon using the demographic factor such as age is sources not only to motivate workers and boost up their commitment but it also pave way for the generation of new knowledge for the economy and society in

general. In this study however, the respondents age distribution are categorised into 5 groups namely 20-28 years, 29-37 years, 38- 46 years, 47-55 years, and 56 years above.

#### Entrepreneurship Education

Education is thought of as being broader in scope than training. Its purpose is to develop individual in a formal setting such as school (university or college) through the acquisition of general knowledge and the development of basic mental ability in a central-distinction. Entrepreneurial education is the degree to which an entrepreneur was educated ranging from high school to PhD (Jo & Lee 1996). Therefore, education is primarily concerned with increasing general knowledge and understanding of total entrepreneurial environment.

Entrepreneurship education “provides better understanding on how learners across culture and educational backgrounds engage and involves in learning process through a multi-dimensional sense of responsibility, independent ways of thinking, and the ability to connect to one’s own and other peoples’ needs” (Mueller & Anderson, 2014:500). Thus, education appears to be one of the important indices for venture performance but this has not been empirically proven in recent time. Jo & Lee (1996) argues that entrepreneurs education has a more positive influences on profitability than other demographic factor such as experience because it give a substantial understanding as well as provide certain information relevant to market or product that the entrepreneurs involves.

Dickson et al. (2008) argues that there is positive effects of general education on the performance of entrepreneurs due to the fact that education taught students on how to put theory into practice as well as demonstrated on understanding of entrepreneurship. Therefore, students are expected to gain self-confidence and motivation, become proactive, creative, and learn how to work on a team during their education attainment periods. Although, some scholars have criticised the significant of education on entrepreneurs performance based on the assumption that

education only focused on exploitation of opportunities without offering entrepreneurial skill development necessary for competencies (Green 2013; Sánchez 2013). That is, most entrepreneurial education only concerned with the establishment or starting-up of new ventures without necessarily consider the performance of the entrepreneurs thereafter.

Dickson et al. (2008) sees general level of entrepreneurial education as one of the determinant of successful entrepreneurs because the entrepreneurial activities that leads to profitability, growth in sales volume, venture survival rates, wealth accumulation among others are logical end result of education attained. These researchers argued for positive significant relationship between the general levels of entrepreneurial education on the outcome of the entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, Rae (2007) argues that education is significant in developing capacities in entrepreneurs, therefore entrepreneurial education programmes should concentrate much on student competencies development as well as other skills required later in the market context. Aside the personality and cognitive factors, entrepreneurship education also focused on developing task self-efficacy (Bechard & Gregoire 2007). In contrast, some studies have shown a negative correlation between entrepreneurial educations on the entrepreneurs' performance. Though, human capital theory predict individual with greater level of skills, competencies and knowledge will achieve better result than individual with lower level of such components, but these are sometimes unattainable (Martin et al. 2013; Honig 2004). In essence, what entrepreneurial education does is to improve and augment the competencies that lead to become self-employed. Nevertheless, some entrepreneurs are school drop-out yet there are successful but business environment is very complex which calls for essential entrepreneurial quality that can be acquired through education (Zhao, Li, Lee, & Chen, 2011). Yusuf (1995) points that the level of education and training act as a critical success factor among the South Pacific entrepreneurs in his study.

### Entrepreneurs Experience

Entrepreneurial experience according to Jo & Lee (1996) refers “to the experience which one obtains in the course of founding and organising the previous firm as an entrepreneurs”. That is, previous number of years and role played by entrepreneurs in their former ventures. It is unnecessarily means the entrepreneurs must be a top-manager but experience gathered based on previous firm participation in decision making about firm mode of operation. Thus, the experience might be obtained at the firm start-up stages or at the later stages provided the experience was gathered from equity holding and management. This experience could be related to unsuccessfulness or successfulness but must be related to number of previous years and the role played in the previous ventures or firms.

Though, studies have shown a high correlation of experience with performance of entrepreneurs (Duchesneiau & Gartneir, 1990; Gartner & Vesper, 1994; Jo & Lee, 1996; Sarasvathy & Menon, 2013). Sarasvathy & Menon (2013) studies the reason for the failure of firms and came to conclusion that success and failure of entrepreneurs depends on the experiences of the entrepreneurs in the business as well as the size distribution of the firms. Sarasvathy & Menon (2013) argued that experiences possessed by the entrepreneurs are a determinant of success or failure of the firms due to the fact that knowledge acquired by the entrepreneurs in their previous place will play a significant impact in the management of the new ventures. However, the study was limited to the use of observation as a method and mainly applies to entrepreneurs in the United States.

Similarly, Rae (2004) posited that working from a background of experience in the industry and expertise in the area of work is of value to the enterprise because it increases the chances of success for the business. His argument was based on practice theory of learning entrepreneurship. Although, Rae's (2004) analysis and explanation of entrepreneurs' success was too narrative in nature and the study based its argument on individual entrepreneurs success story which we consider not suitable to measure

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entrepreneurs performance after the acquisition of previous experience by the entrepreneur.

In Jo & Lee (1996) study, entrepreneurs experience was subdivided into experience related to management and industrial experience. The former are the management acumen possess by the entrepreneurs based on his/her previously in another organisation while the latter are the experience related to functional area or in line of business on previous organisation, particularly technological related experiences of the past ventures. There are other types of experience aside the aforementioned ones namely functional experience, experience in the line of business, and high-growth experience (Duchesneau & Gartner, 1990). Entrepreneur's prior experience can influence performance either positively or negatively, at the same time could be a stumbling block when drastic change is required (Case 1982). Duchesneau & Gartner (1990) study on the breadth of managerial experience reveals a significant effect of combined managerial and industrial experience on venture success.

#### Relationship between Entrepreneurial Training and Entrepreneurs' Success

There are series of debate among entrepreneurship authors and scholars on the internal determinants of entrepreneur's behaviour, whether there are inherited or learned. Some authors asserted the innate nature of entrepreneurial personality as an endowed and inborn psychological trait (Baum & Locke, 2004; Luca & Cazan, 2011; Zhao, Seibert, & Lumpkin, 2009) while others "social constructivist" are convinced that the entrepreneurial personality is a product of learning (Baron & Markman 2000; Torikka 2013; Ulhøi 2005).

Entrepreneurial training is an entrepreneurship programmes that focuses on the teaching of basic entrepreneurial skills, practice, business plan and the interaction of these components with practitioners in order to improve competencies and intentions of becoming business owners (Sánchez 2011; Torikka 2013). This training could be short term or long term but basically targeted at people who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs, self-employed or small business owners. That is,



entrepreneurial training is basically to educate somewhat narrowly by instruction, drill and discipline (Yoder as cited in Ogundele, 2012). In the words of Ladzani & van Vuuren (2002) and Luca & Cazan (2011), entrepreneurial training can be imported and adopted into a new context but four (4) criteria must be observed in order to record success namely programme content and style; identification and selection of trainees; follow up; and qualified instructors. Though, the debate about the degree to which entrepreneurship can be taught is inconclusive, however, studies have shown that education and training have a significant impact on decision making as well as other key aspects of entrepreneurship such as creation intention, performance, and self-efficacy (Dickson et al. 2008; Huang 2010; Torikka 2013).

Entrepreneurial training can be viewed from three (3) major perspective namely professional training, vocational training and entrepreneurial development (Echtner 1995). The professional training concentrate on theoretical analogies which often times, are carried out at the universities or other tertiary levels, and are basically designed for supervisory managers in every entrepreneurship setting while vocational training teaches skills that can be applied in practice, that is, frontline activities on daily running of entrepreneurship. The third component on the other hand, entrepreneurial development refers to initiative to work for oneself (Echtner 1995).

Ogundele, Akingbade, & Akinlade (2012) pointed out that one of the problems facing entrepreneurs is the lack of management skills and thus, suggested that entrepreneurs should have a good training in the art of management. Entrepreneurs need managerial skills such as conceptual and technical skills required for turning out the actual products or services of the firm, and are needed for performing specific activities within the organization (Ogundele et al. 2012; Salome et al. 2012; Idris 2014). This is because entrepreneurial training is "a structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurial competencies, which in turn refers to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth-oriented ventures" (Ogundele et al. 2012). The entrepreneurs' limited formal educations, as well as the entrepreneurs' substantial orientation to the past, and

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ignoring the future associated helping techniques are the major challenges on the failure of Nigerian entrepreneurs in small business enterprises (Osuagwu 2001).

Based on the foregoing, the researcher hypothesized that:

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Training and entrepreneurs' success among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria.

## METHODOLOGY

This study was guided by the earlier stated theory of human capital. Thus, extensive literature review was done in line with the theoretical background in order to ascertain the position of scholars with respect to demographic factors as a determinant of entrepreneurial success. Meanwhile, inferential statistical analysis was utilised by the researcher to maintain a status-quo on the relationship between the variables under study. Therefore, quantitative research design approach was considered necessary for this study because data were collected from the population in their natural environment for an intensive study and analysis.

### Sample and procedure

The population of the study are entrepreneurs in Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) of Lagos State, Nigeria. The unit of analysis are the entrepreneurs in manufacturing operation for a minimum of 5 years. These are entrepreneurs with employment capacity of 10 to 199 employees and have capital base of 50 to 500 million naira (\$9750 to \$97,500 thousands) according to Nigeria national policy on micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). A sample size of 307 using multi-stage sampling technique was employed to draw a representative sample for the study. The method is the combination of stratified and cluster sampling techniques. This is to allow for equal distribution of the population in a complex and heterogeneous given population (Asika 2000).

## Measures

In this study, the researcher adopted some instruments from the previous studies related to this present study with little or no modifications. The dependent variable is entrepreneurs' success which was measured with combination of profits growth, sales growth, satisfaction, and employees' growth because of the objectivity and subjectivity of these measurements. This study adopted the instrument on small business success from the research work of Benzing, Chu, & Kara (2009) and Owens (2003) with Cronbach alpha of 0.850 to 0.887. The instrument has 9 items in all for entrepreneurs' success with some statements for the entrepreneurs' to describe their success rate ranging from *not success*, *below average*, *average*, *neutral*, *successful*, and *very successful*. Again some statements were about the level of satisfaction with the business such as *not satisfied*, *very dissatisfied*, *dissatisfied*, *somewhat dissatisfied*, *satisfied*, and *very satisfied*. Similarly, some statements compare sales, employees and profit growth percentage with options to be ticked from the 6 Linkert scales type of measurement in this order; *negative*, *no change*, *below 5%*, *6-14%*, *15-24%*, and *25% or more*. The choice of the 6-point Linkert type of scale was based on the fact that it allows for more granularities when making a better decision (Dawes 2008).

Demographic factors and Entrepreneurial Training on the other hand are the independent variables in this study which has 13 items. Thus, 4 items demographic factor instrument was designed by the researcher with questions related to age, gender, experience of the entrepreneurs, and educational level of the participated entrepreneurs. However, instrument on entrepreneurial training was adopted from the work of Holton III et al. (2000). The 9 items instrument on entrepreneurial training was modified by the researcher and has a Cronbach alpha value of 0.830. This instrument used 5-point Likert's type scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represent *strongly disagree* and 5 represent *strongly agree*.

## DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, inferential analysis was utilised using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to determine the relationship between the gathered variables (demographic

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factors and entrepreneurial Training) on entrepreneurs' success. SEM is basically used to confirm model rather than to discover a new model and it has three (3) levels of analyses namely confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), measurement model, and structural model. The first two analyses are for data preparation while the last analysis deals with full execution of SEM

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for the Construct Validity

In the study, full CFA model was undertaken to depict the relationship between the construct items. Thus, the CFA is the first step in data preparation in SEM (Hair et al. 2010; Hayes 2013; Byrne 2010). Importantly, all standardized factor loading must be positive and more than 0.5. The below table revealed that its only items with factor loading greater than 0.5 are considered while the AVE above the threshold of 0.5 shows construct reliability. Therefore, the researcher assumed that the variables are valid to be used in the model testing.

Table 4.1 below show the CFA of the constructs used in the study.

Constructs	Items	1 <sup>st</sup> Order CFA $\geq$ 0.5	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order CFA $\geq$ 0.5	Average Variance Extracted > 0.5
Demographic Factors				0.574
	Age	0.394	0.693	
	Gender	-0.050	-	
	Education	0.047	0.086	
	Experience	1.072	0.609	
Entrepreneurial Training				0.685
	TOT 1	0.427	-	
	TOT 3	0.444	-	
	TOT 4	0.416	-	
	TOT 6	0.396	-	
	TOT 7	0.530	0.515	
	TOT 8	0.521	0.517	
	TOT 9	0.619	0.622	
	TOT 11	0.555	0.585	
	TOT 13	0.529	0.509	
Entrepreneurs' Success (ES)				0.913
	ES 1	0.254	-	
	ES 2	0.346	-	
	ES 3	0.306	-	
	ES 5	0.886	0.887	

Constructs	Items	1 <sup>st</sup> Order CFA $\geq$ 0.5	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order CFA $\geq$ 0.5	Average Variance Extracted > 0.5
	ES 6	0.884	0.884	
	ES7	0.881	0.881	
	ES 9	0.799	0.802	
	ES 10	0.663	0.660	
	ES 11	0.653	0.651	

#### Measurement model

"A measurement model should be developed based on theory and then tested with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)" (Hair et al. 2010). Therefore, measurement model is perceived as the second level analysis in SEM because it is basically concerned with data preparation. In order to test for model fit, Hair et al. (2010) suggested for 3 to 4 fit indices to establish model fit and the recommended fit indices include: Relative Chi-Square, RMSEA, and any one or two from GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI, and TLI. At the same time, for GFI, AGFI, NFI, and CFI to be an acceptable fit, it should indicate by a value higher than .90 (Byrne 2010; Hair et al. 2010). In this study, the measurement model depicts that model meet the fit indices after series of modifications and adjustments of the CFAs both first and second orders. The results of the Goodness-of-fit indices are as follows:

Table 4.2: Goodness of fit indices of the structural model

Goodness of fit Index	CMIN ( $\chi^2$ )	( $\chi^2/df$ )	GFI	CFI	IFI	TLI	RMSEA
VALUE	186.832 (p = 0.000)	2.631	0.923	0.937	0.938	0.919	0.073

Therefore, the researcher concludes that the measurement model is fit and the model is acceptable for structural model analysis.

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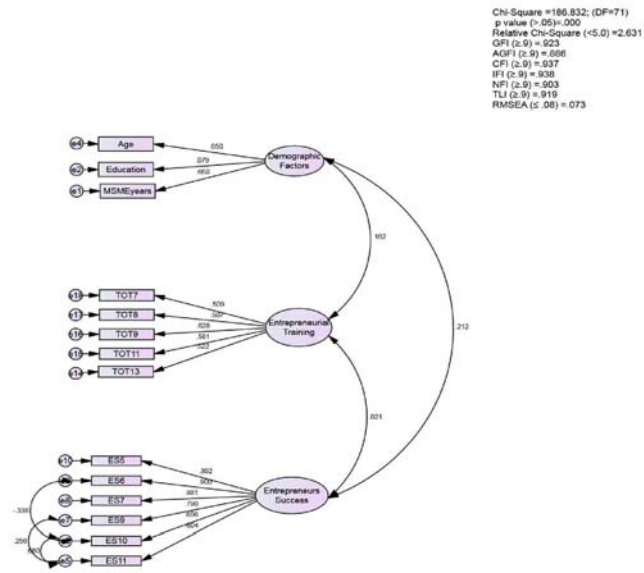


Figure 4.1: Measurement model for the study

#### Structural Model

In quantitative studies with stated hypotheses, the analysis of structural equation modelling using AMOS depicts that the structural model fit the Goodness-of-fit indices as illustrated in Figure 4.1 above. Prior to model testing, the level of significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ , while fit statistics of a particular path is indicated with standard regression estimate ( $\beta$ ) to determine the effect of one construct over the other.

Figure 4.2 below indicates adequacy of hypothesized relationship of the structural model, which means the structural model illustrated Goodness-of-fit indices with the

following values to be considered as acceptable model fit (Hair et al. 2010; Byrne 2010). These include: The relative Chi-square value of 2.631 is lower than the recommended threshold of 5. The CFI output is 0.937 is greater than recommended 0.90, the TLI have an output of 0.919 which is greater than recommended 0.90. The IFI yield good output at 0.938 and it is above the recommended 0.90 thresholds as well. The RMSEA output in the model is equally 0.073 and it is below the recommended threshold that is suggested not to be greater than 0.08.

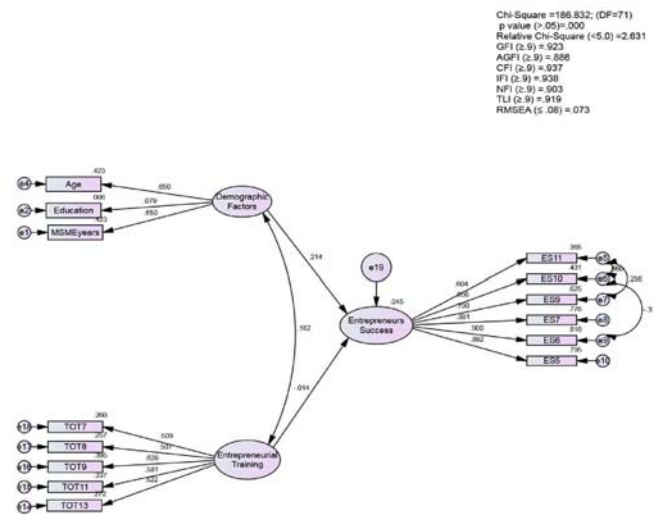


Figure 4.2: Structural Model to explain the relationship between demographic factors, and entrepreneurial training on entrepreneurs' success  
Note: TOT = Entrepreneurial Training; and ES = Entrepreneurs' success.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the above structural model in figure 4.2, individual path contributions in the structure were analysed based on the relationship between the constructs. Thus, table 5.1 below depicts the relationship between the variables under study based on the stated research hypotheses.

The structural model indicated that Demographic factors ( $\beta = .214$ , CR = 2.192,  $p = .028$ ) and Entrepreneurial Training ( $\beta = -.014$ , CR = -.186,  $p = .852$ ) are predictors of entrepreneurs' success. The contribution of both demographic factors and entrepreneurial training on entrepreneurs' success is estimated at 4.5% in the study. Among the demographic factors, experience possessed by Nigeria SMEs owners is the most predictive factors with ( $\beta = .650$ , CR = 2.509,  $p = .012$ ), this was followed by age ( $\beta = .650$ , CR &  $p =$  reference point estimates) that has a significant relationship to demographic factors in this study. It is worthy to note that 'reference point' in this study context is the minimum output estimates threshold for a construct or variables with a minimum of 3 items (Zainudin 2012). However, the relationship between educational level of the entrepreneurs to demographic factors is insignificant ( $\beta = .079$ , CR = 1.059,  $p = .290$ ). Meanwhile, there is a moderate positive relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurial training ( $r = .162$ ) among the sampled respondents in the study.

Table 5.1: Unstandardized (B) and Standardized Regression ( $\beta$ ) Weight in the Hypothesized Path Model

Hypothesized Relationship	B	S.E	$\beta$	CR	p
Entrepreneurs' success < --- Demographic Factor	.030	.014	.214	2.192	.028
Entrepreneurs' Success < --- Entrepreneurial Training	-.039	.211	-.014	-.186	.852
Experience < --- Demographic Factor	.572	.228	.650	2.509	.012
Education < --- Demographic Factor	.013	.012	.079	1.059	.290
Age < ----- Demographic Factor	1.000		.650	Reference point	



### Hypotheses Testing

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Demographic factors and entrepreneurs' success among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Figure 4.2 above revealed the analysis of SEM to show the relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurs' success. Having met the model fit indices, the model shows that there is a significant relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurs' success ( $\beta = .214$ ,  $CR = 2.192$ ,  $P = .028$ ), thus, reject H<sub>1</sub> which implies there is no significant relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurs' success among the manufacturing SMEs owners in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding from this study found support from the earlier work of Genty et al. (2015) on demographic factors as the predictor of entrepreneurial success among micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria. According to Genty, Idris, Wahizat, et al. (2015), the combination of education, training and experience of the entrepreneurs predicted the success of Lagos MSMEs owners estimated at ( $R = .285$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .071$ ,  $P > .05$ ). The outcome is attributed to the fact that entrepreneurs' success is a function of education, training, and relevant experience of the entrepreneur, because the personal qualities, management competencies and other factors are gathered by the entrepreneurs during demographic development stage. This also corroborates the work of Rae (2007) and Sarasvathy & Menon (2013).

H<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Entrepreneurial Training and entrepreneurs' success among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owners in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Going by the output from figure 4.2 above, the first model have considered a path in which demographic factors of the entrepreneurs was hypothesized on entrepreneurs' success among the manufacturing SMEs owners in Lagos State, Nigeria. The second structural path reveals statistical relationship between entrepreneurial training on

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entrepreneurs' success at  $p < 0.05$  level. The outcome of the model shows ( $\beta = -.014$ ,  $CR = -.186$ ,  $p = .852$ ). However, the structural model indicated that entrepreneurial training has not contributed significantly to entrepreneurs' success. Thus, the relationship of entrepreneurial training on entrepreneurs' success among SMEs owners in Lagos State, Nigeria is insignificant. The finding from this research contradict the work of Torikka (2013) who argued that entrepreneurial training enhances the potential of becoming successful franchisee. Similarly, this study finding contradict Akplu (1998) research outcome on the Transfer of Entrepreneurial Training In Small Enterprises Development in Ghana. This is an indication that in Nigeria context entrepreneurial training does not guarantee the success of entrepreneurs, perhaps due to the objective of the training, pedagogical method used by the trainee or the curriculum design of the training (Genty & Khairuddin, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

From the literature reviewed, it has been evident that the three demographic factors (education, training, and experience) are highly debateable among scholars as a determinant of entrepreneurs' success. Some scholars argue for demographic factors as predictors of entrepreneurial success while others are against these postulations. This implies that the study of demographic factors on entrepreneurial success is still inconclusive. Though, large quantum of the studies reviewed is conceptual in nature with very few quantitative studies. Thus, the relationship between demographic factors and entrepreneurial training as a predicator of entrepreneurial success requires further empirical analysis in Nigeria, perhaps using other variables such as personal qualities, management competencies, and environmental factors. Therefore, future empirical studies are recommended in order to investigate the relationship between education, training, and experience to entrepreneurial success.

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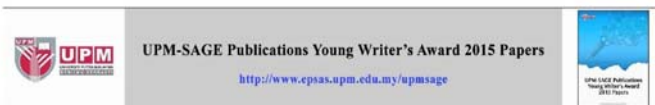


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## PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS IN ADOLESCENTS: SYMPTOMS, TREATMENTS AND RECOVERY

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### ABSTRACT

Psychosis is a serious mental illness that causes individuals to experience a reduced quality of life, while in severe cases, they can be harmful to both themselves and to others around them. When psychotic conditions manifest in adolescents, it also impairs their development. Early treatment of psychosis can significantly offset the damaging effects of this mental disease, especially among younger people. Unfortunately, there is limited information regarding psychosis in adolescents. This has caused a lack of understanding regarding this cognitive disorder, causing psychotic conditions in adolescents to often be overlooked by their guardians. This paper serves as tool for better understanding of this mental illness. Besides listing out the symptoms for identifying this disease, the current treatments available are also observed. It was found that more development is needed in the prescription drugs for psychotic conditions for adolescents, as the only ones available currently were developed for adults. Furthermore, the recovery process for these adolescents was plagued by prevalent societal stigma. Hence, it is obvious that more public awareness regarding this mental illness is necessary. There was also a very interesting observation in adolescents recovering from psychosis, as they were found to view their mental conditions positively.

**Keywords:** Psychosis, Schizophrenia, Major depressive disorder, Bipolar disorder and Brief psychotic disorder.

## INTRODUCTION

Psychological problems are known to have adverse effects on the wider health and development of adolescents. Common psychological conditions in adolescence, such as anxiety disorders, depression and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), is commonly acknowledge to be a vital concern by both the general public and psychiatrists. This is reflective in the vast amount of research and literature available regarding these psychological problems among adolescents. However, people generally tend to overlook psychotic disorders among adolescents when considering psychological conditions, although the effects of psychosis can be extremely damaging and distressing to juveniles.

Psychosis is a mental health problem that can be best described as a “loss of contact with reality”, as it causes sufferers to perceive or interpret things differently from those around them. People with psychosis, often referred to as psychotic, suffer from disruption in perception, thinking, emotion and behaviour. Its most common symptoms include hallucinations, delusions and formal thought disorders. It is important to note that an isolated psychotic symptom is not sufficient to diagnose a person to be having psychotic disorder, making the differential diagnosis of psychosis rather extensive. The occurrence of psychotic disorders and its symptoms have been extensively studied in adults; unfortunately there is a relative lacking of research on how often these syndromes and symptoms are present in adolescents. As of to date, specific prevalence rates for psychosis among adolescents is unknown. However, it is widely accepted that these disorders are less prevalent among adolescents when compared to adults.

As mentioned earlier, the symptoms of psychosis can be quite varied, while the variance in its diagnosis is substantial. Furthermore, there is a severe lacking in research for psychotic conditions among adolescents. For these reasons, accurately diagnosing youngsters whom are suffering from psychotic symptoms is extremely difficult. Besides that, there are several complications that arise even when adolescents are recovering from this mental disease, ranging from lack of properly developed

prescription drugs to societal stigma. Regardless, early treatment for psychotic conditions is important to ensure that the youngster does not experience the damaging effects too severely. The only way this is possible is by guardians being able to determine if the adolescents are exhibiting any of the known psychotic symptoms.

