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PREDICTING WHISTLE-BLOWING INTENTION AMONG SUPERVISORS IN MALAYSIA

Nadzri Ab Ghani, Jeremy Galbreath and Robert Evans

Curtin Graduate School of Business,
Curtin University, Perth, Australia
nadzri.abghani@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The function of whistle-blowing as an effective internal control mechanism has long been accepted around the globe. Several individual factors have been considered as predictive variables of whistle-blowing intention. However, findings are still inconclusive. Using the theory of planned behaviour as a framework, this study examines the relationship between the selected predictive variables (internal locus of control, work experience and ethics training) and whistle-blowing intention. Data were collected randomly from 311 supervisors within large manufacturing companies in Malaysia. Applying multiple regression analysis, results indicated that work experience and ethics training are significantly related to whistle-blowing intention. On the other hand, there is no significant relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention. Implications for theory and practice from the findings are discussed.

Keywords: *Whistle-Blowing Intention, Theory Of Planned Behavior, Internal Locus Of Control, Work Experience, Ethics Training, Malaysia*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ethical breaches have constituted many accounting scandals which have resulted in the collapse of some high profile corporations around the world, including Enron and World Com (MacNab & Worthley, 2008). These accounting scandals, generally referred to as corporate misconduct, have come to light due to whistle-blowing actions of company employees (both former and present) who believed that any misconduct occurring in their corporation should be dealt with correctively by the authorities (Pulliam & Solomon, 2002). The actions of the concerned employees in reporting corporate misconduct is known as whistle-blowing. They, themselves, are known as whistle-blowers (Saha 2008) and are sometimes considered as “model employees to organizations” (Vinten, 1999).

Whistle-blowing has been defined as “the disclosure by organization members (former or current) of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organizations who may be able to effect action” (Near & Miceli, 1985, p. 4). Read and Rama (2003) suggest that whistle-blowing is an aspect of ethics management. Thus, effective corporate governance in an organization can be enhanced through whistle-blowing practice. This is substantiated by Ponemon (1994, p. 118), who states that “whistle-blowing can play an essential role as a perspective and defective control if organization explicitly incorporates reporting mechanism that discloses incident of wrongdoing

into its internal control structure". In other words, whistle-blowing can play an important role in the internal control environment of an organization (Read & Rama, 2003).

At present, whistle-blowers in US corporations appear to be more courageous, when compared to their Asian counterparts, in embracing whistle-blowing actions (Park, Rehg, & Lee, 2005). One of the possible reasons could be the perception of the whistle-blowing action itself. For instance, in countries such as China, Japan and Hong Kong, whistle-blowing can be regarded as unacceptable behaviour (Bond, 1996; Fukuyama, 1995; Redding, 1990). In Malaysia, whistle-blowing action is not a popular means of reporting wrong-doing in organizations (Ngui, 2005). Pricewaterhouse Coopers Global Economic Crime Survey 2005 reports that 23 percent of large Malaysian companies are subjected to misconduct in terms of unreported fraud (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006). Therefore, whistle-blowing research in Malaysia is deemed significant, especially in investigating the possible factors which could influence the decision to whistle-blow and at the same time highlight the important function of whistle-blowing action as an internal control mechanism.

In Malaysia, the function of whistle-blowing as an internal control mechanism has been considered only recently by statutory authorities (Anwar, 2003). Specifically, Malaysia introduced its first whistle-blowing law in 2003 under the Securities Industry (Amendment) Act 2003 (Wahab, 2003). In moving towards a corruption free country, the government has urged major stakeholders to uphold whistle-blowing law with the provision of protections, incentives and non-monetary rewards for whistleblowers (Hassan, 2006). Further, accountants, auditors and advisors must provide assurance on financial statements and must not hold any tolerance for corporate misconduct. In addition, investors and other users must be accountable for their decisions; so, decisions must be made under the spirit of transparency (Yakcob, 2005).

Given the above, the interest of this study is to re-examine several individual variables of whistle-blowing intention in the form of an introduction to an intercultural perspective that may give a whole new interpretation to research on whistle-blowing (Park, Blenkinsopp, Oktem, & Omurgonulsen, 2008). Vogel (1992) asserted that whistle-blowing is particularly affected by cultural contexts, as perceptions of right versus wrong, justice, morality and loyalty may differ very much in different countries. Moreover, human behaviour is believed to be a result of cultural and social backgrounds (Chiu & Kosinski, 1999). Hence, employees with different socio-economic influences may have different views on what is ethical or what is not (Chen, 2001). Thus, this study expands the study of whistle-blowing by examining the relationship between the selected individual (personal) variables and whistle-blowing intention in a cultural context previously unexplored. Selection of individual variables is based on Miceli and Near's (1992) model of whistle-blowing decision-making.

To date, studies on individual variables of whistle-blowing intention have become popular (Keil, Tiwana, Sainsbury, & Sneha, 2010; Lih-Bin & Hock-Hai, 2010; Taylor & Curtis, 2010; Zhang, Chiu, & Li-Qun, 2009a). Yet, findings on the relationships between some of the individual variables and whistle-blowing intention are still open for discussion (Miceli, Near, & Dworkin, 2008). The individual variables; namely, internal locus of control, work experience and ethics training, are predicted to influence whistle-blowing intention. The relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention has produced inconclusive empirical results ranging from a positive relationship (Miceli & Near, 1992; Stead, Worrell, & Stead, 1990; Trevino, 1986) to a mixed relationship (Wise, 1995) to a moderated relationship (Chiu, 2003) and even an insignificant relationship (Miceli, Van Scotter, Near, & Rehg, 2001; Starkey, 1998). Similarly, results for work experience range from a positive relationship (Brewer & Selden, 1998; Dworkin & Baucus, 1998; Goldman, 2001; Miceli & Near, 1988) to a mixed relationship (Wise, 1995) and

to an insignificant relationship (Keenan & Sims, 1995; Lee, Heilmann, & Near, 2004; Sims & Keenan, 1998).

The inclusion of ethics training is based on a proposition from Jones, Massey and Thorne (2003) as an important factor to affect an individual's intention to act ethically. Frisque and Kolb (2008) agree that an ethics training program could have a huge impact on an individual's decision to blow the whistle. Besides, Miceli, Near and Dworkin (2008, p. 190) advise that there is "... no controlled research demonstrating the effectiveness of ethics training regarding whistle-blowing and such research is sorely needed". Hence, this study considers the proposition by Jones, Massey and Thorne (2003) for the direct relationship between ethics training and whistle-blowing intention. Thus, the empirical result for the relationship would add to the literature of whistle-blowing research.

The main objective of this study is to re-examining the relationship between internal locus of control, work experience, ethics training and whistle-blowing intention. This effort is deemed significant and differs from other previous studies in several ways. First, this study would offer an alternative explanation for the inconclusive empirical results obtained from previous studies on the direct effects between the variables and whistle-blowing intention. As evidenced, only limited studies have investigated whistle-blowing intention in a non-western context (Lih-Bin & Hock-Hai, 2010; Park & Blenkinsopp, 2009; Zhang, et al., 2009a), and thus, results of this study are expected to, at least, bridge the gap between western and non-western differences. Therefore, re-examination of whistle-blowing intention in the Malaysian environment will indirectly reveal cultural influences on whistle-blowing actions. New interpretations of whistle-blowing behaviour and actions among Malaysians would add significantly to whistle-blowing literature.

Secondly, following the calls from Malaysian authorities, the impact of the first Malaysian whistle-blowing law has been studied very little and more knowledge is needed regarding how effective the law is in affecting one's decision to blow the whistle (Anwar, 2003; Hassan, 2006; Yakcob, 2005). As argued by Patel (2003), whistle-blowing research in Malaysia is virtually non-existent. Thus, this study would fill the gap by being one of the first research studies on whistle-blowing, providing empirical results which would benefit both theory and practice within the Malaysian environment. Moreover, this study would offer a new usage of theory (Theory of Planned Behaviour) investigating the direct relationships between the selected variables and whistle-blowing intention. Most theories used in whistle-blowing intention studies are based on pro-social behaviour (Dozier & Miceli, 1985; Miceli & Near, 1985) and motivational perspective (Miceli & Near, 1992). This study considers the theory of planned behaviour because the theory clearly proposes the relationship between an individual's intentions and his/her behaviour and actions (Ajzen, 1991).

Finally, from a methodological perspective, this study differs from other whistle-blowing intention studies in terms of its respondents and samples. In highlighting the chosen respondents of supervisors, this study intentionally deviates from normal samples of bank managers (Chiu, 2003), civil servants (Starkey, 1998), management accountants (Shawver & Clements, 2008), internal auditors (Arnold & Ponemon, 1991) and MBA students (Chiu, 2002). The rationale for choosing supervisors is based on the argument that reports of wrongdoing are usually made by members close to the inner workings of an organization (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005). Further, this study considers a simple random sampling of listed manufacturing companies in Malaysia. Manufacturing companies are posited as an adequate environment because such companies often report incidents of wrongdoing (Hooks, Kaplan, & Schultz, 1994). Both the chosen respondents and samples are recommended by the Malaysian authority when investigating whistle-blowing research in Malaysia (Ghazali, 2005; Khan, 2003).

2.0 DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

Whistle-blowing intention

Since the dependent construct of this study is whistle-blowing intention rather than actual whistle-blowing action, the issue of behavioural intention needs to be understood. According to Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behaviour, "behavioural intention is a good predictor of actual behaviour" (Chiu, 2003, p. 66). A behavioural intention is the subjective probability that an individual assigns to the likelihood that a given behavioural alternative will be chosen (Ajzen, 1991; Hunt & Vitell, 1986). According to Demetriadou (2003), an individual's behavioural intention is a weighted additive function of three elements: the individual's attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. Chiu (2003) defines all the elements: the individual's attitude is the individual's judgment of that behaviour, subjective norm is the individual's perceived acceptability of that behaviour, and finally, perceived behavioural control is the individual's perception of the difficulty level of performing that behaviour. With all these elements, the dependent variable of this study, whistle-blowing intention, is referred to as "the individual's probability of actually engaging in whistle-blowing behaviour" (Chiu, 2002, p. 582).

The interest to study whistle-blowing intention rather than actual whistle-blowing action stems from the impossibility and difficulty of carrying out investigations of unethical conduct in the workplace by first hand observation (Victor, Trevino, & Shapiro, 1993). Yet, a study on restaurant employees in the fast food industry provides evidence that behavioural intention correlates with actual peer reporting of unethical behaviour (Victor, Trevino, & Shapiro, 1991). Therefore, whistle-blowing intention is deemed appropriate in the context of this study.

Internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention

Internal locus of control refers to the belief that outcomes are generally contingent upon the work and effort put into them (Keller & Blomann, 2008). Unlike other variables, internal locus of control is the most likely to affect whistle-blowing decisions (Miceli & Near, 1992). The reason is that a whistle-blower may be strongly motivated by the degree to which the situation is potentially under his/her control (Chiu, 2002). Previous studies have concluded that when individuals share in individual determinants, they share in ethical disposition (Ford & Richardson, 1994; Loe, Ferrell, & Mansfield, 2000).

According to the theory of planned behaviour, an individual may have the intention to perform behaviour if they perceive that they are in control of the situation and the likely outcome (Ajzen, 1991). This means that the variable "internal locus of control" connects to the third element in the theory of planned behaviour (Chiu, 2003). In support, Chiu (2003) argues that Rotter's (1966) study of the locus of control echoes the perceived behavioural control suggested by Ajzen (1991) in relation to an individual's internal locus of control. Thus, linking with the theory of planned behaviour, this study's predictive variable of "internal locus of control" falls within the element of the perceived behavioural control in suggesting an individual's intention to perform behaviour.

Miceli and Near (1992) discovered that the locus of control is one of the characteristics that affects whistle-blowing decisions. The researchers believe this is because whistleblowers may be strongly motivated by the degree to which conditions suggest that the situation is potentially under their control. They argue that individuals with an internal locus of control may have more propensity to blow the whistle. In agreement, the relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention can be deduced based on the idea that "individuals who have internal locus of control may blow the

whistle when their external locus of control counterparts would not" (Chiu, 2003, p. 67). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 1: Internal locus of control is positively associated with whistle-blowing intention

Work experience and whistle-blowing intention

Work experience means the length of time the individual has been employed by his/her current organization (Cherry, 2006). Adequate work experience is essential in influencing the decision to whistle-blow (Miceli & Near, 1988; Sims & Keenan, 1998). Experienced individuals generally will be expected to have more knowledge about organizational operations, stronger commitment and more loyalty to their organizations than inexperienced individuals (Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Sims & Keenan, 1998).

Linking with the theory of planned behaviour, work experience is one of the antecedent variables 'external' to the theory. These variables 'external' to the theory are variables that influence an individual in relation to each element of his/her attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control when forming an intention to perform behaviour (Demetriadou, 2003). According to Ajzen (Ajzen, 1988), antecedent variables 'external' to the theory include individual characteristics such as self-esteem and personality, as well as other demographic or background variables such as work experience and ethics training. These have been postulated in previous literature to influence whistle-blowing behaviour (Miceli, et al., 2001).

According to Miceli, et al. (2001), demographic variables have effects on the perceived efficacy of whistle-blowing behaviour, apart from other factors. A review on the relationship between work experience and whistle-blowing suggests that employees with work experience are more likely to blow the whistle (Trevino, Weaver, & Reynolds, 2006). Following Thorne, Massey and Magnan (2003), investigation of the relationship between work experience and whistle-blowing is needed when dealing with whistle-blowing. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 2: Work experience is positively associated with whistle-blowing intention

Ethics training and whistle-blowing intention

Ethics training is defined as the curriculum or program which provides thoughts and applications of ethics in decision-making processes (Frisque & Kolb, 2008). According to Jones, Massey and Thorne (2003), ethics training could be regarded as an important factor regarding an individual's intention to act ethically. Research also has indicated the influence of ethics training in deciding which action to take when faced with ethical challenges (Kolb, Frisque, & Lin, 2004; Trevino, 2007; Weaver, Trevino, & Agle, 2005). Further, scholars posit that ethics training must be provided to solidify employees' duty to report wrongdoing or encourage whistle-blowing (Applebaum, Grewal, & Mousseau, 2006; Baker, 2008; Near & Miceli, 1994).

Similarly, when linked with the theory of planned behaviour, ethics training also is one of the variables external to the theory. Again, referring to Ajzen's (1988) model of planned behaviour, antecedent variables external to the model include demographics, personality characteristics and situational variables. Thus, these variables are considered as variables external to the theory. Adopting Miceli, et al. (2001), these variables external to the theory have influenced whistle-blowing behaviour in previous studies.

Literature has demonstrated that ethics training can increase the likelihood of the disclosure of wrongdoing (Sheler, 1981). For example, Miceli and Near (1985) suggest that an organization can prevent demoralization and, at the same time, can increase employees' awareness of wrongdoing. Commenting further, the researchers agreed that, with ethics training, employees' intentions to blow the whistle on wrongdoing may be enhanced and fulfilled by an organization. Demonstrated in studies by Applebaum, Grewal, and Mousseau (2006) and Baker (2008), the scholars believe that the existence of ethics training in organizations may promote employees' decisions to whistle-blow. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 3: Ethics training is positively associated with whistle-blowing intention

3.0 METHODS

Sample

This study uses large manufacturing companies listed under Bursa Malaysia Berhad (BMB), the stock-broking company in Malaysia (BMB, 2009). 'Large manufacturing companies' refers to manufacturing companies having more than 1,000 employees and market capitalization of RM500 million (BMB, 2009; FMM, 2008). The rationale for choosing such companies is based on the provisions under the Malaysian whistle-blowing law of 2003, and further, such companies are more likely to run investigations for whistle-blowing behaviour (Ghazali, 2005; Hooks, et al., 1994).

To collect data, the role of supervisor was chosen for respondents in this study. The rationale for choosing supervisors is based on the argument that reports of wrongdoings are usually made by members close to the inner workings of an organization (Hooks, et al., 1994; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005) and, moreover, supervisors who intend to disclose their organization's malpractice will be protected from victimization and retaliation under Malaysia's whistle-blowing provisions i.e., the Securities Industry (Amendment) Act 2003 (Khan, 2003).

Using the BMB 2009 directory, five companies from each of three sectors (consumer product, industrial product and technology) were randomly selected to form the sample of this study. A total of 600 surveys were distributed to supervisors in all 15 companies. Of the 600 surveys, 346 were returned, representing a 57.7 percent response rate. However, after a data screening process, a total of 311 completed questionnaires were used in this study, representing a 51.8 percent response rate. The response rate is deemed appropriate because Babbie (1986) suggests that a response rate of at least 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting, while 50 to 60 percent is good for research on a sensitive topic.

Table 1: Profiles of Respondents

Demographic profile	Number of respondents (N = 311)	Valid percentage (%)
Gender:		
Male	156	50.2
Female	155	49.8
Marital status:		
Single	113	36.3
Married	198	63.7
Race:		
Malay	196	63.0
Chinese	68	21.9
Indian	47	15.1
Age:		
<30	18	5.8
30-40	213	68.5
>40	80	25.7
Educational level:		
Diploma	87	28.0
Degree	135	43.4
Master degree	19	6.1
Other qualification	70	22.5
Size of organization:		
1000 - 1999	207	66.5
2000 - 2999	82	26.4
3000 - 3999	22	7.1
Working experience:		
< 5 years	94	30.2
5 – 10 years	102	32.8
>10 years	115	37.0

Table 1 displays the profiles of respondents. All information is presented in actual figures and percentages to facilitate interpretation. The proportion of males to females was 50.2 percent males and 49.8 percent females, with 63.7 percent of the respondents being married and 36.3 percent single. The respondents were mainly Malay (63.0 percent), Chinese (21.9 percent) and Indian (15.1 percent) with 68.5 percent of them aged between 30 to 40 years. In total, 43.4 percent of the respondents had a university degree and a total of 33.5 percent worked in large companies having more than 2,000 employees. More than half (69.8 percent) of the respondents had a working experience of five years and above.

4.0 MEASURES

This study considers the fact that the respondents are Malaysians and little research has been conducted using the chosen measures outside of western countries. Therefore, a back-translation process was utilized to minimize any possible variance due to cultural and linguistic differences.

Internal locus of control

Internal locus of control was measured using Spector's (1988) Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS). Recent studies employing work locus of control suggest that the construct is an important and useful personality variable for explaining behaviour in a work setting (Oliver, Jose, & Brough, 2006). Using Spector's (1988) WLCS, respondents were asked to indicate their beliefs by answering eight items

designed to tap internal locus of control. An example of an internal locus of control item is "A job is what you make of it". As recommended by Spector, a 6-point Likert-type response format was used (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = 0.882$.

Work experience

Work experience was measured by asking respondents to indicate the length of their employment in their organization. The respondents stated the number of years for their length of employment (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Sims & Keenan, 1998).

Ethics training

Ethics training was measured by asking respondents to indicate 'yes' or 'no' answers to four questions, for example, "Does your school/university/other institutions that you have attended offer ethics courses?" and "Does your company offer training on ethics?". The measurement method was adapted from Daniels' (2009) original version.

Whistle-blowing intention

Whistle-blowing intention was measured using a short vignette adapted from Demetriadou (Demetriadou, 2003). A vignette is a "short description of a person or social situation which contains precise reference to what are thought to be the most important factors in decision-making or the judgment-making process of respondents" (Alexander & Becker, 1978, p. 94). The vignette approach was utilized in this study because it provides a more realistic context for the respondents, i.e., they, themselves, are placed in the position of a character portrayed in a hypothetical situation (Patel, 2003; Reidenbach & Robin, 1990; Weber, 1992). Along with the vignette, a four-item semantic differential scale of behavioural intention has been adapted from Barnett, Bass and Brown (1996) and used to measure whistle-blowing intention. This scale was utilized because it displays respondents' intentions in a consistent manner for the given vignette (Barnett, et al., 1996; Zhang, Chiu, & Li-Qun, 2009b). The respondents were asked to read the vignette and assess the probability of blowing the whistle in terms of both "given the hypothetical situation above, indicate your likelihood to report the observed violation to the next higher level" and "given the hypothetical situation above, indicate your colleagues'/peers' likelihood to report the observed violation to the next higher level". The purpose of asking the respondents to imagine their colleagues'/peers' behavioural intention was to identify any social desirability response bias that might be present in the responses (Watkins & Cheung, 1995). A six point scale ranging from 6 (definitely would) to 1 (definitely would not) was used. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = 0.965$.

Control variables

Gender, educational level and firm size were included as control variables. Gender was a dichotomous variable represented by male = 1 and female = 2. Educational level was measured using a nominal scale and was coded as a four-level variable: 1 (Diploma), 2 (Degree), 3 (Master's degree) and 4 (other qualification). Firm size was measured with a single item: number of full-time equivalent employees. The control variables had been proposed by Miceli and Near (1992) to be potential influences on whistle-blowing decisions (Barnett, et al., 1996; Barton, 1995; Miceli, et al., 2008).

5.0 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 2: Mean (M), standard deviation (SD) and correlation between the study variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Internal locus of control	2.50	0.88	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Work experience	8.42	4.99	0.00	1.00	-	-	-	-	-
3. Ethics training	1.47	0.46	0.09	-0.24*	1.00	-	-	-	-
4. Whistle-blowing intention	3.85	1.79	0.02	0.18**	0.25**	1.00	-	-	-
5. Gender			-0.03	-0.09	0.13*	0.02	1.00	-	-
6. Educational level			0.01	0.17**	-0.08	0.03	-0.12*	1.00	-
7. Firm size	1855		-0.09	-0.05	-0.07	-0.06	-0.05	-0.08	1.00

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Means, standard deviations and correlations are presented in Table 2. The correlations between the variables were in the predicted direction and significant at $p < 0.01$ except for internal locus of control. In general, there was a small tendency to whistle-blow and the internal locus of control appeared not to be strongly manifested among the respondents, as indicated by the means of 3.8 and 2.5, respectively, assessed in a 6 point scale. The average work experience of the respondents was 8 years. In addition, most of the respondents were not well exposed to ethics training. All control variables were found not to be correlated with the dependent variable indicating that there is no confounding effect on the hypothesized relationships. Thus, the decision is to exclude all control variables for further analysis.

All hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis. Prior to hypothesis testing, multicollinearity was tested via variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance levels. Because the highest VIF is 1.610 and the lowest tolerance value is 0.621, multi-collinearity among the independent variables does not seem to be a problem (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998).

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis results for the relationships between the predictive variables and whistle-blowing intention

Predictor	Beta	Coefficients t	Sig.
Internal locus of control	-0.04	-0.69	0.490
Work experience	0.53***	8.40	0.000
Ethics training	0.57***	9.07	0.000

Note: *** $p < 0.001$

R square 0.24
F value 31.83

Table 3 indicates that the three independent variables accounted for 24 percent of the variance in whistle-blowing intention among supervisors. Work experience ($\beta = 0.53$, $t = 8.40$, $p < 0.001$) and ethics training ($\beta = 0.57$, $t = 9.07$, $p < 0.001$) were found to be significantly and positively associated with whistle-blowing intention. Thus, hypotheses 2 and 3 are confirmed. Yet, internal locus of control was found not to be significantly associated with whistle-blowing intention ($\beta = -0.04$, $t = -0.69$, $p = 0.49$). Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

6.0 DISCUSSION

This study investigates direct relationships between internal locus of control, work experience, ethics training and whistle-blowing intention, using a sample of Malaysian supervisors in manufacturing companies. Hypothesis 1 is not supported: internal locus of control has no relationship with whistle-blowing intention. This result is consistent with prior studies in a western context (Miceli, Dozier, & Near, 1991; Starkey, 1998). In the study by Miceli, et al. (1991), internal locus of control had no effect on students' propensity to report wrongdoing by a research assistant to their university's research committee representative. Using a different sample, Starkey (1998) found that when scenarios describing wrongdoing were presented to hospital employees, no relationship was found between employees' internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention.

Miceli, et al. (2008) justify the non-significant relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention using two previous studies. First, Wise (1995) concluded that one's decision to whistle-blow may vary according to that individual's beliefs, situations and surroundings. Secondly, having similar arguments, Chiu (2002) suggests that whistle-blowing behaviour among Chinese people is influenced by traditional Chinese cultural values and teachings. In the case of the current study, the non-significant relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention among supervisors may be influenced by the collectivistic culture in Malaysia.

