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Contents

Making Volunteering Visible[1]

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ABSTRAK

Kerja sukarela selalu dikaitkan dengan jenis pekerjaan yang tidak berbayar dan percuma serta tidak pernah diambil kira di dalam data kebangsaan Malaysia. Kertas kerja ini mencadangkan agar kerja sukarela diambil kira sebagai satu nilai ekonomi dan sebahagian daripada aset negara. Asas empirikal kertas kerja ini adalah berdasarkan satu kajian yang telah dijalankan pada tahun 2003 yang berkaitan dengan sumbangan nyata atau tidak nyata pesara kerajaan di dalam kumpulan profesional dan pengurusan sektor Perkhidmatan Awam Malaysia. Ia mengandaikan bahawa dengan memberi nilai wang yang sesuai dan sepatutnya terhadap sumbangan pesara sukarelawan di dalam pembangunan komuniti, akan menggalakkan lebih ramai pesara melibatkan diri dalam kerja yang lebih produktif dan bermakna semasa tempoh peralihan hidup mereka.

ABSTRACT

Volunteer work is always associated with free and unpaid employment and is never accounted for in the national data of Malaysia. This paper argues that voluntary work should be made visible by according it with economic value for it to be part of the national asset of the country. The empirical basis of this paper is reflected in a research survey conducted in 2003 on the tangible and intangible contributions of the public service retirees who belonged to the Professional and Managerial group within the Malaysian civil service. It is premised on the belief that providing a decent and liveable monetary value to the retirees' voluntary contribution in community development would usher in more retirees to come forward to engage in meaningful and productive work during the so-called transition period of their waking life.

INTRODUCTION

The world over is facing an uphill battle of engaging the ageing population in the most productive and meaningful way. In western countries such as the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia, concerted efforts have been underway to ensure that the elderly gets their fair share in the development of their nations. For instance, in America, the Independent Sector, a non-profit organization with a membership of at least 500 charities, youths and other groups, conducted a survey in 2002, had estimated that Americans spend 19 billion hours per year volunteering and put the value of these efforts at US$226 billion. This represents 2.5% of the United States Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and is greater than the GDP of 85% of the countries in the world (United States Department of Energy 2003, as cited in Penner 2004). Such

concerted efforts are well reflected in the manner in which the political and civil leadership formulates social and health policies and regulations affecting the ageing population; creating formal support services; job-matching programme within the formal and informal industries; and, initiating support programme within the non-governmental framework, among others. Thus, it can be said that the whole system of governance initiates and supports programme that are fully effective and operational and which considers, among others, the equally prominent role that the elderly population plays in the mainstream society. In less developed countries, however, much is to be desired when it comes to the status and welfare of the ageing cohort presumably because these countries still have to confront other more pertinent issues affecting the 'productive' labour age group to the extent that the elderly is relegated to the background. For example, has the increasing number of older population been reflected in development plans, specifically in regard to the budgetary allocation for the elderly?

How it did come about that the elderly population has become redundant and disposable when they no longer thought to contribute to the economic life of the nation? That this perception may well be pervasive in many developing countries is a seeming reality. Perhaps it would be interesting to note that, such reality springs from a policy that few developing countries in the region have adopted. It is based on the principle that promotes and encourages the productivity of the people and where their productivity and economic 'exchange value' is measured in relation to the labour they put in their work. The bias in this model definitely impacted on the elderly population where the essentiality of the labour exchange is couched in monetary terms for those who are active and, as such, demarcates the population of the community from those who are not. In the case of Malaysia, when working adults in the government sector reach the mandatory retirement of 55/56, they become a 'redundant' workforce; while in other countries e.g., Philippines and Singapore, the retirement age is around 60.

The main objective of this article is to show how voluntary work of retirees could be accounted for in the national statistics as part of the assets of Malaysia. In this way, retirees' contribution will be quantified in light of the number of ways they can engage in voluntary work.

Voluntary Work Among the Retirees

What is then the relationship between retirement and volunteerism or is there any connection between the two? According to the Independent Sector Report (1995), about 50% of the adults in the US were involved in voluntary work. It was also found that more women, more whites and particularly those with higher incomes were more prominent. About 11% of the 93 million volunteers were involved in political or societal activities. A telephone interview survey by the Hong Kong Public Opinion Program (HKPOP) of 1555 randomly selected persons aged 15 and above, indicated that 22% had participated in organized voluntary services and 55% had non-organized voluntary mutual aid activities. Of these, 22% were professionals or semi-professionals. Altruism was the main reason for volunteering with 72.2% believing that people volunteered to help others. The average contribution of a volunteer was estimated as HK$2660 (US$350). As to the most important volunteer cause, nearly half of the respondents in the Commonwealth Fund Survey were church-related, followed by health services (Bass 1995; Fischer and Schaffer 1993). The recent volunteers were from among women, high school education or higher preferences, married, high income, good health and active in religion (Bass 1997).