#### COMMON SYMPTOMS OF PSYCHOSIS IN ADOLESCENTS

Although the symptoms of psychosis can vary among sufferers, there are certain general symptoms that indicate the possibility of psychotic disorders among adolescents. An isolated psychotic symptom doesn't necessarily mean that the individual is suffering from psychosis, as it could also be caused by other psychological problems. Therefore, it is important for guardians of adolescents to immediately seek professional help if any of these symptoms are exhibited by the youngster.

##### Hallucinations

According to Findling et al., (2001), hallucinations can be defined as "a sensory perception that has a compelling sense of reality of a true perception, but occurs without external stimulation of the relevant sensory organ". This means that hallucinations can cause the distortion in sensation of any of the five human senses, although most common hallucinations are auditory and visual. Hallucinations are the most commonly observed symptom of psychosis. Psychotic patients have typically described hearing voices, either inside or outside of the head, and seeing a variety of visual images. While there also have been instances of psychotic sufferers to hallucinate smelling noxious or unwanted odour, tasting unpleasant substances and also the sensation of bugs crawling on or under the skin. It has to be noted that neurological conditions may also lead adolescents to experiencing these hallucination. As neurological conditions can be as harmful as psychosis, it is important that guardians do not dismiss any symptoms of hallucinations that adolescents might be experiencing.

## Delusions

Findling et al., (2001) defines delusions as "a false belief based on incorrect inference about external reality that is firmly sustained despite what almost everyone else believes and despite what constitutes incontrovertible and obvious proof or evidence to the contrary". Delusions, unlike hallucinations, are arbitrary or interpretational according to the individual conducting the observation. This is because the delusional is often used in a daily context to describe individuals who have "far-fetching" ideas or believes. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between delusions and overvalued ideas. Overvalued ideas can be best described as illogical or unusual believes that the individuals usually belief due to culturally supported beliefs, such as witchcraft. Delusions therefore are outside the realm of culturally accepted believes that can be best described as bizarre.

Delusions in the context of psychosis can be the belief that one's private thoughts are being projected outward so that others have access to them, something psychologists refer to as thought broadcasting. When considering youths, some have been found to be delusional to the idea that another individual of higher social or economic level, is in love with him or her. This delusion is referred to as erotomania, as is commonly dismissed by adults when witnessed in adolescents due to them perceiving it as "harmless imagination". Another common delusion experienced among psychotic adolescents is delusional jealousy, which is the unshakable conviction that one's boyfriend or girlfriend is engaging in additional sexual liaisons. This too is often dismissed in adolescents, being viewed as common teenage jealousy. Therefore it is important when such symptoms is witness in adolescents that they be accessed properly by professionals, as delusions are known to cause severe harms in terms of mood instability or elevation.

## Formal thought disorder

Perhaps the most significant symptom of psychosis is distortions in thinking. Researchers refer to the cognitive difficulties that are present in adolescent

experiencing psychosis as "formal thought disorder". Adolescent psychotic patients have been observed to present certain characteristics, such as rambling, illogical, overly vague or elaborate, repetitive speech or reasoning. Besides this, some researchers have also stated that psychotic juveniles tend to have unusual word choices and inappropriate breaks in their flow of speech. Although some researchers believe that disorganized speech and behaviour are effects of catatonia, although this itself is a symptom of psychosis.

Adolescents who suffer from these symptoms are sometimes thought to be exhibiting these symptoms due to still developing their cognitive functions. This is false, as after 7 years of age, children should not exhibit illogical thinking. Hence, evidence suggests that adolescents exhibiting cognitive difficulties are experiencing mental problems, most likely a form of psychosis.

#### TYPES OF PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

There are several different types of psychosis but when an individual experiences their first episode it is not always possible to determine which type they are suffering from. This is due to there still being no standard criteria that can be used to identify particular types of psychosis. To obtain a proper diagnosis, a comprehensive assessment is needed. Mental health professionals will require information from several sources to conduct a diagnosis, including the adolescent's own account, family history and physical examinations. However, diagnosis is still a difficult task for these professionals, as each adolescent's experience of psychosis may differ despite having similar diagnosis, meaning the symptoms they exhibit are different and they are affected by psychosis in different ways. Following are common types of psychotic disorders in adolescents:

##### Schizophrenia

Mental health professionals consider schizophrenia to be the archetypal psychotic disorder. Schizophrenia is both the most common and severe of psychotic conditions.

Some researchers estimate that almost 1 percent of the world population suffers from some form of schizophrenia. Adolescents experiencing schizophrenia exhibit all the core symptoms of psychosis, which are hallucinations, delusions and formal thought disorder.

Adolescents who have developed schizophrenia have been found to be "loners" as they have a history of being socially isolated or rejected. Similar to adults, young people with schizophrenia usually experience auditory hallucinations rather than visual hallucinations. However, some schizophrenia cases have recorded adolescents experiencing visual hallucinations, often being described as frightening. Besides hallucinations, delusions occur approximately in half of all juveniles with schizophrenia. These delusions have been found to increase in frequency and severity as a youth gets older. The hallucinations and delusions of adolescents with schizophrenia usually centre on their experiences, such as video games and school. Unlike adults, adolescents with schizophrenia do not exhibit poverty of speech content, but rather often fail to speak at the level of other youths of equal intelligence. Besides that, these youths have also been found to be very ambiguous when referring to people or objects.

Overall, males have been to experience schizophrenia at an earlier age compared to females. In the United States, nearly 40 percent of males who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia experienced their psychotic symptoms before the age of nineteenth. Hence, schizophrenia is not a rare disorder in adolescents. It is still not known why this cognitive condition occurs in the first place, although genetics appears to be a major contributor. Early detection of schizophrenia is important, as effective interventions at early stages have been found to contribute to better long-term recovery. Alongside treatments, family support is also important for these adolescents.

### Major depressive disorder (MDD)

MDD on its own is not a psychotic disorder, however severely affected youths with MDD have been found to develop psychotic conditions. Although schizophrenia is the most common psychotic condition among adults, MDD have been found to occur more frequently in adolescents compared to schizophrenia. Some researchers estimate that as many as 4 percent of adolescents have MDD. According to current mental health professionals, the diagnostic criteria for MDD is that a person must have either a depressed mood or lose interest in almost all activities for at least fourteen days. Besides this, adolescents experiencing MDD should also exhibit at least four other symptoms for MDD, some of the more prevalent symptoms being: significant changes in appetite that is associated with either weight loss or weight gain, insomnia or hypersomnia, psychomotor agitation or retardation, fatigue or loss of energy, feelings of insignificance, reduced ability to focus or think and repetitive thoughts of suicide.

MDD is not related to ethnicity or socioeconomic status, however it has been found to be three times more common in adolescent females than in adolescent males. As of to date, the precise cause of MDD is unknown. Interestingly, it has been found that children who have one depressed parent have two to three times the likelihood of developing MDD, hence indicating that MDD is influenced by either genetics or environmental factors. There are also data to suggest that stressful life events and having a dysfunctional family can cause MDD in youths.

Adolescents have been found to also describe MDD differently than adults. Adults commonly described it as sadness or depression, but juveniles often describe it as feeling of emptiness and lack of motivation. Adolescents suffering psychotic MDD have often experience auditory hallucinations. But unlike schizophrenia, these auditory hallucinations are of a single voice, as opposed to multiple conversing voices. This "voice" is very demeaning towards the individual, often invoking a sense of guilt or shame in the adolescent.



### Bipolar disorder

Similar to MDD, bipolar disorder are considered to be mood disorders. Bipolar disorders are less prevalent than MDD, affecting less than 1 percent of the population. Bipolar disorders are characterized by having both MDD symptoms and mania. Its common for adolescents to be initially diagnosed with MDD to develop symptoms of mania, therefore meeting the symptoms of bipolar disorders. Mania can be best described as specific and distinct period of time in which the individual has an elevated or irritable mood, these periods being at least one week long. During these mania episodes, adolescents often experience the common symptoms of psychosis.

Although the symptoms of bipolar disorder in juveniles are similar to that of adults, there have some distinct characteristics in adolescents. Adolescents showed symptoms of euphoria, grandiosity, hyperactivity and distractibility. A major effect of bipolar disorder in youths is that they commonly have dysfunctional and disruptive behaviours, making them unable to accept figures of authority. This often leads to school truancy or in more severe cases, criminal activities.

### Schizoaffective disorders

Schizoaffective disorder is the combined symptoms of schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, either simultaneously or different distinct periods. It is categorized as a distinct psychotic disorder rather than a mood disorder. It is less common than other psychotic conditions, hence having very limited research on it. This is especially true for cases involving adolescents.

Individuals suffering from schizoaffective disorders experience typical psychotic symptoms for at least fourteen days, while also experiencing distinct mood disorders. However, it must be determined that the mood symptoms are not occurring as a result of the psychotic symptoms; otherwise it should be diagnosed as schizophrenia. This disorder has been found to be twice more prevalent in women than men. Initially, it was believed that schizoaffective only affect adults, however recently there

has been some cases involving adolescents. There are almost no research conducted on adolescent with schizoaffective, making it very difficult for the detection and treatment of these youngsters.

#### Brief psychotic disorder

Brief psychotic disorder, formerly known as brief reactive psychosis, is a disorder that has all the characteristics of schizophrenia. The only difference is that this disorder causes the individual to have rapid onset of psychosis which resolves after a short duration (a day to a month). The person is then able to function normally. This disorder is perhaps the least understood psychotic disorder; even its prevalence among the general population is unknown. Besides that, there is almost no data on adolescents experiencing this disorder. However, there are still reasons to believe that this psychotic disorder is present among youngsters. There are some theories that adolescents who experience stressful events will experience this brief psychotic disorder. More research is needed in this area.

#### CURRENT TREATMENTS FOR PSYCHOSIS AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Treatments for psychosis are similar to most mental disorders, involving a combination of psychotherapy and medications. Sometimes self-help is encouraged for psychotic individuals. However, when it comes to adolescents, self-help is not advisable as these individuals normally do not possess the maturity to conduct such actions. Regardless, family support is vital for the rehabilitation process of adolescents suffering from psychosis. The least of treatments that are available for each respective type of psychotic condition is listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Treatments for psychotic condition in adolescents

Psychotic disorder	Treatment
Schizophrenia	Antipsychotic medications are vital for patients with schizophrenia. Unfortunately, these drugs have been found to cause extrapyramidal side effects, which can sometimes be fatal. As of to date, there is no antipsychotic treatment that is ideal for adolescents, therefore physicians need to observe these youngsters for aforementioned side effects when administering these drugs. Psychotherapy treatment should also involve the adolescent's family, as the family support system is vital for these patients.
Major depressive disorder	The most widely prescribed medications for adolescents with MDD is antidepressants, specifically serotonin selective reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). These drugs have been found to be safe for adolescents. Psychotherapy is vital for adolescent depression, especially Cognitive-behavioural therapy, as it has been very effective in treating adolescents with MDD.
Bipolar disorder	Lithium carbonate, carbamazepine and divalproex sodium are the most commonly prescribed medication. Besides that, psychosocial interventions are also used to help these young patients, alongside their respective families.
Schizoaffective disorder	Similar to schizophrenia treatments, antipsychotic medications alongside family-based psychotherapy are prescribed for adolescents with schizoaffective disorders.
Brief psychotic disorder	At present, there are no proven treatments for brief psychotic disorders in adolescents. Mental health professionals believe that if the symptoms cease within 48 hours, no treatments are necessary. However, if these symptoms continue beyond this period, antipsychotic medications are commonly prescribed.

## RECOVERY FROM PSYCHOSIS ACCORDING TO ADOLESCENTS

Recovery in the context of psychotic conditions is not the complete removal of the mental illness but the removal of the psychotic symptoms, in other words, regaining cognitive functions. This means that these individuals will commonly still be taking medications and attending psychotherapies, but will be recovered from their psychotic conditions. When adults were interviewed for their views on their psychotic condition and their recovery from it, they were found to be generally negative about

it. They saw the disease as having irreversible effects and also felt guilty about "pressuring" their loved ones with their recovery process. Interestingly, when adolescents were interviewed about their recovery, they had usually a more optimistic view.

Lam *et al.*, (2010) found that 66.6 percent of adolescents felt their psychotic condition was life enhancing. They said that the mental illness helped them to become more mature and to appreciate life more. Most of them also said they now had more meaningful relationships with loved ones, as these individuals were commonly present throughout the recovery process. Some even said they felt stronger and had a sense of control over their lives. This is attributed to popular culture nowadays being more receptive towards psychotic conditions, often portraying these individuals in a positive light. For instance, in a famous Japanese anime (which is very popular among youngsters) titled *Aku No Hana*, the main character is portrayed to be experiencing severe psychosis. This is a positive direction of popular culture, as it makes adolescents more open to this condition and thus improving recovery.

Adolescents did voice out concern on the possible side effects of their medications. This concern is not unfounded, as there are still no drugs being developed specifically for treating psychosis in adolescents. Besides that, another concern was the prevalent societal stigma. Societal stigma regarding psychosis has been in existence for a long time. This stigma normally arises due to being misinformed; these people often see these recovering individuals as a threat to those around them. Adolescents recovering from psychosis have pointed out that typically the older generation were more likely to ostracize them due to their mental illness. Some even stated that they were unable to continue their previously held part-time jobs due to this stigma. Therefore, more awareness is needed among the general public regarding this condition to avoid further harming recovering adolescents.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Psychotic conditions among adolescents are both common and harmful. The key to reducing these harms is through early detection, as early treatments have been found to do wonders. Therefore, it is important for guardians of adolescents to be highly observant of any possible symptoms being exhibited by these youngsters. However, there is still a severe lacking in the development of prescription drugs specifically for adolescents with psychotic conditions. Having to opt for drugs designed for adults instead can sometimes lead to fatal side effects for these youngsters. Besides that, there is also a need for more awareness among the general public regarding psychotic conditions among adolescents. Lack of awareness has led to a prevalent societal stigma, which erodes the quality of life of these adolescents while making recovery even more difficult. Regardless, the most important aspect of recovery for adolescents with psychosis is support from family and friends.

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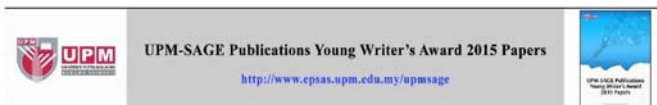
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Keeren is currently a PhD candidate at the Department of Biology, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Albeit having vast experience in the field of ecology, he always had a hidden passion for psychology. He credits this interest to his mum, Prema, who holds a degree in Early Childhood Psychology. He believes that individuals with psychotic disorders have always been misjudged by a misinformed society, thus by him writing this academic paper was his way of disseminating awareness.

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## THE IMPACT OF PERCEPTIONS OF TAX COMPLIANCE QUALITY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

As the economic factors are insufficient to explain tax compliance behaviour, tax literature evolves to socio-psychological factors. This study extends the “slippery slope framework” to further investigate how perceptions impact on voluntary compliance and enforced compliance. Quota sampling was employed with 340 usable responses from the self-employed group, employed group and student group in Malaysia. SEM Amos was conducted for hypotheses testing in addition to model fit assessment. The findings indicate that perceptions of power of authorities and trust in government enhance both dimensions of compliance quality, whereas trust in tax authorities merely increases enforced compliance. Besides that, conditional cooperation reduces voluntary compliance, while tax awareness enhances voluntary compliance. This paper tested the framework in an Asian context and more importantly, it contributes to the literature by exploring the impact of different dimensions of trust and morale on compliance. Furthermore, findings and inferences would help the policy makers to adapt appropriate strategies to optimize tax revenue.

Keywords : Tax compliance quality, Trust, Power, Conditional cooperation, Tax awareness.

## INTRODUCTION

The World Development Indicators conclude that a country level of development correlates significantly with tax revenues (OECD, 2013). In spite of that, inconsistency is observed by Daude, Gutiérrez, and Melguizo (2012). For instance, with similar GDP per capita, tax revenue in Jordan is 33 percent of GDP per capita, as compared to 13 percent in Guatemala. Followed by the economic view, another question is further challenged: Why do the majority of the Ghana's citizens pay taxes willingly, while most of the Serbia's citizens are reluctant to pay taxes? From the tax literature, it seems to be a common conflicting view that taxpayers are more honest in paying taxes than expected (Frey & Torgler, 2007; Kirchler, Hoelzl & Wahl, 2008), yet tax non-compliance has been persisting every now and then (Kasipillai, 2006; Marliza, 2012).

As tax gap substantially exists due to tax non-compliance, tax authorities are anxious to reduce tax evasion and increase voluntary compliance (Pentland & Carlile 1996; OECD 2010). In Malaysia, escalation in illegal economy (Marliza 2012) is alarming with 20 percent-30 percent estimated tax gap<sup>1</sup>. The tax audit framework is issued by the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia (IRBM) which comes into effect from 1 April 2013, aims to enhance voluntary compliance (to which the tax literatures claim as "enforced compliance") via penalising tax offences include tax non-compliance. Tax compliance outcome is a behavioural action to meet or on the contrary, to infringe the tax compliance standards (Braithwaite, 2010, 2011); where voluntary compliance is the behavioural outcome to comply accordingly without enforcement mechanism (Isa & Pope 2011). Generally, tax administrators would adopt "cop and robber" approach by taking probability of detection, enforcement and fines as useful tools to punish tax evaders. Such deterrence actions also are set as examples for other taxpayers to ensure they pay taxes obediently. Unfortunately, voluntary compliance would not be achievable with the exertion of deterrence power in the long run: More intensive strategic tax behaviour arises as the "fair share of taxes" is always contestable

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<sup>1</sup> Claimed by the director of Inland Revenue Board (IRB) at 2012 MIA International Accountants Conference



with increasing cash economy and aggressive tax planning, which is also known as tax avoidance or minimisation. Resistance defiance may take place with grievance in such command-and-control operational system because taxpayers may perceive the mutual trust between the authorities and themselves has been broken (Braithwaite, 2011). Therefore, it is argued that setting clear border between tax evasion and tax avoidance should not be the focus from the moral point of view (Sandmo, 2005), since both evasion (i.e. infringing law) and avoidance (i.e. exploiting loopholes within legal means) ultimately results in the reduction in tax revenue.

With the arguments above, this paper delves into tax compliance quality instead of identifying tax avoidance and evasion. Using the “slippery slope framework” (Kirchler, 2007; Kirchler et al., 2008) as the basis, this paper’s primary objective is to investigate whether perceptions of power, trust, tax morale, conditional cooperation, and tax awareness affect voluntary compliance and enforced compliance respectively.

Provided the earlier forgoing background, this research contributes in comprehending a deeper insight on citizens’ perceptions and social influences via studying additional predictors such as conditional cooperation, tax awareness, tax morale and its dimensions, meanwhile enabling the policy makers to realise that the desired compliance outcome could be derived from different compliance behavioural intentions (i.e. voluntary compliance or enforced compliance) for which eventually lead to relatively different tax collections and compliance cost.

The outline of this paper is organised as follows: Second section discusses the theoretical foundation in developing the present conceptual framework and research questions, followed by research methodology in the third section. Forth section contains data analysis with discussions, while concluding remarks and recommendations for future research are discussed in the last section.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Power of Authorities, Trust in Authorities, and Tax Compliance Quality

In 2008, Kirchler, Hoelzl, and Wahl develop the “slippery slope framework” (Figure 1) integrating economic and socio-psychological factors into “trust in authorities” and “power of authorities” in determining the impacts on tax compliance quality, which comprises voluntary tax compliance and enforced tax compliance. It is empirically tested that enforced compliance is achieved with high power and low trust, while voluntary compliance is achieved with high trust and mixed results for power (Wahl et al., 2010; Kogler et al., 2013). Power of authorities denotes the perception of tax authorities’ ability to deter evasion which significantly impacts compliance (Turner 2005), meanwhile correlates with trust with mix results (Lavoie 2008; Kirchler et al., 2008). In this study, we assume power to increase both voluntary compliance and enforced compliance.



Source: Kirchler, Hoelzl and Wahl, 2008

Figure 1: Slippery Slope Framework

Trust, on the other hand, is a belief that reflects a trustor’s expectation about the trustee (Gargiulo & Ertug, 2006). Taxpayers (trustor) who make tax payments would expect tax authorities (trustee) to administer the process effectively and efficiently.

whilst expecting the government would fully utilise the tax revenue for the benefits of the nation and citizens. Interchangeably, tax authorities and government (trustor) would expect citizens (trustee) to meet their tax obligation honestly. While the “slippery slope framework” operationalises “trust in authorities” as a construct to infer how significant trust could impact compliance; we take a step further to expand trust into two dimensions: Trust in LHDN<sup>2</sup> and trust in government. We are specifically referring to generalized trust, a common shared values creating regular expectations of regular and honest behaviour, which is generally extended to whom the trustees without direct interaction (Bjørnskov, 2006). We believe that trust in government takes crucial role to determine compliance quality (Daude et al., 2012). According to Hammar, Jagers, and Nordblom (2009), generalised trusts such as trust in government and legal system are also positively correlated with tax morale (Torgler, 2003) and are vital in determining actual and perceived tax evasion. As it has been widely proven that trust in authorities increases compliance over the world (Cummings, Martinez-Vazquez, McKee & Torgler 2005; Richardson, 2006; Kogler et al., 2013), this research investigates specifically if both dimensions of trust in authorities, i.e. trust in the government and trust in the LDHN, increase compliance quality.

#### Tax Morale and Tax Compliance Quality

Game-theoretic approach postulates the interchangeable behaviour of being honest and deceitful to maximise taxpayer self-interest under specific situational setting (Greenberg, 1984). However, calculative self-interest is unlikely sustainable in the long run (Williamson, 1993). Over here, we explore the construct of tax morale, an intrinsic value to pay taxes (Alm & Torgler, 2006) into two dimensions: “Self Morale”, the self-perceived morale, and “Other’s Morale”, a reversion of reflecting others’ self-interest and the influences on tax compliance. Devos (2008) empirically discovers that tax morale is impactful on compliance outcome though different results may be expected for both dimensions of tax morale due to the tendency of perceiving others with lower morale than oneself (Kaplan, Reckers & Roark, 1988). It

<sup>2</sup> LHDN stands for Lembaga Hasil Dalam Negari, an official language for tax authorities, the Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia

is expected in this study that both dimensions of tax morale to increase compliance quality.

#### Conditional Cooperation and Tax Compliance Quality

As the creation of reciprocity is well explained with the introduction of trust game by Blau (1964); Frey and Torgler (2007) further identify the social comparisons and cooperation level affecting compliance behaviour by developing the concept of pro-social behaviour. Conditional cooperation relates to social norms which is an important determinant to compliance (Sigala, Burgoyne & Webley 1999). It is therefore used as an independent variable in this study to examine would one be conditionally cooperative in paying tax according to the social norms they perceive (Rabin, 1998; Falk & Fehr, 2002).

#### Tax Awareness and Tax Compliance Quality

Apart from the social factors, understanding basic tax law and knowledge such as completing individual tax return correctly (Loo, Evans & Mckerchar, 2010) and awareness of the main purposes of tax collection and one's tax obligation (Devos, 2008) are equally important though there are very few studies differentiating tax knowledge and tax awareness. As this is a behavioural study, we only examine the significance of tax awareness on compliance quality (without considering tax technicalities and knowledge) while it is proven that tax awareness is impactful to the non-evaders' compliance behaviour positively (Devos, 2008).

#### Research Questions of the Study

Research questions are then developed as follows with the main objective to investigate determinants for both dimensions of voluntary compliance and enforced compliance:

1. Is there a positive relationship between power of authorities and compliance quality?

- 2(a). Is there a positive relationship between trust in government and compliance quality?
- 2(b). Is there a positive relationship between trust in authorities and compliance quality?
- 3(a). Is there a positive relationship between perceptions of others' tax morale and compliance quality?
- 3(b). Is there a positive relationship between perceptions of self-tax morale and compliance quality?
4. Is there a relationship between conditional cooperation and compliance quality?
5. Is there a positive relationship between tax awareness and compliance quality?

#### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This study is a cross sectional, quantitative research using non-experimental method by employing a five-likert scale survey instrument (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Pilot study was conducted and questionnaire was refined to enhance the understandability and clarity of the questions and instructions.

The questionnaire was mainly adapted from Wahl et al. (2010) and Rizal (2010) studies. It consists of seven sections with a total of 56 questions. Table 1 lists the section, variable and sources adapted by this study.

Table 1: Questionnaire Variables and Sources

Section	Variable	Sources
A	Trust in Authorities	Wahl, Kastlunger & Kirchler (2010); Kastlunger, Lozza, Kirchler & Schabmann (2013)
B	Power of Authorities	Wahl et al. (2010); Kastlunger et al. (2013)
C	Tax Compliance Quality	Braithwaite (2003); Wahl et al. (2010); Kastlunger et al. (2013)
D	Tax Morale	Devos (2008); Rizal (2010)

Section	Variable	Sources
E	Conditional Cooperation	Rizal (2010)
F	Tax Awareness	Rizal (2010)
G	Demographic Profile	

Quota sampling was applied into three groups: employed, self-employed and university students, with resident status. Any of these groups can be tax registrants paying taxes; tax registrants not exceeding threshold of paying taxes and non-tax registrants. It is argued that non-taxpayers' perceptions are as well significant to be included although they are yet to contribute taxes. And the main reason final year university students were included in this behavioural study is because they would likely be the tax registrants soon upon graduation, hence their perceptions towards tax compliance behavioural intentions are similarly crucial. 1,200 copies of the questionnaires were distributed personally by hand or via email throughout Malaysia, in return of 314 usable responses to proceed with data analysis, of which 106 representing the self-employed group, 124 representing the employed group and 110 representing the university student group. The respondents comprised 145 males (42.6 percent) and 195 females (57.4 percent); 169 Bumiputra (49.7 percent), 120 Chinese (35.3 percent) and 51 Indians (15 percent). Since one third of the samples consist of undergraduate and postgraduate students; employed group was mainly represented by the academics in various universities throughout Malaysia, and self-employed group was represented by agents and practitioners in various workshops and seminars, over half of the respondents were at 18 to 30 years old (58.8 percent), 34.7 percent were at the age of 31 to 50 years old, and only 6.5 percent were over 50 years old. 210 respondents (61.8 percent) were single and the remaining (38.2 percent) were married. There was only 3 percent respondents' education level at STPM and below, 55 percent were diploma or undergraduates, 35 percent were postgraduates, and 7% were professionals in accounting.