According to Spector, Sanchez, Siu, Saldago and Ma (2004), people in collectivist cultures view themselves in terms of social connections and group harmony. In other words, people are integrated into in-groups, for example, family or business associates or society as a whole. Further, Spector, et al. (2004) argue that, in order to be effective in a collectivist society, a person must cultivate relationships with colleagues at all levels and must express a high level of sensitivity. Thus, referring to the result in this study, supervisors in large manufacturing companies may prefer to apply social standards in their intention to whistle-blow by behaving in ways that seem socially appropriate for the situation (Snyder, 1987) and thus, demonstrate low levels of self-directedness (Bandura, 1991).

Moreover, collectivist cultures reflect the subordination of personal goals to group goals, a sense of harmony and independence, and concern for others (Hofstede, 1991). Malaysia has three major ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese and Indian. However, Abdullah (1996) states that, although Malaysian society is a multi-cultural mix, Malaysian workers share common and distinct workplace values. In this study, Malays form the majority of the respondents (Table 1). Previous studies have indicated that Malays represent a collectivist community with collectivist minds (Abdullah, 1996; Hofstede, 1980; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). Thus, it could be concluded that the non-significant relationship between internal locus of control and whistle-blowing intention provides the collectivistic view on the issue of whistle-blowing intention.

Hypothesis 2 is confirmed. Work experience has a significant and positive relationship with whistle-blowing intention. This result is consistent with prior studies in a western context (Brewer & Selden,

1998; Goldman, 2001). The result shows that adequate work experience is essential in determining an individual's decision to whistle-blow (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Miceli & Near, 1988; Sims & Keenan, 1998). An experienced individual will generally be expected to have more knowledge about organizational operations, as well as stronger commitment and more loyalty to their organization than an inexperienced individual (Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Sims & Keenan, 1998). Hence, the positive relationship between work experience and whistle-blowing intention proved that Malaysian supervisors with more working experience are likely to have an intention to whistle-blow on wrongdoing. Previously, work experience is believed could elevate the morality of individuals (Gupta & Sulaiman, 1996).

Finally, ethics training is confirmed to have a significant and positive relationship with whistle-blowing intention. This result supports suggestions from western scholars about the function of ethics training in relation to ethical intention or behaviour such as whistle-blowing intention (Frisque & Kolb, 2008; Jones, et al., 2003; Miceli, et al., 2008). Individuals with ethics training have the advantage of applying reasoning to a dilemma in an appropriate way (Trevino, et al., 2006). Supported by Rossouw (2002), the cognitive competence, or the acquisition of the mental knowledge and skills, can be developed through training and may form bridges toward ethical decision-making (Ritter, 2006). In this study, result indicated that Malaysian supervisors who attend ethics training courses may have the ability to resolve dilemmas ethically. In short, adequate ethics training may enhance the ethical values among supervisors in Malaysia.

Implication for theory

This study makes three major contributions to theory. First, as a preliminary study involving whistle-blowing in Malaysia, this study provides new literature on whistle-blowing research in a non-western context. Thus, the results of this study may additionally provide a comparison of whistle-blowing behaviour between western and non-western countries (Keenan 2007). Secondly, this study provides further insight on the direct relationship between internal locus of control, work experience, ethics training and whistle-blowing intention. For instance, differences in application of theory, respondents and samples in this study are beneficial in advancing the knowledge in the field of whistle-blowing. Lastly, this study considers the suggestion made by Jones, Masey and Thorne (2003) to examine the relationship between ethics training and whistle-blowing intention. This effort brings a new avenue of research in the field of whistle-blowing.

Practical implications

This study offers two major managerial contributions. First, apart from relying wholly on educational level in exercising promotion to the supervisory level, work experience should be an additional factor that should be considered. Based on the results, experience workers appear to have tendency to become good supervisors. They are more willing to whistle-blow. If organisations are serious about implementing whistle-blowing as one of the internal control mechanism, supervisors' willingness to whistle-blow plays an important role in ensuring the success of this approach. Secondly, organizations should consider designing and providing a well structured and comprehensive ethics training program among their employees, particularly, supervisors. Previously, scholars posit that ethics training must be provided to solidify employees' duty to report wrongdoing or encourage whistle-blowing (Applebaum, et al., 2006; Baker, 2008; Near & Miceli, 1994). In addition, the current result further confirmed on the assertion that ethics training help individuals to make ethical decision when faced with ethical challenges (Kolb, et al., 2004; Trevino, 2007; Weaver, et al., 2005).

Limitations and directions for future research

Using a hypothetical vignette to evaluate whistle-blowing intention may be subjected to social desirability bias. However, several preventive steps, such as guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality of individual responses, were taken to ensure that social desirability bias was minimized (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). It is also worth to note that, generalizability of the findings may be limited to supervisors working in the listed manufacturing companies. Hence, there is a possibility that different results might be obtained from different samples and sizes. Other limitation such as non-response bias had been considered and minimized by applying Armstrong and Overton (1977) method. Future research should incorporate other individual and contextual variables that influence whistle-blowing intention. A mixed-method approach could be applied to strengthen the results and gain better understanding of the hypothesized relationships. A cross-cultural study would also provide comparative results on whistle-blowing intention among employees in western and non-western countries.

7.0 CONCLUSION

This study has contributed to an understanding of whistle-blowing intention. Specifically, work experience and ethics training are positively associated with whistle-blowing intention. Interestingly, internal locus of control is not significantly related to whistle-blowing intention. A plausible explanation to the non-significant relationship might be due to the collectivistic culture of Malaysia. Taken together, the findings of this study pave the way for further investigation on predictive factors of whistle-blowing intention especially in the non-western context.

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MANAGING TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY: UNDERSTANDING SRI LANKAN COMMUNITIES READINESS TO PARTICIPATE IN NATURE BASED TOURISM

Iraj Ratnayake

Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka
iraj@sab.ac.lk

Azilah Kasim (PhD)

Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia
azilah@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Proper management practices could contribute towards the attainment of social and environmental sustainability. However, determining proper management practice require an understanding of the attitudes of those involved. This paper examines the Sri Lankan context of community tourism initiatives that is integrated with participatory natural resource management programmes. Focusing on participation readiness of the community in terms of their attitudes towards tourism development, their commitment, and the existing community capacity, the study employs a mixed method with predominantly qualitative approach to obtain data and analyze two communities of similar nature. It critically evaluates the efforts of community empowerment programmes delivered by the state institutions and non-governmental organizations in the selected areas. It also discusses of repercussions of generic issues in existing policy and legislation of the country that can have significant bearing on community empowerment efforts as well. The findings reveal that in the study context, the 'community capacity' and 'community commitment' factors are very subjective and can affect the success of community participation considerably despite the community's positive attitudes towards tourism development. Thus, empowering local communities to become self-reliant in tourism, and helping them to raise incomes and improve their standards of living has become a key challenge in this context. The findings draw attention on the pressing need for understanding inherent weaknesses of rural communities and external factors affecting the success of these initiatives. The implication is the need for change in technicalities in the present approach of community tourism development – one that provide policies that recognize, and facilitate community's participation in tourism development.

Keywords: Community Tourism, Community Participation, Participation Readiness, Environmental Conservation, Sri Lanka

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The role of tourism is undeniable for socio-economic development of communities, provided that they have the motivation for productive involvement. In addition, they should possess or should have access to resources with tourism potential. In a context where new forms of (alternative) tourism are emerging, community heritage and resources are now increasingly becoming decisive inputs for this form of tourism development in particular. In order to bring in the best out of this available opportunity, it

needs to turn efforts of the community and other stakeholders into successful collaborations and partnerships encouraging good practices in community tourism wherever possible. Sri Lanka's perception on alternative form of tourism is not clearly evident and therefore, the position of community participation in nature based tourism is quite susceptible. It needs to re-asses the efforts of tourism development, adapting properly to case specific local conditions in order to address the aspirations of the communities affected. When promoting alternative forms of tourism in particular, it has been assumed that community participation is needed to be harnessed as such development demands community inputs of different nature. Thus, there is a pressing need of recognising opportunities of environmental conservation efforts that could develop into successful participatory nature based tourism initiatives.

Community based nature tourism (CBNT) development could play a vital role in linking and achieving multiple objectives as mentioned above. However, the concept of participatory tourism development approach appears not to have been fully considered in the context of developing nations (Tosun, 2005). Despite community participation in tourism, aspect of natural resource management is also a critical concern in designing and managing of community tourism initiatives since resource ownership is more often collective. The success is achieved not only from repeat patronage, but preservation of the physical and social environments of the locals utilized for development (Wearing & Neil, 1999). Despite the rising expectations regarding the value of community tourism in many fields of expertise, the decisions about community tourism are being made in a relative vacuum of research data and knowledge. Thus, there are great gaps in the information necessary to plan and manage initiatives of this type and, apparently, it requires further research in order to bridge the above said gaps (Boo, 1990; Valentine, 1993). Thus, the case specific knowledge on current practices is vital to have and such contribution is primarily expected to deliver by studying the problem especially defined and described above.

Goodwin and Santilli (2009) claim that, whilst many community tourism initiatives have been funded in developing countries, their success (or otherwise) has not been widely monitored and, therefore, the actual benefits to local communities remain largely un-quantified. Thus, this has been a subject of much debate at policy, planning, and operational levels as far as realisation of objectives are concerned. And still there are existing gaps in the case-specific knowledge necessary to reach full potential in performance of those initiatives by overcoming impediments. According to a study undertaken by Goodwin and Santilli (2009) by considering 116 community tourism initiatives from all over the world which have been nominated by 134 participants who replied in a survey, found only four of initiatives were only economically sustainable. These observations substantiate that the link between the conservation objective and the objective of local socio-economic development is inadequate. For instance, there has been a great deal of discussion about the contributions of tourism to community well-being, very little is visible in rural Sri Lanka as well. The backdrop of these thoughts provide some meaningful way in identifying the problem within the context where CBNT initiatives failed to deliver and sustain expected benefits consistently; but notably certain cases demonstrate interest and sensible success in protection and conservation of environmental values but their future may be quite susceptible with unrealised community expectations. However, this understanding largely depends on surface level observations. Therefore, it demands for an in-depth study in order to comprehend nature of the issue, its cause and associations.

This study aims to identify the conditions under which the participation of the local community can be improved and challenges that the stakeholders must overcome to make this possible. CBNT is used here

as an umbrella-term to portray various initiatives with and by the community in the field of participatory natural resource management that linked with community based nature tourism development in Sri Lanka. The objective of CBNT development generally covers various aspects, such as, establishing alternative sources of income for communities through mobilizing resources available, diversification of local economy, conservation possibilities through economic impacts, and promotes sustainable use of resources with collective ownership.

Many CBNT initiatives of the country have experienced failures. For example, Ranasinghe (2009) states that, Walathwewa community tourism initiative was out of operation even before the participatory natural resource management project has been completed. And according to the President/SLETF (personal communication, September 22, 2009), Bundala community camping initiative and Nilwala community tourism initiative can also be claimed as failures. These evidences substantiate the weak relationship between the objectives of conservation and rural socio-economic development. Despite the great deal of discussion about the contributions of tourism to community well-being, very little is visible in rural Sri Lanka. Although superficial observations indicate commendable success in the protection and conservation of environmental values, success for community values is still largely unrealized. Thus there is a need to understand why CBNT initiatives have failed to deliver and sustain expected benefits consistently; such understanding entails an in-depth study in order to comprehend nature of the issue, its cause and associations.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the study, both primary and secondary data have been used. The primary data collection was mainly based on semi-structured and unstructured interviews. Those were conducted in the Sinhala language, except the interviews with the respondents from CEGA, Arugam Bay Tourism Association (ABTA) and foreign resource persons, which was conducted in English. In addition to interviews, field notes were taken wherever necessary and a self-completion questionnaire that has been used for the community survey on a selected sample from each community (used only for major case studies) also contributed as primary sources of data collection. The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, except for the interviews with respondents from governmental institutions. The files containing digitally recorded interviews (voice data) were transferred to the computer and saved in separate folders. The format of audio tracks was compatible to playback using the windows media player. The procedure has been initiated for producing a written version of the interviews, which is called transcribing. Accordingly, all semi-structured interviews have been transcribed. Thus verbatim of transcripts of conversations were developed manually, first in Sinhala and then translated into English. As a result, the documents in text format were created by using MS Word software. This tape analysis was performed for the unstructured interviews. While listening to the audio tracks of those interviews, the notes were taken of the sections which contain particularly useful information and key quotations for the use of analysis.

Examination of existing documents such as research reports, grants proposals, development plans, constitutions & by-laws, agreements, and statistical compilations have been used as secondary sources of data subject to the availability. It was also expected to obtain general demographic data from the community survey. To understand the general socio-economic background is important, because its main focus was to have an idea on attitude of the community about potential tourism development in their locals. In order to achieve this objective, in addition to the primary data obtained from the survey, the use of secondary data has been considered and such data which were available at officers in each

Grama Niladari Division (GND) have been accessed (GND) (the smallest civil administrative unit available at village/local level.

The questionnaire and an interview protocol were developed based on the research questions, findings of the literature review, background information including the general industry behaviour and awareness on CETIs. However, few revisions were made to the initial interview protocol during the data collection phase, to adopt it to each research site because CETIs vary in terms of organization, structure, functionality, and as well as those initiatives are at different stages of development as well.

The questionnaire consisted of five attitude measurement statements (multi-item scale), on which five-point summated rating scale has been used with- 1, 'strongly disagree' to 5, 'strongly agree' ³. Apart from that, one opinion indicator was also included in the same questionnaire, for obtaining the opinion of the each community surveyed on expected future development of tourism in their locals. This self-administrative type questionnaire was used at two research sites, on which the major cases were developed. This survey was conducted to complement the major inquiry which has been conducted qualitatively. The respondents were invited to a place in their respective villages as previously arranged and the survey was carried out.

Validity and reliability are ensured by referring closely to previous work undertaken in assessing host community attitudes in the field of tourism, WTO's (1995) guide on development and the use of indicators, the context in which they are going to be used. The measurement scale developed for the attitude survey consisted with five items and used appropriate wordings in order to ensure positive correlation among them. A pre-testing of the instrument was carried out on 30 households selected based on a convenient sample for the purpose of both testing and further refining the instrument. Reliability test was run by using SPSS and calculated the Cronbach's alpha for the indicators included in the questionnaire used for the community attitude survey (except for the opinion indicator) ⁴. The results of the reliability test are: Cronbach's alpha = 0.797; Cronbach's alpha based on standardized items = 0.791; and No. of Items 5. According to the "rules-of-thumb that use to interpret alpha value" (Hair et al., 2007: 244), the value of 0.79 is considered as "good" in terms of the strength of association is concerned. Thus, it can be concluded that five-items can be combined to measure the degree of positive attitudes of a local community towards their involvement in tourism in a consistent manner. Based on the household registry, the sample sizes for above two research sites were selected as 105 and 85 respectively (including approximately 10 percent of additional selection) and the simple random sampling method was used for selecting the respondents.

3 A summated rating scale attempts to measure attitudes or opinions and often use a five-point or seven-point scale to assess the strength of agreement about a group of statements that typically all relate to a single concept (Hair et al., 2007).

4 "Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that indicates how well the items in a set are positively correlated to one another. Cronbach's alpha is computed in terms of the average inter-correlations among the items measuring the concept" (Sekaran, 2003: 307); "Coefficient alpha ranges from 0 to 1. ... Researchers generally consider an alpha of 0.7 as a minimum, although lower coefficients may be acceptable depending on the research objectives" (Hair et al., 2007: 244).

3.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A community is a vital element as it plays a dual role in tourism development. First, tourists have often attracted by the distinct life styles of the host community. Second, the participation and support of the local community in numerous ways in tourism is essential to its long-term sustainability. This relationship is developed when communities interact either directly or indirectly with both visitors and the industry. Hence, the local communities cannot simply be avoided in tourism development of a country, particularly when it takes place in marginalized or in remote rural areas. Moreover, community tourism improves avenues to mobilize social capital available in communities, sustains local knowledge, socio-cultural values, and traditional lifestyles and fosters on value addition opportunities for the tourism industry of the entire destination.

The notion of alternative tourism is being in the centre of discussion, in most occasions when community development takes place provided that tourism potential resources are available. Repositioning of Sri Lankan tourism product is also a current requirement of the industry. It demands quality potential resources as it depends on them for long term sustainability. The contribution of the local community must be an important consideration in the context since there are potentials and prospects of developing community tourism based on available resources. Because, it is easy to obtain the rights to access natural resources that are under the management of state agencies when collective community participation is concerned.

CBNT is based on natural resources that fit well into sustainable resource management principles. It can be positively contribute to conserve natural resources and as well as benefiting the community by promoting alternative sustainable livelihoods. Being world's one of bio diversity hot spots, Sri Lanka has tremendous advantage for promoting alternative forms of tourism. In order to make this possible, there must be considerable shift from command and control approach to participatory approach where active community involvement is taken into consideration as a vital input in the process of natural resource management. From tourism industry point of view, there is a growing concern for product diversification as well. Given this background, there is very conducive environment for developing and promoting community tourism in Sri Lanka.

Table 1a: Overall Community Attitudes towards Tourism – Walathwewa Community

Indicator	Value
1: I believe tourism should be actively encouraged in my community.	4.38
2. I am confident in that I would be able to engage with development of tourism in my community.	4.07
3. I am happy to see that if there are more opportunities available in tourism industry for our community to involve collectively.	4.01
4. I support tourism and would like to see it become an important part of my community.	4.37
5. I would be happy for my children to work in the tourism industry.	4.14
Overall Mean	4.19

Table 1b: Overall Community Attitudes towards Tourism – Rekawa Community

Indicator	Value
1. I believe tourism should be actively encouraged in my community.	4.65
2. I am confident in that I would be able to engage with development of tourism in my community.	4.11
3. I am happy to see that if there are more opportunities available in tourism industry for our community to involve collectively.	4.11
4. I support tourism and would like to see it become an important part of my community.	4.57
5. I would be happy for my children to work in the tourism industry.	4.39
Overall Mean	4.37

In community development literature, positive attitudes, resource availability, and commitment of the community members are considered as vital inputs. The same inputs are also required in any effort to develop CBNT initiatives. Table 1a and Table 1b show the findings of community attitude survey. The results of the survey have been revealed that attitudes of the community vary according to their understanding, experience and exposure to the tourism industry. For example, both communities have showed that they have positive attitudes towards tourism while Rekawa community is relatively significant on the same aspect due to their exposure to tourism in their local setting.

Community attitudes that favour tourism development is highly essential, without which, community tourism may not be successful. Community awareness is a key element that could make a substantial attitude change in this regard. According to this study's findings, positive attitude of the communities that prefer conservation and sustainable use of resource was a result of awareness programmes that disseminate the knowledge on environmental consequences, particularly on undesirable impacts that they are mainly responsible for. In other words, these programmes were successful in improving their understanding on natural resource conservation issues. Both cases of this study have showed substantial evidences to prove this. However, community's attitude about tourism, on the other hand, was quite different from this and varies substantially among community members even prior to awareness campaigns or gaining any experience. The study further reveals that negative perception of certain community members was basically due to misunderstanding about foreign tourists rather than tourism. Their reluctance to welcome tourists was mainly because of perceived negative impacts of international tourism to their culture.

From economic point of view, resource endowment is the base of the process of developing CBNT. The marginalised communities are more often not in a position to find the right combination of resources enabling them to develop their own livelihoods. For example, the use of and substitution of labour has its own limitation within the context of those communities. As the study recognises, the use of volunteer labour as an input in community development activities is no longer successful. Since there is an obvious opportunity cost which is highly influential in communities who are depending on rural subsistence agriculture. In most occasions, it has created unrest among the communities. This means that the use of volunteer labour for community development beyond a certain level is not practical and this must be taken into consideration wherever community involvement is taking place in a development. In addition to labour, land tenure of the community is also a determinant of the degree of potential community participation. However, most coastal communities in particular are loosing property rights day by day, making land tenure a complicated issue. Both local investors and foreigners purchase properties (lands) belonging to members of such communities. Those lands are often of high

commercial value being located on to the coastal belt which is ideal for tourism development. Since most of the locals in these areas do not have the capacity to invest in tourism, they were compelled to sell. As a result, those communities are losing their position in bargaining over the development decisions that take place in their locality.

The interactions of enforcement agencies are obvious in marginalised communities living adjacent to natural resources like forests, wildlife, or marine ecosystems. Since controlling aspects of natural resources have been prioritised, this regulatory framework is relatively rigid. However, "considerable change in the approach now hopes for better community participation than before. But still we are experiencing too much technical and regulatory limitations that difficult us to adapt to certain contexts" (Deputy Conservator of Forests/DF, personal communication, December 15, 2009). The community participation in CETIs should be encouraged by means of supportive legislation and regulatory mechanism. It is important that rights of the community to access natural resources be given to avoid unsustainable and illegal use of the resource

In addition to positive attitude and community capacity, commitment is also a driving force behind a successful community tourism development. It is therefore, vital to understand how committed the community is in engaging with their own development activities. CBNT initiatives of this study have demonstrated outstanding commitment by the respective communities, particularly at the initial stage of their development. They are typical examples for the achievement of this nature. However, maintaining such commitment has been proven difficult among these communities. And misguided and less performing these initiatives have experienced complications in maintaining community commitment requiring them to reorganise themselves before any success is to be attained.

Empowerment is another influential factor in community development. Understanding power relationships among various community members are important in order to empower communities because meaningful empowerment requires changes in power relations. In other words, if power can change, then empowerment process can be easily accommodated. Therefore, the concept of empowerment depends upon the idea that power can expand and this reflects our common experiences of power existences in relations between people and places. Power is a factor that determines most deliverables in development processes and as well as potential access to those by various stakeholders. Moreover, power is of direct relevance to participation readiness. Since power exists and occurs within individuals and groups of the community for various reasons; as Spear and Hughey (1995) state, "...most important is the understanding that a reciprocal relationship exists between development of power for community organizations and individual empowerment for organisation members" (729). This reflects not only the ability of the community and its individuals to be involved and have influence in collective decisions, but also how well they are able to take decisions that affect their lives, their ability to bargain over development decisions, their responding ability, their willingness to take calculated risks, their access to necessary information, their competencies in mobilizing social capital, and their ability to bargain with external parties and deal with supportive mechanisms.

However, power imbalances that exist among community members are a common occurrence. The traditional power patterns in rural communities may resist or may not support collective decision-making due to heavy dominance by local elites or existence of traditional community or religious leadership. In most Sri Lankan rural communities, traditional power bases are still in dominance. In this context, development process of CBNT, like any other collective economic activity that takes place in rural settings requires power sharing. Therefore, empowering communities is inevitable. Participation readiness of the community largely depends on a successful empowerment process. As observed during

the study, such empowerment processes are rather ad-hoc or less comprehensive. Therefore, they have not been able to deliver the expected. This issue has been discussed further under the 'inconsistent facilitation' by the convener below.

In absence of many successful stories in CBNT, this is an attempt to identify possible conditions that would determine the success of those initiatives. In other words, the idea here is to review factors (both internal and external) that inhibit the success of CBNT. The review gives particular attention to shortcomings in the present policy and tourism development approaches, and issues related to the establishment of strong institutional support, the role of convener, the scope of CBNT, multiple uses of natural resources, the implementation/organisational weaknesses, the community leadership and management issues, and the lack of entrepreneurial market orientation.

Facilitation, regulation and control (where necessary) by enforcement and sectoral agencies are still inadequate. This is mainly because of the lack of recognition for developing and promoting recreational facilities within the existing legal and policy framework. As a result, tourism related opportunities have not been exploited and objectives of CBNT were not reached fully. Government recognition of alternative tourism is essential to ensure formulation and implementation of effective policy measures with suitable organisational and administrative setting. As found in this study, institutional support at the time of the fieldwork was not at best. Tourism policy and planning, inter-sectoral coordination and poor relationship issues among line ministries (for example, line ministries of central and provincial governments) have not been adequately addressed or improved to give room for community tourism growth.

In certain cases attention has been paid to address generic issues in the legislative environment related to the protection and conservation of natural resources. However, not much attention is given to the issue of alternative tourism. This creates confusion among the community which discourages them from participating actively. As Deputy Director/DWC says, "authorities need to improve understanding in order to work collaboratively with the community" (personal communication, August 22, 2008). This is a considerable fact in fields of natural resource management where the involvement of state agencies is significant. Similarly, it is also vital to maintain proper coordination among different state agencies as well.

