



***PREDICTORS OF INTENTION TO APPLY FOR THE EXCELLENT
TEACHER POSITION AND THE MODERATING ROLE OF GENDER
AMONG TEACHERS IN MALAYSIA***

SALINA BINTI JANIS

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By

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

January 2019

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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January 2019

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Excellent Teacher position is one of Malaysian teachers' position in their career path within the teaching services promotion system. Recently researchers identified a gap between studies in determining factors of intention and the role of gender of Malaysian teachers applying for Excellent Teacher position. This study examined the predictors of behavior intention in applying for promotion for Excellent Teacher position in Malaysia, and the moderating role of gender in the relationship between the predictors and the intention to apply for the promotion. The objective of the study is to examine the behavioral beliefs (attitude), normative beliefs (subjective norm), and career decision-making self-efficacious beliefs as factors that explain the intention to pursue a promotion to an Excellent Teacher position. The framework of this study was based on the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1991). A correlational study design was employed to determine the relationship between the predictors and intention to apply for promotion. This study explores four predictor variables namely, attitude, expectation of others on applying for promotion, career decision making self-efficacy and belief towards performance appraisal system for promotion application for the Excellent Teacher position. Career decision making self-efficacy concept serves as the intrinsic belief factor while belief towards performance appraisal system serves as the extrinsic belief factor that might influence the teachers' intention to apply for promotion.

A self-administered questionnaire was developed and pre-tested for reliability and validity of the questionnaire items. The reliability of the measuring scale was acceptable ($\alpha = 0.7$). A total number of 500 respondents consisting of 226 males and 274 female teachers who were qualified to apply for promotion. A simple random sampling was conducted by utilizing a zone matrix of school locations (zones: east, west, central, north and south of Peninsular Malaysia, and Sabah and Sarawak). The

sample represents a population of school teachers nationwide. Using structural equation modelling (SEM), this study found that expectation of others towards applying for promotion was significantly related to intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position. Belief towards performance appraisal system for promotion application, attitude towards applying for promotion and career decision making self-efficacy were not significantly related. This study compares the results between gender and found that the effect of belief towards performance appraisal system for promotion application on intention to apply for promotion was moderated by gender. The factor of belief towards performance appraisal system in applying for promotion for the Excellent Teacher position significantly affects intention to apply for promotion among male but not female teachers. The result shows that subjective norm and the external belief of performance appraisal system for promotion as the components of the theory of planned behavior, as well as gender play important roles in predicting teacher's intention to apply for promotion. This study concludes teachers' belief towards the performance appraisal system cannot be the predicting factor that contribute towards intention of qualified teachers to apply for the Excellent Teacher positions. It is also concluded that male and female teachers are not affected by the consequences related to applying for promotion for the Excellent Teacher position and their belief towards the performance appraisal system used. As a concluding remark, this study could not support nor strengthen the finding of previous research with regards to belief towards career decision-making self-efficacy. However, the intention to apply for promotion will increase if the expectation of others towards qualified candidates applying for promotion for the Excellent Teacher position also increases. Hence, the process of application for promotion towards Excellent Teacher positions are therefore expected to be more informed of the factors of gender and belief towards others to apply for the promotion application. Further research is recommended to minimize the number of items from variables selected in investigating the relationship between the variables to achieve the model fit for the study. Furthermore, TPB framework can be used to investigate the specific factors that are of concern in a career development studies, particularly on examining the intention of applying for a promotion for the Excellent Teacher position in Malaysia.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PERAMAL NIAT UNTUK MEMOHON JAWATAN GURU CEMERLANG
DAN PERANAN PERANTARA JANTINA DALAM KALANGAN GURU DI
MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Jawatan Guru Cemerlang adalah salah satu daripada jawatan dalam laluan kerjaya guru dan sistem kenaikan pangkat perkhidmatan pendidikan di Malaysia. Mutakhir ini penyelidik mengenalpasti jurang antara kajian yang menentukan faktor niat dan peramal gender dalam kalangan guru yang memohon jawatan Guru Cemerlang di Malaysia. Kajian ini mengkaji faktor peramal bagi niat tingkah laku memohon jawatan Guru Cemerlang dan peranan gender sebagai perantara dalam hubungan antara peramal dan niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat. Ojektif kajian adalah untuk meneliti tingkah laku kepercayaan (sikap), kepercayaan noramtif (norma subjektif), dan kepercayaan efikasi sendiri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya sebagai faktor dalam menerangkan niat memohon kenaikan pangkat ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang. Rangka kerja kajian ini adalah berdasarkan Teori Tingkah laku Terancang (TPB) oleh Ajzen (1991). Reka bentuk kajian korelasi telah digunakan untuk menentukan hubungan antara pemboleh ubah yang menentukan sebarang ramalan terhadap niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat. Kajian ini meneroka empat pemboleh ubah peramal iaitu, sikap, jangkaan orang lain terhadap memohon kenaikan pangkat, efikasi sendiri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya dan kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi untuk permohonan kenaikan pangkat ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang. Konstruk efikasi sendiri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya berfungsi sebagai faktor dalaman manakala kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi berfungsi sebagai faktor luaran yang mungkin mempengaruhi niat guru-guru untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat.