The framework is tested empirically through the two-step Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) process: Model fit and validity are initially measured via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), once the results are achieved at the satisfactory

level, model specification is applied in the second step to test the structural relationship of the model (Hair, 2013).

## EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows the measures of dispersion and normality mainly include mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. Given the mid-point of the five-likert scale as 3.00, mean per item for both trust in government and perceptions of others' tax morale are below the mid-point; conditional cooperation is neutral at mid-point; and the others higher than the mid-point. In general, the respondents acknowledged the legitimate power of authorities ( $M = 3.49$ ) and have trust in LHDN ( $M = 3.35$ ), but not expressing much trust in the government (mean = 2.75). Interestingly, they claimed themselves with higher voluntary compliance ( $M = 3.92$ ) than enforced compliance ( $M = 3.17$ ). On one hand, respondents perceive higher self-morale ( $M = 3.17$ ) than others ( $M = 2.85$ ), and deem themselves with relatively high tax awareness ( $M = 3.81$ ). Lastly, respondents expressed neutral in conditional cooperation behaviour ( $M = 3.01$ ). Overall, responses varied and deviated most for self-assessed tax morale ( $S.D. = 1.12$ ) and trust in government ( $S.D. = 1.00$ ) followed by perceptions of others' tax morale ( $S.D. = 0.92$ ) perhaps due to different demographical background and understanding level. Having said that, the distribution of data is assumed to be normal given all skewness and kurtosis of the collected samples range between -1 to 1.

Table 2: Distribution of Mean Scores

	Number of items	Range	Mean per item	S.D. per item	Skewness	Kurtosis
Trust_Government	4	4-20	2.75	1.00	0.17	- 0.64
Trust_LHDN	5	5-25	3.35	0.85	- 0.11	- 0.14
Power	5	5-25	3.49	0.74	- 0.22	0.36
Voluntary Compliance	5	5-25	3.92	0.89	- 0.72	0.28
Enforced Compliance	5	5-25	3.17	0.77	- 0.06	- 0.04

	Number of items	Range	Mean per item	S.D. per item	Skewness	Kurtosis
Morale_Others	3	3-15	2.85	0.92	0.31	0.06
Morale_Self	3	3-15	3.17	1.12	- 0.15	- 0.56
Conditional Cooperation	5	5-25	3.01	0.85	- 0.25	- 0.01
Awareness	4	4-20	3.81	0.82	- 0.56	0.36

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) measurement model

Confirmatory factor analysis was tested to assess the validity of the framework by examining the fit indices and evaluating the construct reliability. The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.062. RMSEA explains the lack of fit due to misspecification of the model tested. Despite that 0.05 RMSEA value and below indicates a close fit of the model, a value of 0.05 to 0.08 is considered acceptable. Secondly, CMIN/DF, chi-square(x /df) was 2.293. A value below two is preferred, still a value between two to five is considered acceptable. Thirdly, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) was 0.797, below the recommended minimum value of 0.90. Correlation matrix and composite reliability (CR) were presented in Table 3 and all constructs were reliable with values above 0.70. In order to enhance the model fit, several diagnostic measures were checked and rectified including the path estimates, standardised residuals and modification indices. Two items from the "Morale" construct and one item from the "Awareness" construct with low loadings (i.e., 0.50 and below) were removed. Besides that, modifications were done by setting free for parameters with M.I. 25 and above. After these diagnostic steps, the modified measurement model with improved fit was derived as presented in Figure 2. RMSEA decreased from 0.062 to 0.051 and CMIN/DF reduced from 2.293 to 1.888, indicating close fit within the range of 0.05 and 2.00. Although GFI was still below the recommended minimum value of 0.90 at 0.847, it was improved from 0.797 before modification took place. Subsequently, standardised residuals were reassessed and there were no residuals exceeded |4.0| after removals of low loading items.



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Table 3: Correlation Matrix

	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	0.801	1.000								
2.	0.936	-0.175***	1.000							
3.	0.920	-0.176***	0.602***	1.000						
4.	0.840	-0.160***	0.545***	0.699***	1.000					
5.	0.929	-0.205***	0.332***	0.397***	0.417***	1.000				
6.	0.805	0.083	0.131**	0.268***	0.428***	0.418***	1.000			
7.	0.793	-0.340***	-0.018	-0.126**	-0.064	-0.004	-0.173***	1.000		
8.	0.933	0.200***	-0.082	0.094	0.137***	0.134***	0.255***	-0.198***	1.000	
9.	0.759	-0.130*	0.299	0.433***	0.483***	0.543***	0.340***	-0.076	0.145***	1.000

Significance level: \*\*\* p&lt;0.001, \*\*p&lt;0.01, \*p&lt;0.05

Note:

- 1 - Conditional cooperation      7 - Other's tax morale  
 2 - Trust in government      8 - Self-Tax morale  
 3 - Trust in LHDN      9 - Tax awareness  
 4 - Power of authorities  
 5 - Voluntary compliance (DV)  
 6 - Enforced compliance (DV)

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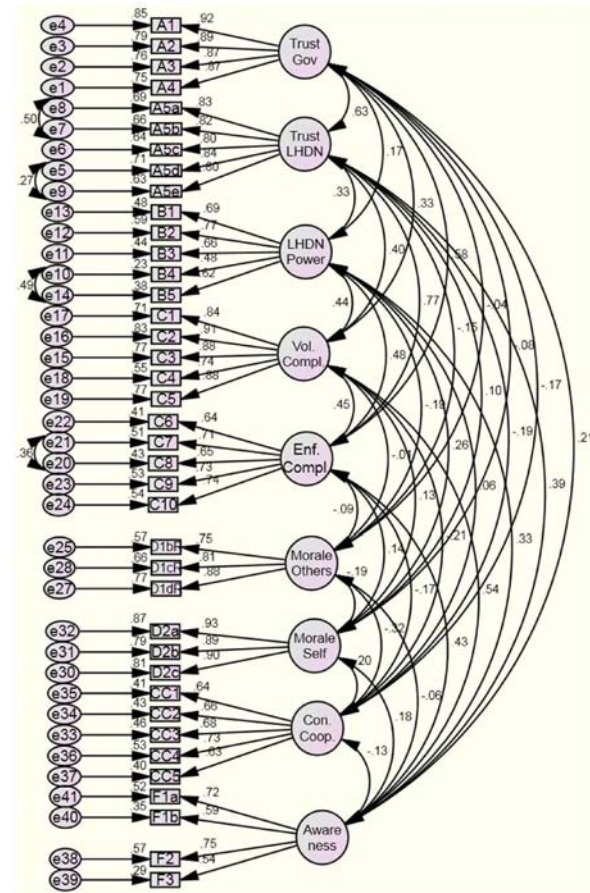


Figure 2: Measurement Model after Modification  
RMSEA 0.051, CMIN/DF 1.888, GFI 0.847

### Compliance model

The main purpose of specifying the structural model was to test the hypothesised conceptual framework by using free parameters (those to be estimated) and fixed parameters (those fixed at zero). Path diagram is depicted in Figure 3 after setting free the parameters with M.I.35 and above. RMSEA was 0.052; relative chi-square( / ) was 1.929; GFI was 0.844. As this is a recursive model, where the paths between constructs are directed only from the predictor construct to the outcome construct, such recursive structural model cannot fit better than the overall CFA model.

This research discovers that trust in LHDN contributes most in enhancing enforced compliance ( $\beta=0.458$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), followed by power of LHDN ( $\beta=0.239$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and trust in government ( $\beta=0.211$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). On one hand, tax awareness is the most significant predictor to increase voluntary compliance in the model ( $\beta=0.371$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), followed by power of LHDN ( $\beta=0.269$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and trust in government ( $\beta=0.161$ ,  $p=0.011$ ). Besides that, conditional cooperation reduces voluntary compliance ( $\beta=-0.139$ ,  $p=0.021$ ). It is in line with previous findings that trust and power increase compliance (Torgler & Schneider, 2007; Kirchler et al., 2008) with the new finding that calculative trust in tax authorities merely increases enforced compliance, not voluntary compliance. The expanded “slippery slope framework” in this study also further confirms past studies where tax awareness increases compliance (Devos, 2008). While Frey and Torgler (2007) claim that citizens are more willing to pay tax conditionally, this study explores a step and discovers that benchmarking others’ behavioural intentions for tax payments will reduce voluntary compliance. Beyond expectation, the concept of “actor observer bias” is supported where respondents tend to claim themselves with high tax morale meanwhile regard others with low tax morale (Kaplan, Reckers & Roark 1988), resulting contradict insignificant results in explaining compliance behaviour.

In sum, the inferences suggest that, if tax authorities adopt deterrence strategies in collecting taxes, they should be aware that perceived trust in tax authorities is highly regarded than perceived power to let citizens to feel the “forces” to pay taxes, and

perception of trust in government also plays a part in increasing enforced compliance behaviour among citizens. If authorities decide to develop synergistic tax climate which attracts voluntary compliance, imparting tax awareness among citizens should be the key area to focus on, then perceived legitimate power so that citizens acknowledge the fair treatment and willingly comply with tax regulations. Perceiving the country is ruled by trustworthy government enhances the willingness to pay taxes with the belief that the government will appoint the eligible authorities to administer tax matters. However, if individuals compare themselves with others and weigh cost and benefits of paying tax, such conditional cooperation behaviour will reduce their willingness to pay taxes unconditionally. It is noted that none of the dimensions of tax morale are supported in explaining the compliance quality. Therefore, it is further explored that actor-observer bias and self-observed bias take place, where individuals are predisposed in assuming tax morale in them and others, causing insignificant results in hypotheses 3. Last but not least, it was estimated that the predictors of enforced compliance explains 59.5 percent of its variance, and 42.2 percent as for voluntary compliance. A summary of these results is laid in Table 4.

RMSEA 0.052, CMIN/DF 1.929, GFI 0.844

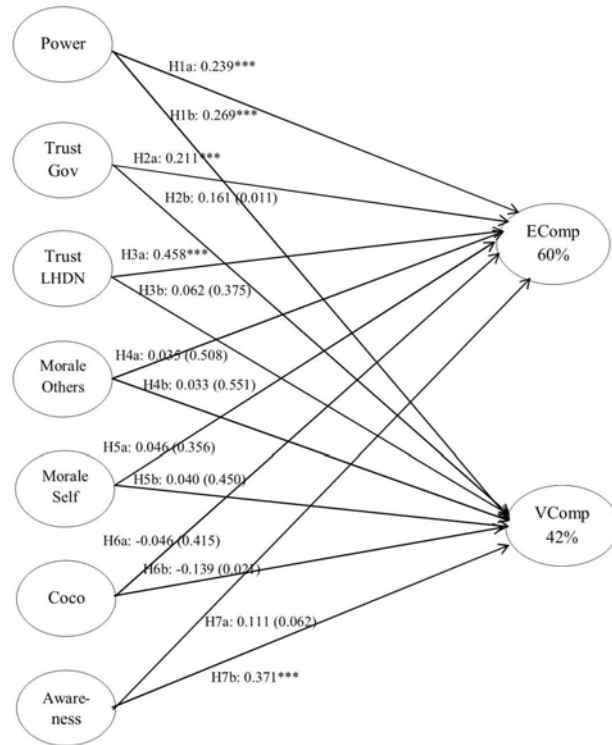


Figure 3: Compliance Model

Table 4: Summary of results of hypotheses testing for compliance model

Alternate Hypotheses		Results
H1a:	There is a positive relationship between power of authorities and enforced compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.239$
H1b:	There is a positive relationship between power of authorities and voluntary compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.269$
H2a:	There is a positive relationship between trust in government and enforced compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.211$
H2b:	There is a positive relationship between trust in government and voluntary compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.161$
H2c:	There is a positive relationship between trust in LHDN and enforced compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.458$
H2d:	There is a positive relationship between trust in LHDN and voluntary compliance.	Rejected
H3a:	There is a positive relationship between perceptions of others' tax morale and enforced compliance.	Rejected
H3b:	There is a positive relationship between perceptions of others' tax morale and voluntary compliance.	Rejected
H3c:	There is a positive relationship between perceptions of self-tax morale and enforced compliance.	Rejected
H3d:	There is a positive relationship between perceptions of self-tax morale and voluntary compliance.	Rejected
H4a:	There is a relationship between conditional cooperation and enforced compliance.	Rejected
H4b:	There is a relationship between conditional cooperation and voluntary compliance.	Supported $\beta= - 0.139$
H5a:	There is a positive relationship between tax awareness and enforced compliance.	Rejected
H5b:	There is a positive relationship between tax awareness and voluntary compliance.	Supported $\beta=0.371$

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study delves into tax literatures to review the significant economic and socio-psychological determinants which are influential to the compliance behaviour before developing a conceptual framework to investigate and explore the constructs which are believed to be crucial and relevant in determining the compliance quality. Although both enforced and voluntary compliance seem to achieve similar compliance outcomes, voluntary compliance is much preferred than enforced

compliance in the long run. As discussed earlier, enforced compliance would lead to strategic tax behaviour over time including aggressive tax planning and tax avoidance.

This paper contributes theoretically and practically by investigating and exploring the significance and impact of the factors on these dimensions of compliance quality. A survey instrument was adapted targeting employed, self-employed and university students with residence status in Malaysia to be the respondents. This study suggests the exertion of power to be one of the fundamental tools to force citizens' compliance behaviour, followed by the perceptions of trust in government. In other words, some citizens are forced to comply due to the probability of detection, and also the calculative trust in government and tax authorities they consider or perceive; whereby some willingly comply knowing that they are always being kept an eye on, and gradually they become discipline in meeting their obligation without grievance, which is contradictory with some studies (Wahl et al., 2010; Kogler et al., 2013). The willingness to comply and pay taxes is in fact very much influenced by the level of trust in government pertinent to the way tax revenues being allocated. As individual perceptions form social norms and subsequently shape the compliance behaviour, the behaviour of cooperating in meeting tax obligation conditionally reduces the willingness to comply. Citizens would only be willing to comply provided their peers are doing the same; or if they have weighed that they are receiving more benefits from the public goods by paying taxes. Moreover, citizens are more willingly to pay taxes if they are aware of their tax obligations and the consequence of not fulfilling their duties. Last but not least, discrepancies were found in this study for both dimensions of tax morale which are supposed to be vital in determining compliance behaviour due to self-response bias and actor-observer bias (Kaplan et al., 1988). Responses in these constructs are not representative because some respondents perceive themselves with high tax morale meanwhile the rests are generally with low tax morale though they withhold the perceptions of low trust high power.

This research is constrained with the limitation of generalizability. Though we use quota sampling method attempting to include self-employed, employed and university students in examining citizens' willingness to pay taxes, we did not

distribute questionnaires on random basis, therefore the samples are not representing the population in Malaysia.

Ideally, future research should attempt to manipulate the variables via experimental design to reduce socially desired responses as much as possible, particularly in developing countries such as Malaysia. It would also be interesting to investigate the difference of tax knowledge and tax awareness in influencing tax compliance as there is so far very little knowledge of literature and empirical studies in examining the two separately. As for this research, we have only proven that tax awareness increases voluntary compliance, and we estimate that tax knowledge could only increase enforced compliance. Certainly, it would be interesting to discover if the findings of this study could be in line with other jurisdictions in the developing and developed countries.

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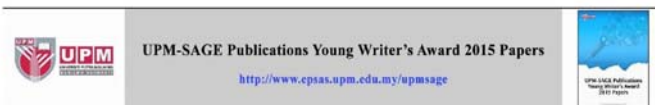
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## MARKOWITZ PORTFOLIO THEORY AND CAPITAL ASSET PRICING MODEL FOR KUALA LUMPUR STOCK EXCHANGE

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### ABSTRACT

Capital Asset Pricing Model is widely used by investors to estimate the return or the moving behavior of the stock and Markowitz Model is employed to achieve portfolio diversification. This study examines whether CAPM is valid to forecast the behaviour of the each individual stock and its return as well as its validity in the portfolio with stocks listed in Malaysia. Second, it evaluates the suitability of Markowitz Model to evaluate the performance of the Malaysia investment portfolio. It is concluded that CAPM is reasonable to be the indicator of stock prices in Malaysia as well as in portfolio basket. It proves that there is linearity in CAPM but unique risk and systematic do not need to be captured. Managers can use CAPM as a proxy to estimate their stock return and diversify the portfolio to reduce the unsystematic risk to enable them to execute the right policy in their management in order to maximise profit at the same time increase shareholder wealth maximisation. Furthermore, it is suggested to apply Markowitz portfolio diversification to reduce the unsystematic risk. Overall, portfolio diversification could build up the investors' confidence towards the investment decision and to develop a sound investment financial market in assisting Malaysia to achieve its mission to be a developed country in 2020.

Keywords: Capital asset pricing model, Risk and return, Markowitz Portfolio Diversification

## INTRODUCTION

In this new century, stock investment is not only heavily traded by local institutions and foreign institutions, it has become very common for household investors to involve in stock market as well. This is due to the transparency of the reporting requirement by the public listed companies and the new advanced technology and software. Malaysia is not an exception, stock market Malaysia which is Kuala Lumpur Security Exchange (KLSE) has expanded significantly with market capitalisation increasing from RM444 billion in 2000 to RM1.2 trillion in 2010 (BNM 2012). This is because investors notice that by investing in stock market, it will offer them higher return. It is also believed that stock market is one of the major contributions for Malaysia's economic development. (Zeti, 2009)

Capital Asset Pricing Model is widely used by investors to estimate the return or the moving behavior of the stock whereas Markowitz Model is employed to achieve portfolio diversification. The study by (Rahman, 2010) investigated the factors of the capital asset pricing model (CAPM) risk exposures by using Malaysia commercial banks. (Lean & Parsva, 2012) examined the performance of Islamic indices in Malaysia with CAPM. Their studies are focusing on CAPM with performance of Islamic indices or commercial banks in Malaysia, but not the stocks come from variety of industries which could be more representative of the performance of the stocks in Malaysia. Moreover, the study on portfolio diversification by Markowitz Model is used by researchers to study on the sample in Malaysia in the area of oil by Mansourfar et al. (2010) and Islamic Unit trust by Kassim & Kamil, (2012) are narrower in a specific industry. In addition, the study by Goh et al. (2014) only investigated 25 companies' stocks in the portfolio to examine the portfolio diversification might be less convincing due to lesser sample data selection.

This paper attempts to study an empirical assessment of the benefits of portfolio diversification in the Malaysia's stock market and more particularly it involves four vital objectives. First, it examines whether CAPM is valid to forecast the behaviour of each individual stock and its return. Secondly, it tests the validity of CAPM in the portfolio with the stocks listed in Malaysia. Thirdly, it evaluates the suitability of

Markowitz Model to study the performance of the Malaysia investment portfolio and whether portfolio investment is preferable to single company's stock investment. Lastly, it studies the effectiveness of portfolio diversification in reducing risk.

This paper will elaborate the relevant literature review, details the methodology, present the data and interpretation of the results in the next section. Finally, the last part will summarise the main finding and present some concluding remarks.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Investors apply many techniques to minimise risk at the same time to optimise return. Among the methods are Markowitz Model developed by Harry Markowitz in 1952 and followed by its development which is Capital Asset Pricing Model (CAPM) by Jack Treynor (1962), William (1964), John Lintner (1965) and Jan Mossin (1966) independently. CAPM takes into the account of asset's sensitivity to non-diversifiable risk (systematic risk) and is symbolised by the beta ( $\beta$ ) in the industry, as well as the expected return of the market and the expected return of a theoretical risk-free asset. CAPM provides precise expectation of the relationship that should be monitored between the expected return of an asset and its risk (Treynor, 1962).

Markowitz Model tries to maximize portfolio expected return for a given amount of portfolio risk, or homogeneously minimize risk for a given level of expected return, with the correct proportions of various securities. This model presumes that investors are rational and markets are efficient, tends to illustrate an asset's return as a normally distributed random variable, identifies risk as the standard deviation of return and demonstrates a portfolio. By combining different assets whose returns are not perfectly positively correlated, modern portfolio theory seeks to reduce the total variance of the portfolio return. This model looks for reduction of the total variance of the portfolio return by combining different assets whose returns are not perfectly positively. (Markowitz 1952).

Hasan et al. (2011) employed the framework in Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) by using monthly stock returns from 80 non-financial companies from 2005 to 2009 to study risk-return relationship with CAPM. The result showed that the intercept term was significantly non-zero and there was positive relationship between beta and return of stocks. The results opposed the CAPM hypothesis and suggested unique risk and the interaction were insignificant in DSE but recommended existence of linearity in the securities market line. This study include the financial crisis period 2008 to 2009 in the data however did not explain the impact of its influence. Besides, it only employed 8 stocks in a portfolio where the sample size was quite small as the rule of thumb for the sample size is at least 30 stocks (Voorhis, 2007). Thus, this provides an insight to this research to use the sample period without financial crisis and use the sample size more than 30 stocks in portfolio.

Tsai et al. (2015) recommended that the optimal level of diversification for the maximization of bank value is asymmetrical and depends on the business cycle by using empirical evidence in Taiwan. Systematic risks were low during expansion thus the influence of lifting systematic risks from portfolio diversification was minor. Subsequently, the benefit of reducing individual risks dictated any loss from raising systematic risks, resulting to a higher value for a bank by holding a diversified portfolio of assets. Systematic risks were high during recession. It was more likely that the loss from raising systematic risks surpasses the benefit of reducing individual risks from portfolio diversification. Consequently, more diversification leads to lower bank values. Instead of using bank industry as the sample as done by Tsai et al. (2015), further research could use the companies in other industries and study the result of the diversification of investment benefits to investors. CAPM's testability issue was discussed by Guermat (2014), it employed a simple combination of the coefficients of determination from Ordinary Least Squares to test whether the index used in the empirical test is efficient. The second step tests the efficient index hypothesis by market portfolio. This has highlighted that to test the CAPM not only testing on the individual assets, it could also test on the portfolio investment.



Elton et al. (2014) illustrated the percentage of risk can be removed by holding a widely diversified portfolio in each of several countries in western region. It showed that the contribution to the portfolio variance by each of the single stock approached to zero as number of stocks in a portfolio getting larger. Furthermore, the contribution of the covariance terms (systematic risk) move towards the average covariance as number of stocks increase. This suggested that the individual risk of the stocks can be diversified away but the contribution to the total risk caused by the systematic risk cannot be diversified away. Hence, the test could be examined by employing the stocks market in non-western region to confirm the validity of this theory.

In addition, the study by Alekneviciene (2012) examined the diversification consequence in Lithuanian Stock Exchange Market by using daily stock market price from 2009 to 2010. It investigated the study with the order of criterions (1) negative correlation coefficient with the highest number (2) negative correlations with the other stocks based on quantitative characteristics (3) stocks based on different industry. The result indicated that the portfolio with naive selections shown a better diversification results compared to the selection criterion portfolios. Thus, it provides another way of methodology tend to work, instead of selection of portfolios based on criterions and with daily stocks return, randomly selection of stocks in the portfolio with weekly returns is suggestible as most of the researchers employed either weekly, monthly or yearly return data as the volatility of daily stock return is very high which might defeat the purpose of portfolio diversification in reducing risk (Hiraki et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2015; Dutt, 2013).

In summary, this study extends the literature in four aspects. First, to include the companies listed in Malaysia main market and test the suitability to fill the gap in literature where the previous researchers only focus on banking related or Islamic related stocks in Malaysia. Secondly, whether CAPM is suitable to be used in a portfolio to capture the risk and return analysis. Thus, there will be two phases of test (time series and cross sectional series) to test whether individual stocks could be estimated by CAPM and followed by portfolio construction to be tested by CAPM.

Thirdly, it tends to provide an insight whether investors could achieve positive diversification value in Malaysia stock market. Lastly, it also aims to study the usefulness of diversification in reducing the risk on a portfolio in Malaysia's stock market.

## DATA AND METHODOLOGY

### Data

The data will randomly select 60 stocks listed in Malaysia main market from the period of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014 and employ weekly data for all the variables. These recent 5 years were chosen to evade any structural break such as significant economy crisis. The companies from financial industries are being excluded due to the reporting system of financial companies is different from non-financial companies (Aletkin, 2014). Daily data is avoided because according to (Basu et al., 2010) the risk and return relationship too volatile. The company stock prices and market price is estimated by the proxy of FBM KLCI are both extracted from Yahoo Finance and risk free interest rate is obtained from Bank Negara Malaysia website. Computation result will be done by Microsoft Excel and E-view.