The failure of relevant authorities to establish an administrative or an implementing unit under the given provisions in the current Specified Tourism Services Code of the Tourism Development Act had some significant bearing on the success of community tourism initiatives. According to President/SLEF, this need has been recognised by the Advisory Committee, appointed by the Minister of Tourism in 2008 on community tourism. The committee has further recommended establishing this unit under the Ministry of Tourism or Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (personal communication, September 22, 2009). If such institutional support exists, CBNT efforts can improve via well designed guidelines, standards. The positioning of a regulatory mechanism will also help potential communities in the country to offer quality products. Unfortunately, to the time of this study's fieldwork, tourism authorities have not been able to make any significant contribution by taking appropriate action.

Some preliminary measures have already been taken by the Sri Lankan Ministry of Tourism by selecting several sites (villages) in the country for developing a pilot programme for community tourism (President/SLETF, personal communication, September 22, 2009), but conventional planning approaches involved may minimise the chances of community to get involved meaningfully and, therefore, expected progress of this programme is uncertain. As Mowforth and Munt (1998) note, the significance of

participation of local community as one of the criteria often agreed as essential to the condition of sustainability in any 'new' tourist project.

From the community point of view, their capacity development is deemed essential for pushing CBNT forward. NGOs and the private sector could contribute in numerous ways for capacity development of the community, since at initial stage communities are greatly lacking skills required to plan, design, and operate tourism initiatives. Because of this reason, community initiatives are heavily donor or convener-dependent. Involvement of external agencies is usually in the areas of funding, skills development, and awareness building. In the area of awareness building, the most successful method would be field demonstrations (study tours) organised by the convener. This type of study tours includes both local and foreign exposure on community tourism. In addition to study tours, training opportunities are also provided to community members at various stages. However, this approach seems to be mostly ad-hoc due to lack of proper planning and existing capacity limitations, mainly funding. Assistance delivered in this form is often termed as 'projects' and execution is often informal. Thus, they lack a holistic, more comprehensive approach.

Another salient feature in Sri Lankan CBNT initiatives is their narrow scope of operation. In other words, these initiatives are confined to few service areas, such as provision of guided nature tours, interpretation services, provision of camping facilities, recreational boat rides etc. To become a more versatile organization, CBNT initiatives need to exploit other ways of involvement like provision of supplementary lodging, tourist transportation, promoting excursions (outside the community) for visitors and so on. This would enable them to capitalise on existing flows of tourists. In addition, these initiatives are not in a position to accommodate guests for long stays or even for a couple of days due to inapt organisation of facility or inadequate capacity in operations. Revenue generation is relatively low due to low value addition. Community heritage has not been properly recognised as an asset that could substantially improve value addition. There is much more to be done to make use of community heritage in total tourist product offering. This can be identified as a common inherited weakness of CBNT initiatives. Consequently, poor value addition and poor product diversification are key challenges and that must be dealt with using appropriate strategies.

Socio-economic development in a community is largely dependent on the availability of natural resources. Tourism potential of such resources should be a decisive factor for development of CBNT. Ownership or access to natural resources is also necessary to stimulate community participation in tourism. For example, forest resources are vital inputs for forest based recreation which, if properly promoted, could benefit the surrounding community. As community in Sri Lanka is largely less dependent on forest resources (Wickramasinghe, 2009), natural resource management programmes with active participation of the community can be developed in order to benefit them while maintaining conservation priorities. But lack of mechanism to educate the community about non-consumptive use of natural resources pose as a threat for the successful implementation of this objective.

Prioritizing natural resource management poses problems for multiple use of a given natural area. The controversy of using Rekawa lagoon for recreational purpose is a typical example. It is noteworthy to mention that the resistance came from different interest groups within the same community, who are members of the Lagoon Fishermen Society. Similar situations have been observed when using inland water bodies such as tanks (reservoirs) which are purpose-built for agriculture. Prior approvals from relevant authorities are needed in order to use these water bodies for recreational purpose. Lack of institutional coordination is responsible for this situation. The weak coordination among stakeholders particularly between government organisations, rigid rules and regulation, too much bureaucracy as

well as attitude and lackadaisical working culture among officers are common issues in Sri Lankan inter-sectoral administration (President/RCTI and Ex. President/RCTI, personal communication, June 15, 2008 and August 02, 2008 respectively).

Consequently, projects that promote sustainable livelihoods including CBNT were also negatively affected. A recent community outreach programme launched by the Department of Wildlife Conservation in its recent Protected Area Management (PAM) project for example, failed to select its beneficiaries for its fund mobilisation which led to failure of reaching its efficiency targets (Deputy Director/DWC, personal communication, August 22, 2008). It is also noteworthy that they encountered methodological issues when selecting the beneficiaries for Sri Lanka Australia Natural Resource Management Programme (SLANRMP), in Walathwewa village. As President/SLETF mentions in a similar case, Kirala Kele CBNT project has also failed due to implementation weaknesses and wrong attitudes of the officers involved in decision-making (personal communication, September 22, 2009). Apparently the realities on the ground have not been properly studied during the planning stage which leads to irrational decisions during project implementation. Misuse of resources including voluntary labour (of community members) is another serious consequence of this issue that warrants appropriate planning process before implementation of any future project.

Dedicated and visionary community leadership is also a vital factor in the success of CBNT. Communities always enjoy the benefit of having good leaders. According to the cases studied, this factor alone has been able to play a decisive role and contribute positively towards the emergence of leadership from the ordinary community members. "In certain cases, we were highly impressed when there were dedicated and hardworking community leaders who play a vital role in their own initiatives. They are the driving force behind the success. The more they contribute, the more they get" (Tourism Officer/Mercy Corps, personal communication, August 15, 2008). However, the community leadership of WCTI has not been able to put a genuine effort due to poor leadership and lack of vision that allowed the community to be cheated by a greedy individual (President/SLETF, personal communication, September 22, 2009).

The study findings also highlighted that community leadership is almost always non-remunerative due to poor revenue generation of those initiatives. Another observation is that members including community leaders of CBNT initiatives are almost from the same age group. Participation by youths of those communities is not very impressive. "Our youths are not prepared to wait and see, because they are usually motivated by quicker results. Poor economic background also does not encourage them to involve in less productive activities or if benefits are unpredictable" (Ex. President/RCTI, personal communication, August 02, 2008). Such attitude of the community youth has considerable bearing on participation of communities in the long-term. Therefore, they must be encouraged to get involved.

There is a long list of shortcomings among communities who engaged in CBNT. These include lack of technical skills (for example, managerial skills required for planning, managing resources including cash flows, skills required for service quality, communication skills etc.) and lack of transparency and monitoring. Programmes for transferring necessary technical skills have often been delivered by the convener. But as described earlier, these programmes were more often ad-hoc and less comprehensive. The case of technical assistance provided by relevant authorities for the construction of RCTI's visitor centre was an example. This project was unable to complete for many years as it started with wrong estimations of available funding (Ex. President/RCTI, personal communication, August 02, 2008). In the case of WCTI, misuse of funds and assets due to lack of monitoring were some of issues blamed for its failure (President/SLETF, personal communication, September 22, 2009).

Since CETIs are being commercial ventures, the success rests largely on effective marketing strategy. Weak marketing effort and insufficient backing of the state-of-the-art information and communication technology (ICT) are also common characteristics of CBNT. As a result, those initiatives seriously lack organisational strength by not linking with external institutions or other similar community tourism initiatives (Travel Journalist/Lonely Planet, personal communication, April 22, 2008). He also added that it is important for CBNT initiatives to focus well on special interests market segments and as well as repeat visitors, since they might need to explore Sri Lanka in depth. The success in these marketing activities largely depends on efficient use of ICT. The use of free media publicity is also an option for those initiatives

In the field of natural resource management state agencies are key stakeholders. Their functions are governed by the respective legislative frameworks which makes them ineffective as conveners of community development. As Deputy Director/DWC says, "a broader understanding on ground realities (of the communities) is essential in order to overcome these limitations" (personal communication, August 22, 2008). This issue has been highlighted particularly in the case of WCTI. In WCTI, members of the respective community claim that the failure of entering into an agreement with the DF has greatly jeopardized the future of the initiative (Secretary/WCTI and Ex. President/WCTI, personal communication, July 22, 2008 and July 23, 2008 respectively). Thus, the most important aspect is to recognise and define clearly the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and better negotiate for a win-win situation that helps to surmount impediments that discourage community participation.

When communities started to experience the consequences of unsustainable livelihood practices, they began to realise that something fundamental had gone wrong and started to demand action from relevant authorities. This study reveals that improved awareness has substantially changed community attitudes in connection with environmental repercussions. However, participation of the community in conservation activities was generally motivated by monetary rewards. Conservation projects usually bring substantial funding where participatory approaches have been established. Direct labour from the community was often paid-labour. SLANRMP technical assistance under AusAid programme was an example. According to respondents of WCTI, it helped them to earn some income which was badly needed at that time as they were experiencing severe drought for a period of three years which affected their livelihoods especially agricultural pursuits (Treasurer/WCTI and Member/WCTI, personal communication, July 24, 2008 and July 23, 2008 respectively).

The study findings also indicate that welfare mentality of the community members has a considerable impact on their contribution for participatory development activities because communities are often motivated by one-way welfare handouts. According to President/SLETF, "this is nothing but hand-to-mouth, an approach that most communities are interested in" (personal communication, September 22, 2009). Quite a similar situation can be seen in tsunami affected coastal areas of the country where the welfare-dependent mentality of the community becomes a critical social issue at present. Mismanagement of post tsunami relief missions was mainly responsible for creating this situation (Ex. President/RCTI, personal communication, August 02, 2008). In addition, lack of tendency to improve entrepreneurial capabilities among the community members also worsens the matter. However, active participation in nature conservation initiatives has enhanced the awareness of the community on the importance of protection and conservation of natural resources.

Participation of the middle aged members of the community has been highlighted as committed as well as eager for results. They are particularly sensitive towards maintaining socio-cultural values. As the younger generation is mostly attracted by material benefits, their participation was insignificant. As

already emphasised, youths will stay longer in the community and their participation is essential to maintain the link with future generation in transforming traditional skills, beliefs, values and so on. Since both initiatives are not producing attractive results at present, young people feel discouraged from getting involved, despite the importance of their involvement for the long-term success. The findings of the study highlighted that certain demographic factors have influenced differently on community attitudes towards tourism. These factors include level of education received and major source of income. The community members who possess relatively less education levels prefer tourism much compared to those who have higher educational levels. Similarly, those who have inconsistent income sources such as fisheries, self employment, and informal sector have preferred tourism development rather than those who have permanent income sources such as public and private sector employment. However, in general, the attitude towards tourism in communities considered for the study is positive and it is an encouraging factor for policy makers and tourism planners.

Community participation in tourism is challenging since its inception. With the general emphasis on community approach, Hawkins and Cunningham (1996) identify the importance of community participation during the early stages of the planning process as critical in tourism development. However, this process itself is associated with issues and limitations particularly during the stages of planning and implementation. During the study, it has been also identified various such issues and limitations such as absence of specific policy framework; constraints in planning approaches; issues of land use planning, ownership and tenure; cultural and institutional/bureaucratic constraints; weak collaboration; negative attitudes of community; lack of participation readiness; existence of local power bases, political factors and so on.

Another observation is that the potential access to externally available sources of funding for such initiatives has stimulated stakeholder interest and participation to a greater extent. These initiatives essentially look for establishing links between local people and tourism to sustain their long-term well-being. Communities who are more dependent on natural resources for their living are mostly subject to the development of this nature. As far as the performance is concerned, the most initiatives are still progressing at a slower rate and some other are almost out of operations. Low level of operational capabilities and limitations in available opportunities hinder more community members to involve directly even though they are willing to do so. Indirect benefits are being mostly offered to non-participatory community members as a compensation for the use of resources of collective ownership. However, indirect benefits are mainly confined to the delivery of social welfare, therefore, it is almost one-way. In general, there is weaker participation by women, particularly in active or direct participation. But their participation is relatively visible in indirect ways. Thus, they mainly have access to indirect benefits and for them it is a part-time source of income.

It has been questioned whether these types of initiatives are capable of generating enough revenue for environmental conservation in the long term. However, it is required to look at this from a different angle. Basic fact is that these initiatives are not having lucrative sources of revenue generation or any generation of revenue is not consistent. Even if they do, the context studied is not demanding high level of environmental conservation efforts that essentially require critical funding to maintain environmental values. Rather, those initiatives were successful in changing attitudes of the community towards environmental conservation, which is more beneficial in the long term. According to Kiss (2004), tourism can generate support for conservation among communities as long as they see some benefit. However, the case of Sri Lanka is quite different from this. Even if such initiatives are not capable of generating much benefit, the study shows that the conservation attitudes of the communities have not been

affected considerably. Once strong attitudes have been established towards conservation of natural resources, communities believed that they are primarily benefited from it rather than secondary rewards that the introduction of community tourism would bring. In other words, in this context, community tourism of this nature in Sri Lanka is a secondary response that has been taken up in the process of conservation and natural resource management.

One might argue that, existing situation of the Sri Lanka's tourism industry in general, is responsible for not generating adequate number of visitation for community tourism initiatives. It may be valid to a certain extent but not a very significant factor. Therefore, it is not a reason to discourage. It is important to understand the real volume and value of community tourism and its potential to diversify and induce local economies, create linkages, stimulate multiplier effects, and foster sustainable resource utilisation. Tourists began incorporating environmentally friendly and culturally protective activities into their travel plans. In other words, the demand for alternative tourism including community tourism exists, because there is a clear prospective market. Hence, no reason can be produced to justify for any failure for such initiatives from market point of view. Lack of organisation at each initiative level and no proper establishment of a network at national and international levels have been recognised as a long-felt weakness of those initiatives. Therefore, Sri Lankan community tourism initiatives are still not in a position to be linked with both national and international community tourism networks for effective marketing.

4.0 CONCLUSION

During the study, there are certain aspects considered, such as, organisation and internal functionality of community tourism initiatives; the role of the convener; inter-organisational relationships; and participation readiness of the community. The findings of the study are leading to some important implications as described above, which can be also recognised as ingredients for best community tourism practices, such as, inputs with right combination (efficient resource mobilisation); visionary community leadership; sound stakeholder collaboration; and responsible intervention by the convener are important consideration. Findings of the study also reveal that resource potentiality, social, and cultural factors are favourable and can contribute immensely to induce community tourism development but not certain economic, political, and technological factors. Moreover, dependency on exiting mass tourism market generally reflects the weakness of marketing effort by each initiative as well as lack of collaborative effort among the initiatives on the same propose. Those who have already accessed to the benefits or at least at the door step of reaping benefits consistently are the ones who possess more understanding, sense of change and responding to it, ability to work collaboratively than others initiatives studied.

It is also important to recognise ways and means that not only the community can benefit from tourism but also how tourism could benefit from community. Therefore, it is crucial to improve measures, in order to place community on right track through a planned process for sustaining their well-being without any failure and before it is too late. The opportunities will not remain same in the future as competitiveness is always on the rise, thus creating challenges of different nature. Hence, if appropriate measures will not be taken responsibly in order to make the basics correct, community tourism could be a missed opportunity in Sri Lanka.

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Personal Communication

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INTEGRATED BUSINESS STRATEGY AND ITS CONSTRUCTS: PILOT STUDY AT HOTELS IN MALAYSIA

Shahrin Saad, Khulida Kirana Yahya and Faizuniah Pangil

College of Business

Universiti Utara Malaysia

06010, Sintok Kedah, Malaysia

sshahrin@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Since hotel industry is major contributor to the growth of Tourism Industry in Malaysia, it is vital to take into consideration of issues that are being carried by the industry. For example the high turnover of employee in hotel due to poor strategy conducted by hotels' management. This paper explores the new strategy measurement which is the integrated business strategy dimensions in fitting the hotel industry due to the scarce of hospitality strategy at present. The new strategy is developed from the integration of four business strategy scholars. The new strategy dimensions have been renamed and items of the strategies have been tested through a pilot study. In the pilot study, a questionnaire of 29 items to measure integrated business strategy were formed. It is hoped that this measurement tool will contribute to the setting of a foundation to future hospitality strategy development and management of hotels in Malaysia.

Keywords: Hospitality Strategy, Business Strategy, Integrated Business Strategy and Hotel

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hotel industry in Malaysia has been considered as second highest industry that contributed to national GDP. Report from Malaysia Insider (2010) mentioned that 9% of country's GDP is contributed by this industry. Hence, this number keeps increasing in the concept of tourist arrival. For example 16.4 million tourist arrived in the year of 2005 and the number keep increasing within five years to 23.6 million (MTPB, 2010). Aligning to this, it has been reported in Industrial Malaysian Plan Three (IMP 3) that there will be 520,770 direct employees opportunities has been created as compared to IMP 2 which the number was only 91,156.

Despite the booming of the industry, report from Ministry of Human Resource in 2009 mentioned that the Tourism employee job turnover in Malaysia is relatively high at 16% and from this number 8% was contributed by hoteliers' job turnover. This issue has resulted that hotels keep loose-fitting skillful employees. Hence, has leaded to high cost that need to be bare by a hotel in order to employ new employee. On top of that, it is also time consuming in training employee in keeping to hotel service standard. Due to this, researchers suggested that there should be strategy in retaining the employee in hospitality industry is needed (Okumus, 2002; Enrique, 2009). Moreover, hospitality researchers have been arguing that in order to ease the issue of losing skillful employees, appropriate hospitality strategy is needed (Okumus, 2002; Bamberger & Meshoulum, 2000; Fernando, 2005; Shahrin, 2010).

Since hotel operation environment involve labour intensive which need continuously employee motivation. Further, at present, hotel strategy is at scarce (Okumus, 2002). Align with the discussion, this study is aim to evaluate and integrate various business related strategies in fitting the hospitality environment.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Strategy

Strategy shall be varied in applying to different types of organization's objectives (Ansoff, 1965; Barnard, 1938; Hofer & Schendel, 1978; Lindblom, 1959; March & Simon, 1958; Mintzberg, 1973; Quinn, 1980). Align with this, many researchers have come out with varies sets' of strategies (Ansoff, 1965; Barnard, 1938; Hofer & Schendel, 1978; Lindblom, 1959; March & Simon, 1958; Mintzberg, 1973; Quinn, 1980). However, these strategies have been said to focus on the manufacturing and trade industries. This issue has made researchers from the hospitality field have come to question what strategies can be used. The main question that has arisen is related to the appropriateness of strategy being utilised in service industry, mainly in the hospitality sector. This argument is due to the products in service industry is known as perishable products. Further, hospitality industry is a labour intensive industry, which the action occurs at the moment the service is produced; for example, a smile that a waiter gives during serving meals (Edger & Taylor, 1996; Olsen & Roper, 1998; Okumus, 2002). Since, hospitality industry carry perishable products, it has come to the conclusion that the industry is unique in term of how to deal with it. Due to this, the strategy use in the hospitality industry shall be added together with the human resources perspectives. The additional of human resource perspective in the strategy can comprehend the need to motivate the service provider in the industry (Mintzberg, 1973; Schuler & Jackson, 1987). Hence, researchers in the hospitality industry have also been reminded, during numerous academic forums such as CHRIE and CHME (the hotel and tourism conferences), to contribute to the literature on hospitality strategy.

Since most of the strategies used in hospitality industries have been adopted strategies from organisational business strategies through Miles and Snow (1974) strategy, it has left a gap for this research to fill with new hospitality strategy dimensions. This research is also supposed to give a new paradigm of strategies by integration of strategies from a range of different strategic environments.

Integrated strategy

The content of strategy is vital since it can be modified based on current circumstances (Mintzberg, 1978; Snow & Hambrick, 1980). Strategy content is how an organisation interacts with its environment and the way it seeks to improve its performance (Rubin, 1988). Due to this, this study is tuned to conceptualise strategy content on integrated strategy which it integrates with various business strategies and incorporates them with the human resource perspective. The rationale of integrating business strategies and human resource perspective is due to the nature of the study which has been proposed by Okumus (2002), that most strategic management studies in hospitality have been adopting business strategy measurements only despite the unique environment of hospitality industry. Hence, since the hospitality industry is a labour-intensive industry, the human resource perspective is deemed important in planning the strategy used besides business strategy. On top of this, Okumus (2002) mentioned in his study that at present strategy in hospitality industry is at scarce.

On the other hand, in the strategic hospitality management field, leading authors such as Michael Olsen, Richard Teare, and their colleagues tend to see strategy as a plan. Hence, in their writings, they strongly emphasise on the importance of achieving “fit” between the organisations’ external and internal organisations. They have called this as the “co-alignment” principle (Olsen, M et.al., 1998).

The argument between authors’ views is considered to be a positive issue since it would encourage more researches to be conducted in validating and contributing to strategic management studies (Schendel & Hofer, 1979; Venkatraman, 1989; Okumus, 2002). For example, strategic management can be characterised into four phases in management mainstream: analysis, formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Few authors considered that these phases can be an overlapping one another and conducted at once if the process is comprehensively understood. However, in the hospitality management field, most studies viewed strategic management as a linear process starting from analysis to evaluation.

Due to the reason that the strategy is at scarce in hospitality industry and most of the study conducted in researching hospitality strategy used business strategy, it has opened the gap to be filled. Okumus (2002) and Bamberger & Meshoulum (2000) mentioned that researchers in hospitality industry need to conducted more strategy researches in hospitality industry in contributing toward strategy knowledge in hospitality industry. Align to this, this study is using strategies from several different scholars of business and human resource perspective and integrate them in finding the best fit and apply it in hotel industry. Hence, according to neo-HR approach of theorists, the way employee being treated is vital since it will reflect the motivation to enhance productivity (Nankervis et.al. 2008). Due to this, HR perspective is needed in the integration of the strategies. From the strategies, a typology is created and the most popular strategies that have been agreed by most of the scholar will be adopted as a dimension for the strategies that will be utilized in hotel industry. This method has been suggested by Hasliza (2009) and Fernando (2005). Table 1 will illustrate the typology.

Table 1: Integration of Business Strategies Typology

Business Strategies Dimension	Miles & Snow	Porter	Jackson & Schuler	Miller	Selected Dimension
1) Product market breath	X	x		X	Product/marker breath Innovation
2) Success posture/innovation	X	x	x	x	
3) Surveillance rationality	X				
4) Growth/Assertiveness/Timing of entry	X	x		x	Timing of entry
5) Technological goal/Cost	X	x		x	Cost / Efficiency
6) Technological breath/Employee behaviours	X	x	x	x	Employee competencies
7) Technology buffers/Risk taking	X		x	x	Employee competencies
8) Dominant coalition/Financial	X	x			
9) Planning	X			x	
10) Structure	X			x	
11) Control	X				
12) Resource Level		x			
13) Active Marketing		x		x	Quality
14) Quality	X	x	x	x	

From the typology, four main scholars' strategy has been evaluated and integrated. However, through the typology only dimensions that concerns on product breath, innovation, time of entry, cost efficiency, employee competencies and quality are being selected. The selection of dimension was done through the most popular items and dimensions being use by all four scholars. Through selecting the popular dimensions and items, it shows that the four scholars agree on the usage of the dimensions in measuring strategy. And from there, the selected dimensions are renamed to superiority-based strategy, uniqueness strategy, product expansion strategy and cost efficiency strategy. In superiority-based strategy, it is highly focus on quality enhancement of product and services. While, the uniqueness strategy focuses more on the differentiation of service or product is offered by organization. The third strategy, which is product expansion strategy, focus on the products and services breaths within the product line. And the last strategy that has been renamed is cost efficiency strategy. In this cost efficiency strategy, flexibility in cost controlling in monitoring products and services is considered.