Soal selidik yang ditadbir sendiri telah dibangunkan dan pra-ujian untuk kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan item-item soalan juga telah diuji. Ujian kebolehpercayaan bagi skala pengukuran kajian boleh diterima ($\alpha = 0.7$). Seramai 500 daripada responden terdiri daripada 226 guru lelaki dan 274 guru wanita yang layak

untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat. Persampelan rawak mudah telah dijalankan dengan menggunakan matriks zon lokasi sekolah (zon: timur, barat, tengah, utara dan selatan Semenanjung Malaysia dan Sabah dan Sarawak). Dengan menggunakan *structural equation modelling* (SEM), kajian ini mendapati jangkaan orang lain terhadap permohonan kenaikan pangkat mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan dengan niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang. Kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi bagi permohonan kenaikan pangkat, sikap terhadap permohonan untuk kenaikan pangkat dan efikasi diri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya menunjukkan hubungan yang tidak signifikan. Kajian ini membandingkan keputusan antara jantina dan mendapati kesan kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi untuk permohonan kenaikan pangkat terhadap niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat diperantara oleh jantina. Kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi bagi permohonan kenaikan pangkat memberi kesan signifikan terhadap niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat dalam kalangan guru lelaki tetapi tidak pada guru wanita. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa norma subjektif dan kepercayaan faktor luaran terhadap sistem kenaikan pangkat dalam memohon kenaikan pangkat sebagai komponen teori tingkah laku berencana, dan jantina memainkan peranan penting dalam meramalkan kecenderungan guru untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahawa kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian prestasi tidak boleh menjadi faktor peramal dalam menyumbang kepada niat guru yang layak memohon jawatan Guru Cemerlang. Adalah disimpulkan juga bahawa kedua-dua guru lelaki dan wanita tidak dikesani oleh akibat memohon ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang dan kepercayaan terhadap sistem penilaian yang digunakan. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian ini tidak dapat menyokong atau mengukuhkan hasil penemuan kajian lepas berkenaan kepercayaan terhadap efikasi sendiri dalam membuat keputusan kerjaya. Namun, niat untuk memohon kenaikan pangkat akan meningkat sekiranya jangkaan orang lain terhadap calon yang layak kenaikan pangkat ini juga meningkat. Justeru, proses permohonan kenaikan pangkat ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang adalah dijangka lebih maklum akan faktor jantina dan faktor kepercayaan jangkaan orang lain terhadap permohonan kenaikan pangkat. Kajian seterusnya disarankan agar meminimalkan jumlah item dari angkubah yang dipilih dalam mencapai kesesuaian model untuk mengkaji hubungan antara angkubah kajian. Tambahan lagi, kerangka TPB boleh digunakan untuk meneliti faktor spesifik dalam kajian pembangunan kerjaya, terutamanya dalam meneliti niat dalam memohon kenaikan pangkat ke jawatan Guru Cemerlang di Malaysia.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Attitude towards Applying for Promotion
AVE	Average variance extracted
BPASPA	Belief towards Performance Appraisal System for Promotion Application
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
ET	Excellent Teacher
EOTAP	Expectation of others toward Applying for Promotion
GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
IAP	Intention to Apply for Promotion
NFI	Normed Fit Index
CDMSE	Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy
SEM	Structural Equation Model
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The chapter consists of the background of the study and research problem. It also presents the research objectives, followed by the significance and assumptions of the study conducted, the limitation of the study and definitions of terms used in this study.