### Test individual stock by CAPM

The theoretical CAPM (Treyner 1962) formula is:

$$R = R_f + \beta (R_m - R_f) \text{ ---- Eq1}$$

#### First phase of regression

To estimate the above equation by ordinary least square is:

$$R - R_f = \alpha + \beta (R_m - R_f) + \varepsilon \text{ ---- Eq2}$$

Where

$R$  = company's rate of return = ———

$R_f$  = risk free interest rate

$R$  = market return

$\varepsilon$  = random disturbance term

The above time series data is then regressed then to obtain  $\beta$  and  $\sigma^2$  and substitute  
To

$$UR = \sigma^2 - \beta^2 \sigma^2 \text{ ----- Eq3}$$

Where

$UR$  = unique risk

#### Second phase of regression

The cross sectional regression formula is:

$$\bar{r} = \gamma + \gamma \beta + \gamma \beta^2 + \gamma UR + \gamma IT + \varepsilon \text{ ----- Eq4}$$

Where

$$\bar{r} = R - R$$

$\beta$  = estimate systematic risk in company i, from Eq2

$\beta^2$  = square of  $\beta$ , from Eq2

$UR$  = unique risk, from Eq3

$IT$  = interaction of systematic risk and unique risk =  $\beta \times UR$

$\varepsilon$  = random disturbance term

#### Test Markowitz Model by CAPM

Thirty stocks will be combined together to form a portfolio, so there will be 2 portfolios in total. Thirty stocks in a portfolio is reasonable as it satisfy rule of the statistics computation as well as to diversify unsystematic risk require minimum 25 stocks (Gupta et al., 2001). Hassan (2011) suggested that in order to accomplish diversification and hence minimise any errors that might happen because of the existence of unique risk, thus the beta need to be organised according to ascending and combine in a portfolio. The thirty stocks are chosen based on the Beta arranged

from highest to lowest. The highest thirty stocks' betas will be grouped into 1 portfolio, another lowest thirty stocks' betas will be grouped into 1 portfolio. Average portfolio excess returns of companies formula is (Hasan 2011).

$$r = \frac{\sum}{k} \text{ ---- Eq5}$$

Where,

$r$  = excess return of companies

$k$  = number of stocks in portfolio ( $k = 30$ )

$p$  = number of portfolios ( $p = 2$ )

To estimate portfolio's beta, the formula:

$$\bar{r} = \alpha + \beta r + \varepsilon \text{ ---- Eq6}$$

Where,

$\beta$  = beta of portfolio

$r$  = average market risk premium

#### Hypotheses

For CAPM to hold true in the individual stocks, the following hypotheses should be convinced: 1.  $\alpha = 0$ , should not be different significantly from 0

2.  $\beta > 0$ , stock price should be positively sensitivity to market price in capital market

3.  $\varepsilon = 0$ , security Market line is linear

4.  $\varepsilon = 0$ , diversifiable unique risk that will not affect return

5.  $\varepsilon = 0$ , interaction risk that will not affect return

#### Effect of Number of Stocks in Risk of the Portfolio

The risk of the portfolio with increasing number of stocks is calculated through: (Elton 2014)

$$\sigma_p = \sqrt{\sigma_m^2 + \frac{1}{k} \sigma_e^2} \text{ ---- Eq7}$$

Where,

$\sigma$  = standard deviation of the portfolio = risk of the portfolio

$N$  = number of stocks ( $j=1, k=1, k \neq j$  to  $N$ )

$\sigma = \frac{\Sigma}{N}$  = average standard deviation of the stock = average risk of the stock

$\sigma^2 = \frac{\Sigma}{(N)} =$  covariance term

## RESULT AND ANALYSIS

### Result for the individual companies

Table 1 illustrates the beta coefficient for individual companies; the range is from 0.227 to 1.577. This shows that the systematic risk of the companies in Malaysia are spread in wider range among the companies due to the nature of the business. Air Asia attains the highest beta at 1.577. This might suggest that aviation business in Malaysia has higher undiversifiable risk compared to other business. Whereas, Denko which is a manufacturing company has the lowest beta at 0.227, however the data shows no significance level. The lowest beta that shows significance at 1 percent is Amway at 0.2956 which engaged in distribution of consumer product. The finding highlights that 57 companies out of 60 companies demonstrate significant beta at 1 percent significance level. One company's beta shows 5 percent of significance level. Only 2 companies such as Harbour and Denko show insignificance level on their beta. The concluding of this result supports the study by Michailidis et al. (2006) but contradicts the research by Hasan (2011). As suggested by Treynor (1962), the higher the beta in CAPM, the higher the return would be. Air Asia has an average excess return of -0.35 percent per week. On the other hand, Amway has an average excess return of -0.49 percent per week. The lowest average excess return is -0.45 percent per week by ACME, however its beta is 0.84. The highest average excess return is 0.64 percent per week by Yinson which is an investment holding with business segment in transportation, trading and operation in addition as an insurance agency, its beta is 1.05. The result does not support with the theory of the higher the

systematic risk, the higher the return. Based on the sample result, it can be concluded that CAPM could be employed to estimate the systematic risk of the company in Malaysia. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to show that the company in Malaysia with higher systematic risk could gain higher return.

As in Table 2, the regression result fitted into Eq 4 become:

$$\bar{r} = -0.0021 - 0.0045\beta + 0.002\beta - 0.3803UR + 0.5915IT$$

The intercept,  $\gamma$  do not reject hypotheses 1, therefore CAPM could be used to estimate Security Market Line (SML) for Malaysia stocks. It is observed that the CAPM slope is - 0.0045, shows that it does not support the theory of there should be non-negative price of risk in the capital markets. This result is the same as the finding by Omran (2007). Moreover, this study accepts hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 by do not rejecting null hypothesis of  $\gamma$ ,  $\gamma$  and  $\gamma = 0$ . It demonstrated that SML of Malaysia stocks is linear relationship. In addition, unique risk and interaction risk do not influence the creating return process by company in Malaysia. Therefore, it could be concluded that CAPM does hold for the Malaysia stock market.

Table 1. Individual stock's beta coefficient

No	Code	Company	Beta	—	No	Code	Company	Beta	—
1	7054	AASIA	1.5768 (0.2007)	*** 0.1931	31	5062	HUAYANG	1.3311 (0.2553)	*** 0.0953
2	7131	ACME	0.8474 (0.3464)	** 0.0027	32	1597	IGB	0.6747 (0.1161)	*** 0.1156
3	5014	AIRPORT	0.7740 (0.1302)	*** 0.1931	33	3336	IJM	1.0323 (0.0991)	*** 0.2961
4	2658	AJI	0.6185 (0.1217)	*** 0.0910	34	4723	JAKS	1.5280 (0.2136)	*** 0.1655
5	7293	YINSON	1.0546 (0.2539)	*** 0.0627	35	4383	JTIASA	0.8898 (0.1731)	*** 0.0929
6	6351	AMWAY	0.2956 (0.0754)	*** 0.0562	36	6769	KELADI	0.6419 (0.1925)	*** 0.0413
7	6888	AXIATA	0.9879	*** 0.3631	37	9083	JETSON	0.8320	*** 0.0531

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No	Code	Company	Beta	—	No	Code	Company	Beta	—
			(0.0814)					(0.2188)	
8	4162	BAT	0.8326	*** 0.1785	38	3476	KSENG	0.8742	*** 0.1040
			(0.1112)					(0.1598)	
9	4863	TELEKOM	0.8130	*** 0.2501	39	2445	KLK	0.8353	*** 0.2356
			(0.0876)					(0.0936)	
10	2836	CARLSBG	0.7521	*** 0.0914	40	1643	LANDMRK	1.3494	*** 0.1325
			(0.1476)					(0.2149)	
11	8982	CEPAT	0.8094	*** 0.1244	41	3859	MAGNUM	1.1115	*** 0.1962
			(0.1336)					(0.1400)	
12	2828	CIHLDG	0.9960	*** 0.0318	42	8583	MAHSING	1.3518	*** 0.1790
			(0.3419)					(0.1802)	
13	5094	CSCSTEL	0.9131	*** 0.1460	43	4707	NESTLE	0.3764	*** 0.0784
			(0.1375)					(0.0803)	
14	8176	DENKO	0.2272	0.0016	44	4634	POS	1.0802	*** 0.1135
			(0.3499)					(0.1879)	
15	6947	DIGI	0.6654	*** 0.0684	45	4588	UMW	0.7580	*** 0.1755
			(0.15284)					(0.1022)	
		DRBHCO							
16	1619	M	1.4133	*** 0.1497	46	5142	WASEONG	0.9199	*** 0.1007
			(0.2097)					(0.1711)	
17	7233	DUFU	0.7775	*** 0.0409	47	4677	YTL	0.9753	*** 0.1920
			(0.2345)					(0.1245)	
18	3026	DLADY	0.5510	*** 0.0648	48	5355	DAIMAN	0.7674	*** 0.0803
			(0.1302)					(0.1616)	
19	8877	EKOVEST	1.0369	*** 0.0718	49	5141	DAYANG	1.3655	*** 0.1549
			(0.2321)					(0.1985)	
20	3417	E&O	1.4519	*** 0.1576	50	7277	DIALOG	1.2728	*** 0.0473
			(0.2090)					(0.3556)	
21	3689	F&N	0.4487	*** 0.0560	51	7229	FAVCO	1.4928	*** 0.1326
			(0.1146)					(0.2376)	
22	7210	FREIGHT	0.6488	*** 0.0675	52	3255	GAB	0.5174	*** 0.0652
			(0.1501)					(0.1219)	
23	4715	GENM	1.1951	*** 0.2726	53	7022	GTRONIC	1.2710	*** 0.1197
			(0.1215)					(0.2146)	
24	7382	GLBHD	0.6471	*** 0.0588	54	7668	HAIO	0.8343	*** 0.1243
			(0.1612)					(0.1378)	
25	5020	GLOMAC	1.3683	*** 0.2664	55	3441	JOHAN	1.4535	*** 0.0905

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No	Code	Company	Beta	—	No	Code	Company	Beta	—		
			(0.1413)					(0.2868)			
26	1503	GUOCO	1.4722	***	0.1770	56	3522	KIANJOO	0.8531	***	0.1146
			(0.1976)					(0.1476)			
		HARBOU									
27	2062	R	0.2977		0.0072	57	7153	KOSSAN	0.5912	***	0.0244
			(0.2170)					(0.2329)			
28	5008	HARISON	0.9418	***	0.1415	58	5878	KPJ	0.7279	***	0.0388
			(0.1444)					(0.2254)			
29	5072	HIAPTEK	1.0522	***	0.1360	59	6012	MAXIS	0.4141	***	0.1549
			(0.1651)					(0.0602)			
30	6238	HSL	1.4558	***	0.2551	60	5347	TENAGA	0.8550	***	0.2136
			(0.1548)					(0.1021)			

Note: Number in parentheses is standard error. Significance at 1 percent (\*\*\*), 5 percent (\*\*), 10 percent (\*)

Table 2. Estimates of individual companies by Ordinary Least Square

Model	1	2	3	4	5
Constant, $\gamma$	- 0.0046	- 0.0044	- 0.0043	- 0.0043	- 0.0021
(t-value)	-4.22222	-6.4594	-6.7609	-7.6528	- 0.7172
(Sig)	0.0000***	0.0000***	0.0000***	0.0000***	0.4763
Beta, $\gamma$	0.0007				- 0.0045
(t-value)	0.6559				- 0.766
(Sig)	0.5145				0.4464
Beta Square, $\gamma$		0.0004			0.0020
(t-value)		0.8014			0.6866
(Sig)		0.4262			0.4952
Unique Risk, $\gamma$			0.2025		0.3803
(t-value)			0.6935		- 0.4917
(Sig)			0.4908		0.6249
Interaction, $\gamma$				0.2472	0.5915
(t-value)				1.0238	0.7105
(Sig)				0.3102	0.4804
R	0.0074	0.011	0.0082	0.0178	0.0298
F-stat	0.4302	0.6422	0.4809	1.0481	0.4227
(Sig)	0.5145	0.4262	0.4908	0.3102	0.7915



Significance at 1 percent (\*\*\*), 5 percent (\*\*), 10 percent (\*)

Table 3. Beta coefficient in the portfolio

Portfolio	Average Excess Return	Portfolio Beta
1	- 0.00355	1.1226*** (0.0374)
2	- 0.00436	0.6596*** (0.0313)

\* Note: Number in parentheses is standard error. Significance at 1 percent (\*\*\*), 5 percent (\*\*), 10 percent (\*)

Based on Table 3, portfolio 1 beta is 1.226 and portfolio 2 beta is 0.6596 significant at level 1 percent. Therefore, it can be concluded that the stocks of Malaysia combine together to form a portfolio, the CAPM still applicable to it. However, the portfolio result does not support higher systematic risk to yield higher excess return. Worth to highlight that Markowitz Model supposes to yield higher return, however, the average excess return in the portfolio surprisingly turns to negative which is contradicted with portfolio diversification theory. Thus, it shows that investors diversify investment in difference Malaysia stocks do not necessary yield higher return compared to only invest in one individual stock.

This study further examines the effect of risk in the portfolio by adding more stocks in the portfolio. As presented in Figure 1, it is shown that with the increasing number of stocks in a portfolio, the risk is reducing. It also clearly supports Markowitz Theory that unsystematic can be minimised with increasing number of stocks up to a risk of  $\pm 3$  percent. This shows that initially a single stock's risk is more than 20 percent (could be reduced by around 17 percent) to approximately 3 percent which is the market risk. This is consistent with the research by Gupta (2001), which indicated that increase the number of stocks in a portfolio could reduce the risk.

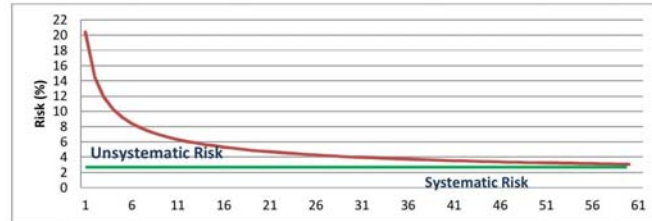


Figure 1. The effect of number of stocks on risk of the portfolio in Malaysia

## CONCLUSION

This research studies the validity of the CAPM on individual stocks as well as on portfolio investment. It also evaluates the suitability of Markowitz Model to evaluate the performance of the investment portfolio within the framework in Malaysia by using the stocks listed in Malaysia's main stock market.

It is concluded that CAPM is reasonable to be the indicator of stock prices in Malaysia as well as in portfolio basket in the investment from 2000 to 2014. From individual stock, result does support that CAPM linear relationship is adequate to explain the return of the stocks. Moreover, unique risk and interaction with systematic risk are tested whether they should be important aspects in to be captured by CAPM and the result shows that systematic risk itself is adequate to explain CAPM but not unique risk and its interaction with systematic risk. The result indicated that excess return toward market return is rewarded for the investors.

For the Markowitz Model, the framework in Malaysia does not support that portfolio diversification can generate higher return and reduce the risk. This could be due to the portfolio diversification is not suitable for short term investment such as weekly investment. However, the result shows that with the increased number of stocks in a portfolio, the unsystematic risk is diversifiable but systematic risk is un-diversifiable, thus, it is suggestible that for the optimistic investor who has low risk appetite, it is

better to invest money in fixed deposit to earn risk free rate and to avoid the hassle of worrying stocks volatility that might provide them negative return. This is similar to a study by DeLong et al. (2008), where fixed deposit insurance introduction had reduced the risk of banks and trust. Fixed deposit had in return generated a greater banking system to ensure the financial stability. This is because in Malaysia, the money deposited by investor in the bank is protected by Perbadanan Insurans Deposit Malaysia (PIDM), which is a deposit insurance system that insures depositors against the loss of their insured deposits placed with member banks, in the unlikely event of a member bank failure up to with RM250 000.00 as the maximum limit of the coverage (PIDM, 2014). Hence with fixed deposits, investor can guarantee a return with the minimum amount as the same as capital amount, however compared to stocks, the investors could obtain a return lower than capital amount. Nevertheless, there is a risk and return balance among fixed deposit and stock.

In summary, investors could use CAPM to estimate the behaviour and the systematic risk of the stocks in Malaysia before investing in stock market. This could be a way to minimise their downside risk as they understand the stock trend of the company and hence invest rationally. In addition, managers in the companies of Malaysia can use CAPM as a proxy to estimate their stock return and execute the right policy in their management in order to maximise profit at the same time increase shareholder wealth maximisation. Furthermore, it is suggested to apply portfolio diversification to reduce the unsystematic risk. Overall, portfolio diversification could build up the investors' confidence towards the investment decision and to develop a sound investment financial market in assisting Malaysia to achieve its mission to be a developed country in 2020.

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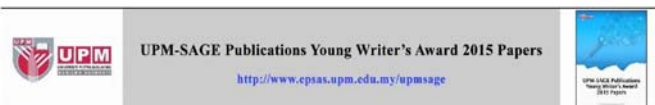
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## THE ROLE OF GENDER TECHNICAL UNIT IN INFLUENCING THE PASSAGE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS PROHIBITION ACT IN NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

The pursuit by the feminist since 1970 to see the inclusion of women right into global human right standard became a reality in the 1990s. This resulted in the international criminalising of violence against women and human right is expanded to encompass women right. This however is not without striving by women movement and feminist at national level. The aim of this article is to illuminate how women creative initiative of establishing the Gender Technical Unit in the Nigeria National Assembly, facilitated the passage of the Violent against Persons Prohibition Act (A bill that is drafted and sponsored by women movement). This study opines that having such an intermediary is a vital catalyst to successful pursuit of women movement. This is part of my thesis and I am utilising two interviews made with members of the GTU

**Keywords:** Legislative advocacy, Gender Technical Unit, Women right, Women right organisation, Violence against women.

### INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a pervasive social problem which is overwhelmingly evident and condoned by the continuous subordination of women. It is an alarming phenomenon that has historically been violating women rights in the world, yet it has been unrecognised, ignored and accepted (Htun & Weldon, 2012; Tripp, 2003 &



Reichert 1998). Thus by subjecting women to violence, men belittle “the right of women to be treated with respect” (Reichert, 1998:372) Statistics revealed that 35 percent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence; 30 percent of all women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence; as many as 38 percent of all murdered women are committed by their intimate partner; 16 percent of physically and or sexually abused women are likely to have low birth rate baby, twice as likely to have an abortion and experience depression and even acquire HIV (World Health Organisation, 2013)).Inspite this statistics however, violence against women (VAW) persist and government inaction gives avenue for solutions.

The UN had since 1970 been an avenue for deliberation among government, Non-governmental, religious and women group. The 1993 United Nations Conference on Human Rights in Vienna was a watershed for feminist whose struggle to place VAW on the international agenda gained acceptance and women right was seen as human right, inalienable, universal, inherent and indivisible part of universal human right(United Nations General Assembly, 1993). This implies that women are entitle to participate in all political, social, economic and cultural life as well as be granted protection of fundamental rights such as right to life; equality; liberty and security; equal protection under the law; free from all forms of discrimination and inhuman treatment (United Nations General Assembly, 1993).Even though the conference centred on all rights, emphasis was more on violence against women.

The 1995 United Nation Fourth World Conference on women held in Beijing further extended to criminalising VAW in both private and public through the adoption of the Universal Human Right Framework (UHRF). The UHRF is the United Nation archetypal otherwise known as “best practice” which prioritised national legislation or adoption of reform over provision of services/ support and training to addressing VAW. This framework is a product of in depth research, it is therefore the most effective means to addressing VAW and all embarkation or initiatives of states are impracticable (United Nation Division for the Advancement Women United Nation Office for Drug and Crime, 2005). The adoption of the UHRF may have set

precedence for the recognition of women's right and the prosecution of offenders. However, the feminist (especially the Africans and Asians) were not in concordance with the UHRF, as they envisaged threat of imposition of Western culture and values over theirs (McBride & Parry, 2011; Zoelle, D., 2000). This shows that women are not homogenous as thought, it is therefore imperative to understand women initiative in their environment.

Extant scholars on women movement and feminist affirmed that they pursue policy reform through legislative advocacy, training, provision of support and educating the public. In Asia and Latin America for instance, a coalesced group known as Joint Action Group on Violence Against Women (JAGVAW) in Malaysia (Ng, Mohammad & Hui), the Mosenyolchicauanij or the Indian Women Working United in Mexico (Gonzalez, 2007) the Korean Women's Hotline's (Sook, 2008) all spearheaded in their respective countries the domestic violence and rape bill while the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC) coalition strove for abrogation of abortion laws in Latin America (Kane, 2008). These women movement lobbied and exploited public education, shelter counselling, workshops and seminar to push for policy reforms. Only JAGVAW utilised demonstration in its advocacy on rape bill (Ng et al., 2006). All these strive led to the enactment of the respective bills in each country. In Africa, the Netright women coalition strove for Domestic violence in Ghana (Tandoh-offin, 2011) and the Ethiopian women lawyers Association pursuit for the abrogation of harmful laws (Burgess, 2013). These groups pressured the government for policy change through protest; they educate the populace and embarked on research. In spite the growing and deepening consensus about the nature and costs of violence against women, there are puzzling differences in these national policies and the strategy (Htun & Weldon, 2012). For instance, both Malaysia and South Korea adopted domestic violence in piece meal but that of Malaysia was more of rape at first and later domestic violence. South Korea however, dwelled on battered women.

In Nigeria, rather than women movement, women right organisation coalesced and formed the Legislative Advocacy Coalition on Violence against Women (LACVAW) pressured the government into passing the Violence against Person Prohibition Act

(VAPP). LACVAW strove for the bill's passage through training of police, legislators and the judiciary, educating the public, organising rallies and organising a mock trial court during public hearing in the Nigerian National Assembly. What interests me most in the Nigerian case is the creation of the Gender Technical Unit (GTU) of which most informants attribute the success of the pursuit of the VAPP Act to. Given this background, in this article, I wish to discuss on the VAPP Act and how the GTU has been imperative in the pursuit of the VAPP Act.

#### AN OVERVIEW OF THE NIGERIA'S VIOLENCE AGAINST PERSONS (PROHIBITION)

The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (HB.191 and SB43) is an Act of the parliament that gears towards prohibiting and eliminating all forms of violence such as physical, sexual, psychological, domestic, harmful traditional practices, discrimination against persons in private and public sphere and heralding maximum institutional protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment for offenders. The legislation marked a concrete legal recognition of domestic violence. It is the first federal legislation of this sort in that what existed was a civil law for the different regions (Northern and southern Nigeria).

It seeks to apply standards to existing criminal laws, make provision for emergent issues on violence (such as acid bath, kidnapping, conflict and emergency situations, suicide bombing and political violence) and to address the issues as such (Human Rights Agenda Network, 2014; Gell, 2012). The provisions of the Bill are gender friendly but the bill is largely targeted at the protection of women and children, this may not be unconnected to the large victims in such category (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, 2012).

The Act is a product of the Legislative Advocacy Coalition on Violence against Women (LACVAW) formed in 2001, a coalition of women right organisation working on various aspects of women rights and social justice. According to Solidarity for African Women's Right (SOAWR), the Coalition was in response to strengthening the voices of women right organisation in proposing Bills on domestic violence, harmful

traditional practices and inheritance rights at the State and National Assemblies (Solidarity for African Women's Right (SOAWR), 2015). The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act emerged from the harmonisation of nine unsuccessful violence-incline bills initiated by LACVAW and some legislators from 1999-2014. These bills were:

1. Circumcision of Women (Prohibition) Bill, 2000. Sponsored by Hon. Janet .Febisola. Adeyemi.
2. Violence Against Women (Prohibition) Bill, 2001. Sponsored by Hon. Dorcas Odujinrin-Junaral.
3. Violence against Women (Prohibition) Bill, 2003. Initiated by LACVAW and sponsored by Hon. Florence Aya and Hon Farouk Lawal and co-sponsored by 30 others.
4. Public Nudity, Sexual Intimidation and Other Related Offences (Prohibition and Punishment) Bill, 2007. Sponsored by Senator Eme Ufot Ekaette.
5. Discrimination and Related Offences (Prohibition and Punishment) Bill 2008 Sponsored by Chris Anyanwu.
6. Domestic Violence (Prevention) Bill, 2008 Sponsored by Sen. Daisy Danjuma.
7. Abolition of Discrimination Against Women Bill, 2009. Sponsored by Ndoma-Egba (Senate leader).
8. Elimination of Violence in Society Bill, 2011. Sponsored by / Sen. Victor Ndoma – Egba
9. Sexual Offences Bill, 2013. Sponsored by Chris Anyanwu.

LACVAW comprise organizations such as Women Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA), International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), IPAS (an international organisation), Department for International Development's (DFID) Voice for Change (V4C), Development Dynamics and Project Alert. LACVAW galvanised support from government agencies (Federal ministry of women Affairs and Federal ministry of Health), champions of the NASS, Faith Base Organisations, Women Associations, the media and traditional rulers. After the due process of the Assembly deliberation, it was accented by the president on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2015 after fourteen years of women activism.

The VAPP Act comprehensively deals with varied gender based violence, the content of the Act reflects the realities of the pandemic in Nigeria and it incorporates Nigeria's commitment to international human rights principles (Anarado, 2015). It consists of six Parts. The Offences and penalties (Part I); Jurisdiction of the court (Part II); Service Providers (Part III); Regulatory Body (Part IV); Consequential Amendment (Part V) and Interpretation (Part VI). The offences provided for by the Act are rape; physical injury, coercion, wilfully placing a person in fear of physical injury, early marriage, forceful offensive conduct, prohibition of female circumcision, frustrating investigation, wilfully making false statements, forced ejection from house, depriving a person of his/her liberty, damage property with intent to cause distress, forced financial dependence or economic abuse, forced isolation or separation from family and friends, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse, harmful widowhood practices, abandonment of spouse, children and other dependent without sustenance, stalking, intimidation of a person, spousal/partner battery, harmful traditional practices, substance attack/acid bath, administering substance with intent, political violence, violence by state actors (government officials and security forces), incest and indecent exposure (Human Rights Agenda Network, 2013 and the VAPP Act). In conglomeration, the offence section provides for 26 offences and their accorded penalties.