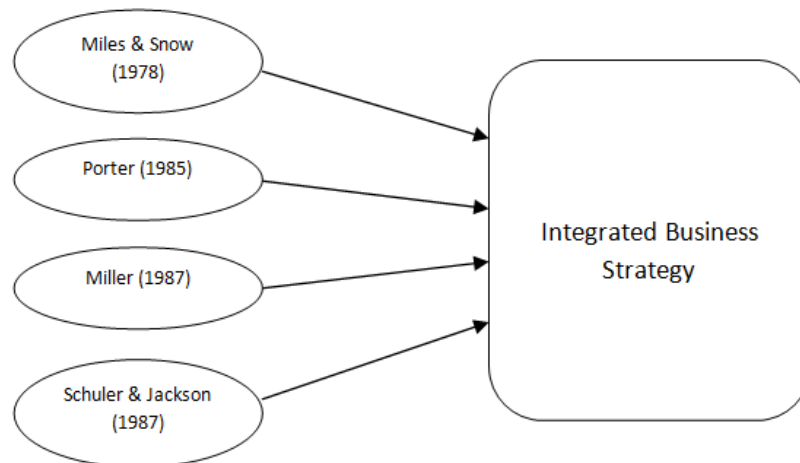
3.0 METHODS

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) explains the underlying process, which is adapted to guide this study. As discussed, this study is deemed to propose the integration of strategies in having strategy fix

which is deemed needed in hotel industry since it is at scarce. Contingency Theory is proposed to be used since the theory has an argument that organizational performance or effectiveness results from fitting certain organizational characteristics and strategies to contingencies that reflect the situation of the organization (Burns and Stalker, 1961; Galbraith, 1973; Hage and Aiken, 1969; Pugh et. al., 1969). Due to that, in this study the integration of strategies is in need due to contingencies of hotel environment that changes its objectives gradually due to economic factors.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Integrated Business Strategy



Instrumentation

Pilot Study

A pilot study is a study conducted in a smaller scale of respondent in order to experiment of a logistic and check the validity of measurements before conducted the study in a larger scale or the real study. During the pilot study, a questionnaire should be piloted with a reasonable sample of respondents who come from the target population or who closely resemble the target population (Cavana et. al., 2000). The reason of conducting the pilot study is due to it will help to validate the measurement by undergo several processes before conducting pilot study for example, face validity and content validity. Face validity has been regarded as the basic or surface of questionnaires validity testing. In operating face validity, a researcher can have peer review of the questionnaires and the peer need to prove and understand the questionnaires and is it adequate for the type of unit of analysis that will be used (Zikmund et. al., 2010). Whilst, content validity is the degree to which a measure relates to other variables as expected within a system of theoretical relationship (Babbie, 2008). However, Zikmund (2003) has suggested that content validity to be defined together with face validity and their activities of testing instruments are similar to each other. This is due to in both processes are trying to examine the measures proposed by researcher in achieving research objectives.

There are rules in conducting pilot study, for example, if the questionnaire has 20 opinion items and factor analysis need to be conducted, then, the ideal number of respondents will need to be multiplied by four to ten times of the items. This number has counted if there is data missing in the questionnaires answers. However, if the questionnaire contains only factual items, then a pilot study of 30 respondents

is common. Hence, Browne (1995) conducted the study in health area mentioned that in conducting pilot study a respondent of 30 is accommodative enough by the rule of thumb. However, since the questionnaires in this study are adapted from literature, they are considered opinion items. But, Cavana et. al., (2008) mentioned that if the number of respondent is too large and if it almost impossible to achieve, most of business researchers will apply less number of respondent and accept the result will be only indicative. Align with these arguments; the study is considering 106 hotels and resorts to be utilized for pilot study by taking the consideration items in the questionnaires are 106.

4.0 FINDINGS

Demographic Data

The sample contained more city hotels (56.6%) than resorts hotel (43.4%). This uneven numbers between the two logistics area is due to numbers of hotels being built are more in city than in the resort area. In addition, the respondents from city type hotels are more cooperative than the resort area.

Data Distribution

Normality refers to the shape of data distribution for an individual metric variable and its correspondence to the normal distribution. It is a foundation process of analyzing data. A data set need to be evaluated through normality first before proceeding to further testing. Through the result gained from normality test, a data set will then only be decided to proceed with parametric or non-parametric test. Normality test cab be assessed by using skewness and kurtosis values. Skewness is used to measure the symmetry of a distribution while on the other hand, kurtosis is used to measure the peakness or flatness of a distribution when compared to a normal distribution (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998).

Based on the results, skewness for all items of integrated business strategy tested were ranged from -0.071 to 1.083. Hair et. al. (1998) mentioned that the normal curve bell-shaped is within ± 3 standard deviation from its mean. Due to this, all the means of various can be considered normally distributed. Whilst, the kurtosis values for all the items ranged from -1.416 to 0.621. Referring to the values ranged in kurtosis result, they do not exceed the threshold of ± 10 and according Hoyle (1995) if a value of kurtosis exceed ± 10 , it can be considered "problematic". Due to the justification by Hoyle (1995), the data is considered to bear a decent kurtosis value.

Reliability Test

The overall Cronbach's Alpha score for all 29 items to test the integrated business strategy was 0.87. As stated in Table 1, most of the dimensions measured integrated strategies are above 0.60, which ranged from 0.57 to 0.77. According to Nunnally (1978) and Sivanisan (1985), these values were quite acceptable since the data has not been validated. Through the Cronbach's Alpha gained from the study, it is considered that the measurements are reliable for data collection as has been suggested by Nunnally (1978) which minimum of 0.50 at Cronbach Alpha. Due to the justification obtained from Nunally (1978), Cost efficiency should be deleted since it's only gained 0.24 of Cronbach's Alpha which is lower than 0.50. However, since this pilot test has been conducted in a small sample size, the dimension shall be kept for further analysis due to literature suggested that it is vital for hospitality study.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test Results For Integrated Strategy Dimensions

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	No of Items
Overall Integrated Business strategy	.87	29
Uniqueness	.57	9
Product Expansion	.75	9
Superiority-based	.77	6
Cost Efficiency	.24	5

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This pilot study explore the integrated business strategy attributes for evaluating and comprehend strategies that have developed earlier by scholar such as Miller (1987), Miles & Snow (1978), Porter (1985) and Schuler & Jackson (1987). From the integration of the strategies, most popular strategies will be adapted in evaluating the strategies in hotel environment due to the need of strategies in hotel industry. Through the literature of business strategies and visitation to hotels added with discussions with the hotels' human resource managers toward hotel strategies, four dimensions with 29 items have been agreed to be accessed for the study. These includes dimensions starts from differentiation, product expansion, quality and cost efficiency.

From the reliability result, two dimensions (product expansion and superiority-based) showed high reliability, one (uniqueness) has moderate reliability. However, cost efficiency dimension has showed low reliability although the dimension has been proven in literature that it has high reliability in measuring strategy in organization (Hasliza, 2009; Olsen, 1998).

In this article, the questionnaire developed was tested with relatively small sample size and respondents were all human resource executive and above. Limited tests and analysis also were conducted on the data collected. To confirm the value of this research tool, further study will be conducted with different sets of hotel respondents with larger sample size and more statistical analysis will be performed.

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MOTIVATIONS FOR VISITING AND NOT VISITING MUSEUMS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS: A CASE STUDY ON UUM STUDENTS

Muhammad Fauzi Mokhtar and Azilah Kasim (PhD)

Universiti Utara Malaysia,

Sintok Kedah, Malaysia

azilah@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Marketing management is an important managerial dimension that must be continually assessed to ensure profit. It includes understanding target markets that could provide desired return to the organization, but are difficult to access. In the contexts of museums in Malaysia, this potentially lucrative but reluctant market is the youth market. This study looks at 1. The motivations of young adults for visiting museums, 2. The reasons inhibiting them from visiting museums, and 3. Their perceptions on how museums should be marketed to attract young adults. Using a questionnaire survey, 1036 usable questionnaires were analyzed to fulfill the research objectives. The findings indicate that youth within the study context has higher predisposition to visit museums and could be a potential sub segment to target when marketing museums to young adults. In addition, a majority of them has an overall positive image of museums, thereby contrasting the theory that young adults tend to see museums as boring, didactic and unapproachable. However, the motivations of visit found in this study shows that practicality can motivate young adults to visit museum. Among respondents who have never visited museums in the last three years, the main reason for not visiting was the lack of time, followed by lack of interest in museum, and lack of information about the museum offerings. Other reasons for not visiting museum include the preference for other activities, difficulties in getting required information about museums and the tendency to put off visiting until a later date and the perception that museum admission fees are too pricy. A very small percentage of the respondents simply indicated that they do not like to visit museum. Brochures, strong web presence and guides in the museums are promotional tools that youth would like to see. Lower admission fees. More attractive museum collections and displays and updated website information are additional measures museum marketers can take in trying to reach and specifically target this young adult's market segment.

Keywords: Marketing Management, Museum Marketing, Young Adults, Target Marketing, Motivations

1.0 INTRODUCTION

People travel for various reasons and culture is indeed one of them. Cultural motives can be an elaborate ritual or just a simple reason of wanting to learn new things from the customs. Whatever it is, tourism and culture are inseparable aspects of travel. As Davidson and Maitland (1997) put it, "General sightseeing, appreciating the natural and built environment, particularly when the latter is of historic interest may be the motivating factor". A big part of any destination's culture can be found in the

museums. Museums contribute significantly to become important part of a destination and in some cases museums become the destinations. Local museums in particular, play a big role in preserving, gathering, displaying and interpreting knowledge materials on artefacts that have historical values for the purpose of learning and public view (Miller, 1997).

2.0 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

Museums traditional role was to educate the public on cultures and histories, reaching only a small, narrow and self-selected audience. However, as stressed by Anderson (2004), since 1990s, museums changed their practices and policies to become more audience-oriented. Public museums and galleries have also been expected to behave more business-like (McLean, 1997; Kotler & Kotler, 1998). Thyne (2001) advocates that not only do museums (as nonprofit, arts organizations) have a preservation obligation to society; they also have an education and entertainment obligation to their visitors. This means they need to become more marketable to all segments of the market. To fulfil this task, management and marketing personnel must determine what the customer actually wants from their visit, and use their resources efficiently by targeting the right market. Today, museums are not just reaching out to larger audiences and building demand among new groups. They are also designing proactively the arrangements, services and offerings which will generate satisfaction and positive outcomes for their visitors (Kotler and Kotler, 2000).

One market segment that most museums repeatedly fail to satisfactorily attract is the young adults market. Young adults are those whose age at 17 to 22 years of age, those whose age at 22 to 28 years of age are regarded as entering the adult world, later the thirty transition (age between 28 to 33 years), settling down and becoming one's own person (age between 33 to 40 years), the mid-life transition (40 to 45 years of age) and entering middle adulthood (45 to 50 years of age) (Gibson & Yiannakis, 2002, p.362). This is arguably a difficult segment to attract because as stressed by Willis et. al., (1990), youth culture is a lifestyle that nurture opposition to institutional or adult culture. This probably explains why surveys of the literature focusing on youth and art museums suggests that they consistently make up a small percentage of visitors overall (Xanthoudaki, 1998; Australian museums online, 2005). Typical group of people who frequent museums, according to Bennet et. al., (1999: 236) are "older, highly educated, with a higher income and class origin". The authors further assert that only 23% of museum visitors come from the 18-25 age group, compared to 40% of those above 60 years old. A study of users and non-users by McDermot Miller (1996), similarly, found that 12% of museum users were from the 15-19 age groups, compared with 5% nonusers, whereas in the 20-29 age bracket 14% were users, and 18% non-users. A number of other studies concluded that visitor profile is influenced more by exhibition content. An example is McLennan study in 1996 which found that Bob Marley Reggae exhibition at the national museum attracted an unusually high proportion of young Maori visitors compared to other exhibition content. On the other hand, this is an important market because today's youngsters are tomorrow's potential museum professionals and audiences. Poor understanding among museum marketers further impede any initiative to make museums more attractive among young adults. Museum professionals know relatively little about people's motivations for visiting historical sites and museums, particularly motivations involving young adults.

The same situation seems to present itself in Malaysia. Even though there are about 150 museums (Federal, State, Institutional/Departmental, Private, Individual), statistics showed that during the Visit Malaysia Year campaign 2007, there were a total of 2,018,058 museum visitors which comprises of 1,403,571 domestic visitors, 244,310 local students and 370,177 foreign visitors. However, a mere 12 percent of the visitors are from the youth category. This prompted the then Minister Datuk Seri Mohd

Shafie Apdal to challenge museums to be more creative and innovative in attracting the young market segment.

(source:http://kebudayaan.kppk.gov.my/about/pengenalan/?c5=262&menu_id=36&c3=18&click=1).

As a first step in addressing the above challenge, it is important to better understand the study context and suggest ways to make museums more attractive to young adults. This research attempted this within the context of a public institute of higher learning. The objectives were:

1. To assess the motivations of young adults for visiting museums
2. To determine the reasons inhibiting them from visiting museums
3. To evaluate their perceptions on how museums should be marketed to attract young adults

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Museums by themselves do not have the attractiveness to draw the wider tourist audience (Leiper, 1990) unless they are part of a cluster of attractions. Museums can however, be the locus in the mosaic of attractions within a destination (Harrison, 1997). However, unless the relative pertinences of images, attitudes, interests and constraints are known, inferences from visitors to non-visitors can be deceptive. By assuming, for example, a lack of appropriate interests among the non-visitors, the real constraints for non-visiting may be neglected. Finding reasons given for visiting and non-visiting museums is therefore important (Prentice et al., 1997).

Non visitation may be due to a lack of knowledge and awareness about museums and their offerings (Davies, 2001). Awareness may be the most important factor in operation amongst potential users. Knowledge of, and information about an institution is an important pre-requisite for visiting. If museums are seeking to attract new audiences, they must increase their attractiveness, and their greatest potential attractiveness is rooted in strongly expressing their sense of distinctive "localness", in all of its dimensions (Harrison, 1997). Special events are also likely to have a strong entertainment value, as well as offering an educational experience of varying degrees of subtlety (Axelsen, 2006).

One theory about museum non-visitation is the notion of 'threshold fear', a kind of psychological barrier which de-motivates people from entering spaces where they feel uncomfortable (Prince & Schadla-Hall, 1985; Fleming, 1999). Bartlett & Kelly (2000) have reported that youth audiences have poor perceptions of museums, which they see as boring, didactic, Unapproachable and preoccupied with the past, in contrast to young adult's interest in the present and future. Young adults, they point out; do not feel as if they are a part of museums. This works all points to dissonance between the culture of museums and the culture and identity of young adults. In addition, cultural institutions such as museums, publicly funded and free of charge, maintain the illusion of democratic access, while in fact catering mainly to the interests of particular social groups and unintentionally excluding others (McLean, 1999). Museums display and their organizational culture therefore clash with the identity and culture of young adults. In addition, there is the issue of boredom. As Pearce (2005) stressed, novelty is an important travel motivation. Understanding youth's travel motivations and the relationship with destination selection can help marketers predict future travel patterns. The information can help museums plan their future exhibitions.

Studies specific to museums have identified general dimensions of motivations for visiting museums including because of interest and curiosity, for informal education and for social interaction (Prentice et

al., 1997) and to learn more about particular history or go on a special outing with their family (Thyne, 2001). Falk and Dierking (2000) identified a number of motivating factors that influence an individual's decision to visit including learning opportunities; education; flow experiences; curiosity; novelty; exploration; self-identity; entertainment and recreation; escape; aesthetic enjoyment; reverential experiences; previous experiences; comfort and general interest. Debenedetti (2003) emphasized on the social setting as a motivator for visiting. Axelsen (2006) supported this and added that social interactions provide opportunities for esteem, family bonding (for people attending with children), and learning-related behaviours, as people are unconsciously influenced to imitate or follow others, resulting in new learning experiences. The author also stated that within the physical context, the motivations identified by researchers include comfort, the exhibits and special events. However, Vaughan (2001) mentioned status as a possible motivation because attending galleries and museums for a special exhibition or event offer something that is 'outside of the ordinary'. He also mentioned images as influencer of decision.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative survey using self administered questionnaire with likert scales and open ended questions. In section A, questions were designed to measure the socio-demographic profile and respondent perception on image of museums. In section B, two filter questions were introduced - The first question measured the number of times respondents have visited selected museums in the past year. The second question was addressed to those who have been to museums other than the ones mentioned in the questionnaire. Those who indicated that they have never been to any museums were asked to proceed to Section D while those who have visited museum at least once were asked to proceed to Section C, where they were asked their motivations for visiting museums. In Section E, Likert scale is used on eighteen selected statements to further explore underlying motivations related to museum visitation.

Sample was calculated based on guidelines on the Creative Research System (2003) website. It was determined that a population of 17456 (undergraduate not including Distance Learning and Off campus students) would require a sample size of $n=1722$ to give researcher 99% confidence level at ± 3 confidence interval.

A stratified sampling approach was taken using nationality (Local = 15858, International = 1598, with a ratio of 9:1); gender (Female = 18376, Male= 8212 giving a ratio of 2:1); and age category (Junior = , Senior = giving a ratio of 1:1:2). This approach is consistent with the findings of past researchers in this area (see Armstrong, Mok, Go, & Chan, 1997); Danaher & Arweiler, 1996); Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996; Baloglu, 1997; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; and Chen & Kerstetter, 1999) on the relevance of gender and age on perceived image of tourist destinations. Other points of stratification include the respondents' year of study. Sampling was randomization using time, day and locations of the survey. The fieldwork generated only 1036 useful feedbacks, which gives the study a response rate of approximately 60.2%. The final respondents consisted of 372 male students and 664 female students in which 330 of them are First Year students, 319 of them are Second Year students, 353 respondents are Third Year students and 34 of them are from the Fourth Year students.

5.0 FINDINGS

Descriptive Data

Descriptive analysis on percentage revealed that preparing homework or project (20.6%) as the main motivation. Only 18.8 percent would visit the museum to broaden their general knowledge. Other main reasons include attending school trip (14.9%), satisfying their curiosity (9.2%) and filling spare time (7.4%). 6.1 percent of the respondents revealed that they have specific interest in such attraction.

Table 1: Motivation to Visit Museum

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Prepare homework or project	166	20.6	1
Broaden my general knowledge	152	18.8	2
Attend a trip organized by school	120	14.9	3
Satisfy my curiosity	74	9.2	4
Fill in spare time	60	7.4	5
A specific interest in such attraction	49	6.1	6
To spend time with friends	43	5.3	7
Accompany a friends/teacher/family member	34	4.2	8
Think that it would contribute to my education	27	3.3	9
Contribute to preserving the attraction for future generation	27	3.3	10
To rest/relax	23	2.9	11
Other	22	2.7	12
Noticing occasionally while wandering in the city	7	0.9	13
To tell friends about it	3	0.4	14

The main reason for not visiting museum (Table 2) is the lack of time followed by no interest in museum and no information about the museum. Other reasons for not visiting museum include the preference to spend time on other activities, difficulties in getting required information about museums and their offerings, the tendency to put off visiting as they can always 'go in the future' and the perception that museum admission fees are too expensive (5.1%). 2.6 percent admit dislike for visiting museum.

Table 2: Motivation for Not Visiting Museum

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Time	227	29.4	1
No interest	120	15.5	2
Do not have information	114	14.8	3
Prefer to spend time on other activities	73	9.5	4
Difficulties in getting such info	52	6.7	5
Can always go in the future	44	5.7	6
Admission prices too expensive	39	5.1	7
Museum do not have spaces such as cafes/restaurants	25	3.2	8
Do not like visiting museum	20	2.6	9
Museums do not have places for rest	17	2.2	10
Museums are physically un-attractive	17	2.2	11
Unable to afford to visit	13	1.7	12
Unsatisfied on a previous visit	8	1.0	13
Attractions thought to be unreflective of personality	3	0.4	14

Both male and female respondents have similar reasons such as to prepare homework and projects, to broaden knowledge, to follow an organized trip school, to satisfy their curiosity and to fill their spare time (Table 3).

Table 3: Motivation for Visiting Museum between Genders (%)

	Male	Female
To prepare homework or a project	59 (20.8%)	107 (20.5%)
To broaden my general knowledge	58(20.4%)	94 (18.0%)
To satisfy my curiosity	32(11.3%)	42 (8.0%)
A specific interest in such attractions	18 (6.3%)	31 (5.9%)
Think that it would contribute to my education	9 (3.2%)	18 (3.4%)
To fill in spare time	20 (7.0%)	40 (7.6%)
To attend a trip organized by school	40(14.1%)	80 (15.3%)
To accompany a friend/ teacher/family member	11 (3.9%)	23 (4.4%)
To contribute to preserving the attraction for future generations	6 (2.1%)	21 (4.0%)
Noticing occasionally while wandering in the city	2 (0.7%)	5 (1.0%)
To spend time with friends	14 (4.9%)	29 (5.5%)
To rest/relax	7 (2.5%)	16 (3.1%)
To tell friends about it	-	3 (0.6%)
Other	8 (2.8%)	14 (2.7%)

The same thing can be observed in Motivation for Not Visiting Museums (Table 4). However, more males perceived accessibility as being a bigger reason for not visiting museums compared to females. In addition, female respondents included possibility to go in the future and Pricy admission fees in the list of reasons for not visiting museums (with 6.2% agreeing to each of these statements). The two groups indicated different motivations as their second and third choices. Females chose "No Time" as the second reason whereas males chose "Prefer to Spend Time on Other Activities" as the second motivation for not visiting. Similarly, males chose "Not Having Information" as the third reason whereas No Interest was the third reason for females for not visiting museums.

Table 4: Motivation for not visiting Museum between Genders (%)

	Male	Female
Do not have information	45 (15.5%) ³	69 (14.3%) ³
No time	83 (28.6%) ¹	144 (29.9%) ¹
Difficulties in getting to such attractions	25 (8.6%) ⁴	27 (5.6%) ⁵
Can always go in the future	14 (4.8%)	30 (6.2%)
No interest	49 (16.9%) ²	71 (14.7%) ²
Prefer to spend time on other activities	23 (7.9%) ⁵	50 (10.4%) ⁴
Museums do not have spaces such as cafes/restaurants for spending much time	12 (4.1%)	13 (2.7%)
Museums do not have places for rest	10 (3.4%)	7 (1.5%)
Admission prices too expensive	9 (3.1%)	30 (6.2%)
Do not like visiting museums	8 (2.8%)	12 (2.5%)
Museums are physically un-attractive	4 (1.4%)	13 (2.7%)
Unable to afford to visit	3 (1.0%)	10 (2.1%)
Attractions thought to be unreflective of personality	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.4%)
Unsatisfied on a previous visit	4 (1.4%)	4 (0.8%)

Between local and international students (Table 5), more international students indicated “to Satisfy my Curiosity” as the second most important reason for visiting museums compared to local students. Instead, local students chose “to Broaden my General Knowledge” as the second main reason for them to visit museums.

Table 5: Motivation for Visiting Museum between Local and International Students

	Malaysian	International
To prepare homework or a project	149 (21.6%) ¹	17 (15.0%) ¹
To broaden my general knowledge	133 (19.3%) ²	15 (13.3%) ²
To satisfy my curiosity	58 (8.4%) ⁴	15 (13.3%) ²
A specific interest in such attractions	39 (5.7%)	10 (8.8%)
Think that it would contribute to my education	26 (3.8%)	1 (0.9%)
To fill in spare time	49 (7.1%) ⁵	11 (9.7%)
To attend a trip organized by school	106 (15.4%) ³	14 (12.4%) ³
To accompany a friend/ teacher/family member	30 (4.4%)	4 (3.5%)
To contribute to preserving the attraction for future generations	23 (3.3%)	4 (3.5%)
Noticing occasionally while wandering in the city	4 (0.9%) ⁵	1 (0.9%)
To spend time with friends	28 (4.1%)	15 (13.3%) ⁴
To rest/relax	20 (2.9%)	3 (2.7%)
To tell friends about it	3 (0.4%)	-
Other	19 (2.8%)	3 (2.7%)

Almost all of the respondents agreed that brochures should be made available in the museums themselves (mean=1.63), museums should have strong web presence (mean=1.65) and there should be guides in the museums (mean=1.67) to help visitors appreciate the exhibits more. Students also indicate that special events for youth should be prepared to increase the attractiveness of the museum (mean=1.67). In term of admission fees, more than 90 percent of the respondents were either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the fees should be lowered (mean=1.68). The collection in the museums should also be exhibited in more attractive way (mean=1.68) to this group segment and the information about museums in the government websites should also be updated (mean=1.70).