1.2 Background of the study

1.2.1 Excellent Teacher

Approximately twelve years ago, the Ministry of Malaysian Education introduced the 'Excellence Teacher' (ET) promotion pathway for teachers as one of the alternative paths to promotion without having to transfer to a management position or post. In general, the objective of ET positions is to motivate and inspire Malaysian teachers towards enhancing the quality of teaching and learning processes. By the year of 2006, the quota for ET positions are 12,556, and this quota had increased to 19,411, as reported by the Promotion Board of Education on the 4th of May 2015 (MOE, 2015).

A significant turning point occurred in the beginning of 2009 when the Ministry of Education gave a mandate to the Board of Inspectors and Quality Assurance to govern the assessments of ET candidates. According to the new rulings, there are two main approaches in assessing ET candidates. First, the assessment requires candidates to fulfill a series of requirement to meet the excellent level with the annual performance report, their documented contributions in the school, and the candidates' aspiration towards excellence, written in a form of an essay. If the candidates achieve the expected score, then two school inspectors will conduct the second part of the assessment—assessing ET candidates at their workplace. The evaluation may include assessing the candidates' performance in the teaching-learning process and gathering of evidence by interviewing the school headmaster, teachers and students.

The study on the assessment approaches involving 'Excellent Teacher' (ET) candidates in Malaysia is still a new phenomenon. Apart from being confidential, any study on ET may pose a viably significant contribution towards the corpus of knowledge in career advancement within the Malaysian education system. In the United States of America, the National Board-Certified Teacher Standards (NBPTS) had spent seven years (beginning 1987) in identifying characteristics of teaching (Norman, 2010). This study examined the role of teachers' attitude towards performance appraisal system in influencing their behavioral intentions in applying for promotional opportunities offered by the ministry.

1.2.2 Intention to apply for Excellent Teacher Position

This study investigated predictors of teacher's intention to apply for promotion for Excellent Teacher position, using the Theory of Planned Behavior as its theoretical foundation. Theory of planned behavior (TPB) has been used extensively by numerous researchers around the world in various fields, particularly in the most frequently hypothesized phenomenon of how intention can or may predict behavior. According to the theory of planned behavior, in predicting behavioral intention, there are three independent determinants of behavior intention, namely attitude towards the behavior, subjective norms as a social factor predictor and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). When an individual behavior intention is high, it is likely that the individual will perform the behavior.

The theory of planned behavior is also applicable in the field of career development as it helps to predict behavioral intention and subsequent behavior. However, the concept of career development is changing from the traditional concept to protean career which pays more attention to individual interests, abilities, values and work environment (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2011). The authors also highlighted the four key aspects of career development, namely, formal education, assessment, work experience and interpersonal relationships. In this study, the focus is premised within the understanding of the evaluation of assessment components, particularly the measurable constructs of intention and pertinent factors related to opportunities for career advancement. According to Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2011), performance appraisal has been argued extensively across the human resource development discipline. In line with these imperatives, this study specifically attempted to correlate the performance appraisal system that has been used in evaluating teachers who have applied for the promotion and the teachers' intentions in applying for the promotion.

1.2.3 Gender

Gender is one of the important issues in the teaching profession. For decades, women have dominated the teaching profession worldwide (Drudy, 2008). Based on the role congruity theory, an individual is motivated to behave according to gender when self-standards are aligned with the role of gender. For instance, as the teaching profession is dominated by women, the profession is commonly associated with the ideas of women facilitating care giving goals. In addition, the careers associated with women are also regarded as facilitating the achievement of status (Evan & Diekman, 2009).