Unlike the VAPP Act that criminalises harmful traditional practices and violence in both private and public sphere, the existing laws (penal and criminal codes) condone and regard specifically the private violence as family affairs thereby providing women with little protection against violence. It is certain that the endorsement of gender based violence by some societies on the basis of cultural constructs of power relation between sexes does depict inadequacy and discrimination in Nigerian laws (Dunia, May 2015). The VAPP Act is therefore an improvement on the existing penal and criminal code that fall short of standards in Acts, scope and penalties (Human Rights Agenda Network, 2013). This is a good beginning for vulnerable Nigerians (Anarado, 2015), if the VAPP bill had been passed before now, women and girls abuse would not have deteriorated to a state where human lives have become invaluable (Dunia, 2015)

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The itemisation of the offences is followed by provisions for the court to pursue justice and protection of victims part II of the Act while Part III and IV provided for the participation of service providers and regulatory agencies. Under this auspice, the newly enacted law introduced the granting of “protection order” by any high court or magistrate court to serve as a protection for a complainant against intended violence. Victims and survivors of violence are also eligible to all-inclusive assistance (medical, psychological, social and legal) by government agencies and accredited service providers. Moreover, victims’ identities are to be protected during court cases. The Act also made provisions for an institutional agency that serves as a regulatory body collaborating with relevant stakeholders to guarantee maximum protection for victims. Currently, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) has been expanded to accommodate such activity (Human Rights Agenda Network, 2013). Part V of the Act provides for those amendments that have been made to the existing laws (Human Rights Agenda Network, 2013; Choice for life, n.d). The pursuit of the bill from formulation to passage has been appraised as a good development

#### THE GENDER TECHNICAL UNIT (GTU) AND ITS MISSION

The Gender Technical Unit (GTU) is a gender resource centre established in the Nigeria National Assembly by LACVAW for legislatures, Management staff, legislative aide’s e.t.c. It is a geared toward “promoting gender friendly laws and issues within the legislation, it is equally a research and documentation centre” (interview with Mrs Ekwunife of GTU on 23<sup>rd</sup>, November 2015 at the GTU Abuja). Basically, the GTU deal with issues on Democracy and Governance, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Education. Specifically, it is missioned to:

- provide technical and knowledge support base particularly to female legislators to enhance quality participation and contributions to legislative processes
- provide accessible resource tools, materials and skills towards articulation and defence of gender legislations

- train legislators to enhance skills for networking and lobbying among female and male legislators beyond partisan lines
- conduct research aimed at accessing and availing to legislators model gender legislations and best practices in partisan and bi-partisan legislative networking and lobbying around specific and general issues of women's political participation.
- share relevant resource materials with key Legislative Aides and National Assembly Standing Committees' Staff to enhance gender-sensitive legislation.
- provide links between legislators and civil society groups, corporate organizations and individuals doing gender work in Nigeria.
- Act as secretariat and referral centre and hub for organisations working with the NASS on women's issues in the Nigeria. "The unit supports Nigerian Legislatures to reasonably carry out its functions of Law making, Oversight and Representation and for the enactment of Gender-Responsive laws for the people of Nigeria" (Interview with Mrs Ekwunife, on the 23<sup>th</sup> November 2015)

Before the establishment of GTU, WROs were confronting challenges such as being outside the NASS environment, lack of good grasp of legislative skill and knowledge of legislation, undesirable feedback from advocacies embarked upon by WROs, negative views of male legislators towards women issue and clash of interest. However, the establishment of the GTU enabled WROs to champion the initiation of the VAPP bill with great vigour. Under this auspice, WROs:

- Incorporate the legislatures into their activities. They discuss and seek the opinions of the legislature in all their engagements. "The rapport built by those in the GTU with the legislatures further encouraged interactions and provided opportunity to lobby for their support for such bills. The rapport we built with members have exceeded to family tie" (interview with Malam Idris Bawa of United Nation Office for Drug Control). These fora also enable the WROs to be well acquainted with gender sensitive male legislators or champions such as the then Senator Ndoma Egba, Senator Dahiru Tambuwal and Hon Faruk Lawal who eventually spear headed the course of the VAPP Act(interview with Malam Idris Bawa of United Nation Office for Drug Control),

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- The GTU staff also engaged the legislators in training so as to get them instilled with the knowledge of legislation. More so, emphasis is not placed on the legislature alone but also on the NASS management staff. This in other words implies that NGOs engaged in capacity building which has enriched Nigeria's democracy thereby preparing the legislatures for their task
- The GTU equally embarked on research on any given gender issues. This is made with the intent that it gingers or enriches the legislators, National Assembly Staff and the general public with the Knowledge of what they are ignorant about. Nigerian society is full of men that are tie to cultural values. The activities of the GTU have widened the horizon of men specifically on violence and the ill treatments that are rendered to women in Nigeria. it has likewise improved the legislative environment for Gender issues.

The activities of WRO is synonymous with the assertion that for feminist to make "policy change in a mainstream policy domain, it is essential for political actors to be positioned in the institutional sites that hold resources and wield political power" (Annesley 2013)

## CONCLUSION

This write up examined the role played by an institutional body (GTU) established by the coalition of WROs which has played enviable role of training, provision of technical assistance and mediating between the WRO and the legislators etc. This paper unveiled that if by having an intermediary in the National Assembly, they were able to recognise and understand the activities and routines of the legislature. They were able to know them better WROs would continue to be given support they would greatly enhance women right.



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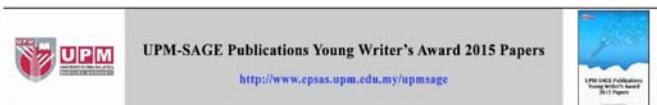
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## RISK FACTORS OF MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS (MSD) AMONG PALM OIL MILL WORKERS

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### ABSTRACT

The palm oil industry is the fourth largest contributor to the Malaysian Gross National Income (GNI) but the importance of this industry to the nation's economy does not preclude them from the risk of being affected by the occurrence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) among the workers in palm oil mills. Previous studies carried out have not properly explained the exact reasons for the occurrence of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) among the palm oil mill workers. Thus, this study aim to determine the association between risk factors and MSD among palm oil mill workers. A total of 120 male workers were consecutively enrolled in this cross-sectional study. Information on sociodemographic, working, lifestyle, health and injury factors were collected via questionnaire and face-to-face interviews. A high lifetime prevalence of MSD (71.7 percent) among palm oil mill workers was found. However, the one-year prevalence of MSD among the same population was only 50.8 percent. Logistic regression analysis adjusted for age, Body Mass Index (BMI) and smoking revealed that the risk factors: history of previous injury [2.35, 95 percent CI 1.12-4.93], Osteoarthritis [3.9, 95 percent CI 1.568-9.708] and perception of exertion [8.09, 95 percent CI 1.358-48.170] was found to be significantly associated with MSD symptoms reported in the past 12 months. As a conclusion, exposure to the combination of these risk factors may lead to an increased risk of developing MSD among palm oil mill workers.

**Keywords:** Risk factors, Musculoskeletal disorders, Palm oil mill, Malaysia

## INTRODUCTION

There are several types and sources of oil and fats in the world such as rapeseed oil, sunflower oil, butter, palm oil and many more. For the year 2011, Oil World stated that among all the different types of oil and fats, palm oil was the highest consumed oil, where it was consumed by up to three billion people in 150 different countries. The palm oil industry is the top contributor of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the agricultural sector in Malaysia (Department of Statistics, 2012). Malaysia and Indonesia are the world biggest oil palm producers where Malaysia currently accounts for 39 percent of world's palm oil production and 44 percent of world's palm oil exports (Malaysian Palm Oil Council, 2012). Until the year 2013, Malaysia has produced a total of 19,400,000 metric tonnes of palm oil for the consumption of the world. The production of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) in palm oil mills involves a series of steps. Generally, it involves preparation, oil extraction, purification and kernel extraction. Figure 1 summarizes the steps involved in the production of CPO.

In 2012, the palm oil industry is the fourth largest contributor to the Malaysian Gross National Income (GNI). This information, together with the fact that this industry is steadily developing as an important economical contributor for Malaysia, increases the importance of not excluding this industry from the risk of being affected by occurrence MSD among their workers. This can be supported by the fact that MSD is one of the most important causes of occupational injury and disability in the industrially developed and currently developing countries such as Malaysia (Shahnavaz H., 1987; Genaidy A. M. et al., 1993 and Maul A. et al., 2003).

MSD is always known as the most common among all non-fatal injuries and illnesses for agriculture workers, especially those who are involved in labor-intensive practices (McCurdy et al. 2003; Meyers et al., 1997). It is also costly and the most prevalent of all work related injury (Bernard et al., 1997). In the industry, MSD can cause problems



taken from the workers' name list of the selected palm oil mills where workers from the eight work sections were selected from the name list. Office workers in the palm oil mills were not included in this study. Inclusion criteria involved were workers who have had a working tenure of not less than one year and aged not more than 60 years old.

#### Questionnaire

A set of questionnaire was used to achieve part of the objectives of this study. The questionnaire consist of seven parts, which are sociodemographic information such as general personal information such as background, age, education level, height and weight (BMI), working information such as designation, type of job, work duration, working area, and duration of employment, lifestyle information such as smoking and leisure activity, health information such as current health status, treatment and medication, injury information including type of injury and body part affected. The Standardized Nordic Questionnaire and Borg's CR-10 Scale was utilized in this survey. The Standardized Nordic Questionnaire helps in determining the prevalence of MSD and Borg's CR-10 Scale which asked for information related with perception of exertion while performing work tasks (Kuorinka et al., 1987; Borg, 1990).

#### Statistical Analysis

All the data obtained were analysed by using the IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 22. Descriptive analysis was used to determine mean, standard deviation, percentage and frequency. Chi square test was used to determine the association between dependent and independent variables. Meanwhile, logistic regression was used to determine the strength of other associated factors with MSD.

### Ethics Committee Approval

This study was permitted for ethical clearance by the University Ethics Committee for Researches Involving Human of Universiti Putra Malaysia. Permission from respondents who was selected to participate in this study was also obtained via written consents from the respondents before study was conducted. Privacy of information and confidentiality of the respondents are, and will always be protected.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal profile, occupational background, lifestyle and health information of the palm oil mill workers.

All 120 study subjects are Malaysian and Malay male, with a mean age of  $38.44 \pm 11.35$  years old. Their BMI lies at an average of  $24.69 \pm 4.67$ . Majority (81.7 percent) of the respondents received education up to secondary level. Majority (67.5 percent) among them are smokers. About quarter (27.7 percent) of them are currently having Osteoarthritis. 45.8 percent of them have history of previous injury, either originating from their occupation or from other activities from their occupation. These information can be obtained from Table 1.

The palm oil mill workers studied belong to eight work sections, which are Grading Area, Loading Ramp, Sterilizer Area, Press Area, Oil Room, Kernel Plant, Workshop and Boiler Area. Most of them worked in their respective palm oil mills at an average of  $9.5 \pm 10.11$  years. Vast majority (91.7 percent) of them were involved with overtime work where 90.0% of them involved with works with repetitive tasks (Table 1). 67.5 percent of them are smokers. 45 percent of them are physically active and they choose to be involved with sports activities such as football and jogging and also with farming and fishing.



Table 1: Personal profile, occupational background, lifestyle and health information of the palm oil mill workers studied (n = 120)

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean $\pm$ S.D	Median	Range
Age (Years)			38.44 $\pm$ 11.35	41.0	38
<27	32	26.7			
28-37	20	16.7			
38-47	33	27.5			
>47	35	29.3			
Total	120	100.0			
Marital Status					
Single	29	24.2			
Married	90	75.0			
Divorced	1	0.8			
Total	120	100.0			
Body Mass Index (BMI)			24.69 $\pm$ 4.67	24.14	25
Underweight (<18.5)	7	5.8			
Normal (18.5-24.9)	61	50.8			
Overweight (25-29.9)	40	33.3			
Obese ( $\geq 30$ )	12	10.0			
Total	120	100.0			
Education Level					
Not in school	3	2.5			
Primary Education	13	10.8			
Secondary Education	98	81.7			
Higher Education	6	5.0			
Total	120	100.0			
History of Previous Injury					
Yes	55	45.8			
No	56	54.2			
Total	111	100.0			

Risk factors of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) among palm oil mill workers

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean $\pm$ S.D	Median	Range
Work Sections					
Grading Area	11	9.2			
Loading Ramp	14	11.7			
Sterilizer Area	12	10.0			
Press Area	11	9.2			
Oil Room	12	10.0			
Kernel Plant	13	10.8			
Workshop	24	20.0			
Boiler Area	23	19.2			
Total	120	100.0			
Working Tenure			9.5 $\pm$ 10.11	5.0	37
1-9 years	75	62.5			
10-19 years	22	18.3			
20-29 years	11	9.2			
>30 years	10	8.3			
Total	118	100.0			
Overtime Work					
Yes	110	91.7			
No	10	8.3			
Repetitive Tasks					
Yes	108	90			
No	12	10			
Total	120	100			
Smoking					
Yes	81	67.5			
No	39	32.5			
Total	120	100.0			
Physical Activity					
Yes	54	45.0			
No	66	55.0			

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean $\pm$ S.D	Median	Range
Total	120	100.0			
Osteoarthritis					
Yes	33	27.7			
No	86	72.3			
Total	119	100.0			

Missing Data: Number of Household Members (6), History of Previous Injury (9) and Working Tenure (2).

Missing Data: Osteoarthritis (1).

#### Prevalence of MSD

As shown in the Table 2, the lifetime prevalence of MSD among the palm oil mill workers studied was high (71.7 percent). However, the one-year prevalence of MSD among the same population was lower, at 50.8 percent.

Table 2: Prevalence of MSD among the palm oil mill workers studied

Variables	Frequency	%
MSD at Any Body Parts (Lifetime Prevalence)		
Yes	86	71.7
No	34	28.3
Total	120	100.0
MSD at Any Body Parts (One-Year Prevalence)		
Yes	61	50.8
No	59	49.2
Total	120	100.0

## Association of risk factors with one-year MSD symptoms reported

Chi-square tests was done to determine whether the risk factors of MSD are significantly associated with the MSD symptoms reported for the past twelve months by the workers working in the palm oil mills. The risk factors involved included age, BMI, physical activity, history of previous injury, Osteoarthritis and smoking. Risk factors originated from the occupation itself were also tested, including working tenure and overtime work. The Chi-square test results revealed that only the history of previous injury, Osteoarthritis and perceived exertion are significantly associated with the MSD symptoms reported. These information was tabulated in the Table 3.

Table 3: Chi-square tests results to test the association between risk factors and MSD symptoms reported

Variables	MSD Reporting (one-year prevalence)				Frequency (%)	X <sup>2</sup> (p Value)
	Yes		No			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Age						
<27	17	53.1	15	46.9	32 (26.7)	3.965 (0.265)
28-37	8	40.0	12	60.0	20 (16.7)	
38-47	14	42.4	19	57.6	33 (27.5)	
>48	22	62.9	13	37.1	35 (29.3)	
Body Mass Index (BMI)						
Underweight	4	57.1	3	42.9	7 (5.8)	0.991 (0.804)
Normal	32	52.5	29	47.5	61 (50.8)	
Overweight	18	45.0	22	55.0	40 (33.3)	
Obese	7	58.3	5	41.7	12 (10.0)	
Working Tenure						
1-9 years	39	52.0	36	48.0	75 (62.5)	2.941 (0.401)
10-19 years	8	36.4	14	63.6	22 (18.3)	
20-29 years	7	63.6	4	36.4	11 (9.2)	
>30 years	6	60.0	4	40.0	10 (8.3)	
Smoking						

Variables		MSD Reporting (one-year prevalence)				X <sup>2</sup> (p Value)	
		Yes		No			Frequency
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
Yes		40	49.4	41	50.6	81 (67.5)	0.210 (0.647)
No		41	69.5	18	30.5	39 (32.5)	
History of Previous Injury							
Yes		34	38.2	21	61.8	55 (45.8)	4.902 (0.027)*
No		27	41.5	38	58.5	56 (54.2)	
Education Level							
Not in school		2	66.7	1	33.3	3 (2.5)	0.418 (0.937)
Primary education		6	46.2	7	53.8	13 (10.8)	
Secondary education		50	51.0	48	49.0	98 (81.7)	
Higher education		3	50.0	3	50.0	6 (5.0)	
Physical Activity							
Yes		27	50.0	27	50.0	54 (45.0)	0.027 (0.869)
No		34	51.5	32	48.5	66 (55.0)	
Overtime work							
Yes		53	48.2	57	51.8	110 (91.7)	3.713 (0.054)
No		8	80.0	2	20.0	10 (8.3)	
Osteoarthritis							
Yes		24	39.3	9	15.5	33 (27.7)	8.422 (0.004)**
No		37	60.7	49	84.5	86 (72.3)	
Repetitive Tasks							
Yes		56	91.8	52	88.1	108 (90.0)	0.448 (0.503)
No		5	8.2	7	11.9	12 (10.0)	

#### Logistic Regression Analysis

Three of the risk factors of MSD, which are history of previous injury, osteoarthritis and perception of exertion was found to be significantly associated with MSD symptoms reporting in the past twelve months among the respondents. These risk factors were further analyzed using Logistic Regression Analysis, adjusted for age, BMI and smoking (Table 4). The results showed that palm oil mill workers with a history

of previous injury are 2.35 (95 percent CI 1.12 to 4.93) times more likely to experience MSD symptoms compared to palm oil mill workers who did not have a history of previous injury ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was also found that palm oil mill workers with Osteoarthritis are 3.9 (95 percent CI 1.568 to 9.708) times more likely to experience MSD symptoms compared to palm oil mill workers who did not have Osteoarthritis ( $p < 0.01$ ). Another finding showed that workers with high perception of exertion (very effort demanding tasks) are 8.09 (95 percent CI 1.358 to 48.170) times are more likely to experience MSD symptoms compared to workers who have low perception of exertion (low effort tasks).

Table 4: Logistic Regression Analysis for previous injury, Osteoarthritis and perceived exertion with MSD, adjusted for age, BMI and smoking.

Variables	Odds Ratio	95% Confident Interval		p Value
		Lower	Upper	
MSD in the past 12 months				
With Previous Injury	2.35	1.120	4.930	0.024*
Without Previous Injury	1.00			
MSD in the past 12 months				
With Osteoarthritis	3.90	1.568	9.708	0.003**
Without Osteoarthritis	1.00			
Perceived Exertion				
Low Exertion (Average scale $\leq 4$ )	1.00	1.358	48.170	0.022*
High Exertion (Average scale $\geq 5$ )	8.09			

\*Significant level at  $p < 0.05$

\*\*Significant level at  $p < 0.01$

The one-year prevalence of MSD among the palm oil mill workers studied was more than half of the population, which was at 50.8 percent. This aligns with many other studies carried out in other types of industries which also reported that the prevalence of MSD was at more than 50 percent of the population studied. One of the studies was carried out by Choobineh et al. (2009), which focused on the petrochemical

industry, with the prevalence of MSD at 73 percent. Another study was carried out by Yu et al. (2012) which comprehensively included workers from many types of industries including the printing industries, metal industries and electronics industries which reported the MSD prevalence at 51.3 percent.

It is also interesting to note that among all the non-occupational risk factors, only Osteoarthritis was found to be significantly associated with the MSD symptoms reported ( $p < 0.001$ ). Osteoarthritis are also known as degenerative joint disease, which is a known risk factor for MSD (Bush 2011). Having Osteoarthritis was also analyzed using Logistic Regression Analysis with an adjustment of age, BMI and smoking and it was found that the respondents with Osteoarthritis are 3.9 (95 percent CI 1.568 to 9.708) times more likely to develop MSD symptoms. Present of Osteoarthritis leading to evolving of MSD symptoms among the palm oil mill workers was also studied.

The Borg's CR-10 Scale values obtained from the respondents were averaged for every individual and were categorized to low exertion (scale value of 4 and less) and high exertion (scale value of 5 and above). The results show that the majority of the respondents perceived low exertion (75.6 percent), while 24.4 percent of the respondents perceived high exertion while performing their respective tasks. The Borg's CR-10 Scale values were further averaged for different work sections. Only two work sections obtained high exertion values, which are Grading Area and Press Area. Both work sections subjected its workers to uncomfortable hot temperatures – Press Area involved a closed area and the press machine which generates heat, while Grading Area is an open area with exposure to direct sunlight, by which the Malaysian temperature can reach up to about 37°C maximum (MOSTI 2014). Work environment with excessive heat are one of the causes of working fatigue and weakness and it is also one of the risk factors for MSD (EASHW, 2007; WebMD, 2014).

About one-third (38.2 percent) of the palm oil mill workers studied had experienced previous injuries. The injuries originated from workplace and also non-workplace. Various parts of the body were affected by previous accidents, which resulted in injuries such as broken limbs, cracks or others. These variables were further analyzed using Logistic Regression Analysis (adjusted for age, BMI and smoking) and the results showed that the workers with history of previous injuries are 2.35 (95 percent CI 1.12 to 4.93) times more likely to experience MSD symptoms. This significant association aligns to a study conducted by Yu et al. (2012) which found the association between the same variables, which focused on the population of factory workers in various types of industries in major cities in China. A study done by Daltroy et al. (1997) found that workers with previous injuries are prone to get similar injury, but at a higher rate.

This study found that a high perceived exertion was significantly associated with one-year MSD symptoms reported among palm oil mill workers. Even though the proportion of respondents reported to experience high perceived exertion are low (24.4 percent), the Logistic Regression Analysis showed that workers with a high perceived exertion have 8.09 times likelihood to report one-year MSD symptoms compared to workers with low perceived exertion ( $p < 0.05$ ). This finding was supported by a study conducted among employees in the Iranian petrochemical industry which concluded that perceived physical demands were significantly associated with musculoskeletal symptoms with OR ranging from 1.45 to 2.33 (Choobineh et al., 2009). Another study done by Heiden et al. (2013) which focused on nurses can also be referred to support this finding. The study found that the physical job demands significantly increased the risk of MSD to 5.7 times more. Even though the exertion / job demands that were investigated in current study was only in term of "perception", the relationship between "perception" and reality cannot be exempted. Physiological and perceptual responses should be used as indicators of both physical and mental work load (Borg, 1990).



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study concluded that the one-year prevalence of MSD was at 50.8 percent among the selected palm oil mill workers studied. Further analysis found that Osteoarthritis, history of previous injury and perception of exertion are important predictors for reporting of MSD symptoms in this study.

It is recommended that the employers of the respective palm oil mills carry out further investigation based on the fact that slightly more than half of the workers studied reported MSD symptoms in the past twelve months. The investigation may include health / medical investigation by medical personnel such as Occupational Health Doctors to confirm these MSD symptoms reported. This may be done before further preventive or control measures can be undertaken to tackle the MSD problems in their workplaces.

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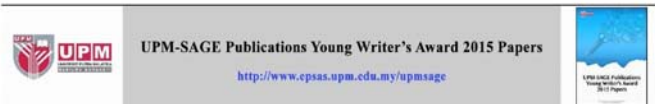
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## COMPARATIVE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NORMS ON TOURIST BEHAVIOUR IN WILDLIFE

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### ABSTRACT

Social norms can be effective factors in promoting environmental behavior. To date, the little research that does exist recommends that there is a discrepancy between what people approve (injunctive norms) of and what people actually do (descriptive norms). Two kinds of norms were compared using PLS (Partial least Square) tool in this survey. The results showed two types of norms were independent and differentiated.

Keywords: Descriptive norms, Subjective norms, PLS-SEM, Focus Theory of Normative Conduct

### INTRODUCTION

Norms have a considerable influence on human action; nevertheless, the impact can only properly recognize when researchers separate two types of norms (Injunctive norms and descriptive norms) that at times act antagonistically in a situation (Cialdini et al., 1990). Despite a history of long and extensive use within the discipline, there is no present agreement within social psychology about the explanatory and predictive value of social norms. On the one hand are those who view the concept as vague and overly general, often contradictory, and ill-suited to empirical test (Weir, 2012).

Social norms are the common and accepted behaviours for specific situations (Göckeritz et al., 2010). In the focus theory of normative conduct, Cialdini et. al (1990) differentiated between two categories of normative beliefs. Descriptive normative beliefs, which refer to what an individual thinks others do in certain situations, and injunctive normative beliefs, which describe what an individual thinks others approve or disapprove of. Put more simply, descriptive normative beliefs can be understood as norms of *is* and injunctive normative/subjective norms beliefs as norms of *ought* (Cialdini et al., 1990).

To date, the little research that does exist suggests that there is a discrepancy between what people approve of and what people actually do (Smith et al., 2012; Weir, 2012). This paper highlights the importance of distinguishing between injunctive and descriptive norms, and of considering the way in which these norms interact to influence behaviour. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), specifically Smart PLS (Partial Least Square) was used to analyse the data. The results reveal that from the path coefficient view, descriptive norm had the strongest effect on the intention towards disturbance behaviour while subjective norm had the strongest variance.

#### Hypotheses

H1. Subjective norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers.

H2. Descriptive norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers.