Table 6: Overall Perception towards Museum in Malaysia

Museums	Frequency (%)					Mean
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither one	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
1. Brochures should be available in the museums	46.3	45.9	6.8	1.0	0.1	1.63
2. Museums should have strong web presence	45.6	45.2	8.0	0.8	0.5	1.65
3. There should be guides in the museums	43.6	47.4	7.9	0.8	0.3	1.67
4. Special events should be prepared in order to increase the attractiveness of the museums	44.9	44.8	9.4	0.7	0.3	1.67
5. Admission prices should be lowered	44.1	45.5	8.8	1.2	0.5	1.68
The collections of the museums should be exhibited in an attractive way	41.6	49.5	8.2	0.4	0.3	1.68
6. The information on the Ministry's web site should be kept up-to-date	43.4	44.9	10.2	1.1	0.4	1.70
7. Museums should be promoted more actively	42.6	47.9	7.0	1.1	1.4	1.71
8. The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once a year	41.5	46.9	10.7	0.4	0.5	1.71
9. Museums should do more to reach its target audience	37.0	52.0	9.8	0.8	0.5	1.76
10. There should be more youth related activities that I can participate in at museums	38.7	46.3	13.8	0.9	0.4	1.78
11. Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of history at school level	36.3	50.7	11.0	1.4	0.5	1.79
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at primary school level	36.1	50.4	11.3	1.5	0.7	1.80
12. Cafes/restaurants and souvenir shops should be opened for getting visitors to spend much time in the museums.	36.6	48.6	12.4	1.4	1.1	1.82
13. Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at secondary school level	32.0	51.7	13.5	2.2	0.5	1.87
14. Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of geography at school level	33.0	49.9	13.2	3.5	0.4	1.88
15. The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once every semester	32.3	49.9	14.1	2.6	1.1	1.90
16. The collections of well-known artists should be brought for permanent exhibitions.	32.4	48.4	16.1	2.3	0.8	1.91

Deeper Analysis

T-Test analyses found males to have stronger view on statement 1 (Brochures should be available in the museums) ($t=1.518$, $p<0.05$), statement 2 (Museums should have a strong web presence) ($t=2.652$, $p<0.05$) statement 3 (There should be guides in the museums) ($t=1.812$, $p<0.05$) and statement 5 (Admission prices should be lowered) ($t=1.631$, $p<0.05$). Females have stronger view that the collections of well-known artists should be brought for permanent exhibitions ($t=-0.394$, $p<0.05$).

Table 7: Comparison between Genders on Perceptions towards Museum Marketing

	Gender (Mean)		t	Sig.
	Male	Female		
Brochures should be available in the museums.	1.72	1.64	1.518	.030
Museums should have web presence.	1.73	1.61	2.652	.029
There should be guides in the museums.	1.75	1.66	1.812	.015
Special events should be prepared in order to increase the attractiveness of the museums.	1.76	1.65	2.353	.286
Admission prices should be lowered.	1.72	1.64	1.631	.006
The collections of the museums should be exhibited in an attractive way.	1.73	1.68	.962	.165
The information on the Ministry's web site should be kept up-to-date.	1.77	1.73	.817	.070
Museums should be promoted more actively.	1.91	1.92	-.224	.258
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once a year.	1.70	1.72	-.350	.815
Museums should do more to reach its target audience.	1.72	1.68	.786	.623
There should be more youth related activities that I can participate in at museums.	1.85	1.83	.235	.154
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of history at school level.	1.87	1.77	1.881	.100
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at primary school level.	1.88	1.90	-.363	.656
Cafes/restaurants and souvenir shops should be opened for getting visitors to spend much time in the museums.	1.89	1.92	-.585	.713
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at secondary school level.	1.84	1.78	1.160	.295
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of geography at school level.	1.87	1.88	-.109	.174
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once every semester.	1.78	1.75	.531	.320
The collections of well-known artists should be brought for permanent exhibitions.	1.77	1.79	-.394	.049

International students have stronger view that special events should be prepared in order to increase the attractiveness of the museums ($t=-2.220$, $p<0.05$). They also have strong view that museums should be promoted actively (-0.990 , $p<0.05$), that interest to visit museums should be inculcated at primary school level ($t=-0.018$, $p<0.05$) and that more cafes/restaurants and souvenir shops be opened so visitors can spend more time in the museums ($t=-0.546$, $p<0.01$) (see Table 8).

Table 8: Comparison between Local and International Students on Perception towards Museum Marketing

	Nationality (Mean)		T	Sig.
	Malaysian	International		
Brochures should be available in the museums.	1.65	1.73	-1.254	.089
Museums should have web presence.	1.63	1.80	-2.647	.085
There should be guides in the museums.	1.67	1.82	-2.230	.700
Special events should be prepared in order to increase the attractiveness of the museums.	1.66	1.81	-2.220	.020
Admission prices should be lowered.	1.65	1.74	-1.269	.140
The collections of the museums should be exhibited in an attractive way.	1.67	1.84	-2.315	.302
The information on the Ministry's web site should be kept up-to-date.	1.73	1.87	-2.000	.064
Museums should be promoted more actively.	1.91	1.98	-.990	.009
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once a year	1.70	1.78	-1.088	.251
Museums should do more to reach its target audience	1.68	1.80	-1.872	.055
There should be more youth related activities that I can participate in at museums	1.82	1.92	-1.267	.365
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of history at school level	1.80	1.86	-.842	.960
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at primary school level	1.89	1.89	-.018	.022
Cafes/restaurants and souvenir shops should be opened for getting visitors to spend much time in the museums.	1.90	1.94	-.546	.000
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at secondary school level	1.79	1.87	-1.127	.211
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of geography at school level	1.89	1.81	1.202	.604
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once every semester	1.74	1.85	-1.419	.677
The collections of well-known artists should be brought for permanent exhibitions.	1.78	1.78	-.022	.743

T-test results for non-visitors and visitors to museums showed the former to have higher perceptions towards museums, compared to the latter. They perceived that special event should be prepared in museums ($t=1.608$, $p<0.05$), admission fees should be lowered ($t=1.069$, $p<0.01$), promotion be more active ($t=0.679$, $p<0.01$), more schools and government trips to museums be organized ($t=0.921$, $p<0.05$) and more be done to reach museum's target audience ($t=0.998$, $p<0.05$). They also perceived highly that museums should have more youth related activities ($t=1.333$, $p<0.05$), be integrated in teaching and learning of history in school ($t=1.251$, $p<0.01$), inculcate visit museum interest since primary school level ($t=0.715$, $p<0.01$), have more cafés and souvenir shops ($t=0.570$, $p<0.05$), be integrated into teaching and learning of geography at school level ($t=0.004$, $p<0.01$), have more frequent school and government trips to m ($t=0.052$, $p<0.01$) and have collection of well-known artists in permanent exhibitions ($t=0.155$, $p<0.01$).

Table 9: Comparison between students who have visited museum in last 3 years and students who have not visited museum on Perception towards Museum Marketing

	Visit museum in last 3 years		t	Sig.
	(Mean)			
	Yes	No		
Brochures should be available in the museums.	1.66	1.87	-3.440	.056
Museums should have web presence.	1.65	1.54	2.213	.421
There should be guides in the museums.	1.69	1.59	2.044	.350
Special events should be prepared in order to increase the attractiveness of the museums.	1.69	1.60	1.608	.046
Admission prices should be lowered.	1.67	1.61	1.069	.003
The collections of the museums should be exhibited in an attractive way.	1.70	1.64	.964	.065
The information on the Ministry's web site should be kept up-to-date.	1.75	1.60	2.807	.117
Museums should be promoted more actively.	1.92	1.87	.679	.003
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once a year	1.71	1.66	.921	.016
Museums should do more to reach its target audience	1.69	1.64	.998	.025
There should be more youth related activities that I can participate in at museums	1.84	1.76	1.333	.031
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of history at school level	1.81	1.73	1.251	.001
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at primary school level	1.89	1.85	.715	.000
Cafes/restaurants and souvenir shops should be opened for getting visitors to spend much time in the museums.	1.91	1.87	.570	.013
Interest to visit museums should be inculcated at secondary school level	1.80	1.81	-.109	.005
Museums visitation should be integrated into the teaching and learning of geography at school level	1.87	1.87	.004	.006
The school and the local authorities should organize trips to museums at least once every semester	1.76	1.76	.052	.000
The collections of well-known artists should be brought for permanent exhibitions.	1.78	1.77	.155	.000

6.0 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Using the context of young adults in an institute of higher learning in Malaysia, this study has found that lack of museum visitation is not really an issue in the study context because 82% of the respondents have visited museums in the last three years. In addition, a majority (70.5%) of respondents has an overall positive image of museums. This is contrasting Bartlett & Kelly (2000) contention that young adults see museums as boring, didactic and unapproachable. Thus this study does not support the idea that there is a dissonance between the culture of museums and the culture and identity of young adults.

Testing motivation and socio-demographic profile revealed that there is a significant difference between Malaysian and International respondents on travel motivation to museums. This supports previous studies that found the link between nationality and travel motivation. Gender has been found to have no effect on travel motivation itself, which supports the finding of Jönsson et. al. (2008) that gender is irrelevant to travel motivation. However, in terms of travel frequency male respondents were found to have more tendencies to visit museums than females. This new finding can be useful when designing loyalty programs for museums. Similarly, there are significant mean differences in both groups where older students aged between 22 to 25 years of age were found to visit museums more frequently compared to the younger group. This finding contrasts that of Andreu, Kozac, Avci, & Cifter (2005) who contended that age has no relevance to travel motivation.

The findings showed that practicality can motivate young adults to visit museum and that not many would go just for the sake of going. But looking at nationality, it is evident that more international students visit museum to satisfy their curiosity compared to local students (who chose this as the fourth reason for visiting). Instead, local students visit museums to broaden their general knowledge. The implication here is that museums need to be able to intrigue young adults from international background by promoting or highlighting unique exhibition such as traditional local weddings and festivals.

For the 231 respondents who have never visited museums, the main reason for not visiting was the lack of time, followed by lack of interest in museum, and lack of information about the museum offerings. Other reasons for not visiting museum include the preference for other activities, difficulties in getting required information about museums and the tendency to put off visiting until a later date and the perception that museum admission fees are too pricy. A very small percentage of the respondents simply indicated that they do not like to visit museum. There is little evidence on the theory of "threshold of fear" as proposed by Prince & Schadla-Hall, (1985) and again by Fleming (1999).

There is a slight difference between genders because more male respondents did not visit museum due to perceived lack of accessibility. More female respondents did not visit as they plan to go in the future. Female respondents also feel admission fee to be de-motivating them from visiting. To market museums, brochures appear to be an important information media for those young adults. Other media include websites, guides in the museums and interesting events to increase the attractiveness of the museums to the target market.

Young students often have money constraint. This could be the reason more than 90 percent of the respondents wanted to see lower admission fees. They also wanted collection in the museums to be exhibited in more attractive way and that museums online information in the government websites to be updated.

7.0 SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future researcher on this issue can focus on young adults beyond those who are university students, or any other relevant market segments. They could also adopt mixed methodology such as combining in-depth interviews of opinion leaders as well as conducting a qualitative survey so that the findings will be richer and more meaningful. In addition, the instrument used in this study which follows recommendation by Cetinel and Yolal (2008) has been found to be less efficient for more rigorous analyses of the data. Therefore future studies are recommended to use scale questions instead of list questions in measuring motivation.

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REGULATING ATYPICAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE MALAYSIAN PRIVATE SECTOR: BALANCING FLEXIBILITY AND SECURITY

Hanita Sarah Saad

Faculty of Business Administration
University of Management and Technology, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Atypical employment is a new breed of employment manifested by flexible and precarious work arrangements like part-time work and fixed-term contracts. Atypical employment provides the elasticity required by modern organisation to respond quickly to market demands without compromising their competitiveness and productivity. Despite providing such flexibility, atypical employments are often said to erode workers' rights, robbing them of job security and social security enjoyed by the regular permanent employees. Nevertheless, atypical employment continues to be an important facet of modern workforce and stakeholders in the labour market have been urged to recognise and accommodate these non-standard works within the regular labour laws framework to provide better protection to the workers. This paper investigates the incidence of fixed-term employment contracts and part-time work among private companies in the Klang Valley and examines the issues and legal problems facing the workers in connection to their work. Subsequently through such analysis, several legislative measures and recommendations are put forward so that the many advantages conferred by atypical employment may be reaped without sacrificing the protection and security that should be enjoyed by all workers in this country.

Field of Research: Labour Laws, Human Resource Management

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Changing Nature of Work

The nature of work has evolved in tandem with the development in human societies. In Malaysia, the employment landscape and the employer-employee relationship have undergone dramatic changes in the past decades. These changes are shaped by factors like shift in workers demography (Burgess, 1997), technological advancements, societal and cultural changes due to globalization, economic and political upheaval and many more. Malaysian economy has gone through a few development stages that could be traced back to the early years of Independence. Before 1957, Malaysia was an agricultural based economy. Over the years, through diversification, urbanization and globalisation, the Malaysian economy has progressed into an emerging multi-sector economy (Yusof and Bhattasali, 2008).

Consequences of the country's economic growth are many. Among others the country saw a significant decrease in poverty level especially among the bumiputera as a result of the structural change in the economy. The economic reforms also saw changes in the labour market policy. With the aim of

attracting more FDI into the country, the government adopted labour policies that are pro-business and promotes a more competitive and business enabling environment. Private sector investments become one of the key growth factor in Malaysia, creating jobs and business opportunities. From the labour standpoint, this translates into changes in utilisation of manpower to increase productivity and changes in labour management practices. The movement from the labour driven days of the agriculture era and labour intensive manufacturing era in the 60s and 70s to the current knowledge economy era transforms the man power needs of the country. Employers are expected to provide more options for career development, training and better redesigning of work to conform to changing expectations and demand for work-life quality. Employees on the other hand are expected to be more flexible, to be manoeuvrable inside and outside the organisation but only to be accorded with lesser job security (Martin, Staines & Pate 1998).

All these changes seem to herald what the experts are calling as the new 'post-Fordist economy' (Piore and Sabel, 1984). Where job-for-life, seven days work week, hierarchical and bureaucratic organisations form the hallmark of the Fordist economy, the 'new Fordist' era places much emphasis on a more flexible, decentralized and organic structure which requires new approaches in organizing and managing the workplace (Diprete, Goux & Maurin, 2002). Consequently, a new breed of work relationship emerges, one which does not necessarily conform to the parameters of the traditional employer-employee relationship. Where previously the term 'contract of employment' connotes a long standing work relationship for unlimited duration, with a single employer and protected against unjustified dismissal, today it is dominated by short-term contracts of employees who are hired when needed and are 'let go' when their services are no longer required by the organization (Dharmawardena, 2009). The notion of lifelong employment no longer holds water in this new era. Lloyd and Bridges (1995) contemplate that "the job is not going to be part of tomorrow's economic reality", in reference to how employers are restructuring and de-jobbing work and the work force would be 'fuelled by self-sufficient "vendor", employees who have changed themselves into "micro businesses" by continually re-evaluating and marketing their skills'.

Consequence of the changing nature of employment is the growth of the so called atypical employment, a term that encompasses non-standard, flexible jobs (which generally refers to part-time work, temporary employment, agency employment) and a growth in self employment (Dickens, 2003). On the part of employees, atypical work arrangements provides the flexibility of finding jobs that suit their needs, one which could accommodate their specific skills and demand for greater work life balance. Nevertheless, it has also been argued that the promotion of atypical work for the sake of employment growth and flexibility has led to many repercussions on the employer and employees alike. A review of the literature investigating the incidents of contract of employment reports higher perceptions of job insecurity (Golsch, 2003), perceived higher levels of psychological distress (Virtanen et al, 2005), lower job satisfaction and lower employment relationship quality (Penard, Sollogoub & Ulrich, 1999) and less positive safety attitudes towards the organization (Clarke, 2003) as among the negative impacts caused by the expansion of atypical employment in the workplace. In addition, in times of economic turmoil and organizational restructuring due to financial constraints, usually this category of temporary workers will be laid off first by the employers long before the axe were to fall on the permanent employees.

Despite evidences of the counter productive use of atypical employment contracts, the fact remains that atypical employment continues to be in favour and has become a commercial reality. What needs to be investigated therefore is how to prevent misuse and abuse of atypical employment contracts without

challenging the rights of the employer (and sometimes the employees) to have recourse to such arrangement when the need arise.

1.2 Scope and Objective of Study

This research paper aims to explore the current situation of two categories of workers that are classified as atypical - the fixed-term contract employees and part-time workers in the Malaysian private sector. Although atypical employment actually encompass a wide plethora of working arrangements, the scope and nature of this paper would not permit thorough investigation into the various categories of atypical employments. This paper therefore proposes to analyse the two forms of atypical employment stated above. The focus of investigation of this paper however will be limited to companies in the Klang Valley area as it is beyond the scope of this paper to carry out data collection on a larger scale across the country. Nevertheless it is hoped that this small start will spur further research into this very significant area by providing critical insight into the scope of atypical employment in Klang Valley and the problems associated with this type of employment.

More specifically, the objectives of the research paper are:

1. to outline the existing legal framework (if any) that regulates the working terms and condition of the atypical employees;
2. to identify the issues faced by the employees arising from the lack of proper legal protection or regulations in relation to their rights;
3. to propose suitable solutions in terms of labour legislation / regulations that would afford better protection and improve the work-life quality of the atypical employees.

2.0 ATYPICAL EMPLOYMENT

2.1 Defining Atypical Employment

Atypical employment is a new type of employment that differs from the conventional employment that used to prevail in the traditional labour market. Although there is no standard definition of atypical employment, this term normally refers to employment outside the regular, full time, permanent and salaried work customarily performed by an employee for his employer (Belous, 1989). On a narrower basis, non-standard employment could be defined as employment that lacks the expectation of continued employment and varied working hours (Polivka and Thomas, 1989). Thus atypical employment would include flexible and sometimes precarious work arrangements like part-time work, seasonal work, fixed-term contracts, agency work, tele-working, home-based work, shift work, night and weekend work.

2.2 Nature and Growth of Atypical Employment

Surveys across the literature reveal many factors that contribute to the displacement of standard employment as industrial norms across the world. Among others the rise and popularity of atypical employment have been attributed to the modern organisational demand for flexibility, the vertical disintegration of the industry that shifted risks and cost production from industry to workers (Collins, 1990), the increased participation of women in the workforce, economic cycles that create fluctuations

in employment patterns and globalisation. Consequently developing these forms of work is considered necessary for achieving economic growth through the adaptation of business strategies and productivity to globalised markets and economies.

At the national level, the growth of atypical employments could also be attributed to the peculiar characteristic of the legal and socio-economic condition of a country. Countries with strict Employment Protection Legislations (EPL) like Spain, Germany and France are said to have higher incidence of atypical employments as a way to gain numerical flexibility compared to countries with less stringent EPL like Denmark and United Kingdom (Kahn, 2007). On the other hand, countries which are more prosperous and have a well developed social protection scheme are reported to have higher number of fixed-term contract workers and part-timers due to the higher financial security and availability of welfare scheme that would protect the workers during period of unemployment (Hevenstone, 2010).

Demographically the composition of atypical employees in the workforce is not only confined to the average workers who are the bread winners of their family but also includes young people between the age of 15 to 24 who primarily join the labour market to fund their education as well as to achieve financial autonomy from their parents (Ribault, 2004). In most Asian countries, although there has been a significant increase of women participation in the labour force, unfortunately a large concentration of these jobs fall under the atypical category making women the highest representative of atypical employees in the region (Debroux, 2010).

2.3 Consequences of Atypical Employment

Atypical employment has been cited as a significant factor that contributes to reducing the average employment status, i.e. employees are more often employed not permanently but temporarily, not full-time but part-time, and more frequently they involuntarily turn to self-employment (Seifert and Tangian, 2006). It was also argued that in society where women are over presented in atypical work, such work arrangement serves to perpetuate job segregation and gender discrimination in the labour market (Petrongolo, 2004).

At the organisational level, atypical employment could bring both negative and positive impact to the company. Among the most often touted benefits would be the increase in numerical flexibility, lower labour cost and higher operating profits. Firms in dynamic environment also have relied on non-standard work arrangement to bring new ideas, access new knowledge and create an innovative competence mix in their employees' profile (Matusik and Hill, 1998). For the individual workers, atypical work arrangements have been observed in many studies to have a negative correlation with job satisfaction, job performance, motivation for self improvement and work life balance (Schimd, 2011). However from a more positive aspect, a recent study suggests that atypical workers are more likely to be employed at subsequent periods in time than the initially unemployed. In other words, these work arrangements increase employment continuity and stability for the worker (Addison and Surfield, 2009).

On a macro level, the growth of atypical employment would necessitate changes in a country's labour policy and legal framework governing the industrial relations scene. The country's current labour laws would have to be revised to make room for the flexibility introduced by the atypical employment contract. The social security scheme would also need to be realigned to accommodate the increasing number of employees that fall outside the normal protection provided by the system.

2.4 Atypical Employment in Malaysia

In Malaysia, there are very limited data available on the number of atypical employees in the labour market. However inference could be made from various researches (Che Rose, Kumar & Gani, 2008; Lee, 2004) and reports that growth of atypical employments in Malaysia is keeping pace with other countries around the globe. In order to get a better understanding of the incidence of atypical employments in Malaysia, a short questionnaire was developed and distributed to thirty companies¹ in the Klang Valley to get descriptive data on the nature and utilization of atypical employment contracts in the private sectors. The survey was sent to the human resource department of each company through e-mails accompanied by a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research being undertaken. Out of the thirty questionnaires, only sixteen were returned with usable data yielding a fifty-three percent response rate. Table 1 and Table 2 below depict the breakdown of the companies according to industry and manpower strength.

Table 1: Breakdown of Respondent Companies

NUMBER OF COMPANIES	TYPES OF BUSINESS / INDUSTRY
4	Manufacturing
1	Telecommunication
4	Retailing
1	Shipping and Logistics
3	Higher Education
3	Services

Table 2: Number of Employees Employed

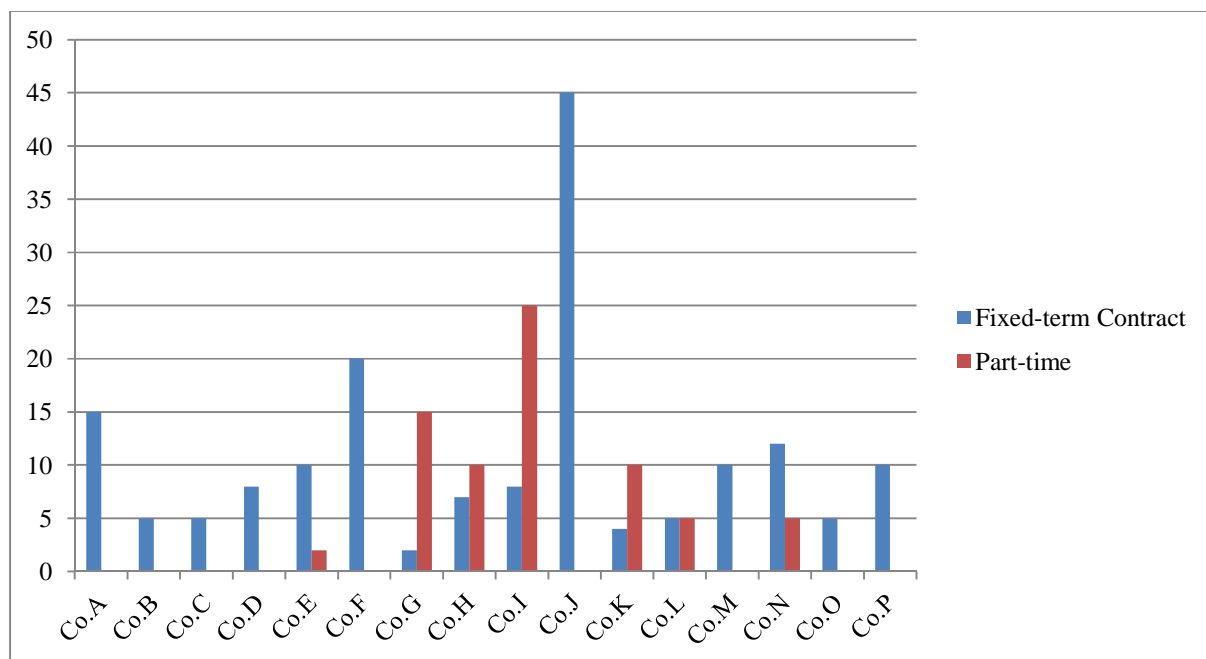
TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	NUMBER OF COMPANIES
Less than 500	8
500 - 2000	6
More than 2000	2

An analysis of the data reveals that all the sixteen companies surveyed employ the service of fixed-term employees across all departments in their organization. The percentage of fixed-term employees in these companies ranges from a low two percent to a high forty-five percent in comparison to permanent employees. Four of the companies use fixed-term contract as a way to re-employ retired

¹ 20 of the companies are selected randomly while another 10 companies were selected based on the researcher's personal contact with people in the company.

employee while the other twelve mainly use fixed-term contract as a way to hire employees with certain expertise and to cope with temporary shortage of manpower. In contrast only seven of the sixteen companies have used the services of part-time workers in their companies. Two of the companies are in the education sector, three in retail, and one in the service sector while the other one is in manufacturing. The percentage of part-time workers in these companies is also lower compared to the fixed-term workers. The lowest was stated at only two percent while the highest was twenty five percent. The main reason cited by the seven companies for using part-time worker was to cater to fluctuation in manpower needs of the company. Figure 1 below summarised the findings.