Role congruity theory stipulates that gender affects how work behaviors and work results are perceived, interpreted and evaluated (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Huttges & Fay, 2015). Evans and Diekman (2009) stated that through the perspective of role congruity, men are labeled with agentic characteristics (strive for power and achievement and produce outcomes) while women are associated with communal characteristics (intimacy, affiliation and altruism). This notion of biases is prevalent among the behaviors that are critical for career advancement among women to the

extent where women are penalized and devalued due to the descriptive component of gender roles (Huttges & Fay, 2015). Past studies have persistently revealed that the main cause for women who are unable to give their commitment in terms of time and energy towards career advancement is predominantly related to structural barriers and psychological processes. These studies listed lack of childcare support as an example of structural barriers and the appraisal process as an example of psychological processes (Evans and Diekman, 2009). Nonetheless, promotion is widely acclaimed as one of the indicators in career advancement and progress. Thus, a situation in which extrinsic reward-oriented work values are not in congruence with gender role expectations may lead to the negative value of the extrinsic reward-oriented work values for women (Evans & Diekman, 2009). However, within the context of the current study, previous literatures indicate that men are more likely to feature power, achievement and self-direction (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005).

Previous studies also show that although most of the teaching posts in primary schools were filled by female teachers compared to those in secondary schools, it was interesting to note that male teachers are more likely to get the promotion (Bloot & Browne, 1996; Draper & McMichael, 2000; Thornton & Bricheno, 2000; Wong & Wong, 2015). According to Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) and Cassie and Chen (2012), women professions are often said to be limited in numbers, come with small salaries and offer lesser opportunity for promotion or better status, compared to male professions. In addition, the hypothesized influence of the teachers' own self efficacy towards the intention to apply for promotion will also be measured.

1.3 Problem Statement

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in highlighting the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action, as adopted in 2015, clearly identifies the lack of professional pathways for teachers' career progression (UNESCO, 2016). The report also addressed the issues of motivational aspects in relation to the promotion opportunities for teachers in Asia-Pacific countries, including Malaysia. In applying for promotion for the Excellent Teacher position among Malaysian teachers, locally conducted studies seldomly address the motivational and volitional aspects from the applicants' perspective. Khaliza-Saidin, Mohd Hasani Dali and Abdul Said Ambotang (2016) indicate that there is a gap in determining factors of intention of teachers applying for Excellent Teacher position. Evers and Sieverding (2015) suggested that behavioral beliefs (attitude), normative beliefs (subjective norm), and self-efficacious beliefs can be studied as the underlying factors that could explain the intention to pursue an academic career. Moreover, the theory of planned behavior postulates that behavior can be predicted using attitude towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. Various studies, particularly those related to career development such as promotion, have applied the theory of planned behavior as it is one of the most influential theories in predicting behavior. One of the most cited studies was by Giles and Larmours (2000) who used the theory of planned behavior that included three predictors of intention to apply for promotion: attitude to apply for promotion, subjective norms and self-efficacy. Interestingly, according to the authors, the

predictor of self-efficacy represents the perceived behavior control that refers to an individual's perceptions of self-efficacy, specifically on whether it may facilitate or hinder the intention to apply for promotion (Giles & Lamour, 2000).

However, previous studies also indicate that self-efficacy only represents the intrinsic factors of an individual (Oplata & Tamir, 2009), and the scarcity of inclusion of these intrinsic factors is widely acknowledged (Oplata & Tamir, 2009, Giles & Lamour, 2000). Abdullah and Kong (2016) examined these intrinsic factors and found that male teachers had a higher self-efficacy and lower anxiety while female teacher felt more self-determination. It is further argued that female teachers are more caught up with emotion when referred to self efficacy while male teachers were not (Abdullah & Kong, 2016). Therefore, the current study attempted to adapt Oplata's and Tamir's work by adding another intrinsic factor, identified as self-efficacy in applying for promotion as well as adding another extrinsic factor (controllability), namely belief towards the performance appraisal system for promotion application. This study attempted to look at it as a predictor in the theory of planned behavior to predict the intention to apply for promotion. Acknowledging the findings of previous studies related to the performance appraisal system, the current study has included 'belief towards performance appraisal system for promotion application', as a predictor within the framework of the theory of planned behavior in predicting the intention to apply for promotion.