#### BODY OF RESEARCH

##### Subjective Norms/Injunctive norms

An individual's personal estimation of the social pressure on performing or not performing certain behaviour is referred to as subjective norms. Two interacting

components are assumed for subjective norms: normative beliefs which refer to beliefs about how the important others would like the individual to behave, and outcome evaluations which are the positive and negative judgments on the beliefs (Jillian J. et al., 2004). It has been argued that the concepts of subjective norms proposed within the TPB might refer more to the perspective aspects of social influence, and might not completely catch the processes of norm sharing within group (Fornara et al., 2011). According to social psychology, the individual's behaviour is affected by the subjective norms, i.e. the expectations of other people who are important (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The common understanding of acceptable, obligatory, or forbidden actions is generally termed as social norms (Ostrom et al., 1999). These norms include general behavioural expectations of the society and standards developed from the observation of others' behaviour (Cialdini et al., 1990).

The enforcement of social norms is done by informal institutions, which are independent from judicial laws of the government (North, 2012, North, 1994). People who break social norms will face shame and rejection from the society (Posner & Rasmusen, 1999). According to Fortes (1966), some particularly unacceptable behaviours which may cause community as well as religious entities' displeasure can be categorized as taboo (St John et al., 2011).

Traditional natural resource management systems existing in non-industrial countries can be governed with the help of social norms and taboos (Berkes et al., 2000). Managing natural resources traditionally has been of importance for centuries around the world. For instance, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Indonesians have used a set of traditional rules known as sasi to control fishing and forest product harvesting patterns in Maluku (Harkes & Novaczek, 2002). Similarly, Norwegian Sami reindeer herders have controlled stocking density on communal lands through traditional institutions (St John et al., 2011).

It has recently shown that social norms are significant in the prediction of re-enrolment to an ecosystem services payment scheme. In a study of investigating the significance of social norms and payment for conservation using stated-choice



methods and it is found that social norms were the most important with intermediate conservation payment, while they were the least important with the lowest and highest conservation payment levels, i.e. none or all participants would re-enrol. respondents made decisions based on what other farmers did, when they were offered intermediate conservation payment (Chen et al., 2009).

Colding and Folke (2001) have identified six types of taboo (resource and habitat taboos) held by traditional societies which impact on conservation. According to these authors, taboos developed for reasons other than managing natural resources can greatly influence conservation. This type of taboos have played a role in the conservation of endangered species in Madagascar, such as lemurs (Indridae family), which were believed to represent the ancestors and the carnivorous fosa, thought to feed from the ancestors' bodies buried in the forest (Jones et al., 2008). The taboos mentioned above originate from respect for ancestors and are not related to natural resources management, yet they contribute greatly to the conservation of certain species. However, some taboos may negatively influence conservation, such as spotted eagle owls (Kideghesho, 2008) which are thought of negatively in Madagascar and Tanzania. These negative beliefs can lead to the persecution of these species.

Conservation interventions can lead to the erosion of the taboos or social norms and their enforcing institutions (Jones et al., 2008, Anoliefo et al., 2003). For instance, Jones et al. (2008) showed that the traditional management of Pandans (a plant used for weaving) broke down as a result of designating Ranomafana national Park in Madagascar. The reason for this breakdown was that as the resource became park property, the prevailing norm to keep the tip undamaged while harvesting was greatly ignored. Modernization and religions introduced recently are the other contributing factors that erode local social norms which protected sacred groves and streams in Nigeria and Tanzania (Anoliefo et al., 2003, Kideghesho, 2008). In case of low enforcement capacity, there is a need for conservationists to take care in introducing new rules which might adversely lead to the collapse of social norms which contribute to a level of effective management (Jones et al., 2008).

### Descriptive Norms

A person's beliefs about other individuals' behaviour are measured by descriptive norms. These norms are the things that are done, rather than the things that should be done which are the case with subjective norms (Forward, 2009; Agardh et al., 2011). Ravis and Sheeran (2003) conducted a meta-analytic study to examine the effect of descriptive norms in the TPB. They argue that subjective norms are responsible for the influences of injunctive norms, rather than the descriptive norms on people. They found that the inclusion of descriptive norms may be useful in the TPB (Armitage & Christian, 2003). Other studies have shown how descriptive norms represent an additional predictor of behavioural intentions within the TPB, independently of original TBP components (Fornara et al., 2011).

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2005), the theory of planned behaviour confirms the impact of descriptive norms as the recent versions of this model has combined subjective norms with descriptive norms. Nevertheless, some studies have not supported the combination and showed a distinction between these two variables and that, sometimes, descriptive norms can predict intention better than subjective norms (Ravis et al., 2009).

Ravis et al. (2009) showed in a meta-analytic study of 14 studies that descriptive norms were overall effective and raised the variance by 5 percent over the other variables included in the model. However, they reported some contradictory findings in their study as well. For example, descriptive norms successfully predicted intention of behaviours such as diet, while they could not predict intentions to perform behaviours such as using a condom. Different reasons have been provided for the conflicting results. One reason is related to the behaviour itself and that it becomes more important in examining the behaviours which are somehow risky. It is argued that risky behaviours are more salient and individuals are more affected by others in these situations (Forward, 2009).

### Focus Theory of Normative Conduct

Activation of social norms can be a powerful tool in promoting environmentally beneficial behaviour (Cialdini, 2003, Weir, 2012). The focus theory of normative conduct emphasizes the importance of social normative influence in affecting behaviour. A major component of the theory is the distinction between Injunctive and Descriptive social norms. Injunctive norms specify what is typically approved of and therefore what out to be done. Descriptive norms refer to what people actually do and consequently provide information as to what is typical or normal behaviour (Kallgren et al., 2000). Both types of norms influence behaviour, but do not do so in all situation.

Most studies focus on only one norm and do not compare the influence of different norm types on the same behaviour. This constitutes a large gap with regard to the applicability of the focus theory normative conduct. There has been little exploration into the relative influence of the various types of norm on pro-environmental behaviour. There is a need for studies that examine the differential influences, and thus saliency, of norms in particular applied setting. Distinguishing between injunctive and descriptive norms is crucial because both types can exist simultaneously in a setting and can have either congruent or contradictory implication for behaviour (Weir, 2012). In this study, it is explored the role of norms (descriptive and injunctive norms) in intentions towards disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers.

### METHODOLOGY

The target population is 421 Malaysian birdwatchers. Data was collected from March 2013- August 2014. To answer research questions of the paper the quantitative survey method is employed to identify what extent of dependent variable (intention) is explained by the independent variables as (a) subjective norm (b) descriptive norm. Structural Equation modeling (SEM), Smart PIS (Partial Least Square) version 2

(retrieved from <http://www.smartpls.com>), was used to analyse the data. The importance performance matrix analysis was done to improve interpreting of implication.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Hypotheses

*Subjective Norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers.*

Subjective norms had a positive, significant effect on intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds ( $\beta=0.219$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). Subjective norms for explaining intention had an  $f^2$  effect size of 0.081, which is considered a medium effect size.

There was a controversy among studies on the contribution effect of subjective norms on intention (Forward, 2009). The result of this study was consistent with other studies based on the TPB, which showed a significant relationship between subjective norms and intention (Ajzen and Sheikh, 2013; Yaghoubi, 2010; Smith et al., 2012). According to Terry and colleague (1999) the effectiveness of subjective norms was dependent on whether the individual identified themselves with the target group, which was consistent with our results. Consistent with the results of the current study, subjective norms were important in predicting pro-conservation behaviours such as farm forestry, farm conservation and obeying boating speed limits in manatee areas (Zubair & Garforth, 2006). Artimage and Conner (2003) suggested that the weak influence of subjective norms in studies using TPB was primarily a legacy of poor methodology and measurement (Marzano & Dandy, 2012).

*Descriptive norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers.*

Descriptive norms had a positive, significant effect on intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds ( $\beta = 0.222$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Descriptive norms for explaining

intentions towards disturbance behaviours on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers had an  $F^2$  effect size of 0.078, which was considered a medium effect size.

The finding of the current research was consistent with previous studies. There was a significant relationship between descriptive norms and intention. Further, other studies also showed that descriptive norms should be included in the model (Rivis & Sheeran, 2003; Forward, 2009; Nolan et al., 2008; Fornara et al., 2011). Descriptive norms were considered an additional norm for the prediction of intention towards disturbance behaviour of birdwatchers. A large number of studies showed a strong correlation between descriptive norms and behavioural intention as well as actual behaviour (Göckeritz et al., 2010; Fornara et al., 2011). Nolan et al. (2008) found that descriptive, normative beliefs were the strongest predictors of an individual's decision to conserve energy in their home ( $r=0.45$ ). On the other hand, in this paper, after subjective norms, descriptive norms were the strongest predictors and had the strongest effect on intention towards disturbance behaviour on birds. These findings were illustrative of a large body of research that showed normative beliefs were strongly predictive of both behavioural intentions and behaviour (Göckeritz et al., 2010).

#### COLLINEARITY ASSESSMENT

For collinearity assessment of each predictor construct's Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be lower than 5. Otherwise, one should consider eliminating constructs, merging predictors into a single construct, or creating higher-order constructs to treat collinearity problems (Hair Jr et al., 2013). The VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) calculated for these two constructs (Subjective Norms and Descriptive Norms) and results also confirmed that there was no serious multi collinearity. In other word, these two constructs were independent, see table1.

Table 1 Collinearity assessment for Subjective Norm and Descriptive Norm intentions toward disturbance behaviour on birds

Construct	Tolerance	VIF
Descriptive norms	0.591	1.691
Subjective norms	0.634	1.577

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Firstly, the hypotheses (H1 and H2) were accepted. H1: Subjective Norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers because the relationship between Subjective norms and Intention is significant. H2: Descriptive norm predicts intention toward disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian birdwatchers. The relationship between Subjective Norms and Intention was significant. The relationship between Descriptive norms and Intention also was significant.

Secondly, from the path coefficient view, the effect of predictors on intention was as following: Descriptive norms ( $\beta = 0.222$ ) > subjective norms ( $\beta = 0.219$ ).

Thirdly, from the  $F^2$  effect size (variance) view, Subjective norms ( $r = 0.081$ ) > Descriptive norms ( $r = 0.078$ ) > Then, the results from path coefficient section are slightly different from the results for  $F^2$  effect size. As we compare these two values, it could be seen Descriptive norms had the strongest effect on the intention in the model of study from the path coefficient view while subjective norms had the strongest variance in the model of study.

Next, the Importance Performance Matrix Analysis of intention towards disturbance behaviour on birds revealed that the subjective norm was primary importance for establishing intentions. In addition, its performance was above average. Descriptive norms had almost low Performance and Importance comparing subjective norms.

Finally, the VIF values showed these two constructs (Subjective Norm and Descriptive Norm) were independent.

#### THEORETICAL IMPLICATION

From theoretical implication, to date, the little research that does exist suggests that, there is a discrepancy between what people approve of and what people actually do (Smith et al., 2012).

This current results supported the meta-analysis study by Ravis and Sheeran (2003), the other studies by Artimage and Christan (2003) and Fornara, et al. (2011) that descriptive norms represented an additional variance within the TPB. From previous studies, different reasons have been provided for the conflicting results for including descriptive norm as an additional predictor to theory of planned behaviour (Forward, 2009). This research revealed descriptive norms had also additional variance on intention towards disturbance behaviour of Malaysian birdwatchers on birds.

#### MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION

From a management perspective, the results of this study showed that manager should focus on norms, including subjective and descriptive norms, as effective predictors of intentions towards disturbance behaviour on birds to decrease these behaviours.

The Importance Performance Matrix Analysis results of intentions towards disturbance behaviours (such as feeding birds, bird watching with noisy group, spot light using, etc.) of Malaysian birdwatchers on birds showed, subjective norm was of primary importance with performance above average for defined negative activities. Descriptive norm, on the other hand, had less relevance because of low importance as

well as low performance comparing to subjective norms. Our research highlights the importance of distinguishing between injunctive and descriptive norms and of considering the way in which these norms interact to influence behaviour.

Thus, firstly managers should focus on subjective norms (opinion of others), then on descriptive norms (acceptable or unacceptable behaviours towards birds). For example, feeding wild birds is considered disturbance behaviour. Many birdwatchers are interested in feeding birds to attract birds to the place of bird watching. Leaders or experienced birdwatchers who conduct the events should inform bird watchers that feeding birds is not always acceptable. Some people do not know that their activity can hurt birds. The leader should display the correct thoughts and actions to people who follow them for birding. Because birdwatchers are usually people who want to conserve wildlife, when they realize that their actions have adverse effects on birds, they may change their behaviour.

In addition, we should consider what messages should be disseminated to behaviour change agents about how they can use norms effectively. First, it is important to consider the framing of the message. The current research suggests that norms will be the most effective predictors of disturbance behaviours of Malaysian birdwatchers. The present research sought to further understand the way in which information about what others do and approve of can guide and shape behaviour. It is clear that norms are powerful determinants of our behaviour, but the power is precarious, as we are bombarded by normative messages from multiple sources; we may often receive conflicting normative information from multiple sources. If we wish to fully harness the power of norms to promote positive (and prevent negative) actions, we need to gain a more complete understanding of how individuals respond to the contradictory normative messages they receive. Our research highlights the importance of distinguishing between injunctive and descriptive norms, and of considering how these norms interact to influence behaviour.



## CONCLUSION

The results shows subjective norm and descriptive norm were two different and independent constructs for the study on intentions towards disturbance behaviour on birds among Malaysian bird watchers.

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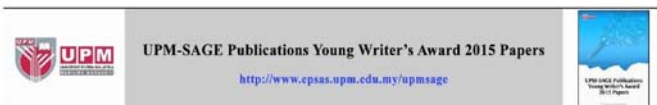
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## REACTIONS TO PLANNED ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE: THE REVIEW OF RESISTANCE BEHAVIOUR

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### ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a conceptual model of resistance to change (RTC) behaviour among civil servant officers in the Malaysia public sector (MPS). It is based on an extensive review of past research on RTC behaviour. From the literature reviewed, three groups of antecedents of RTC behaviour were identified, viz. individual factors, social factors and organizational factors. This paper offers a number of propositions which cumulatively propose leadership competency as a mediating variable in linking the three groups of antecedents with RTC behaviour. Upon model validation, the paper could offer practical intervention for managers and Organizational Development (OD) practitioners to review and manage "positive" RTC behaviour among civil servants in organizations. It is hoped that this paper yields a new approach in theorizing the behaviour of RTC by integrating the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Theory of Psychological Reactance, Social Identity Theory and Organizational Support Theory. This paper contributes to literature in RTC, OD and Human Resource Development.

Keywords: Reactions to change, Resistance to change, Planned Organizational Change, Change Agent and Leadership Competencies.

## INTRODUCTION

Change is inevitable in the life-cycle of any organizations. In brief, the Malaysia public sector (MPS) has undergone various planned organizational change (POC) initiatives since independence in 1957. The British colonial administration was custodial in nature and MPS played a limited developmental role. The only main change undertaken by the new government after independence was replacing the expatriates with Malayan civil servants (Nabiha & Khalid, 2008).

Consequently, the public sector widened its scope and change initiatives. After the New Economic Plan (NEP) was established via a revenue growth grant, the functions of the public sector changed from those performed under the colonial administration to ones directly involved in the economic development of the country (Economic Planning Unit (EPU), 1979). In the 1990s, the widening range of public enterprises' functions led to a number of development programmes (Rais, 1995). The effect of the Look East Policy in 1982 and of the Malaysia Incorporated and Privatisation Policy in 1983 pioneered the transformation of the role, function and scope of the public sector (EPU, 1981).

The POC initiatives in the 2000s had a huge impact on the MPS. The initiatives started with the enhancement of Information Communication Technology (ICT) usage in 2000, which continued until the enhancement of Service Delivery in 2005 (EPU, 2001). With the implementation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other initiatives, civil servants are now required to work efficiently to respond to the new environment and to meet the demands of the stakeholders.

In today's challenging environment, the government has acknowledged that people's participation and contribution must be considered in the formation of transformation initiatives. The Government Transformation Programme (GTP) is seen as the biggest POC initiative in the history of the country and it encompasses the vast area of the full public sector. Other initiatives, such as the Economic Transformation Plan (ETP), the New Economic Model (EPU, 2011) and the creation of a civil service that is

people-oriented (KSN 2014), as well as the establishment of the Performance Management & Delivery Unit (PEMANDU), Unit Peneraju Agenda Bumiputera (TERAJU) and TALENT Corp, are deemed to be the driving forces for the public sector's transformation into a people-based institution (EPU, 2015).

Though numerous POC initiatives have been implemented by the government, civil servants' resistance to change is a main restraining force behind the limited results of some of the initiatives (Nabiha & Khalid, 2008; PEMANDU, 2015). Resistance of civil servants to each activity of POC implementation varies in degree. A civil servant might resist even while technically implementing a POC initiative. This behaviour or attitude triggered the interest of the author to further explore and investigate this phenomenon.

Civil servants in the MPS have been unable to respond effectively to the POC initiatives (Nabiha & Khalid, 2008). Civil servants' efficiency in service delivery has become a critical issue in the MPS due to the expectations of the society (Institut Tadbiran Awam Negara (INTAN) 2011). Indeed, the MPS, through New Economic Model (NEM) recognizes that public service productivity has not improved much over the past few years (INTAN, 2010). Although there are many potential factors behind the failure to enact the POC initiatives, resistance to change (RTC) behaviour is widely recognized as a significant contributor to this problem (Georgalis et al., 2014).

#### THE KNOWLEDGE GAP

Public sector organizations often attempt to implement POC to improve efficiency, enhance the quality of service delivery and cut cost expenditure (Kuipers et al., 2014). Employees are critical in POC initiatives because they are either the change implementers or change recipients. Despite well-planned change initiatives, approximately 70 percent of all change implementations generally have failed, leading to disappointed expectations (Pieterse, 2012). RTC behaviour by employees is

the main factor behind unsuccessful POC and often cited as the main reason for difficulties in implementing POC initiatives.

Over the last two decades, research on leadership styles has explored the relationship between leadership competency and POC. Literatures on leadership have also postulated that leaders' competency in interpersonal interactions is determined by their abilities to mediate their own and others' emotions and to use this information to guide thinking and action whether to accept or resist the change (Berson & Avolio, 2004; Higgs & Rowland, 2000; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). In recent years, several academic studies have examined POC in the public service together with RTC behaviour as a whole. However, there is a lack of research analysing the degree of resistance to each level of activities in implementing POC which are communicating, mobilizing and evaluating (Battilana et al., 2010) and analysing how leadership competency can influence these activities.

In the Malaysian context, there are various arguments that the implementation of POC initiatives in the MPS have not led to significant changes mainly due to employee resistance (Nabiha & Khalid, 2008; PEMANDU, 2015). Indeed, Malaysia Government recognized that its organizations underperform largely due to the likelihood that the status quo will be maintained at each phase of POC initiatives (PEMANDU, 2015). Hence, to develop in-depth knowledge on resistance to change in each activity, there is a need to endeavour a research in the MPS.

#### RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (RTC) BEHAVIOUR DEFINED

RTC behaviour is basically a catchall phrase and it has been seen as a dangerous potency that runs counter to the enthusiasm of the organization (Erwin & Garman, 2010; Smollan, 2011). In that capacity, RTC behaviour is viewed as something to overcome no matter what. Those whom resist are considered individuals with poor states of mind, ailing in camaraderie. As anyone might expect, treating "resistance"



along these lines serves just to escalate genuine resistance, in this way obstructing or possibly derailing POC (Erwin & Garman, 2010).

Likewise, Dent and Goldberg (1999) warn managers to avoid creating resistance among employees by assuming that employees will always be opposed to change. In the 1990s others have reissued similar warnings (Dent & Goldberg, 1999; Merron, 1993). A prominent consultant noted that the concept of RTC "has been transformed over the years into a not-so-disguised way of blaming the less powerful for unsatisfactory results of change efforts" (Krantz, 1999: 42).

As the discussion of POC revealed, however, resistance is a part of the natural process of adapting to change. It is normal response for employee who has a strong vested interest in maintaining their perception of the current state and guarding themselves against loss (Smollan, 2011). In most studies on RTC behaviour, researchers have obtained a perspective from Lewin (1957) where resistance is defined as a restraining force moving toward keeping up the status quo. As such, employee's RTC behaviour is always being considered in the organizations negatively. Indeed, managers treat RTC in employees as an impediment to the POC. Nevertheless, at the point when RTC is viewed as a normal response in the POC process, it can in this way be seen as an initial move toward acceptance to change (Georgalis et al., 2014; Smollan, 2011). RTC generally shows the extent to which POC has affected on something significant to employees and the organization (Saksvik & Hetland, 2009). Organizations would not be able to achieve the POC if its employees do not acknowledge the change and make the change "work" (Burke, Lake, & Paine, 2008).

In different sorts of literature which encompasses the exploration on RTC, researchers likewise postulate more extensive spectrum of reasons why employees may resist POC. For example, research on commitment to organization shows that resistance may be motivated by people's intention to act as per their principles (Milgram, 1968). Moreover, the organizational change literature demonstrates that most of employee RTC is influenced by their intention to get the management's attention on issues that

need to be considered for making the organization relevant and current rather than individual selfishness (Ashford et al., 1998; Chuang, 1999; Dutton et al., 1997).

It is seldom for employees to resist or express such mentalities in demonstrations of dispute or dissent, without taking into account the potential pessimistic outcomes for themselves. Consequently, what some may see as impolite or unwarranted action may likewise be impelled by employees' ethical principles or by their yearning to safeguard the organization's best interest (Gravenhorst, 2003). The author feels it is worth to consider those virtuous intentions by modulating the part of tagging employee's reactions to change as "bad employee".

As far as RTC behaviour is concerned, leaders play important roles in ensuring POC initiatives are successfully implemented (Burnes, 2004). Studies have postulated that leaders' RTC behaviour will influence the success rate of planned organizational change implementation activities (Burnes, 2004; Ford & Greer, 2009; Nielsen et al., 1995; Purser, 2005). Building on this phenomenon, the author argues that each activity in planned organizational change implemented by the leaders has a certain amount of degree of resistance. However, based on exhaustive reading on literatures, there is a lack of study to empirically determine which of those activities have the highest amount of resistance.

#### THEORIZING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (RTC) BEHAVIOUR

There are several theories chosen to conceptualize the RTC behaviour of individuals.

##### Theory of Planned Behaviour

Theory of Planned Behaviour is one of the most comprehensive frameworks examining human behaviour (Strambach & Doring, 2012). This theory proposed by Ajzen (1991) explains that an individual's intention to perform a specific behaviour is a result of his or her behavioural beliefs. Thus, the more control and information

regarding the behaviour of an individual, the greater the likelihood in predicting his or her behaviour.

#### Theory of Psychological Reactance

According to the Theory of Psychological Reactance introduced by Brehm in 1968, in the event that people feel that any of their free practices, in which they can draw in at any minute or later, is dispensed with or undermined with disposal, the motivational condition of psychological reactance will be stimulated (Miron & Brehm, 2006). This reactance state is coordinated toward the rebuilding of the debilitated or dispensed with conduct. This theory proposes that if the degree of reactance is high, the individual may have antagonistic sentiments (Thomas Dowd et al., 1994). Therefore, individual will make an effort to restore the opportunity which has been lost or debilitated when the degree of reactance is higher (Knabe 2012; Nesterkin, 2013).

#### Social Identity Theory

An essential presumption in this theory is that individuals tend to consider themselves as far as groups and organizations to which they belong (Stets & Burke, 2000). As a result of social identification (or self-categorization) processes, people may develop a sense of psychological attachment to their organization(s), which can be an important predictor of their motivated behaviour (Smith et al., 2007). In accordance, they will behave the way a good member behaves because they want to be recognized as a good member for a particular group (Ellemers et al., 2004; Reicher et al., 2005). The theory implies that a person will be influenced to exhibit certain behaviour when he/she is attached to a certain group of people whom also enact the same behaviour.

#### Organizational Support Theory

Organizational Support Theory was developed from the social exchange perspective in order to explain the member-organization relationship (Ngo et al., 2012). Research on RTC behaviour was done more commonly in organization settings in order to

examine employees' response to any POC implementation. It is assumed that organizational factors are linked to evaluations of respect, which in turn could influence the volatility of individuals' engagement and contribution to the organization, one aspect of which is RTC behaviour (Ngo et al. 2012).

#### CONTINUUM OF EMPLOYEES' RESPONSES TO PLANNED ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE (POC): ACCEPTANCE AND RESISTANCE

To empower change agents to recognize employees' acceptance and resistance, it is crucial to operationalize the meanings of reaction to change. Resistance is a multidimensional state of mind toward change, containing affective (feelings toward the change), cognitive (assessments of worth and advantage of the change) and behavioural (intention to act against the change) elements (Oreg, 2006). Hence, these dimensions can be described as extending from "acceptance" to "resistance". Should these elements be considered as a whole; the outcome is the employees' acceptance or resistance to change (Self et al., 2007). Moreover, employees can actually respond with both resistance and acceptance (Harding, 2005; Wittig, 2012). Therefore, investigating the relationship between the behaviour of resistance and acceptance to change is critical to completely comprehend the range of employees' response to change.

#### ANTECEDENTS OF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR

Research shows that high extents of POC initiatives are unsuccessful (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Beer, 2011). Researchers basically concur that employee resistance is one of the main sources for the failure of POC initiatives (Bovey & Hede, 2001a; Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Jurisch, Ika, Wolf, & Krcmar, 2013). Such findings indicate that change agents focusing on employee's reactions including resistance and acceptance during POC are of utmost importance to the success of the initiative. In response, this paper provides a model that illustrates the cause of employees' RTC behaviour.

### Individual Factors

Employee's RTC behaviour is influenced by a number of factors, and the individual factor is an important one that must be considered (Swarnalatha 2014). It is practical to anticipate that employees will respond subsequent to the process of change includes going from the known not obscure, and when employees respond, it is crucial to recognize the manifestations of their responses and the reasons behind them (Wittig, 2012).

Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolaou (2004) defined emotional intelligence (EI) as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships". The function of EI in employees' responses to change is essential in light of the fact that people with high amounts of EI experience more profession achievement, feel less employment instability and more successful and perform in a team, are more versatile to distressing situations and show strong adapting techniques compare to those with low EI levels (Vakola et al. 2004).

Research also shows that irrational thoughts are fundamentally corresponded with employees' RTC behaviour (Bovey & Hede, 2001a). Individuals have a tendency to have some thoughts that join what has been depicted as "faulty, irrational or crooked thinking" (Bovey & Hede, 2001a). Amid change, employees make their own particular judgement of what is going to happen, how others see and think about them (Neenan & Dryden, 2011).

Defence mechanisms emerge automatically in light of impression of risk and are embraced to reduce anxiety (Bovey et al., 2001b). According to Bovey et al. (2001b), employees who are unwittingly disposed to utilize maladaptive defences will probably oppose change. Employees with a propensity to unwittingly embrace adaptive defences are more averse to oppose change.

Vakola et al. (2004) recognized numerous studies in which employees' attitude toward change were crucial in accomplishing fruitful POC activities. A few components effect employees' states of mind toward change, particularly gender, tenure, educational attainment, and social systems (Oreg, 2006; Vakola et al. 2004). Stanley, Meyer, & Topolnysky (2005) have also recognized that there is a relationship between employees' negative dispositions and resistance.

#### Social Factors

A need to feel in a group or a requirement for social collaborations is a basic human motivation in interpersonal conduct (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Thus, individuals' reaction in certain behaviour can likewise be influenced by social components, for example, a longing to have social collaboration with others or as a consequence of the social connection itself. Leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships are social interactions between employees and their supervisors which can impact RTC behaviour (Griep et al., 2015).

Peer pressure also leads to RTC behaviour. Studies on reaction to change have found that social ties in organizations play a strong causal role in influencing individuals' decision to resist or support initiatives (Griep et al., 2015; Hill & Bartol, 2015). This evidence reflects the important role of group members as a paramount push factor to RTC behaviour.

Individuals' involvement in social roles recognized by the public can enhance one's image (Hu, 1994). A study by Ariely, Bracha and Meier (2009) on philanthropic behaviour shows that image is a vital force in driving and motivating a particular behaviour. It is assumed that an individual's image in his/her social roles will also influence the reaction in the POC initiatives by other employees.

#### Organizational Factors

RTC behaviour occurs in both formal and informal organizational contexts (Saksvik & Hetland, 2009). Thus, it is essential to discuss the organizational variables that are

most likely to influence individual involvements in this context since different people have different reactions when it comes to POC. Hence, organizational factors such as organizational structure (Saksvik & Hetland, 2009), organizational trust and goals (Loi et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2006) are found to affect employees' responses to change behaviours.

Organizational factors cannot be overlooked in examining resistance behaviour in the implementation activities of POC. In fact, Damanpour (1991) and Robertson, Roberts and Porras (1993) also advocated that organizational factors demonstrate significant variance in RTC behaviour. Thus, this suggests that the interrelationship of these organizational antecedents with RTC behaviour might be a direct or indirect association. There is a need to confirm this relationship.

#### RESISTANCE BEHAVIOUR IN A PLANNED ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE (POC) CONTEXT: PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSFORMATION

Public Service Transformation (PST) initiative is in line with the aspirations and strategies outlined in the 10th Malaysia Plan: 2011-2015 (10MP), chapter on "Transforming Government to Transform Malaysia" (EPU, 2010). It specifically supports the government's agenda to restructure the public sector to ensure that it is more effective in its service delivery while at the same time ensuring that the transformation programmes contributes to better fiscal expenditure and management of the public sector. In the 10MP, one of the main priorities outlined by the government is the critical need to transform the government's systems, processes and human capacity in order to ensure that the government's various transformation programmes are implementable.

During the planning period, the government will be undertaking a comprehensive audit of all government organizations and structures and reviewing roles, functions, gaps and overlaps. The objective of this will be to develop a plan for rationalizing agencies with overlapping or redundant functions and to align the structure of

government agencies contributing to the national priorities. As challenges and opportunities will increasingly transcend traditional public sector boundaries, a whole-of-government approach will be deployed during the 10MP period. This whole-of-government approach will require agencies to work across portfolio boundaries and across federal, state and local levels as an integrated government to address cross cutting issues.

This POC approach will be applied to policy formulation, programme development and delivery of outcomes. The new structure of government will require a number of existing government organisations, particularly those with overlapping or redundant functions, to be rationalised. Organisations focused on national priorities will be strengthened and talent in the public service will continue to be developed.

The importance of understanding resistance behaviour among civil servant is shown by various arguments that the implementation of POC initiatives previously such as Government Transformation Programme (GTP) in the beginning have not led to significant changes mainly due to employee's resistance to the change (Muhyiddin, 2010; PEMANDU, 2015). Therefore, this triggered the author's interest to endeavour a study on RTC in the MPS.

#### LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY AS MEDIATOR

One of the difficulties for leaders is to take their organizations into the future by executing POC towards more effective outcomes (Purser 2005; Van der Voet, 2015). Numerous leadership studies on the relationship between leadership and change does not accentuate on the unpredictability of intra-organizational processes (Yukl, 1999), including the multifaceted nature of the diverse activities in the POC implementation process.

In this paper, building on the leadership, organizational change and RTC behaviour literatures, the author proposes that with the influence of leadership competency as a



mediator, leaders are likely to accept on all or different activities involved in POC implementation.

Despite numerous theories progressed by leadership scholars (House & Aditya, 1997), this paper will emphasize on the task-oriented and person-oriented behaviours model. In this model, task-oriented emphasizes on organizational structure, outline, control and building up schedules to accomplish organizational objectives and goals (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). This orientation is vital for accomplishing organizational objectives and creating POC activities (House & Aditya, 1997; Huy, 1999; Nadler & Tushman, 1990). Person-oriented abilities incorporate practices that encourage synergistic cooperation among team members in organization, set up a supportive social atmosphere that guarantee fair treatment of team members in organization (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). These interpersonal aptitudes are vital in POC executions which empower leaders to spur and direct their followers (Nesterkin, 2013; Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Such leadership competencies might mediate the RTC behaviour and probably have implications for POC implementation.

Based on the above discussion, a conceptual model to show the correlations between the variables has been developed. Figure 2 below illustrates a model showing the antecedents of resistance to change behaviour and the mediator.

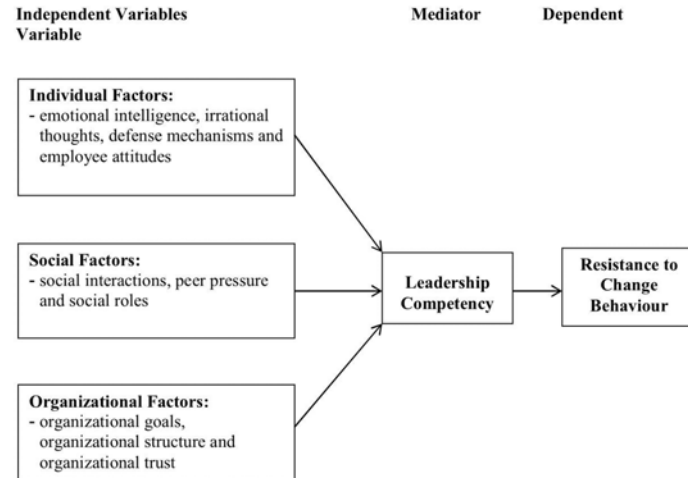


Figure 2: A model showing the antecedents of resistance to change behaviour and leadership competency as the mediator

#### IMPLICATIONS TO ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

POC is vital for organizations to stay focused in today's competitive environment. To effectively actualize change activities, change agents must understand that the responsibility of employees is essential and employees' responses to change are impacted by various components, including individual factors, social factors and organizational factors. Change agents can apply the understanding of continuum of employees' reactions to POC to illustrate how employees response to change. The proposed model is based on the idea that the level of employees' acceptance or resistance is a necessary element that change agents ought to analyse. Generally, this paper gives OD professionals and the managers' essential information about employees' responses to change. By understanding the degree of employees' resistance

and acceptance to change in each activity in implementing POC, top management would be able to review the POC initiatives which are not in the best interest of the organization. Therefore, resistance may be useful in helping productivity and assisting in refining the implementation strategic and action plans as well as to improve the quality of decision-making.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Many factors must be considered when studying RTC behaviour among civil servants in MPS. The author further proposes that individuals should develop their leadership competencies in order to facilitate the implementation of POC initiatives in the government transformation. It is proposed that individuals' who have high leadership competency in the activities in implementing POC initiatives will be more likely to support and accept the change rather than resist it.

This paper provides a theoretical support for the individual factors, social factors and organizational factors as antecedents of RTC behaviour and leadership competency as a mediator. Therefore, the author proposes future research empirically test and validate the propositions and the links between individual, social, organizational factors, leadership competency and RTC behaviour among civil servants with the existence of the mediating variable in the model.

Consequently, empirical evidence that could be obtained based on this model may contribute to the emerging literature on rethinking the resistance behaviour of individuals from different perspectives, particularly in the MPS.

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## UNDERSTANDING OF THE HALALAN TAYYIBAN CONCEPT TOWARDS PURCHASE INTENTION OF HALAL COSMETICS AMONG YOUNG URBAN MUSLIM CONSUMERS

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept and its influence on purchase intention of halal cosmetics. The data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire survey with purposive sampling on a population of 560 Indonesian young urban Muslim consumers. A structural equation modelling technique was used to test the proposed model. Understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept was found to be predictor of attitude towards halal cosmetics. Attitude was found to influence purchase intention of halal cosmetics. This study is one of the first attempts to empirically test the value-attitude-behavior model in the context of halal cosmetics purchasing behavior. The study provides useful information for marketers as well as policy makers.

Keywords: Halalan tayyiban, Attitude, Intention, Halal cosmetics.

### INTRODUCTION

The global trend for ethical beauty shows that consumers seek purity, integrity and authenticity in their cosmetics. The consumers prefer cosmetics that are animal cruelty free and based on natural ingredients. Religious and conscientious consumers avoid material that are in such a way as to cause unnecessary pain or that pollute the

environment. There are same needs between the halal consumer and the ethical consumer. Halal cosmetics respond to a growing demand from the consumers for eco-certification (organic, natural and free of animal testing) and halal certification (compliance to *Shariah* law).

Muslim consumers, like another, request for the products that not only can satisfy their preferences, but also balances their harmonious and peaceful living (Abdul Aziz et al., 2010). They need to understand the halal concept that meets the demands of the religion to make an intelligent decision according to their preferences and faith. However, their understanding of the halal concept in comprehensive way is lacking (Mariam, 2008). Many Muslim consumers still do not understand the spirit of *Shariah* governing these products. Moreover, they do not consider ecological and environmental issues in making a decision about the halal status of the product despite the *Quranic* message of the need of harmonizing halal and tayyib that the product is not only legal but also good for human health, environment and animals (Muttaqin, 2014).

Marketers need to make greater efforts to identify the consumers in understanding the halalan tayyiban concept and its affect in their consumption behavior. By knowing understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept of their consumers, marketers are in a better position to create new interest in their products. Marketers may structure their communications more suitably to the halalan tayyiban concept. Therefore, this study aims to investigate consumers' understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept towards halal cosmetics and its influence on their attitude and purchase intention towards such product. This study is conducted among young urban Muslim consumers on a sample in Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Concept of Halalan Tayyiban

The concept of halalan tayyiban refers to the command from Allah SWT that mankind should select products that have the features of halal and tayyib (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:168; Surah al-Maidah, 5:88; Surah an-Anfal, 8:69; Surah an-Nahl, 16:114). The concept considers all the physical and spiritual advantages of the product to the humankind. Halalan tayyiban product can be interpreted as the product that is permitted to be consumed and can give benefits to the human body (Sazelin & Safiah, 2015). It does not mean that the product must be halal and pure only. It also means that the product must be beneficial to the body and does not cause any harm. Furthermore, what is beneficial for the body is also beneficial for the human's mind and soul. Thus, products which are impure, unbeneficial and worthless are prohibited and are not considered as worthy product and unacceptable. According to Sazelin and Safiah (2015), whatever product consumed must meet the criteria of halalan tayyiban which encompass the holistic concept of quality including hygiene and sanitary, safety, wholesome and the permissible by God.

### The Concept of Halal Cosmetics

The concept of halal cosmetics takes into consideration the physical and spiritual aspects which are derived from the halalan tayyiban concept. Halal cosmetics are halal if they comply with Islamic law. According to DSM (2008), the products must not contain human parts or ingredients derived from human parts or contain animal by-products that are forbidden to Muslim such as from pigs, dogs etc. Only by-products from animals permitted by and slaughtered according to Islamic requirements are permissible in products; examples of these animals are chickens, cows, buffaloes, turkeys, sheep and goats. If genetically-modified organisms (GMO) are used in the products, the GMO must not contain components forbidden by Islam. The product must not be contaminated with najis in any circumstances and condition.

If the products are not prepared or processed according to halal requirements, they are forbidden from being used by Muslims.

Halal cosmetics are *tayyib* if they are clean and not harmful to consumers. The production of the products must be carried out under strict hygienic conditions in accordance with good manufacturing practices and public health legislations (NPCB, 2009). Cosmetics are hygienic if they are free from *najis* or contamination and harmful germs. Whereas, cosmetics are safe if they do not cause harm to the consumers be Muslim or non-Muslim when it is used. In order to assure quality and safety, the producers should take necessary steps to comply with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Good Hygiene Practice (GHP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP).

#### Awareness on Halal Cosmetics

Muslim consumers are becoming more conscious to take the issue of halal seriously (Husain, 2006). The consumers were concern and aware of the product they consume (Saabar & Ibrahim, 2014). Muslim consumers choose to spend on lifestyle products that meet their religious and cultural requirements. The educated and conscientious Muslim consumers are seeking environmentally friendly and organic lifestyle products (Fitrahhub, 2015). Furthermore, Muslim consumers require the choice of beauty products being in line with halal requirement in the ingredients. They are becoming more conscious and concern over the presence of harmful chemical and non-halal ingredients in their cosmetics products. Thus, Muslim consumers are looking for the products that must be *tayyib* such as clean, safe, and healthy where all aspects of the production comply with the Shariah (Al-Harran & Low, 2008). Therefore, this study investigates how Muslim consumers reflect understanding of the *halalan tayyiban* concept into the cosmetics they use.

### Attitude

Attitude towards a product are built based on beliefs and evaluative judgments for each attribute of that product. Consequently, marketers have to understanding how their own product attributes are perceived by consumers differently from their competition. For example, cosmetics with the halal logo are perceived by consumers as their first priority when they selected cosmetics products (Norman et al., 2008). Halal cosmetics were found to be important for consumers as their choice (Abdul Aziz et al., 2010) while other study found that consumers were likely to choose halal products as a good idea (Lada et al., 2009).

Consumers' attitude towards purchasing halal foods is firm by religious commitment and social pressure (Alhazmi, 2013). Along with Widodo (2013), Muslim consumer's attitude towards halal food product could be predicted by perception of safety, religious values, health and exclusivity of halal food. Meanwhile, consumers' attitude towards purchasing halal cosmetics is explained by spiritual intelligence, spiritual congruence, product involvement and product image (Azreen Jihan & Musa, 2013). This study investigates consumers' understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept as the determinant for their attitude towards halal cosmetics. The attitude is identified through agreement statements that using halal cosmetics is a good idea, a personal choice, first priority and preferred.

### Intention

Intention is defined as indications of how much effort people are planning to exert in order to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). According to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), desire to perform the particular action will be a function of the strength of one's attitude. Thus, intentions will be well formed and thus more likely to reflect attitudes. Azreen Jihan and Musa (2013) proposed that spiritual intelligence and spiritual congruence would influence the attitude of the individual to continuous or having an intention to purchase halal cosmetics. Whereas Azmawani et al. (2015) indicated that consumers' attitude had positive effect to intention to choose halal cosmetic products.



Moreover, it is found that consumers had more positive attitude and intention towards halal food products than towards halal cosmetic products. However, attitude was found to have insignificantly influence with the intention to purchase halal cosmetics (Abdul Aziz et al., 2010). With these references, the present study proposes to investigate purchase intention towards halal cosmetics. It is identified from how subject considere, decide, intend and recommend to purchase halal cosmetics.

#### Conceptual Model

Homer and Kahle (1988) initially developed the value-attitude-behavior model to examine the interrelationship between values, attitude and behavior. The model implies a major flow of causation from values to attitudes to behaviors, so that the strongest causal effects are between values and attitudes, and between attitudes and behavior. However, the model has not been tested in the context of halal products. Therefore, this study proposes the conceptual model that built upon the value-attitude-behavior model by exploring understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept for applying in the context of halal cosmetics purchasing behavior.

#### Hypotheses Development

According to the relevant literature on halal consumption, it appears that concerned with religious belief, hygiene, health, environment and animal welfare influence the consumption. Bonne et al. (2007) showed that French Muslims selected halal meat products not because of religious obligation only, but consumers also believe that halal products are tastier, healthier and the Islamic slaughter method was less painful for the animal. Golnaz et al. (2010) stated that awareness towards halal is not only the way Muslim slaughter their animals but also relates to environmental, sustainability, animal welfare and food safety. Halal food consumption could be considered a religious expression which is strongly linked to the faith value and level of religiosity, next to other values such as health, safety and being friendly to environment and animals (Bonne & Verbeke, 2006).

Consumers' awareness of the halalan tayyiban concept helps to boost their confidence in choosing halal restaurant (Shaari et al., 2014). Muslims should find rizk (sustenance) and consumed product which is halal and tayyib as it ensures better healthy life which able to portray good attitudes and behaviours (Yousef, 2010). With this reference, it is expected that consumers' understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept have positive impacts on purchasing behavior of halal cosmetics. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be stated:

- H1. Understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept positively influence attitude towards halal cosmetics
  - H1a. Understanding of halal dimension positively influence attitude towards halal cosmetics
  - H1b. Understanding of tayyib dimension positively influence attitude towards halal cosmetics

Attitude is an important factor in influencing consumer's intention to purchase halal cosmetics. This means, when the consumer's attitude towards halal cosmetics is positive, the consumer is more likely to have the intention of purchasing halal cosmetics in the market. This in line with statement of Ajzen & Fishbein (1980), whereby when a person's attitude towards engaging in behaviour is positive, then he or she is more likely to engage in that behavior.

Several studies have confirmed the relationship between attitude and behavior intention to choose or purchase halal cosmetics. In a study conducted by Azreen Jihan and Musa (2013), a positive personal attitude was found to be an important predictor of the intention to purchase halal cosmetics. Ahlam et al. (2015) indicated that consumers' attitudes had positive effect to intention to choose halal cosmetic products. Moreover, it is found that consumers had more positive attitudes and intentions towards halal food products than towards halal cosmetic products. However, attitude was found to have insignificantly influence with the intention to purchase halal cosmetics (Abdul Aziz et al., 2010). Therefore, motivated by the above discussions, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2. Attitude positively influences purchase intention towards halal cosmetics

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample and Instruments

The data was collected using a self-administered structured questionnaire that consists of information about respondents and measurements of the *halalan tayyiban* concept, attitude, and purchase intention. The questionnaire was distributed based on the purposive sampling of the shopping population in Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, and Semarang, where the cities were having higher number of shopping centres and most of the shopping activities take place and people in the urban areas were the biggest buyers of cosmetic products. The participants were intercepted at the shopping centres and asked to complete the questionnaire. The 560 participants were sampled. Of the participants, 68 percent (382) were female, while 32 percent (179) were male. The age of the participants was 18 - 35 years.

Understanding of the *halalan tayyiban* concept is measured a through scale adapted and modified from previous studies on *halal* products (Shaari & Arifin, 2010; Shaari et al., 2014; Ambali & Bakar, 2014). Subscale of *halal* dimension consisted of seven items while subscale of *tayyib* dimension consisted of five items. Attitude towards *halal* cosmetics consisted of four items, indicating how the subjects perceived *halal* cosmetics as a good idea, personal choice, first priority, and preferred. The scale was adopted from Lada et al. (2009) and Abdul Aziz et al. (2010). Purchase intention was measured using a scale developed by Widodo (2013). The scale consisted of four items, indicating how subject considere, decide, intend or recommend to purchase *halal* cosmetics. All items of the four constructs were measured using a 7-point of Likert scale, labelled from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

#### Data Analysis

The procedure for data analysis for this study entailed three steps. Firstly, descriptive statistics indicate mean and standard deviation of variables. Secondly, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the measurement model. Finally, structural equation model (SEM) was estimated to explore the relations between understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept and attitude towards halal cosmetics on one hand and attitude and purchase intention towards halal cosmetics on the other.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

#### Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics found that the overall mean score of the halal dimension was 6.49 with its standard deviation of 0.75, indicating the high importance of the halal dimension related to halal cosmetics to the respondents. Meanwhile the overall mean score of the tayyib dimension was 6.55 with its standard deviation of 0.69, reflecting the high importance of the tayyib dimension related to halal cosmetics to the respondents. However, the mean score of the tayyib dimension was slightly higher than the halal dimension, indicating that the tayyib dimension has been considered much important than the halal dimension. It means that concern to hygiene, safety, health and naturalness related to halal cosmetic products to the respondents is quite important than concern to halal status of the products.

The overall mean score of attitude towards *halal* cosmetics was 6.45 with its standard deviation of 0.74. This indicates that respondents have positive attitude towards halal cosmetics. Whereas the overall mean score of purchase intention was 6.29 with its standard deviation of 0.82. This shows that respondents have high purchase intention towards halal cosmetics.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Halal dimension	6.49	0.75
Tayyib dimension	6.55	0.69
Attitude	6.45	0.74
Purchase intention	6.29	0.82

## Validation of Measurement Model

As shown in Table 2, all factor loadings exceed the recommended level of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010). The construct reliability of all constructs achieves the recommended level of 0.70 (Hair et. al., 2010). The variance-extracted for all constructs also exceed the recommended level of 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 1995), except the halal dimension (0.40). However, this study chooses to keep the halal dimension in the model since it has shown to have a relation to halal product choice in earlier studies.

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Report for All Constructs

Construct / Indicator	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
Halal dimension		0.813	0.714	0.396
Cosmetics I use should				
HL1. not contain pork or its derivatives	0.619			
HL3. not contain alcohol	0.502			
HL4. not contain GMOs	0.744			
HL5. not be contaminated with najis	0.629			
Tayyib dimension		0.860	0.756	0.632
TY1. be hygienic	0.753			
TY2. be safe	0.840			
TY3. be healthy	0.789			
TY4. contain natural ingredients	0.720			

Understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept towards purchase intention of halal cosmetics among young urban muslim consumers

Construct / Indicator	Factor loading	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE
Attitude		0.877	0.754	0.659
AT1. Using halal cosmetics is a good idea	0.824			
AT2. Halal cosmetics is a personal choice	0.813			
AT3. Halal cosmetics is first priority	0.804			
AT4. I prefer halal cosmetics	0.806			
Purchase intention		0.859	0.757	0.615
PI1. I consider purchasing halal cosmetics	0.790			
PI2. I decide to purchase halal cosmetics	0.865			
PI3. I intend to purchase halal cosmetics	0.792			
PI4. I recommend my friends to purchase halal cosmetics	0.678			

The full measurement model meets the fitness indexes requirements as presented in Table 3. The Chi-square was significant,  $\chi^2/df = 3.528$  were in the range of 2.0 to 5.0 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) demonstrating a good model fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was 0.064 which was in the 0.05 - 0.08 limit interval offered by Hair et al., (1995) and Kline (2005). The Goodness of Fit (GFI) = 0.927, the Normed-Fit Index (NFI) = 0.925, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.945, and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.932, were greater than 0.90 as offered by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), and Bentler (1990).

Table 3: Goodness of Fit Statistics for the Full Measurement Model

CFA Model	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
Full Measurement	3.528	0.927	0.899	0.945	0.925	0.932	0.064

## Evaluation of Structural Model

The results of the SEM analysis indicate that the structural model demonstrates an acceptable fit with the data. As shown in Table 4, six of seven fit index has achieved the required level. Chi-square was significant,  $\chi^2/df = 3.778$  were in the range of 2.0 to 5.0 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) demonstrating a good model fit. The RMSEA was 0.071, which was in the 0.05 - 0.08 limit interval offered by Hair et al. (1995) and Kline (2005). GFI (0.922), CFI (0.938), NFI (0.918) and TLI (0.925), were greater than 0.90 as offered by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) and Bentler (1990).

As presented in Table 5, the path between halal dimension and attitude was significant and positive ( $\beta = 0.299$  at  $p = 0.00$ ). The positive path coefficient between tayyib dimension and attitude was quite strong and significant ( $\beta = 0.432$  at  $p = 0.00$ ). The path between attitude and purchase intention was quite strong, significant and positive ( $\beta = 0.661$  at  $p = 0.00$ ).