Figure 1: Utilization of Fixed-Term Contract and Part-Time Employees in Sixteen Companies in the Klang Valley



The result of the survey also shows that companies with a high percentage of atypical employees actually planned their recruitment as part of the business and human resource strategy while companies with a lower percentage hire fixed-term and part-time workers as a reactionary measure to cater to contingencies arising from their day to day business operations. All sixteen companies cited ease of termination and lower labour cost as advantages of using fixed-term and part-time employees in their organisation. On the other hand, high turnover rate, low motivation and lack of commitment to work were among the problems faced by the companies in dealing with the atypical employees. While it is acknowledged that the findings of the survey discussed above probably would not be representative of the true incidence of atypical employment in Malaysia or even the Klang Valley considering its very small sample size, nonetheless it does provide a snapshot of employment trends practised by the companies that warrant further investigation by other researchers.

The following sections in this chapter will be laying down the definition as well as the legal framework regulating fixed-term contract and part-time work in Malaysia. This will be followed by discussions on the problems and legal issues confronting the use of each type of employment contract.

2.5 Fixed-term Employment Contract

A contract that is stated to last for a set period of time is considered to be fixed-term contract. In other words, fixed-term contract is a contract of employment for a specified period with a defined beginning and a defined end. To be a fixed-term contract, generally the court will look to whether there is a date stated as to when the contract will be deemed to be ended. This is due to the fact that such contract will automatically expire by the effluxion of time without the need to give notice. Alternatively a contract of employment would also be considered as fixed-term when there is the occurrence or non occurrence of a specific event or the completion of a specific task when the contract was concluded exclusively for the performance of such task.

2.5.1 The Law on Fixed-term Employment Contract

In Malaysia, a specific legislation with regard to fixed-term employment has yet to be promulgated by the government. However section 11 (1) of the Employment Act 1955 makes indirect reference to fixed-term contract when it provides that “contract of service for a specified period of time or for the performance of a specified piece of work shall, unless otherwise terminated in accordance with this Part, terminate when the period of time for which such contract was made has expired or when the piece of work specified in such contract has been completed.”

Specifically there are no limitations or requirement for justification imposed on the use of fixed-term contract, no limitation on the maximum number of successive fixed-term contract allowed and no limitation on the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contract could be found in any of the current labour laws. It is also accepted that fixed-term contract employees would normally receive different remuneration package compared to their permanent counterpart as there are no laws to prohibit differential treatment among the workers based on their status. At best a fixed-term employee who comes under the coverage of Employment Act 1955 would be entitled to all benefits and protection afforded by the said Act while those outside its scope would have to rely on the contract entered into with the employers.

With the limited amount of regulations on the use of fixed-term employment contract in Malaysia, it would not be amiss to conclude that the protection provided by law for these employees is not sufficient to safeguard their rights and interests. In case of dispute between the fixed-term employee and his employer, the courts will invariably fall back on the written contract between them and see to the terms agreed to by the parties. If the terms in the contract are clear enough to preclude certain benefits or claims of permanency, the court will not hesitate to enforce the contract. It is only when the court suspects some ulterior motive for the use of the fixed-term contract will it enquire into true nature of the work arrangement and if appropriate infer the existence of a permanent contract.

2.5.2 Issues Arising Out of Fixed-term Employment Contract

From the employee's point of view, fixed-term employment contract seldom comes as a choice but rather an ultimatum by the employer of the 'take it or leave it' kind considering the current employers' market. Although there are employees who are happy to accept a fixed-term contract for high-end jobs that offer lucrative remunerations package designed to attract talents to the company, comparatively

fixed-term employments are still more precarious than permanent employment despite evidence to show that fixed-term contract is a good stepping stone towards permanent employment (Booth, 2002).

For the employers, fixed-term employment contracts would be useful to companies that engage in seasonal or project-based work or operating on limited funding and require the technical expertise of a worker on a short term basis. A fixed-term contract is also useful when the company needs someone to replace a permanent employee who is on extended leave. Some companies also hire retired employees on a contractual basis in order to tap into their experience and cut back on training cost. While the law does not interfere with the employer's rights to utilize fixed-term employment contracts, most jurisdictions would require the employer to be able to justify their use of fixed-term contract worker based on genuine operational requirement to prevent exploitation of the workers. In this respect, Article 2(3) of the ILO Convention No. 158 provides that "adequate safeguards shall be provided against recourse to contracts of employment for a specified period of time the aim of which is to avoid the protection resulting from this convention".

In term of entitlement under employment protection legislations, for a fixed-term worker who clearly falls under a 'contract of service'², then the worker would be entitled to the minimum protection of labour laws accorded to a permanent employee. Nevertheless there may be instances of a fixed-term contract worker that is considered to be working under a 'contract for service'³ due to the nature of work done (i.e. lack of control by employer, work not integrated to company's business etc.). In such cases, these workers would then be outside the scope of employment protection legislation and would have to fend for themselves accordingly. Consequently, the most usual legal problem with regard to fixed-term contract would be the arbitrary use of this form of employment by employers. Employers either hire workers on fixed-term contract to circumvent the provisions of labour laws or use several successive fixed-term contracts to avoid liability of unfair dismissal and redundancy payment. Nonetheless, the utilization of fixed-term contract that is not genuinely related to the company's financial or operational requirement but is used as a device to circumvent the provision of law could result in the court holding the termination of fixed-term contract employees as invalid and without just cause and excuse (Ashgar Ali, 1997).

2.6 The Law on Part-time Work

In Malaysia the Employment (Part-Time Employees) Regulations 2010 was introduced under the Employment Act 1955 and came into force on 1 October 2010. The Regulations itself does not define 'part-time' employee, but the definition is to be found under the Employment Act 1955. It is to be noted that the definition refer to persons included in the First Schedule who has entered into a 'contract of service' with the employer. Therefore it can be concluded that an employee is considered to be a part-timer if he works between 30 per cent and 70 per cent from the normal working hours of full-time workers which are deemed to be eight hours per day or forty eight hours per week. In other words, if an employee works on a continual and regularly scheduled employment that amount to less than 40 hours per week, such employee would be classified as a part-time employee and would be entitled to the

² An employment contract between an employer and an employee is known as a 'contract of service'. A contract of service, once entered into by the parties, gives rise to not only rights and duties as envisioned by the contract but also to place the employee under the protective umbrella of labour laws.

³ A 'contract for service' is where a person doing the work for the benefit of another party and be compensated for the task is not recognized as the 'employee' of the latter but merely as an 'independent contractor'. An independent contractor is excluded totally from the ambit of protection given by labour and employment legislation.

protection and benefits given under the labour laws. Conversely, a worker whose work is not scheduled beyond a finite period of time or specific job but rather is on call for any available work that might be offered to him would fall into the casual or temporary worker category.

The Employment (Part-Time Employees) Regulations 2010 has the objective of providing better protections and clearer guidelines for part-time workers so that more people would be encouraged to work part-time. The Regulations set out the legal entitlement of part-time workers on matters such as paid annual leave, sick leave, rest day and public holiday. A part-timer is also entitled to get over-time pay for working beyond his normal hours. Other relevant benefits include Employees Provident Fund (EPF) contributions, Social Security Organization (SOCSO) coverage and medical entitlements.

Although the Regulations are lauded as providing employers with the flexibility to arrange suitable working hours for employees working on part-time basis, it has also been criticized on several grounds. One aspect is the determination of 'normal working hours'. Since the Regulations are drafted on the assumption that 'normal hours of work' will be fixed by the parties, and do not include any mechanism to deal with scenarios where a part-time employee's hours vary from week to week or month to month, in certain cases this will result in injustice. This is because one part-timer may work more hours compared to another part-timer (as long as his cumulative hours are between thirty to seventy percent of the regular hours). However under the Regulations, both of them will be entitled to the same number of paid public holidays, annual leave days and sick leave days each year regardless of hours worked as long as they have been under twelve months of continuous employment with the same employer (Yuen and Cooper, 2010).

2.6.1 Issues Surrounding Part-time Work In Malaysia

Part-time work has been credited as a vital component that contributes to the flexibility of labour market which is the hallmark of modern industrialised economy. For the employer, part-time jobs facilitate the adjustment of manpower use and work hours, enabling better control of cost. For the employees, opportunities to work part-time widen employment choices and enable those who were previously unemployed either by choice or by some compelling circumstances to contribute to the country's labour pool.

Despite these advantages, part-time employment also has its drawbacks. Employers usually complain that part-timers are not committed to the job (Jacobsen, 2000), less dependable and prone to commit mistakes due to lack of proper job related training. Meanwhile part-time employees are disadvantaged by the lower wages (Ismail & Mohd Nor, 2005), ineligibility to get certain benefits and protections available to full time employees and limited career advancement prospects (Bolle, 1994, De Cuyper, De Witte & Emmerik, 2011).

Although the government has introduced the Employment (Part-Time Employees) Regulations 2010, it is submitted that the benefits granted to the part-time employees are still inadequate compared to the full-time employee. For instance, taking into consideration that women tend to dominate part-time work (Chen, 2005), provisions regarding maternity leave and maternity benefits are conspicuously absent from the Regulations. Thus even if a female part-time employee took time off after delivery, she will not be getting any pay during this period. If her financial state is dire enough, this would compel her to return to work sooner than later at the expense of her health and her new family. Another issue is that the Regulations do not cover part-time employees who work under a 'contract for service' or who earn more than RM1500 per month. In such cases the part time workers would be susceptible to

exploitation by the employers as their employment terms and conditions are not regulated by the law. In addition, the Regulations do not apply to casual employees and workers who perform work for an employer within the employee's residence, irrespective of occupation (also known as a home working employee).

Thus, it is argued that the scope of protection should be extended to include the casual and home-workers because these are the workers who are continuously marginalised and exploited due to their 'invisible' nature in the system (Loh-Ludher, 2008). It is unfortunate that these categories of worker are excluded from the protection of labour laws despite them being a substantial economic contributor. The fact that they have to grapple with poverty, face greater exposure to working risks and produced works that are grossly undervalued underscore the importance of having labour safety net for these workers in line with the Decent Work Agenda (Loh-Ludher, 2003).

3.0 CONCLUSION

3.1 Atypical Employment Revisited

The popularity of atypical employment, as noted in earlier chapters has given rise to various issues regarding its utilization and regulations (or lack thereof). Proponents of non-standard forms of work have touted the many benefits accruing to the employers and the economy from these types of employment. Among the key advantages that have been highlighted in this paper include the fact that hiring atypical employees increases the firm's ability to respond quickly to variations in factors determining the demand for labour. This flexibility allows employers to reduce cost and improve productivity thus maintaining their competitive edge (Seifert, 2010). In addition, certain types of non-regular work like part-time or temporary works stimulate economic development by facilitating the entry of latent workforce (youth, unemployed, women, retirees) into the labour market. Atypical employment helps to restore labour market equilibrium in case of structural and cyclical unemployment. Researchers have also found evidence to show that temporary jobs facilitate labour market advancement by reducing the time candidates spend job hunting and increasing chances of securing permanent jobs (Addison and Surfield, 2009).

However along with these benefits, twice as many drawbacks have been put forward by the critics on atypical employments. Precarious work has been blamed for entrenching discrimination, especially gender discrimination in the workplace. Declining standards of workplace safety, job insecurity, widening wage gaps and increasing the number of people being excluded from labour and social security protections are just among the few negative impacts of atypical employment documented by the literatures on this subject.

Despite these contradicting evidences, atypical employments in particular fixed-term contracts and part-time jobs continue to be an important facet of the employment market all around the world. Confronted by the inevitable spread of atypical employments, rather than opposing their use with unqualified resistance, stakeholders in the industrial relations scene have been urged to recognise and subsequently accommodate these non-standard works within the regular labour laws framework and social security scheme of their particular country. The following section seeks to underline the inadequacies that the researcher perceives to still exist in the current legal framework pertaining to atypical employments in Malaysia and thereafter make a few recommendations on how the problems could be addressed to the advantage of all parties concerned.

3.2 Lacunae in the Current Regulations

One of the lacunas pertains to the definition given to the category of atypical employees the law sought to regulate. Most of the time the regulations will define the workers that come under the protection of the law in a qualified manner therefore effectively excluding a large number of the workers from whatever benefits or security given by the regulations. The same could be seen in the Malaysian Employment (Part-Time Employees) Regulations 2010 that cover only part-timers under a contract of service who work 30% to 70% of the hours normally worked by full-time employees of the same company. The Regulations do not cover casual or home workers. It is argued that this limited scope will only partially alleviate problems faced by part-timers in Malaysia. As stated before, it is believed that a large number of part-timers in Malaysia either work under a contract for service or are involved in works that are temporary or casual in nature (Ghosh, 2004). Another important aspect that is missing from the current Regulations on Part-time in Malaysia is the requirement of proportionality and non-discrimination in the treatment of part-time workers by the company. The employers therefore are not obliged to treat the part-timers equally or to grant other benefits like paid maternity leave or even to make sure that a female part-timer who gives birth gets to return to her job after the maternity leave.

While certain part-timers could at least turn to the Regulations for some protection, the same cannot be said for fixed-term contract employees in Malaysia. The many injustices that have befallen fixed-term employees in this country speak for the need to have a specific legislation to regulate their terms of employment. In particular we need regulations on the requirement for justification for the use of fixed-term contract, on the maximum number of successive fixed-term contract allowed, on maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts and on the requirement to ensure equality of treatment between a fixed-term employee and a permanent employee.

3.3 Recommendations

In view of the shortcomings highlighted in the previous section on the labour law protections for part-time and fixed term contract employees in Malaysia, this paper recommends several legislative measures that could be introduced to address the problems identified above. The followings are four recommendations to be considered:

1. include a deeming provision ⁴ that automatically consider a part-timer who works 30% to 70% of the regular working hours as working under a contract of service to guarantee protection to a larger number of part-time workers.
2. expands the rights and benefits made available to a part-time employee so that they are not treated less favourably compared to permanent employee doing similar or comparable work as the part-timer, unless such disparate treatments are objectively reasonable.
3. introduce specific regulations for fixed-term employment contract. In particular the regulations should stipulate the need to objectively justify the use of fixed-term contracts by a company and impose limits on the duration of each contract or its renewal. There should also be requirement for equal treatment of a fixed-term employee comparable to a permanent employee in the same situation or capacity.

⁴ A deeming provision is a clause in a statute which deems what should be taken to be the case if the actual situation is unclear

4. extends the minimum floor rights provided by the labour laws that are currently available only to employees to include workers. This is to protect marginalised workers who are currently excluded from the labour protection because they are considered as casual, temporary or home workers. This objective could only be achieved if the definitions given to persons entitled to protection under the labour laws are amended and enlarged to include both employees and workers (Blainpain, 2009).

3.4 Conclusion

Regulating atypical employment could be a double edge sword. On one hand regulations would improve the working conditions and protect the rights of the workers who were formerly outside employment protection legislation. Ironically one of the factors cited for the growth of atypical employment was the employer's need to circumvent onerous labour regulations. Thus unduly rigid labour provisions could backfire and make it more difficult for young people, women and other groups in the latent workforce to gain access to employment. To mitigate such risk, a progressive equality approach could be adopted where wages and benefits should commensurate with the duration of service in a company or industry. This approach could facilitate access to employment and at the same time promote skill acquisitions of the workers. Therefore a worker who works for a brief period of six weeks might not be entitled to get benefits and wages comparable to another person who has worked for six months; however he would still gain access to basic rights like social security protection (SOCSO), sick leave or protection against unlawful dismissal. It is submitted that this approach would provide a fair compromise to all stakeholders in the labour market, the employers would not have to bear undue financial burden in hiring these workers, the rights of the full-time employee will not be jeopardized while fundamental rights of the precarious workers are still protected in line with the Decent Work Agenda (Benjamin, Borat & Cesthuizen 2010).

This paper was written with the objective of arguing the case for fixed-term contract workers and part-time employees in Malaysia so that their problems could be identified, understood and subsequently rectified through the introduction of relevant employment protection legislations. While it could be argued that the foregoing sections have considerably presented and analysed the problems, the real solution still lies in the far horizon. Given the current socio-economic and political climate, it could be a while before Malaysia would see a comprehensive set of labour laws that conform to the ideals of social justice and human rights. A question posed by Juan Somavia, (ILO, 2008) the Director-General of ILO would be a fitting end to this paper. He asked, "Have we really, despite our achievements, bettered the working lives of people everywhere?" The answer today would be "No, not yet, not enough." But if we work together and accept the challenges put before us, then one day the answer would be a decisive and an unequivocal "yes".

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INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SME: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Nazlina Zakaria

Universiti Utara Malaysia
Sintok Kedah, Malaysia
nazlina@uum.edu.my

Dr. Siti Rohaida Mohamed Zainal and Prof. Dr. Aizzat Mohd. Nasurdin

Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Human resource management (HRM) practices play an important role in improving productivity, performance and survival of the organization. By adopting the practices of human resources, it will enable the organization to attract, retain and motivate employees to support the mission, objective and organizational strategy towards an enhancement of organizational performance. However, most studies on human resource practices are discussed in the large organization and are less completely covered in small organizations. Therefore, this article will discuss the importance of human resource management practices to Malaysian SMEs in view of SMEs also need such practices to survive and sustain a competitive, which in turn to improve organizational performance.

Keywords: *Human resource management practices, organizational performance and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been identified as one of the growth engines for various countries in the world, since SMEs make up over 90 per cent of all enterprises. For instance, United States, 99.7 per cent (Heneman, Tansky, & Camp, 2000), China, 99 per cent (Cunningham & Rowley, 2008), Europe, 99 per cent (Rauch & Frese, 2000), Holland, 95 per cent, Philippines, 95 per cent and Taiwan, 96.5 per cent (Lin, 1998) as well as Malaysia, 99.2 per cent (Man & Wafa, 2007; National SME Development Council (NSDC), 2009; Saleh & Ndubisi, 2006). The figures above show that countries all over the world recognized SMEs as a key business sector. Besides, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) (2002) pointed out that SMEs are deemed as supporters to larger enterprises as well as an important foundation in expanding business activities and sustaining economic growth. SMEs even provide more jobs than large companies (APEC, 2002; Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOS) 2007; NSDC, 2009). In sum, SMEs play a vital role in contributing to the economy and are likely to be increasingly important as the economy becomes more global.

Nowadays, changes in the atmosphere of global business and the continuing liberalization pressures occurring from economic and financial crisis provide new challenges as well as opportunities for Malaysian SMEs. Representing 99% of total establishments, SMEs are anticipated in performing a

significant role to develop the nation's economy under New Economic Model (NEM) and the Tenth Malaysia Plan (10MP), primarily in stimulating innovation and new growth areas. Hence, SMEs have to grab the opportunity to search for new roads and promote the value chain in order to improve their survival and ultimately turned out to be a global performer and eventually be able to compete with big companies. In an effort to capture the opportunities, SMEs need to exploit all of their available resources as means of achieving competitive advantage to firms and in turn, improve the performance of their organization.

Hence, to ensure the sustainability of country's economic growth, it is a need for SMEs to know thoroughly the factors that may influence their performance. Since the competitors will enable to imitate the advantage of physical and financial resources, practitioners and researchers have shifted to the uniqueness of human resources as factors that could lead to sustainable competitive advantage of the firm (Barney, 1991; Barney, Wright, & David J. Ketchen, 2001). This is supported by Pfeffer (1998) that human resource is a vital factor that could affect the performance of organization. Therefore, it is important to understand how to manage human resources so as to maximize productivity and enhance creativity as well as control the costs (Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006; Dart, Ng, & Sarkar, 1990). Besides, HRM might be valuable foundations for SMEs to study, due to their growth rate, the rising number of SMEs and their diversity (Sethakaset & Santimataneedol, 2008). Consequently, to ensure the smooth running of the organization in order to improve the performance of an organization, then a system of good human resource management (HRM) practices need to be addressed (Cappelli & Neumark, 2001).

2.0 DEFINITION OF MALAYSIAN SMEs

In 2005, the National SME Development Council (NSDC) as a platform to develop Malaysian SMEs, has approved the use of standard definitions for SMEs in the manufacturing, manufacturing-related services, primary agriculture and services sectors. These definitions are used by all Government Ministries and Agencies engaged in the development of SME, and financial institutions as well. The use of standard definitions for SME will: 1. Strengthen government efforts to create effective policies and support programs for specific target; 2. Make it easier to provide technical and financial assistance to SMEs; and 3. Allow for the identification of SMEs in the various categories and levels (SME Corp, 2010a).

Generally, SMEs in Malaysia can be grouped into three categories, which are micro, small and medium enterprises. These grouping are determined based on either the annual sales turnover or number of full-time employees, as indicated in Table 1 below (SME Corp, 2010b).

Table 1: Definition of SMEs in Malaysia

Size Category	Micro Enterprise	Small Enterprise	Medium Enterprise
Manufacturing, Manufacturing-Related Services and Agro-based industries	Sales turnover of less than RM250,000 OR full-time employees less than 5	Sales turnover between RM250,000 and less than RM10 million OR full-time employees between 5 and 50	Sales turnover between RM10 million and RM25 million OR full-time employees between 51 and 150
Services, Primary Agriculture and Information & Communication Technology (ICT)	Sales turnover of less than RM200,000 OR full-time employees less than 5	Sales turnover between RM200,000 and less than RM1 million OR full-time employees between 5 and 19	Sales turnover between RM1 million and RM5 million OR full-time employees between 20 and 50

Source: <http://www.smeCorp.gov.my/node/33>

3.0 THE IMPORTANCE OF SMES IN MALAYSIA

In Malaysia, SMEs are considered as the backbone of industrial development (NSDC, 2009) and give meaningful contributions to the national economy. Hashim (2010) stated that SMEs play a significant role in generating more employment, economic outputs, income generation, export capabilities, training, encouraging competition, innovation and promoting entrepreneurship and supporting the large-scale industries (LSIs) as well.

In Malaysia, SMEs represent a majority of the businesses constituting 99.2 per cent of total establishments and offering employment for about 56 per cent of the total employees (NSDC, 2009). As indicated by SME performance report 2005 (SMIDEC, 2006), a census on establishments and enterprises initiated by the Statistics Department in 2005 disclosed a current status of SMEs. Figures point out a total of 523,132 establishments in the manufacturing, agriculture and service sectors. Table 2 shows the current status of SMEs, generally, there is a total of 39,219 (7.5%) enterprises in the manufacturing sector, 451,516 (86.3%) in services and 32,397 (6.2%) in the agriculture sector. As indicated in table 2, total SMEs disclose 99.2 per cent or 518,996 of all enterprises listed. Of the total, SMEs in the service sector comprises of 99.4 per cent or 449,004, whereas in manufacturing, they made up of 96.6 per cent or 37,866 companies. As for agriculture-related activities, according to Table 2, SMEs account for 99.2 per cent or 32,126 out of the 32,397 enterprises.

Table 2: Current Status of SMEs

	Establishments	SMEs	Percentage of SMEs
Manufacturing	39,219	37,866	96.6
Services	451,516	449,004	99.4
Agriculture	32,397	32,126	99.2
Total	523,132	518,996	99.2

Source: SME performance report 2005

In terms of generating employment, SMEs have contributed almost 3.2 million employees (64.0%) of total employment of 5.0 million attached in three key sectors namely manufacturing, services and agriculture (DOSM, 2007). The services' sector provides the most employment, 74.2 per cent, followed by the manufacturing sector, 56.8 per cent and agriculture sector, 45.7 per cent. In terms of full-time employment, the highest was also in the services sector (69.0%) followed by manufacturing (43.7%) and agriculture (40.7%). The significant role of Malaysian SMEs at the same time is also demonstrated by their contribution to output and value added. DOSM (2007) reported that in 2003, SMEs contributed to around the RM 381 billion (38.4%) of output and created about the RM 159 billion (41.3%) to value added. Table 3, noted that the services sector contributed the largest share 49.5 per cent of output and 46.4 per cent of value added followed by the agriculture sector contributed 47.9 per cent and 45.4 per cent respectively. On the other hand, SMEs in the manufacturing sector contributed the lowest share, 29.0 per cent of output and 32.4 per cent of value added. Generally, from Table 2 and Table 3 it can be concluded that SMEs are the backbone of the national economy and have a great potential to drive its growth.