Academic gender gap has been discussed based on various gender related reasons (see, e.g., Blickenstaff, 2005; Ceci & Williams, 2007). On reasons of culture and values, Hirschman (2016) emphasized that Malaysia ranked extremely low in Global Gender Gap Index based on statistical data on male-female gaps in education, economic mobility, health and political roles. The gender gap was primarily because of the traditional cultural values is challenged (Hirschman, 2016). Leemann and Boes (2012) emphasised that previous studies had consistently indicate that expected internationality and mobility are perceived as higher barriers for women than men. In addition to these barriers, Raja (2016) discussed that women had limited option and choices in managing their career progression as they were constrained by range of traditional values even though they were qualified for promotion. Baker (2010) argued that the scarcity of female role models in higher academic positions and gender differences in access to professional networks and in personal priorities are regarded as relevant factors. Cheung and Halpern (2010) identified an important factor in explaining the academic gender gap is family circumstances. Moreover, gender-role stereotypes and attitudes towards women's career choices lead many to choose teaching over management position and the reality of women's roles made women less comfortable with management positions (Raja, 2016). Apart from existing stereotyping careers with gender, difficulties for women in balancing work and family especially when raising young children were also found to be relevant factors (Goulden et al.,2011; Williams & Ceci, 2012).

Opltika and Tamir (2009) have consistently opined that female teachers are less interested in moving upwards in the school hierarchy, and the main reasons for not applying for promotion vary. Feeling overwhelmed or stress and health threatening issues have been previously reported as pertinent causes of anxieties (Opltika & Tamir, 2009). Nevertheless, contrary to this notion, it is interesting to note that in Malaysia, promotions in the teaching sectors are not limited only to moving upwards within the school hierarchy of career advancement.

The teaching profession is a profession that is highly respected, not only in Malaysia but also the whole world. The world views the profession as closely linked to economic development, urbanization, education of children and cultural view of masculinity (Drudy et al, 2005; Drudy, 2008). However, there are evidences of gender imbalance in the teaching profession. Drudy (2008) emphasized that women made up the majority in the teaching profession in some countries such as Brazil, Russian, Italy and Slovakia. The same scenario exists in Malaysia. Out of the total of 421,828 teachers in primary and secondary school, 69.3% were women (MOE, 2016). The gender imbalance in the teaching profession was due to the perception of others towards the teaching profession. It is viewed based on the perception that it is women's responsibility to educate; thus, teaching is seen as an unattractive career with low income compared to other careers (Drudy, 2008).

According to MOE (2013), there had been a significant increase in the number of quota provisioned for the position of 'Excellent Teachers' (ET). An additional 4,953 positions were added on top of the existing 9,374 positions offered, which represent a 35% increment of ET positions within the period of three years between 2006 and 2009 (MOE,2011). Thus, it is apparent that the award program may have benefited teachers positively, particularly ET applicants in relation to their career development and promotion of grades in the existing New Remuneration System. Based on the results of discussions and interviews held with Excellent Teachers and those who were eligible to apply for the Excellent Teacher positions, Hoque, Abdul Razak and Zohora (2012) believed that there are a few factors that hinder the intention of many qualified teachers from applying for the Excellent Teacher posts. Firstly, it is due to the fact that these excellent teachers cannot return to their previous posts as regular teachers. Secondly, it was due to relocation that demands them to move according to the needs of the education ministry. These are the factors influencing the teachers' intention to apply for promotion. Nonetheless, opportunities for promotion that are offered directly by the ministry should motivate teachers to serve with higher levels of excellence. Moreover, this motivation should not hinder or deter teachers from applying for the promotion through promotional opportunities given by the ministry. Those who succeed will not only be given a salary increment, they will also no longer be involved in administrative duties, as opposed to the previous common practice. However, if the promotion increases job responsibilities and work load without any benefits, this would be one of the reasons that discourages teachers and makes them less interested to apply for promotion (Amzat & Salim Al-Hadhrani, 2011). The current study attempted to address the following research questions:

1. Does attitude towards applying for promotion to Excellent Teacher position have any significant relationship with the intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position among teachers?
2. Does career decision making self-efficacy have any significant relationship with the intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position among teachers?
3. Does belief towards the performance appraisal system for promotion to Excellent Teacher position have any significant relationship with the intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position among teachers?
4. Does expectation of others influence teachers' intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position?
5. Does gender moderate the relationship between attitude, expectation of others, career decision making self-efficacy, belief towards the performance appraisal system, and the intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The purpose of the study was to investigate the predictors of intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position and the moderating role of gender.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the levels of intention, attitude, expectation of others, career decision making self-efficacy, and teachers' beliefs towards the performance appraisal system for promotion to Excellent Teacher position.
2. To examine the relationship between intention and factors of attitude, expectation of others, career decision making self-efficacy, and teachers' beliefs towards the performance appraisal system for promotion to Excellent Teacher position.
3. To examine the role of gender as a moderator in the relationship between attitude, expectation of others, career decision-making self-efficacy, teachers' beliefs towards the performance appraisal system for promotion application to Excellent Teacher position (IVs) and teacher's intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position intention to apply for promotion to Excellent Teacher position (DV).

1.5 Research Hypotheses

In this research, the hypotheses are as follows:

- H1: Attitude towards applying for promotion has a positive relationship with the intention to apply for promotion.
- H2: Expectation of others towards teachers applying for promotion has a positive relationship with the teachers' intention to apply for promotion.
- H3: Teachers' career decision-making self-efficacy has a positive relationship with their intention to apply for promotion.
- H4: Teachers' belief towards the performance appraisal system for promotion application has a positive relationship with the teachers' intention to apply for promotion.
- H5: The positive relationship between teachers' attitude towards applying for promotion and intention to apply for promotion will be moderated by gender.
- H6: The positive relationship between expectation of others towards teachers applying for promotion will be moderated by gender.
- H7: Gender will moderate the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy in applying for promotion and their intention to apply for promotion.
- H8: The positive relationship between teachers' belief towards the performance appraisal system for promotion application and their intention to apply for promotion will be moderated by gender.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study provides a theoretical basis and empirical evidence for predicting intention to apply for promotion among teachers. The results from the study could contribute towards enriching the field of human resource development, specifically in the area of career development. First, it could demonstrate the application of the theory of planned behavior in predicting intention to apply for promotion as a form of career development process in the teaching profession. A high intention to apply for promotion for Excellent Teacher position can be regarded as a fundamental psychological prerequisite for a person to pursue the teacher's career path and to take the steps that are necessary to obtain a higher position in teaching professions (Evers & Sierverding, 2015). The stronger the individual's intention, the more likely she or he will be to pursue this career path. Sandberg (2013), as cited in Evers and Sierverding (2015) argues that if it is possible to identify the main determinants of gender differences in advancement of teaching career intention, these variables can be addressed in tailored interventions to encourage women to be at par with their male counterparts and not to draw back or drop out of the promotion system. Second, this study also hopes to examine the predictors, namely, career decision-making self-efficacy and the performance appraisal system in relation to intention to apply for promotion for Excellent Teacher position. Using TPB as a conceptual framework to investigate the career development of women, Giles and Larmour (2000) demonstrated in their study of 108 employees in North Ireland (mean age 41) that self-efficacy was, next to subjective norm and attitude, the third predictor of the intention

to apply for a promotion. Furthermore, self-efficacy had the greatest impact on intention and was more important for women than for men (Giles & Larmour, 2000). Thirdly, the findings of the study could improve the understanding of career development in the Malaysian teaching sector. Specifically, the study conducted ought to provide added knowledge-value towards the performance appraisal system that has been implemented by the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, the findings of this study would provide useful information for the Ministry of Education with regards to teachers' intention to apply for the Excellent Teacher position.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

This study attempted to explore the roles of selected constructs with the framework of theoretical understandings of Ajzen's planned behavior towards the intention of applying for promotion and its relation to the candidates own self-efficacy levels. Hence, the underlying assumptions of this present study are as follows:

1. The theoretical framework of the theory of planned behavior (TPB) is feasibly applicable to the measurable concepts of the current study as described and argued extensively by previous studies (Francis, Eccles, Johnston, Walker, Grimshaw, Foy, Kaner, Liz Smith & Bonetti, 2004).
2. All Malaysian teachers that eligible to apply for promotion have the intention to apply for promotion for the Excellent Teachers position.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The samples of the study are limited to secondary school teachers who were qualified to apply for the Excellent Teachers position. The criteria required for the post are having been confirmed in the service, having achieved the required performance level based on the annual performance evaluation report for the last three years with a score of 85% and above in annual work target, and having at least five years of teaching experience including three years of teaching the major subject. The sample size of the study may limit the likelihood of obtaining significant relationships between the predictors and the outcome variables. Gathering self-reported data through questionnaires is a common method that comes with potential sources of biasness, particularly when the responses are socially desirable. Finally, the cross-sectional survey research limits the ability to infer causality.

1.9 Conceptual and Operational Definitions

1.9.1 Promotion

Conceptual definition:

According to Ruderman and Ohlott (1994), promotion generally refers to the advancement of an employee within a company position or job tasks. A job promotion may be the result of an employee's proactive pursuit of a higher ranking or as a reward by employers for good performance. Typically, is also associated with a higher rate of pay or financial bonus

Operational definition:

In the current study, promotion refers to the promotion towards Excellent Teacher position in Malaysia.

1.9.2 Excellent Teacher

Conceptual definition:

Excellent Teacher is a promotional scheme for teachers who demonstrate excellence in teaching without requiring them to hold any administrative position (Khaliza-Saidin, Mohd Hasani Dali and Abdul Said Ambotang, 2016).

Operational definition:

Excellent Teacher in the current study refers to the pre-determined candidates who serve as respondents of the study from the existing population of Excellent Teacher candidates who qualify for nomination for the position. The list was obtained from the Ministry of Education's Board of Inspectors and Quality Assurance;

1.9.3 Attitude towards applying for promotion

Conceptual definition:

In general, the more favourable the attitude towards the behaviour is, the stronger the individual's intention to perform it should be (Ajzen, 1991). Conceptually, attitude towards applying for promotion refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the promotion.

Operational definition:

Attitude towards applying for promotion refers to excellent teacher candidates' belief as being favorable or unfavorable in applying for promotion in Excellent Teacher position.

1.9.4 Expectation of others towards applying for promotion

Conceptual definition:

In the literature of TPB the dimension of subjective norms must be with “the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour” by the individual (Ajzen, 1991; Krueger et al., 2000), in other words, the perceived extra personal influences on the decision maker (Krueger & Brazeal, 1994).

Operational definition:

Expectation of others towards teachers' intention to apply for promotion refers to the extent to which teachers perceive that their supervisors, colleagues, close friends and family expect them to apply for promotion for Excellent position.

1.9.5 Career Decision Making Self-Efficacy

Conceptual definition:

Self-efficacy expectations, our beliefs in our capabilities to successfully perform a given behavior or class of behaviors, are postulated to influence behavioral choices, performance, and persistence (Betz, Klein & Taylor; 1996, Bandura, 1977).

Operational definition:

Career Decision-Making Self-efficacy refers to teachers' perception and judgment of their abilities and competencies required for the promotion for Excellent Teacher position.

1.9.6 Belief towards the Performance Appraisal System for Promotion Application

Conceptual definition:

In general discussions, controllability questions are said to reflect external factors (“the performance of the behavior is completely up to the actor”), and self-efficacy questions are restricted to internal factors (“the actors have the ability to perform the behavior”) (Evers & Sieverding, 2015). The distinction between those different types

of control is an empirical question, and Ajzen (2002b) suggests “they may both reflect beliefs about the presence of internal as well as external factors” (p. 680).

Operational definition:

Belief towards the performance appraisal system for promotion application refers to the teachers’ perception towards the performance appraisal system (Montano & Kasprzyk, 2008) that is being used by the Ministry of Education’s Board of Inspectors and Quality Assurance in the evaluation process of promotion for Excellent Teacher positions.

1.9.7 Intention to Apply for Promotion

Conceptual definition:

Ajzen (2011) provides a generic definition of intention as a person’s readiness to perform a given behaviour (Kautonen, Gelderen & Tornikoski, 2013).

Operational definition:

Intention to apply for promotion refers to the extent to which teachers are willing to try and exert effort in applying for promotion for Excellent Teacher position.

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