Table 4: Goodness of Fit Statistics for the Structural Model

Model	$\chi^2/df$	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA
Strutural	3.778	0.922	0.894	0.938	0.918	0.925	0.071

Table 5: Result of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesized Path	Estimate	SE	Estimate Standardized	CR	P
Halal dimension → Attitude	.376	.079	.299	4.757	***
Tayyib dimension → Attitude	.553	.075	.432	7.380	***
Attitudes → Intention	.722	.054	.661	13.424	***

## DISCUSSIONS

The present study indicates that understanding of the halalan tayyiban concept is the determinant for a consumer to form a positive attitude towards halal cosmetics. It means that the more concerned consumers with the halalan tayyiban concept, the more positive attitudes they have towards halal cosmetics. Thus, halal cosmetics are accepted by consumers because of permitted by *Shariah*, hygienic, safe, healthy and natural. The findings are consistent with study of Majid et al. (2015) whereby awareness of ingredient and logo, halal status and halal certified brands of cosmetics are the predictors for the intention of cosmetic consumer females towards halal brand. The findings confirms the study of Shaari et al. (2014), who report that consumers' awareness on halal significantly influence confidence to choose halal restaurant. The result of the current study also supports the study of Cervelon et al. (2010). The researchers mention that ethical concerns are highly associated with consumers' positive attitude towards green fashion.

In addition, understanding of the tayyib dimension is shown to have a stronger relation to the consumer's attitudes towards halal cosmetics than do the halal dimension. This finding is in line with study conducted by Azreen Jihan and Musa (2013), which provide evidence that halal, was not a priority but the ingredient was the most important factor that may influence consumers to consume cosmetic products. This is confirmed by Ambali and Bakar (2014) that reveal health reason was found to have a stronger relation to Muslim awareness about halal consumption than halal logo. The current of the study is consistent with study of Honkanen et al. (2006) whereby ecological motives are even greater related to attitudes towards organic food than religious motives. However, this finding is in contrary with research conducted by Michaelidou and Hassan (2008) whereby ethical self identity is found to have a stronger relation to attitude towards organic food than health consciousness.

The relation between attitude and purchase intention are positive and quite strong, indicating that consumers with positive attitudes towards halal cosmetics are more



likely to firm intentions to purchase such cosmetics. This is in accordance with studies by Abdul Aziz et al. (2010), and Azreen Jihan and Musa (2013). The researchers explain the significant relationship between attitude and intention to choose halal cosmetics.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The present study reveals that consumers' understanding of the *halalan tayyiban* concept significantly influence attitude towards halal cosmetics while attitudes significantly influence purchase intention towards halal cosmetics. This shows that understanding of the *halalan tayyiban* concept give an important contribution to explaining attitudes. Even though opinion polls show that the majority of people have very positive perceptions of halal cosmetics, the market of halal cosmetics has not developed as expected in Indonesia.

The results of this study suggest that marketers may appeal to the *halalan tayyiban* concept and attitude in their communications. Moreover, one could appeal to the potential advantages of using halal cosmetic products. Halal cosmetics may be positioned based on halal and *tayyib* dimension. The strategy may include the adoption of tagline such pure, hygienic, safe, healthy, and natural. On other hand, the policy makers can use the findings of the present study to review or redesign a policy related to cosmetics sector. Thus, attention of policy-makers should be paid to the dimensions of halal cosmetics by reinforcing regulatory policy based on the *halalan tayyiban* concept.

This finding of this study is generalizable only to young Muslim consumers in urban (Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Semarang). Future research may broaden the geographical locations in Indonesia in order to represent young Muslim consumers both from the urban and the rural areas.

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Appendix

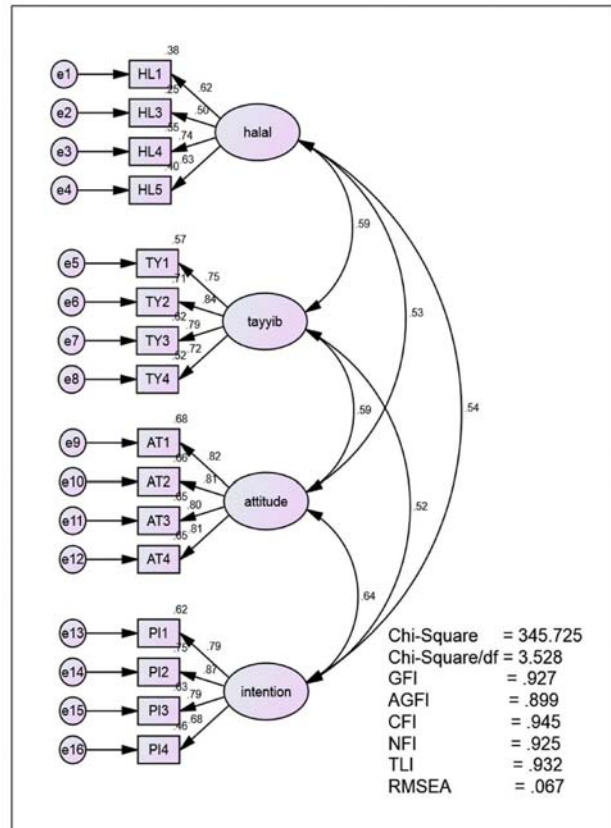


Figure 1: The full measurement of the study

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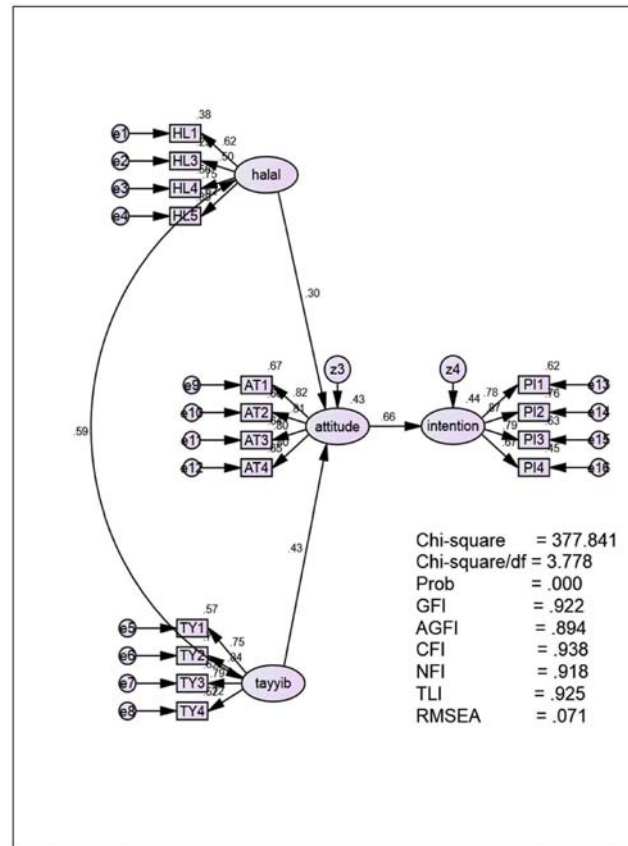


Figure 2: The structural model of the study

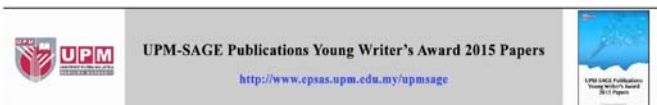
## Measurements of the Study

Label	Construct/Dimension/Item
	Understanding of the Halalan Tayyiban Concept
	Halal dimension
HL1	Cosmetics I use should not contain pork or its derivatives
HL2	Cosmetics I use should not contain any human parts
HL3	Cosmetics I use should not contain alcohol
HL4	Cosmetics I use should not contain GMOs
HL5	Cosmetics I use should not contaminated with najis
HL6	Cosmetics I use should not contain shubhah (doubtful) ingredients
HL7	Cosmetics I use should contain halal ingredients
	Tayyib dimension
TY1	Cosmetics I use should be hygienic
TY2	Cosmetics I use should be safe
TY3	Cosmetics I use should be healthy
TY4	Cosmetics I use should contain natural ingredients
TY5	Cosmetics I use should not tested on animals
	Attitude
AT1	Using halal cosmetics is a good idea
AT2	Using halal cosmetics is a personal choice
AT3	Halal cosmetics is first priority
AT4	I prefer halal cosmetics
	Purchase Intention
PI1	I consider purchasing halal cosmetics
PI2	I decide to purchase halal cosmetics
PI3	I intend to purchase halal cosmetics
PI4	I recommend my friends to purchase halal cosmetics



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The author, Sutono, obtained Bachelor of Economics from Universitas Muria Kudus and Master of Management from Universitas Diponegoro, Indonesia. In 2009, he advanced his academic pursuit in PhD in marketing with Graduate School of Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia. During his study as a PhD student, he managed to publish articles in the journals and presented paper in the conferences. He joined Universitas Muria Kudus in 2005 as Lecturer in Department of Management, Faculty of Economics. He teaches management and marketing related subjects such as Marketing Management, Consumer Behavior, Business Ethic and Strategy Management.



## STRESS, LIFE SATISFACTION, SATISFACTION WITH PARENTAL AND PEERS RELATIONSHIP AND SUICIDAL IDEATION AMONG MALAYSIAN ADOLESCENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Suicide has been increasing at an alarming rate throughout the world including our nation. Adolescents have become one of the high risk groups for suicidality. Thus, it is important to explore suicidal ideation especially among adolescents in order to curb this issue. This study aimed to investigate stress, life satisfaction, satisfaction with parental and peers relationship and suicidal ideation among Malaysian adolescents. This study employed a cross-sectional research design where the respondents were recruited using multistage cluster sampling. Result highlighted that 60.1 percent of the respondents had suicidal thoughts. Independent Samples t-test analysis revealed that adolescents with suicidal ideation had more stress and were less satisfied with life, maternal relationship, paternal relationship and peers relationship compared to adolescents without suicidal ideation. Binomial Logistic Regression indicated that stress increased the likelihood of suicidal ideation while life satisfaction reduced the likelihood of having suicidal thoughts. Thus, practitioners should emphasize on providing suitable intervention especially on stress management programs and being satisfied with life workshops in order to curb suicidal ideation among adolescents.

Keywords: Life satisfaction, Parental and peers relationship, Stress, Suicidal ideation

## INTRODUCTION

Suicide is a serious public health issue worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported approximately 800,000 people die from suicide every year (WHO, 2015). More seriously, suicide has become the third leading cause of death for adolescents aged 10 to 19 years old (WHO, 2014). This is due to adolescence is a period of “storm and stress” where they experience various emotional and behavioral disruptions (Arnett, 2006). Thus, adolescents have a higher risk of committing in suicide behaviors.

In Malaysia, suicidal cases are on the rise. The National Suicide Registry Malaysia (NSRM) reported that a total of 290 registered suicide cases were found in 2008. In 2009, the total number of registered suicide cases increased to 328 cases (NSRM Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2011). In 2010, it was found that an average of 60 suicide cases happened every month in Malaysia which is equivalent to two cases each day in 2010 (Ng, 2012). These figures were reported by the National Suicide Registry Malaysia (NSRM) where they analyzed data of completed suicide from all the forensic departments in Malaysia with the supervision of the Ministry of Health Malaysia (Nor Hayati et al., 2014). The increased number of suicide cases highlighted the seriousness of this issue in our nation. Thus, it is important to curb this issue by identifying the factors that cause people to involve in suicidal behaviors.

Suicidal ideation is a precursor of suicidal attempts and suicidal behaviors. People with suicidal ideation have thoughts about ending their life (O’Carroll et al., 1996). The World Health Organization found that the figures of people with suicidal thoughts are much more beyond those committed suicide (WHO, 2015). Suicidal ideation was caused by various factors including self, parents and peers. Henceforth, by focusing on the factors that cause adolescents to think of suicide strongly help in intervening suicidality issues.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are various factors that are associated with suicidal ideation such as feeling stressful (Park & Chung, 2014), not satisfied with one's life (Kim & Kim, 2008) and not satisfied with their relationship with other people (Yao et al., 2014). The level of stress is one of the main factors suicidal ideation occurred among adolescents. In this modern era, rapid social and economic changes cause adolescents to be under heavy pressure (Zhang, Wang, Xia, Liu & Jung, 2012). When adolescents are unable to cope with the heavy pressure from daily hassles, stress eventually occurred. Consequently, stresses become unbearable which lead adolescents to have negative thinking including the thoughts of committing suicide (Chang, Yang, Lin, Ku & Lee, 2008; Park & Chung, 2014). Zhang and colleagues (2012) found that life stress was associated with suicidal ideation and was also a strong predictor of suicidal ideation. Students with stress were two times riskier in having suicidal thoughts. Thus, adolescents who are under stress are at-risk of experiencing suicidal thoughts.

Stress was also caused by academic issues among adolescents. Nowadays, parents and teachers exert high expectations on adolescents where they expect them to excel academically. The high expectations caused adolescents to feel stress which consequently increased the risk of suicidal thoughts, plan and attempt among students (Ang & Huan, 2006; Park & Chung, 2014). In sum, adolescents nowadays are facing more stress which causes more of them to have suicidal ideation whenever they are unable to cope with it.

Beside stress, life satisfaction is another important factor of suicidality. Life satisfaction is a subjective assessment of individual made on the quality of their life based on self-defined standard (Gilman, Huebner & Laughlin, 2000). Past study found that adolescents who were dissatisfied with their life involved in serious suicide consideration, suicidal plan, and also suicidal attempt (Valois, Zullig, Huebner & Drane, 2004). Moreover, Kim and Kim (2008) revealed that adolescents who had attempted suicide were less satisfied with their life and experienced more frustration. Another recent study by Yao et al. (2014) also reported that life satisfaction was

negatively associated with suicidal ideation among adolescents. These past studies supported that satisfaction with life is an important factor in preventing adolescents to be involved in suicidality.

Other than that, social figure such as parents play an important role in adolescents' development. They not only served as a role model for adolescents, but also as a supporting and caring figure that help them whenever they needed help (Santrock, 2008). Thus, having a good and satisfied relationship with parents is crucial for a healthy outcome. Previous study by Xing et al. (2010) reported that improper parental rearing, separation from parents and social problems in family increased the risk of suicide attempts among adolescents. Evidence has also highlighted that adolescents who were satisfied with their family relationship were found to be less likely to have depressive feelings and suicidal thoughts (Samm et al., 2010). Henceforth, it is important for adolescents to maintain a satisfactory relationship with their parents.

Other than parents, peers are important social figure that impact adolescents' well-being including risky behaviors (Livaudais, Napoles-Springer, Stewart & Kaplan, 2007). Adolescents believed in their friends and were able to discuss with them anything even about death (Kok, Gan & Goh, 2011). However, evidence highlighted that adolescents who experienced low connectedness in school and felt poor in peer group were associated with suicidal attempt (Tang et al., 2009). Moreover, adolescents who experienced problems in peer relationship such as lack of associations with friends and being victimized were associated with suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts (Cui, Cheng, Xu, Chen & Wang, 2011). Therefore, dissatisfaction with peer relationship exerts more risk on adolescents in having suicidal thoughts.

As mentioned above, there are various factors that cause adolescents to have suicidal ideation. Suicide is indeed a very serious mental health issue in Malaysia; however research on this issue is still scarce in our nation (NoorAni, Cheong, Nurashikin & Azriman, 2014). Therefore, it is important to emphasize on this issue and investigate the factors that are associated with suicidal ideation among adolescents. The current

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study investigates this issue with two main objectives. The first objective is to examine the differences between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation in terms of stress, life satisfaction, satisfaction with parental and peers relationship. The second objective is to explore the likelihood of stress, life satisfaction, satisfaction with parental and peers relationship in influencing suicidal ideation among Malaysian adolescents. The findings of this study will provide a more in-depth understanding on suicidal ideation which in turns may able to help to curb this problem in Malaysia.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sampling

A total of 684 school-going adolescents were involved in the current study. They were recruited from twelve different national high schools in the Selangor area using multistage cluster sampling. Prior in conducting this research, ethical clearance was gained through the Ethics Committee for Research involving Human Subjects Universiti Putra Malaysia (JKEUPM). Moreover, both the Ministry of Education Malaysia and Education Department of Selangor had given approval to conduct this study in local school setting. Lastly, approval from school principals was obtained from each participating schools.

The respondents involved in the current study were initially briefed regarding the purposes and confidentiality of the study. Consent from each respondent was acquired. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed and collected upon completion on the same day. From the data obtained, the respondents were aged between 14 to 17 years old. There were a total of 379 female (55.4 percent) and 305 male (44.6 percent) adolescents. Analysis revealed that 60.1 percent of the adolescents reported having suicidal thoughts.

## INSTRUMENTATION

Suicidal ideation was measured using the Positive and Negative Suicide Ideation Inventory (PANSI; Osman, Gutierrez, Kopper, Barrios & Chiros, 1998). This instrument consists of positive ideation and negative ideation. The negative ideation was used in the current study to measure the thoughts of one to commit suicide. It consists of eight items scored on a 5-point scale. Each item is rated from 0 = none of the time to 5 = most of the time. However, only six items were used in the current study due to the sensitivity of this issue in the Malaysian context. The excluded items were "Thought about killing yourself because you could not find a solution to a personal problem?" and "Felt so lonely or sad you wanted to kill yourself so that you could end your pain?". PANSI was categorized into two groups – adolescents with suicidal ideation and adolescents without suicidal ideation. Adolescents without suicidal ideation had a score of zero for the negative ideation scale. Meanwhile, adolescents with suicidal ideation had a score of one and above for the negative ideation scale. The reliability for this scale was 0.832.

Stress was measured using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarak & Mermelstein, 1983). PSS measures the degree of one's life which is perceived as stressful. It consists of fourteen items scored on a 5-point scale. Each item is rated from 0 = never to 4 = very often. In this scale, there are seven positive items and seven negative items. The seven positive items are 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 13 which are also the reversed item. The score for PSS was obtained by summing up the negative items and the reserved score of the positive items. Higher score indicated higher perceived stress in life. The reliability for this scale was 0.553 which is still in the acceptable range.

Life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). SWLS measures one's satisfaction with life globally based on one's own judgment where they compared their current state with a standard state which they set for themselves. SWLS consists of five items scored on a 7-point scale. Each item is rated from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

Higher score indicated higher satisfaction with life. The reliability for this scale was Cronbach's alpha 0.825.

Satisfaction with maternal, paternal and peers relationship were measured using the Network of Relationships Inventory – Relationship Quality Version (NRI-RQV; Buhrmester & Furman, 2008). The NRI-RQV measures the relationship of an individual with a variety of social figures including mother, father and friends. The subscale – satisfaction was used in the current study to measure the satisfaction level of respondents with their mother, father, and peers. This subscale consists of three items scored on a 5-point scale. Each item is rated from 1 = never or hardly at all to 5 = always or extremely much. Higher score indicated higher satisfaction with the respective individual. The reliability for satisfaction with maternal, paternal, and peers relationship were Cronbach's alpha 0.756, 0.806, and 0.754 respectively.

#### DATA ANALYTIC PLAN

All the data obtained was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. First, the data was analyzed descriptively. Then, Independent Samples t-test analysis was tested to examine the differences of all the study variables between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation. Lastly, Binary Logistic Regression analysis was run to determine the likelihood of the independent variables in influencing suicidal ideation among adolescents.

#### RESULTS

Table 1 displayed the mean differences of all the study variables between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation. Independent Samples t-test analysis was used to examine the differences between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation in terms of stress, life satisfaction, satisfaction with maternal, paternal, and peers relationship. Result revealed that stress ( $t = -6.125, p < 0.001$ ), life satisfaction ( $t =$



5.296,  $p < 0.001$ ), satisfaction with maternal relationship ( $t = 4.017$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), satisfaction with paternal relationship ( $t = 3.499$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and satisfaction with peers relationship ( $t = 2.408$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) were significantly different between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation. From the result, adolescents with suicidal ideation had a higher level of stress, less satisfied with life, maternal relationship, paternal relationship, and peers relationship compared to adolescents without suicidal ideation.

Table 1: Mean differences across all study variables among adolescents with and without suicidal ideation (N = 684)

Variables	With suicidal ideation (n = 411) Mean (SD)	Without suicidal ideation (n = 273) Mean (SD)	t
Stress	42.16 (4.52)	39.95 (4.81)	- 6.125***
Life satisfaction	23.75 (5.86)	26.01 (5.20)	5.296***
Satisfaction with Maternal Relationship	12.08 (2.49)	12.81 (2.22)	4.017***
Satisfaction with Paternal Relationship	11.40 (2.79)	12.16 (2.75)	3.499***
Satisfaction with Peers Relationship	11.51 (2.51)	11.97 (2.38)	2.408*

Note: SD = Standard deviation; \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Binomial Logistic Regression was used to determine the likelihood of the independent variables in influencing suicidal ideation among adolescents. In the binomial logistic regression, the model is considered fit when the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) and the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test is non-significant ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). In the current study, the model is fit having Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients yield a significant value with chi-square 53.929, 5 degrees of freedom ( $p$

Stress, life satisfaction, satisfaction with parental and peers relationship and suicidal ideation among Malaysian adolescents

< 0.000). The Hosmer and Lemeshow Test also indicated good fit with significant value greater than 0.05 ( $p = 0.740$ ).

Table 2 showed the unstandardized coefficient (B), odds ratios, 95 percent Confidence Interval (CI) and significant value of all the study variables for suicidal ideation among adolescents. The result showed that only stress and life satisfaction were the significant predictors for adolescents' suicidal ideation. Stress [ $B = 0.07$ , OR = 1.090 (95 percent CI 1.050 to 1.132),  $p = 0.000$ ] significantly predicted adolescents' suicidal ideation. This means that adolescents suffered from stress were 9.0 percent more likely to have suicidal ideation. Beside stress, life satisfaction [ $B = -0.040$ , OR = 0.961 (95 percent CI 0.929 to 0.994),  $p = 0.020$ ] significantly predicted adolescents' suicidal ideation. The results indicated that adolescents who were more satisfied with their life were 3.9 percent less likely in having suicidal ideation. From the result, it can also be concluded that stress exerted the most influence on adolescents' suicidal ideation, followed by life satisfaction.

Table 2: Binomial logistic regression on suicidal ideation among adolescents (N=684)

Variables	B	OR	95% CI	p-value
Stress	0.087	1.090	1.050 - 1.132	0.000
Life Satisfaction	- 0.040	0.961	0.929 - .994	0.020
Satisfaction with	- 0.068	0.934	0.840 - 1.039	0.209
Maternal				
Relationship				
Satisfaction with	0.007	1.007	0.923 - 1.098	0.879
Paternal Relationship				
Satisfaction with	- 0.004	0.996	0.923 - 1.074	0.920
Peers Relationship				

Note: B = Unstandardized coefficient; OR = odds ratio; CI = confidence interval

## DISCUSSIONS

The current study found significant differences between adolescents with and without suicidal ideation. From the result, adolescents with suicidal ideation had a higher level of stress, less satisfied with life, maternal relationship, paternal relationship and peers relationship compared to adolescents without suicidal ideation.

This study revealed that at-risk adolescents suffered from suicidal thoughts as they experienced more stress. The respondents in this study were school-going high school students. In this modern and competing era, students nowadays suffered more stress where these stresses exert negative influence on students including having suicidal thoughts (Zhang et al., 2012). Local study also supported that stress from school work and family issues were the reason for suicide among students (Kok et al., 2011). Additionally, study by Grover et al. (2009) reported that both life stress and chronic stress significantly correlated with suicidal ideation and suicidal attempts. These evidences supported that stress is a significant risk factor of suicidal ideation among adolescents.

Moreover, adolescents with suicidal ideation were less satisfied with their life and their relationship with parents and peers. Previous study found that adolescents' life satisfaction was decreasing throughout their development (Goldbeck, Schmitz, Besier, Herschbach & Henrich, 2007). Heisel and Flett (2004) indicated that life satisfaction and the purpose in life were negatively correlated with suicidal ideation. Study by Yao et al. (2014) also supported this result where they found that satisfaction with life in terms of family, friends, school, and living environment were negatively associated with suicidal ideation. Thus, being satisfied with life is very important as well as being satisfied with parental and peers relationship is crucial in maintaining a healthy outcome among adolescents.

From the Binary Logistic Regression, only stress and life satisfaction significantly influence suicidal ideation among Malaysian adolescents. Stress exerted the most influence on adolescents' suicidal ideation where higher level of stress increased the

likelihood of having suicidal thoughts among adolescents. On the other hand, life satisfaction decreased the likelihood of having suicidal thoughts among adolescents. Thus, by focusing on reducing the stress level and increasing the level of life satisfaction among adolescents will help in decreasing the rates of suicidal ideation among Malaysia.

#### CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LIMITATIONS

Suicide is a serious public health issue in Malaysia yet researches on this issue are still lacking (NoorAni et al., 2014). This study highlighted the seriousness of suicidality in Malaysia where 60.1 percent of the respondents were at-risk as they reported having suicidal thoughts. As mentioned previously, suicidal ideation is a precursor of suicidal behavior. The figures of suicidal ideation are always much higher than suicidal behavior (WHO, 2015) where a local study reported that only 20 percent of the respondents involved in suicidal behavior (Choon et al., 2014). Although only some of the people with suicidal thoughts will turn their thoughts into action, it is still important to target these at-risk adolescents in order to prevent them from realizing their thoughts into action.

Practitioners should promote intervention programs especially for the at-risk adolescents as they have a higher risk of committing suicide. Improving adolescents' relationship with parents and peers is crucial as parents and peers served as a supporting and caring figure for adolescents. Moreover, intervention programs such as stress management programs and being satisfied with life workshops are advisable to carry out throughout the nation to curb suicidal problems.

This study successfully investigated the factors that influence suicidal ideation among adolescents. However, there were several limitations in this study where recommendations for future study are recommended. Firstly, this study employed a cross-sectional research design where causation between variables is unable to determine. Thus, it is recommended for future study to utilize mixed-method or

longitudinal research design which is able to determine the effect of the variables across a period of time. Secondly, the information was solely dependent on the adolescents where bias may occur as suicidality is a sensitive issue in our nation. Therefore, it is recommended to collect data from various parties namely parents and teacher to improve the accuracy of the data and to avoid bias.

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