Table 3: Output and Value Added Of SMEs by Sector, 2003

Sector	Output (RM billion)			Value added (RM billion)		
	Total	SMEs	%	Total	SMEs	%
Total	992.6	381.3	38.4	386.4	159.4	41.3
Manufacturing	533.9	154.7	29.0	141.2	45.8	32.4
Services	437.0	216.1	49.5	234.3	108.7	46.4
Agriculture	21.7	10.4	47.9	10.9	4.9	45.4

Source: Malaysia, Department of Statistics, Census of Establishment and Enterprises 2005.

Despite the importance and relevance of human resource management to SMEs, research on the HRM-performance linkage among SMEs is still lacking. This paper intends to highlight this relationship. In order to meet this objective, the next section will explain the concept of human resource management. Then this paper will discuss the relationship between the HRM-organizational performance, HRM in SMEs and the proposed framework of the relationship of four HRM practices to the performance of SMEs. Finally, this paper will end up with the conclusion.

4.0 CONCEPT OF HRM

Human resource management (HRM) has evolved substantial change and redefinition over the past century in its theory, research and practices, and mainly in the last two decades, it has gone through a major process of transformation in terms of form and function. The increasing pressure from internal and external environmental factors have significantly pushed HRM to devote from their mostly function of administrative tasks to the role as a source of sustained competitive advantages in support of organization that operate in a worldwide economy (G. Ferris, Hochwarter, Buckley, Harrell-Cook, & Frink, 1999). As defined by Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright (2010), human resource management is a philosophy, policy, system and practices that can affect the behavior, attitudes and performance of employees. Activities of HRM include HR planning, staffing, training and development, performance management, compensation management, safety and health and employee relations. In an early stage, the management of organization has ignored the function of HRM practices as a main driver of organizational success. Only lately, the potential role of HRM in enhancing organization performance has been realized. HRM practices can improve the performance of organizational by contributing to

employee and customer satisfaction, innovation, productivity, and development of good reputation among firm's community (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Noe et al., 2010).

There are several approaches in studying HRM practices in relation to organizational performance: universalistic, contingency or configurational approach (Delery & Doty, 1996; Youndt, Snell, Dean Jr, & Lepak, 1996). The universal, or "best practices" perspective is the simplest form of a theoretical model in HRM literature, and their researchers are micro analytical in nature. This perspective involves a direct relationship between HRM practices and performance (Youndt et al., 1996) whereby some HRM practices are hypothesized as constantly superior to others and these best practices should be adopted by all organizations (Delery & Doty, 1996). The contingency perspective, on the other hand, posits that the impact of HRM practices on firm performance is conditioned by an organization's strategic posture. Researchers in the contingency approach dispute that HRM practices that applied by any organization must be coherent with other aspects of the organization so as to be effective. They have tried to explain the interaction between various HRM practices and specific organization strategies as they relate to organizational performance (Youndt et al., 1996). In contrast to "best practice" and contingency approach, the configurational perspective is interested on how the pattern of multiple HRM practices is related to organizational performance. Wright & McMahan (1992) argued that there is the pattern of intended human resource deployments and activities that can facilitate organization in achieving their goals. In order to be effective, an organization must build up its HRM system that reaches both horizontal and vertical fit. Horizontal fit refers to the internal consistency of the organization's HRM practices, and vertical fit refers to the congruence of the HRM system with other organizational characteristics such as a firm strategy.

Consequently, in order to explain the process of examining HRM practices that are related to organizational performance, researchers can comply with either or a combination of those three difference approaches. This conceptual paper adopts the universalistic perspective for several reasons. Firstly, the universalistic perspective is suggested as the primary approach since most of HR studies had centered on a holistic or universal view of HRM practices and organizational performance, highlighting set of practices used by all firm employees and the uniformity of these practices across firms. Secondly, this perspective enables researchers to study the contribution of each HRM practice on organizational performance relatively.

5.0 HRM PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

There is no universal definition of performance (Anderse'n, 2010) and no agreement on the suitable indicators of small firm performance (Wiklund, 1999). Performance from process perspective involves the process of transformation from inputs to outputs in order to accomplish specific results, whereas, from an economic perspective, performance is focused on efficiency and effectiveness of the organization in managing their cost and outcome (Chien, 2004; Jarad, Yusof, & Shafiei, 2010). Daft (2000) in his book defined that organizational performance is the organization's ability to attain its goals by using resources in an efficient and effective manner" (cited in Jarad et al., 2010, p. 147). In other words, the organizational performance concerns with the effectiveness, productivity, efficiency or excellence factors of an organization, whereby the factors are measured against the intended output (performance).

Given the importance of HRM practices in influencing organizational performance, it has been noticed that the significant used of HRM into business practices in the organization. The issue on how HRM practices affect the performance of organization is drastically increasing (Chang & Chen, 2002; Huselid,

Jackson, & Schuler, 1997; Panayotopoulou, Bourantas, & Papalexandris, 2003; Pfeffer, 1998; Youndt et al., 1996; Zheng, O'Neill, & Morrison, 2009). Prior researches proposed that HRM acts as a proactive role instead of reactive in an organization (Schuler & MacMillan, 1984) and it is deemed to be a strategic partner in strategic formulation and implementation (Ulrich, 1987). Huselid (1995) added that the application of good HRM practices in the organization can develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of present and prospective employees, strengthen their motivation, decrease avoidance and retain excellence employees while push nonperformers to quit and which, in turn to improve employees and organizational performance.

According to Delaney and Huselid (1996) and Huselid (1995), the impact of HRM practices on organization performance is depending on how HRM practices affect employees' skills and abilities, motivation and organizational structure. The impact of HRM practices on employees' skills and abilities are portrayed in recruitment, selection and training. Organization can hire employees through sophisticated selection procedures that created to choose the best potential employees. After selection, employees can be provided comprehensive training and development programs in order to advance their knowledge, skills and ability in performing their works. Secondly, the effectiveness of skilled employees will be restricted, if they are not motivated to do the job. Therefore, to motivate employees, employers can encourage their employees to work efficiently through the performance appraisal based on individual and group performance, relating these appraisals to reward systems, the use of internal promotion systems based on employee merit and other types of incentives that support the interest of employees with those of shareholders. Finally, the contribution of skilled and motivated employees is influenced by the way in which a workplace is structured. If jobs are structured, it will limit the way employees perform their job. Hence, HRM practices can affect organizational performance in addition to organizational structure condition that supports employees' participation and encourages them to improve the way they perform their jobs. Among relevant practices in achieving organizational performance include employees' participation, internal promotion systems, team-based production systems and job security.

Recently, empirical evidence has revealed HRM practices affect organizational performance (Che Ros & Kumar, 2006; Subramony, 2009; Tzafrir, 2006; Uysal, 2008; Wang & Zhang, 2005). Dyer and Reeves (1995) have analyzed four studies and revealed the relationship between HRM practices and firm performance. Similar to Becker and Gerhart (1996) in their reviewed of seven studies on HRM practices, and firm performance confirmed significant relationship between two variables. In fact, Rogers and Wright (1998) in their article described the linkages between HRM practices and various operationalizations of firm performance. For example, a study by Macduffie (1995), on 62 universal automotive assembly plants and Ichniowski, Shaw and Prennushi (1997) on 36 steel finishing lines owned by 17 companies in the U.S. discovered that a "bundle" or "systems" of HR practices were related to productivity and quality. Moreover, numerous studies have shown the relationship between HRM practices and employee retention (Arthur, 1994; Guthrie, 2001), HRM practices and accounting profits among banks (Delery & Doty, 1996), HRM practices relate to operational performance among manufacturing plants (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2003; Youndt et al., 1996), and HRM practices relate to organizational effectiveness as well (G. R. Ferris et al., 1998; Stavrou-Costea, 2005).

6.0 HRM IN SMEs

HRM is one of the vital roles in an organization. Most HRM theories and literatures are focused on HRM studies in large organizations and overlooked small organizations (B. E. Becker & Huselid, 1998; Huselid, 1995; S. Jackson & Schuler, 1995; Lado & Wilson, 1994). Even, Tansky & Heneman (2003) stated that

SMEs have long been having the status of second-class citizens by HRM researchers. This is supported by one of the qualitative findings showed that only 129 of the 403 articles that explicitly addressed issues of HRM in small businesses. Of the 129 articles, only 17 articles which have a specific hypothesis to be tested (Heneman et al., 2000). Additionally, most of HRM researches in small enterprises are often conducted in exploratory and primarily explanatory (De Kok & Uhlaner, 2001). Several studies depict the use of diverse HR practices in SMEs (Cassell, Nadin, Gray, & Clegg, 2002; Golhar & Deshpande, 1997; Hornsby & Kuratko, 2003), whereas others concentrate on individual HRM practices, for instance, recruitment and selection (Tanova, 2003), training and development (Macpherson & Jayawarna, 2007), performance appraisal (S. E. Jackson, Schuler, & Rivero, 1989), compensation (Carlson, Upton, & Seaman, 2006) and an employee relation (Matlay, 1999). Most of the results from the aforesaid studies proposed that the use of HR practices is relatively fewer in a smaller firm to a larger firm. Moreover, SMEs also treat HRM practices as rather ad hoc and informal (De Kok & Uhlaner, 2001) due to their limited size and resource availability such as financial, time and HR expert (Klaas, McClendon, & Gainey, 2000).

However, recent studies have revealed the importance of HRM for SMEs. For instance, a study done in the USA revealed that one of the keys for business failure in SMEs is due to less emphasis on human resources (Baron, 2003). Another analysis and classification of problems in small business done by Huang & Brown (1999) also found that apart the area of sale/marketing, human resource management is the second most create problems for the small businesses. In fact, this is further supported by the ascendant facts indicating that HR practices in a smaller firm are expected to be as sophisticated as large organizations (Bacon, Ackers, Storey, & Coates, 1996; Golhar & Deshpande, 1997; Hornsby & Kuratko, 1990). For example, there are no significantly differences between HR issues in large and small firms (Golhar & Deshpande, 1997; Hornsby & Kuratko, 1990). Bacon et al. (1996) put forward the recognitions of small business managers toward the importance of new approaches of management to the success of the small businesses such as teamwork, job flexibility, decentralization, performance appraisals, etc., and that innovative and progressive HR practices are no longer limited to large organizations. Furthermore, these new approaches also have been proven to have significant implications for the success of small firms (Bacon et al., 1996; Jones, Knotts, & Scroggins, 2005). Consequently, HRM practices should not be ignored by the management of SMEs in order to remain competitive.

According to Ismail (2006; 2009), competitiveness is strongly linked to human resource capabilities. A review of the literature indicates that human resources can be key ingredients affecting organizational performance (Pfeffer, 1998; Rauch, Frese, & Utsch, 2005), source of sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Krishnan & Singh, 2011) and the function of human resource management (HRM) (Wright, McMahan, & McWilliams, 1994). Given the importance of SMEs and the possibility of human resource practices influence their performance, it is essential to SMEs to increase their understanding on the effectiveness of numerous human resource practices.

A number of studies have focused on the potential effort that good human resource policy as an important firm resource is capable of enhancing organizational performance. As stated by Guest (1997, p.263), "the impact of human resource management on performance has become a major research issue in the field." Research by Hornsby & Kuratko (1990; 2003) found that employees who were motivated and highly skilled can be a determinant of the capability of small firms in order to maintain competitiveness in the current business environment. Moreover, Rauch, Frese, & Utsch (2005) and Pfeffer (1998) also claimed that human resource is a major role in producing transformations in small-

scale enterprise development. Subsequently, the practices of effective human resource management should be of concern to SMEs to assist in improving their performance.

7.0 HRM IN MALAYSIAN SMES

In Malaysia, most of the SME studies focused on financing (Rozali, Taib, Latif, & Salim, 2006; Zabri, 2009), building business networking (Farinda, Kamarulzaman, Abdullah, & Ahmad, 2009; Zain & Ng, 2006), technology efficiency (Jajri & Ismail, 2009; Radam, Abu, & Abdullah, 2008), business strategy (Hashim, 2000; Hashim & Zakaria, 2010), innovation (Hilmi & Ramayah, 2008; Hussin & Noor, 2005; Man & Wafa, 2007) and its relationship towards SMEs performance. Comparatively, less research on HRM-performance link was performed utilizing small firm as their samples in Malaysia. For instance, the study by Ismail (2006), has focused on the effect of human capital attainment on labor productivity growth in SMEs. Hamid, Baharun, and Hashim (2006) found that SMEs in general seem to experience fewer understanding of the variety of managerial practices. Furthermore, Jamaludin & Hasun (2007), have conducted a study on the importance of staff training toward SMEs' performance and a recent survey by Osman, Ho, & Galang (2011) on the extent of adoption of HR practices in Malaysian SMEs is also not comprehensive as it is limited to the service sectors.

All the aforementioned studies reflect HRM is in the stage of infancy in Malaysian SMEs since the study on HRM-performance link in small firms remains scarce (Abdullah, Ahsan, & Alam, 2009; Lo, Mohamad, & La, 2009). Similarly, Hornsby & Kuratko (2003) mentioned that the needs of HR-related, practices, behaviors and outcomes are less understood in smaller firms. Heneman et al (2000, p.22) also proposed that, "SMEs may be an excellent place to study synergistic human resource management practices." Therefore, it is required to perform a study to fulfill the gap by providing empirical evidence of HR practices and their outcomes in the context of Malaysian SMEs.

Drawing from universalistic, there are several combinations of HRM best practices that have been studied and yet no consistency on which combination of practices has been achieved. For example, Youndt et al.(1996) in his summary of best HRM practices offered a very comprehensive list of diverse HRM practices used by various studies, Delery and Doty (1996), Delaney and Huselid (1996) and Way (2002) used seven of different practices, Wang and Zhang (2005) applied ten practices and Theriou and Chatzoglou (2008) utilized nine practices in their study (see Table 4 for a summary of best HR practices used by different studies). However, in this conceptual paper, the selection of HRM practices is based on Boselie, Dietz, & Boon (2005) in their review of 104 articles on 'HRM & Performance' research; the total of 83 articles is on the training and development, 71 articles on the contingent pay and reward scheme, 51 articles on the performance management (including appraisal) and 50 articles on the recruitment and selection. These four practices listed justified having the most support across various literatures. Lepak and Snell (2002), Snell and Dean (1992) and Youndt et al.(1996) similarly agree that the four key HRM practices are staffing, training and development, performance appraisal and compensation. The selection of those practices is in the interest of parsimony and ease of comparison.

Table 4: Summary of Best Practices in Human Resource

Delery and Doty (1996)	Delaney and Huselid (1996)	Way (2002)	Wang and Zhang (2005)	Theriou and Chatzoglou (2008)
1. The use of internal career ladders	1. Staffing selectivity index	<i>Staffing</i> 1. Extensiveness of staffing	<i>Functional HRM dimension</i> 1. Personnel selection & placement	1. High levels of teamwork
2. Formal training systems	2. Training index	<i>Compensation</i> 2. Group-based performance pay	2. Performance appraisal	2. Performance-related pay
3. Results-oriented appraisal	3. compensation	3. Pay level	3. Pay & bonus system	3. Decentralized decision making
4. Performance based compensation	4. Grievance procedure,	<i>Flexible job assignments</i> 4. Job rotation	4. Personnel training & development	4. Comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures
5. Employment security	5. Decentralized decision making	<i>Teamwork</i> 5. Self-directed teams	<i>Strategic HRM dimension</i> 5. Career development & promotion	5. Limited status differences
6. Employee voice	6. Internal labor market	<i>Training</i> 6. Formal training	6. Employee participation	6. Extensive training
7. Broadly defined jobs	7. Vertical hierarchy	<i>Communication</i> 7. Involvement in meetings discussing work-related issues	7. Quality control program	7. Employees' involvement and internal communication arrangements
			8. MBO	8. Internal career opportunities
			9. Team management	9. Broadly defined job descriptions
			10. Corporate culture	

Staffing

Staffing refers to the activities, including recruitment and selecting by identifying and attracting potential employees (Noe et al., 2010). With a thorough process of recruitment and selection of employees, employers can get the best and brightest workers in which they can fully contribute their expertise in developing the organization. Staffing is a critical practice and must be implemented cautiously to acquire employees who really qualified so as to improve organizational growth via increasing in employees' productivity. Hornsby & Kuratko (2003), in a replication and extension of their 1990 study, suggested that further research is required due to the increasing use of HRM practices in small firms, and they argued that staffing remains as critical issues in HRM for small firms as well. Generally, SMEs have a tendency to utilize informal methods of recruitment (e.g. walk-ins and newspaper ads) and selection (e.g. face to face interview, application blanks and reference checks) as effective methods of staffing. Nevertheless, as small firms grow up, the exhausted of informal staffing contacts by managers (for instance, relatives, recommendation and walk-ins), it is necessary to develop more formal methods in employees' recruitment in order to maintain their growth (Williamson, 2000). As a result, this provides an opportunity for SMEs to improve its ability to reach employees who can produce good quality of output. Thus, this conceptual paper proposes:

Proposition 1: Staffing would be positively related to SMEs performance.

Training and development

Training and development are defined as activities that have been planned in order to assist the learning related to job knowledge, skills and employees behaviors (Noe et al., 2010). Well-trained employees can share their knowledge and use their creativity to produce or serve a product to customer and understand the system development of product or service in the organization. Previous research had found a positive relationship between training and firm performance (e.g., T.-C. Huang, 2001; Loan-Clarke, Boocock, Smith, & Whittaker, 1999; Marshall, Alderman, Wong, & Thwaites, 1995). In fact, training and development are recognized as important HRM issues in small firms but in terms of providing formal training, it is still being overlooked by them. This is because most employers often underestimate the benefit and cost of training to small firms is not worthwhile (Storey, 2004; Storey & Westhead, 1997; Westhead & Storey, 1996). In Malaysia, several platforms of training are provided by government to assist SMEs development in terms of managerial and technical training. Thus, given the importance of training and development in small firms, SMEs have to grab the opportunities and take an initiative to improve as well as update their employees' knowledge and skills in order to produce superior output. Accordingly, this suggests:

Proposition 2: Training and development would be positively related to SMEs performance.

Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal is a process to assess the extent to which employees perform the job well (Noe et al., 2010). This appraisal gives employers the information on the employees' progress in implementing their jobs. According to Delery and Doty (1996), performance appraisal has been acknowledged as strategic HR practices, which are results or behavior oriented. Behavior-oriented appraisal center on the employees' behavior that is needed to perform the job effectively while result-oriented appraisal emphasis on the upshots of those behaviors. Prior findings highlighted that performance appraisals affect the performance of the firm as well (Delery & Doty, 1996; King-Kauanui, Ngoc, & Ashley-Cotleur, 2006). However, this practice is also likely to be informal in small firms and tend to focus on monitoring and controlling rather than employees' development (Cassell et al., 2002). As an alternative, SMEs should develop a systematic performance appraisal in order to develop their employees' capabilities by allocating more time in providing a developmental response, communicating problems and discovering new aspects to develop. Hence, the following proposition is:

Proposition 3: Performance appraisal would be positively related to SMEs performance.

Compensation

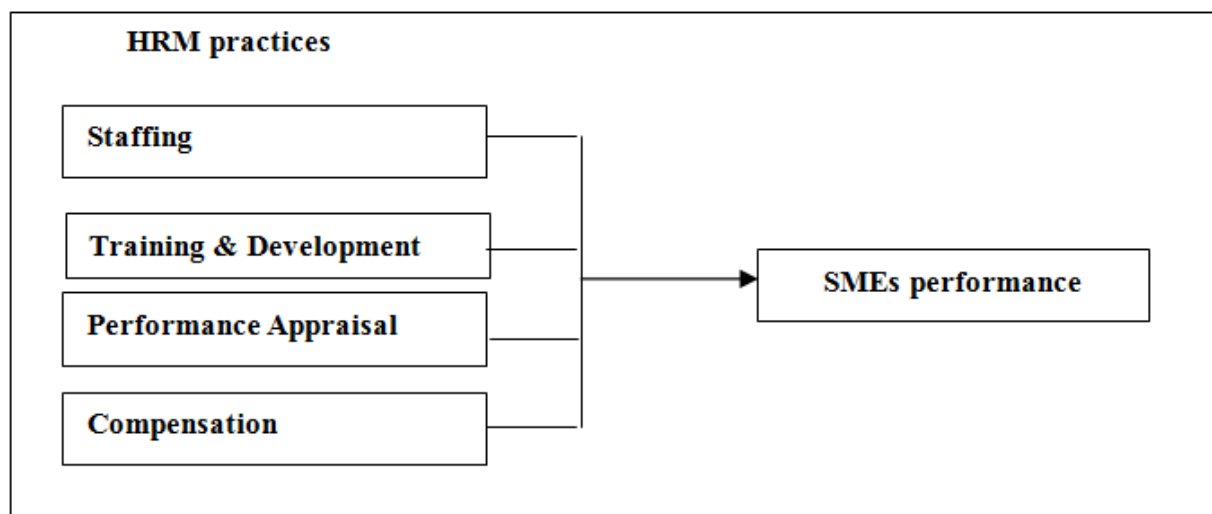
Compensation is described as incentives of pay or reward that has been planned to stimulate individuals to join, retain and perform well over time to the firm (Lepak & Snell, 2002; Snell & Dean, 1992; Youndt et al., 1996). The objective of compensation is to motivate employees to perform their job effectively to facilitate the accomplishment of organization goals. Then, it is crucial to decide on how employees are being paid; it can attract talented employees or bring down a motivation of existing employees. As with other HRM practices, small firms tend to practice informal system of compensation or reward such as recognition and reinforcement, pay increment, job security, etc. (McEvoy, 1984). In contrast, to attract more and good applicants and sustain quality and talented employees, SMEs should design an effective formal system of compensation since it is a potential source of achieving competitive advantage, which sequentially enhancing organizational performance (Carlson et al., 2006; Delery & Doty, 1996; Tzafrir,

2006). Therefore, SMEs need to offer equitable compensation policy so that they can attract, retain and motivate employees to apply their proficiency in their work-related activities efficiently and effectively. Therefore, the final proposition is:

Proposition 4: Compensation would be positively related to SMEs performance.

Based on the preceding discussion of the literature, the following is a proposed conceptual framework:

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework



8.0 CONCLUSION

This conceptual paper contributes to an understanding of the impact of HRM on SMEs performance generally and particularly in Malaysia. Even though HRM practices have been considered as one of the significant factors appear to boost the performance of organization, it can be said actually most of the Malaysian SME does not practice HRM effectively in their business (Daud & Mohamad, 2010). Hence, Malaysian SMEs have to realize their own competencies, particularly their internal strengths such as the human resource and their HRM practices in order to support SMEs to be innovative and competitive (Ngah & Ibrahim, 2009).

In order to remain perform, the management of SMEs needs to put more attention on the possible HRM practices or the best combination of HRM practices, which contribute to organization performance. As mentioned by Malaysian Human Resources Minister, Datuk Dr. S. Subramaniam at the two-day Congress, which said that SMEs should pay attention to the factors of HRM in improving their productivity as well as maintaining the existing talent. This is due to lots of small and medium businesses, which had limited expertise in managing human resources, compared to large corporations (Bernama, 2011, April 19). With the intention of understanding the predictors of business performance; firstly, SMEs must realize the HRM practices that are affecting business performance. Consequently, in reality, SMEs need HRM to be practiced in their firm to facilitate goal achievement and also to generate more innovation. As HRM appears as an essential role for SMEs, more research on this topic is called for

and as SMEs not a version of 'scaled-down' to large firms (Nguyen & Bryant, 2004), all the findings related to HRM in large firms cannot be generalized to SMEs.

In conclusion, Malaysian SMEs should consider on how to enhance the capabilities in the fields of human resource and skills development in order to increase their business success (Baron, 2003; McEvoy, 1984). Moreover, they also need to figure out, value and adopt the best practices of human resource management in order to ensure sustainable performance enhancement.

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A STUDY ON STRESS LEVEL AMONG PART-TIME STUDENTS IN A HIGHER INSTITUTION IN KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

Nor Azimah Chew Abdullah and Saharudin Mohd Dan

School of Business Management, College of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia,
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia
norazimah@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the stress level among part-time students and its relationships to their psychological well-being status. 92 part-time students agreed to be the respondents for this study. Data was collected using a set of questionnaires. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regressions. Descriptive statistics revealed that major stressors for work stress were performance demand, long working hours, overwork and deadline, dealing with difficult people and role conflict. For family stress, the major stressors were money constraint, having too much debts and bills to pay, family members' health problems, insufficient time with family, and burden with household tasks. The findings of this study revealed that there was a low positive relationship between psychological well-being and family stress, negative correlation between psychological well-being and self-efficacy, and no significant relationship between psychological well-being and work stress. For multiple regressions, results showed that only family stress and self-efficacy had a significant relationship on psychological well-being. It is also suggested that for future research, this type of study is to be extended to all part-time students from variety of programs from various higher institutions throughout Malaysia.

Keywords: Work Stress, Family Stress, Psychological Well-being

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Learning is necessary to upgrade individuals' knowledge. It is also important to raise ones' income. In order to increase ones' education, most people especially working people study on a part-time basis. This could be due to family and work tasks, limitation of financial and time, etc. As a result, it can be seen that many private or public institution offer continuing educational programs that can be taken either full time or part time maybe during late afternoon or early evening or weekends to accommodate students who work during the day.

Part-time study is a challenge and can create difficulty for working students as they are facing demands from multifunction roles: work, family and study and these can cause frustration and stressful situation to them. Part-time students are often deal with the difficulty of stress to the point of defeat, which is generally derived from the related factors such as work stress, family stress and high self-efficacy. Other burdens that produce stress among part-time students are examinations, project work, project paper, thesis, fear of academic failure, or any other related factors such as conflict with faculty, conflict with

lecturers and communication failure with the administration (Rafidah, Azizah, & Noraini, 2009; Kumar & Jejurkar, 2005).

There are complaints from part-time students that they have little control over stress that occurred, especially of those that have multifunction roles in their families, workplaces, coupled with their high self-efficacy that they comprise within themselves to pursue any challenges that come along during the study. All these multifunction roles have led to the occurrence of role strains.

The impact of stress to students has been the subject of study among researchers. Stress that is linked with academic activities has been simultaneously related to various negative outcomes such as poor health, depression, and poor academic performance (Pietromonaco, Manis, & Lane, 1986; Vaez, & Laflamme, 2008). It is also learnt that too much stress will lead to the consequences of physical and mental problems (Shirom, 1986). Even, various studies found association between stress level and psychological conditions of students.

Stress is critical as it is a common problem in workplaces especially for those who plays multiple roles and is a cost to organization (NIOSH, 1999). Furthermore, in today's workplaces, the nature of work is shifting rapidly and stress is a risk to employees' health. Furthermore, a survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates (1997) found that three-fourths of workers experience more on-the-job stress than a generation ago. Even, various studies have been done on stress which associate stress with employee turnover (NIOSH, 1999). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the stress level among working students and its relationship and influence to their psychological well-being status.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Work Stress and part-time students

It has been accepted that stress is a physical, mental, and emotional response to various demands, changes, and events in life as it is an internal occurrence and a mental attitude (Lazarus, 1991; Pietromonaco et al. 1986; Segerstrom & Miller, 2004). Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein (1983) defined stress as a process in which environment demands strain an organism's adaptive capacity, resulting in both psychological as well as biological changes that could place a person at risk for illness. Lazarus (1991) however, defined stress as a psychological and physical response of the body whenever someone must adapt to the changing conditions. Lazarus also divided stress into four types of stress which are 1) eustress, 2) distress, 3) hyperstress and 4) hypostress. Eustress is a positive type of short-term stress that provides immediate strength at points of increased physical activity, enthusiasm, and creativity while distress is a negative stress brought about by constant re-adjustments or alterations in a routine. On the other hand, hyperstress occurs when an individual is pushed beyond what he or she can handle. It may result from being overloaded or overworked. Hypostress however, is the opposite of hyper stress. Hypostress occurs when people are bored or unchallenged and often experience feelings of restlessness and being uninspired. Excessive stress or distress in students results in obvious symptoms such as inability to effectively perform college work and the fear of academic failure and college drop outs (Kumar & Jejurkar, 2005). How the students act in response to the stressor will depend on their personality, perceptions, and past experience (Linn & Zeppa, 1984).

Studies have discovered that working students face more stress than those not working.

A number of studies have been done looking at the relationship of stress factors among students at higher learning institutions, and the effects of stress on their academic performance. Rafidah et al.

(2009) highlighted that majority studies on stress have been done in the United States of America (USA) and the emphasis has been cited more on students in the dental and medical fields.

In a study of Ross, Niebling and Heckert (1999), 75% of their respondents described that working was a source of stress as working students have added their student role to a current role structure and being affected by the stresses and strains from family and work role expectations. (Patricia, 1987; Wiersma & Berg, 1991; Young, 2007). According to Patricia (1987), although efforts may be made to modify the role structure, it is often the remains of a disappointed role that contribute to role conflict and eventually will cause to psychological stress. Furthermore, Dunkel-Schetter and Lobel (1990) found that financial fears were a common cause of stress as working students cannot resign from their work in order to upgrade their education. As a result, working students often experience stressed because of the limited amount of time available to them and their jobs come with more responsibilities (Macan, Shahani, Dipboye & Philips, 1990).

Part-time student (graduate or non-graduate) are simply not able to escape from the requirement of handling many students' functions which are usually related to their academic subjects and program of study. Part-time students, like the other students are still attached to learning functions and often tied up with students' responsibilities such as working on the assignments, presentations, group discussions, examinations, project work, project paper, and thesis. While performing these functions, part-time students are often integrated with the wish to succeed and full of desire to complete the subjects and program taken within the limitation of time period allocated. Many part-time students are highly motivated and full of enthusiasm to overcome whatever obstacles that would be coming along the way pursuing the program, nevertheless, their ability to deal with multiple functions roles, have eventually put the undesired burden on them. As ascertained by Sanders & Lushington, (2002), part-time students with high self-efficacy are believed to influence their goals and aspiration, hence increase their better expectations and efforts to produce better academic performance and increased on their psychological well-being status, whereas part-time students with low self efficacy probably would suffer an adverse affect on academic performance and their psychological well-being.

It is also important to highlight that how the individual responds to the stressor will depend on their personality, their perceptions, and their past experience. Some stress is necessary that it assists us in achieving both work and personal goals. However, too much stress can make those goals harder to achieve. How well a person will cope with occupational stress will depend on the extent to which they felt threatened by the stressor, the actions they know they can take to reduce the impact of the stressor and their expectations as to how they will be able to cope with the stressor (Managing stress in the work place, 2000).

Students' with severe depression do not take pleasure in activities that were once enjoyable. Other physical and mental problems often experienced include sleep problems, loss of appetite, inability to concentrate, memory problems, and aches and pains. Students who suffer from this condition often feel worthless, helpless, and hopeless about their ability to fix things. They often welcome sleep and experience their waking life as a living nightmare. No matter how hard they try to snap out of it, they feel as though they are falling into an abyss with nothing to hold on to. Students who experience major depression feel persistently sad (Berkeley University Health Services, 2003) and also have the tendency to even committing suicide (Goldberg & Hillier, 1979).

Family Stress

Research done by Holmes and Rahe (1967) had earlier indicated that family stress situations can develop when an individual's behaviour is condemned by other members, or when the family collectively experiences a stressful event, such as chronic disability or death, or a loss of income.

Family stress may arise from conflict of ideas or relationships with spouse, children, siblings, parents. This stress may also be caused by the ill-health of a family member, financial problems, a divorce, or the death of a dear one. A stressed individual can play havoc with family life (Wiersma & Berg, 1991). Part-time students may indulge in self-destructive behavior, which will have an influence on family members. He or she may become absent-minded, neglect duties, and overlook health problems (Patricia, 1987). In addition, many people are distressed by efforts to juggle work and family demands, such as caring for sick or aging parents or children (Wiersma & Berg, 1991; Home, 1998; Young, 2007)

Similar to individuals, family units are often frequently feel overloaded, which deals on the factors of too much demand and not enough resources (Blgbee, 1992). This impact of stress within families can be connected to significant stressors or may come about as the result of seemingly insignificant, normal, developmental changes (Home, 1998).

Stress can thus affect the family if left unchecked (Jaffe, 2000). In this study, the selection of family stress are 1) money constraints, 2) conflict with spouse, 3) burden with household work, 4) having sexual frustration, 5) not enough time spent with family members, 6) personal health problem, 7) family member health problems, 8) difficulty due to no babysitter or housemaid, 9) unfriendly and disgusting neighborhood and 10) having too much debts and bills to pay (Holmes and Rahe, 1967).

Self Efficacy

'Self-efficacy beliefs' is among the factors that influence the positive and negative effect to the part-time students' well-being conditions. These factors that come with a demand perceived to be either challenging or threatening on students (Sanders & Lushington, 2002). Psychologist, Bandura (2004) has defined self-efficacy as belief in ability to succeed in specific situations. Self-efficacy beliefs influence goals and aspiration. This beliefs form the outcomes of people, particularly students' expectation in their efforts to produce. It is a belief that one has the capabilities to execute the programs of actions required to manage prospective situations (Sanders & Lushington, 2002).

A person with high self-efficacy may engage in more healthy related activities when an illness occurs, whereas a person with low self efficacy would harbour feelings of hopelessness (Moeini at al., 2008). It is important here to understand that part-time students with high self-efficacy in general might think that they would be able to cope up with any related stress factors that occur during their studies (Abdulghani, 2008). Those of high self-efficacy expect to realize favourable outcomes. Conversely, those with low self-efficacy expect their efforts to result in poor outcomes (Bandura, 2004). Self-efficacy is a focal determinant because it affects health behaviour, both directly and by its influence on the other determinants (Moeini et al., 2008).

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological stress refers to the emotional and physiological reactions experienced when an individual confronts a situation in which the demands go beyond their coping resources (Venes & Thomas, 2001). Psychological stress is continually related to emotional and psychological disorders (Pietromonaco et al.,

1986). Stressful situations, whether long term or short term, can set forward a series of emotional symptoms such as a feeling of personality breakdown, fear, worry attacks, unfocussed attention or diversion, overstated emotional responses and psychological upset such as depression, confusion and burnout (Segerstrom & Miller, 2004). Under continual psychological stress, an individual suffers from spiritual riots within himself. These disturbances in emotional and psychological health may cause or make worse disorders, which can stop life on its track (Vaez & Laflamme, 2008).

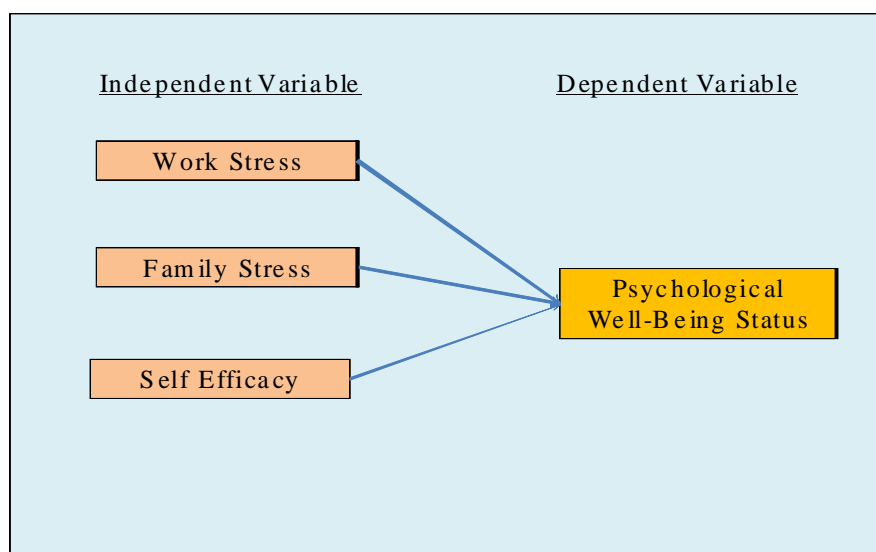
Part-time students' psychological well-being is often developed with the components as outlined by a research done by Ryff & Keyes (1995). There are six major components that could relate to the involvement of students' psychological well-being status which are autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relations with others and self-acceptance. On the other hand, the higher impact stress level and psychological well-being on part-time students' means that there are negative mental condition that makes it relatively unable to be associated with feelings of good health, happiness, high self-esteem and confidence in regular physical activity. As outlined by Moeini et al. (2008), high level of stress among part-time students will directly affect their physiological functions. These will lead to the indirect effects on health, which specifically contribute to the increases in behavioural risk factors for illness such as increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or decreased sleep may accompany increased levels of stress. Moeini et al. (2008) also highlighted that stressors result in changes in the autonomic nervous system, neuromuscular system, neurotransmitter integrity, endocrine together with the immunological functions that increases the probability that an illness will be developed. From all these consequences, studies have found that in part time students' high stress level will lead to negative associations between degree of stress experienced from combined sources and academic performance (Vaez & Laflamme, 2008).

Based on the above literature review, Figure 1 shows the variables that developed the research framework, while the hypotheses in this study were derived from the research aim which are as follows:

H1 - There is a significant relationship between work stress, family stress and self efficacy with psychological well-being status.

H2 - Work stress, family stress and self-efficacy influence the changes in psychological well-being status.

Figure 1: Research Framework of the Study



3.0 METHODOLOGY

The research is a correlational survey. This study was conducted among 105 part-time students who were studying at a private institution in Kuala Lumpur. These students came from various backgrounds like private sectors, government sectors, and some of them are entrepreneurs who have their own consulting firms. They were chosen by simple random sampling.

Four variables used in this instrument were work stress, family stress, self-efficacy and psychological well-being. Instrument on work stress was adapted from Sauter et al. (1989), while family stress was adapted from Holmes and Rahe's Stress Scale (1967) and Jaffe (2000). Types of scale used for both work stress and family stress were a five-type Likert Scale which comprised of a 1 to 5 rating scale where: 1 = never at all, 2 = almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often and 5 = very often. The self-efficacy instrument was adapted from Schwarzer's 10-item General Self-Efficacy (GSE) Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Responses were made on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 = not true at all, 2 = hardly true, 3 = moderately true and 4 = exactly true. The psychological well-being was measured by 28 items of the Malaysian version of Goldberg's General Health questionnaire (GHQ-28) [Goldberg and Hillier (1979)]. Types of scale used for this variable was 1 = not at all, 2 = no more than usual, 3 = rather more than usual and 4 = much more than usual.

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 13.0. The statistical parameters that had been analyzed including descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regressions. A probability of 0.05 was used throughout the analysis.

4.0 RESULTS

Rate of return

From the total of 105 questionnaires distributed, 95 questionnaires were returned to the researcher. All the returned questionnaires were checked in order to confirm that all questions have been answered. After checking, 3 questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete answers. Hence, after excluding incomplete questionnaires, the response rate for study was 87.62% (N = 92).

Demography

Majority of respondents (44.6 %) were attending the Safety & Health Officer (SHO) Certificate program, 25 %were attending Executive Diploma in Occupational Safety & Health (EDOSH) program and 30.4 % were attending the Master in Occupational Safety & Health (MOSH) program. As for the age group of the respondents, it was seen that majority were in the group of 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 years of age which represents 39.1% and 30.4% respectively giving the total percentage of 69.5%. The frequency distributions of the respondents were predominantly male with 82.6% and only 17.4 % were female.

The majority of the respondents were Malay (72.8%), followed by India (17.4%), Chinese (6.5%) and others (3.3%). Majority of the respondents' religion is Islam (72.8%), followed by Hindu (17.4%), Buddhist (5.4%), Christian (3.3%) and others (1.1%). Married respondents were 58.7% while single respondents represented 41.3%. From the table, it can be observed that the majority monthly income were between RM 2,000 to RM 4,999 (55.4%).

Reliability of the instrument

Table 1 shows the reliability analysis of the survey. The Cronbach's alpha values were between 0.708 to 0.900. The values of Cronbach's alpha for all the scales in this sample were majority showed acceptable consistency as they were greater than 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 1: Reliability of the instrument

Variables		Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Work Stress		0.779	10
Family Stress		0.708	10
Self-efficacy		0.829	10
Psychological well-being status	Somatic Symptom	0.757	7
	Anxiety	0.900	7
	Social Dysfunction	0.846	7
	Severe Depression	0.846	7
Total		0.891	58

Descriptive statistics**Work Stress**

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistic of mean scores of all the variables that construct the work stress factor. The lowest mean score is 'interpersonal conflict', which is 1.63, while the highest mean score is 'performance demand'. There are five variables of work stressor that scores more than 2.00 mean which are, 'performance demand', 'long working hours', 'overwork and deadline', 'dealing with difficult people', and 'role conflict'.

Table 2: Work Stress Descriptive Statistics

Stressor		Mean
1.	Performance demand	2.89
2.	Long working hours	2.35
3.	Overwork and deadline	2.16
4.	Dealing with difficult people	2.11
5.	Role conflict	2.04
6.	Physical hazard exposure	1.99
7.	Technology	1.98
8.	Job Insecurity	1.77
9.	Workplace Culture	1.68
10.	Interpersonal conflict	1.63

Family Stress

The family stress descriptive statistic of all the variables of the work stressor are shown in Table 3. The lowest mean score is 'difficulty due to no babysitter or housemaid', which is 0.79, while the highest mean score is 'money constraint' which is 2.52. Five highest mean scores that contributed to family stress were 'money constraint', 'having too much debts and bills to pay', 'family member health problems', 'not enough time spend with family members' and 'burden with household work'.

Table 3: Family Stress Descriptive Statistics

Stressor	Mean
1. Money constrain	2.52
2. Having too much debts and bills to pay	1.86
3. Family member health problems	1.68
4. Not enough time spend with family members	1.61
5. Burden with household work	1.43
6. Conflict with spouse	1.14
7. Unfriendly and disgusting neighbourhood	1.04
8. Personal health problem	1.03
9. Having sexual frustration	0.99
10. Difficulty due to no babysitter or housemaid	0.79

Relationship between work stress, family stress, self-efficacy and psychological well-being

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients of the four variables under study. A low relationship was found between psychological well-being and family stress ($r = 0.334$) and this was significant at 1% level (0.001). However the correlation between psychological well-being and self-efficacy was found to be negative ($r = -0.389$) although it was small and definite correlation and significant at 0.000. Findings also showed that there was no significant relationship between psychological well-being and work stress. Overall, there was a low positive relationship between psychological well-being and family stress (33.4%) and a low negative relationship between psychological well-being and self-efficacy.

Table 4: Correlations

	Work Stress	Family Stress	Efficacy	Psychological
Work Stress	1			
Family Stress	.153	1		
Efficacy	.055	-.190	1	
Psychological	.179	.334**	-.389**	1

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

Influences of work stress, family stress, self-efficacy to psychological well-being

Multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the effects of independent variables (work stress, family stress and self-efficacy) on dependent variable (psychological well-being). From Table 5, the

model indicates that approximately 24.6 per cent ($R^2 = 0.246$) of the variance in psychological well-being are jointly explained by three independent variables (work stress, family stress and self-efficacy). The F value = 9.577 at $p < 0.000$ suggesting that the three independent variables have significantly explained 24.6% of the variance in psychological well-being. However, it was seen that only family stress and self-efficacy had a significant relationship on psychological well-being at 95 % confidence level with standardized beta of 0.242 (family stress) and -0.352 (self-efficacy) where $p < 0.05$.

Based on the above result a model can be developed:

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2$$

$$\text{Psychological well-being} = 1.733 + 0.198 (\text{family stress}) - 0.225 (\text{self-efficacy})$$

Table 5: Multiple Regressions

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
R Square = .246						
Sig. = .000						
F = 9.577						
	(Constant)	1.733	.316		5.480	.000
	Work Stress	.126	.073	.161	1.711	.091
	Family Stress	.198	.078	.242	2.532	.013
	Efficacy	-.225	.060	-.352	-3.716	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Efficacy, Work Stress, Family Stress

b. Dependent Variable: Psychological

5.0 DISCUSSIONS

The findings on the relationship and the influence between work stress and psychological well-being is contrast with other findings like Cochran (2001), Lambert (1993), and Patricia (1987). Lambert (1993) found that part-time students' jobs play a role to more stress to their students' function which required long, unpredictable, or inflexible hours, demand exclusive devotion and are intolerant of interference from other roles. Furthermore Patricia (1987) findings also support that stressful events at work such as adjusting to a new job, poor job-person fit, or inability to perform satisfactorily can produce fatigue, worry, or frustration that can distract from pursuing a satisfying non-work life while Cochran (2001) examined that working students are exposed to more occurrence of stress. The difference might be due to all classes are conducted during weekends and furthermore courses conducted are related to their experience, thus they might not feel stress at work while performing their student's function. Furthermore, these results again were consistent with the literature review which has clarified that how the individual responds to the stressor will depend on their personality, their perceptions, and their past experience. Some stress is necessary that it assists the part-time students in achieving both work and personal goals. However, too much stress can make those goals harder to achieve. The part-time students' stress level in this study has supported the literature that students act in response to the stressor will depend on their personality, perceptions, and past experience (Linn & Zeppa, 1984). The findings also supported the literature that how well a person will cope with occupational stress will depend on the extent to which they feel threatened by the stressor, the actions they know they can take

to reduce the impact of the stressor and their expectations as to how they will be able to cope with the stressor (Managing stress in the work place, 2000).

From the study results, it was found that family stress plays a vital role in contributing to psychological well-being. It can be concluded that family stress is often related to the factors as highlighted by Blgbee (1992), where the major contributor to family stress is too much demand and not enough resources. As a result, part-time students' family units often frequently feel overloaded, where it has been obviously indicated that family stress situations are developed when the family collectively experiences a stressful event, such as chronic disability or death, or a loss of income. In addition to the overall findings of family stress, those factors further supported that many people are distressed by efforts to juggle work and family demands, such as caring for sick or aging parents or children (Wiersma & Berg, 1991; Home, 1998; Young, 2007). Nevertheless, family stress is more fragile to part-time students psychological well-being condition, where it can contribute to the negative effect of mental wellness (Patricia, 1997).

This study has also observed that there are significant relationships and influences between self-efficacy and psychological well-being status of part-time students. This study finding is congruent with the study of Moeini et al. (2008); Sanders and & Lushington (2002) where they found that high self-efficacy has been related to increased psychological well-being status. The relationship between self-efficacy and psychological well-being however showed that there was a weak negative correlation (-0.389). Even the multiple regressions analysis also showed negative effect of self-efficacy (Beta of -.352). It means that when self-efficacy decreases, the stress level will be increased, hence giving the impact of higher stress level and psychological mental illness.

These findings were consistent with past literature that social dysfunction is always associated with failure to develop in interpersonal, educational and work-related area. It is also linked with avoidance of learning situations, problems making friends and early school drop-out (Russell, 2008). Somatic symptom are related to part-time students to experience decreased appetite, decreased muscular strength and endurance, and lowered levels of ambition or drive (Selye, 1977). Anxiety is reported to be predictive of reduced performance among students, worry, uneasiness, apprehension, or worry, panic attack and emotional outbursts (Lazarus, 1991; Sanders & Lushington, 2002; Seligman et al., 2001; Stowell et al., 2008).

6.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the stress level among part-time students and its relationship and influence to their psychological well-being status. Theoretically, the implication of this study suggested that work stress has contributed to greater levels of stress if compared against family stress. However, since the higher work stress is usually paid off with higher salary income or many other rewards, it has been concluded that it does not directly impact to the psychological well-being of the part-time students. Unlike family stress, even though the contribution is comparatively lower to the level of stress, the impact onto psychological well-being is apparently greater, since it involves the matter of adverse affect on psychological consequences when dealing with relationship within a family. Furthermore, family stress did not directly contribute to part-time students' rewards in term of monetary or achievement recognition unlike the work stress. The stress level and psychological well-being are parallel in terms of significance, whereby the higher the stress levels are, the greater its impact to the psychological well-being and the result does suit the findings. Self efficacy however, indicated that it can be easily influenced by the part-time students' emotion while answering the questionnaires. The emotional factor in self efficacy shows that part-time students' are courageous

enough to overcome any obstacle that comes along with the program, but at the same time reported high stress level. Relatively, this study indicates that self efficacy does have significant negative relationship with stress level and psychological well-being, but the relationship shows that it has revealed a weak and poor negative relationship. It is also suggested that for future research, this type of study is to be extended to all part-time students from variety of programs from various higher institutions throughout Malaysia.

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