The ability of seniors to re-enter the labour force and find jobs has no doubt been aided by the fact that more of them are enrolling in the career or job-related education programs. According to the latest available data from the Department of Education, the number of Americans 55 and older enrolled in the career- or job-related adult education courses

increased by 45% between 1995 and 1999. An analysis of the Department of Education statistics found that there were 10,800,000 Americans 55 and older participating in the adult education programs in 1995. Of those, 3,800,000 or 35%, were enrolled in the career- or job-related courses. By 1999, seniors in adult education jumped 27% to 13,700,000, of which 5,500,000 were taking job-related courses. Most surprisingly, perhaps, is the fact that, while individuals 65 and older enrolled in adult education programs grew 12% between 1995 and 1999, those taking job-related courses expanded by 38%, from about 697,000 to 966,000 (Challenger 2003).

Malaysia does not have sufficient data with regard to its volunteers from among the retirees. In view of the fact that social changes and social development are a high priority, retirees could be of help in this area. This study attempts to ascertain the extent of involvement of the retirees in voluntary work and their potential for further involvement in the activities planned under the 8thMP. As Herzog and Morgan (in Bass *et al.* 1993:120) have said, "...If older persons were viewed as a potential societal resource, we might begin to document the contributions they make through volunteer work today and attempt to identify circumstances that can facilitate further volunteer work...."

There is little data, if any, about the involvement of Malaysian retirees in voluntary work. Any reference to volunteerism in the 8th Malaysia Plan (8MP) is with reference to youth. In view of the importance of the community development, the Government has planned for various community and family development programs such as *Rukun Tetangga, Pesta Gawai and Pesta Keamatan* under the 8MP to assist the people cope with social changes and social integration. The Government is also aware of the decrease in the family size and increase in the longevity of the older generation. To meet the challenges of the future, the Government will encourage smart partnerships with NGOs. More care-centres for the aged, the disabled, unfortunate children will be established. Recognizing the importance of training for social workers the Government has established the Social Institute of Malaysia in 2001. The Institute will cater for training in family development, psychology, sociology, social work, counselling for volunteers and members of NGOs and other social workers (8MP, 2001: 530-533). The retirees could contribute to these activities.

Volunteerism and Community Development

A community is a group of people living in a locality bonded together by a special nationality, race, religion, values or occupation. Boyle (1981:150) defines it as '...a social system of relationships is implying a patterned aggregation of individuals and objects operating as an interdependent whole with some degree of regularity....' Development is described as a dynamic concept of growth and improvements subject to continuous environmental change. Community development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress with the active participation of the whole community and with the fullest possible reliance on the communities' initiative (Rothman 1974). Levin and Perkins (1997) emphasize the importance of democratic procedures, voluntary cooperation, self-help, development of indigenous leadership, and education in community development.

Community development cannot take place without the community involvement. Stukas and Dunlop (2002) suggest "efforts to increase involvement of citizens in their communities are now widespread, involving both top-down process (i.e. government initiatives) and bottom-up processes (i.e. grassroots organizing)". In the US, President Bush and President Clinton issued the National Community Service Act 1990 and the National and Community Service Trust Act. The global initiative was further promoted through the National initiatives and the UN General Assembly 2000 resolution such as" "to promote the contribution that volunteerism can make to the creation of a caring society (annex 111, article 54, p.24). Community involvement requires the understanding of

roles and perspectives, needs and outcomes of all the various constituent groups in the system and their integration (Stukas and Dunlop 2002).

However, we have extended our community domain to global perspectives in relation to the community we live in today. "...The broader global community will be enhanced by the health of the many smaller communities that constitute the whole...." With this perspective and the introduction of the information age, we have to make connections, reach out to create a system of relationships with the blurring of boundaries and enter the virtual world of relationships where "...every person has a chance to be influential and make difference in the world by being a volunteer", where every CEO will promote the ethics of "Everybody is a volunteer in this organization. Everyone has stewardship or personal responsibility to improve our community..." using the "...dominant force of our society ...the goodness in the overwhelming majority of the people..." (Covey 1998 in Hesselbein, Goldsmith, Beckhard *et al.* 1998). To quote Van Til (1995:11). "The world has never been in so great a need of the work of volunteers and the many voluntary organizations sustained by voluntary commitment...."

Bartle (n.a.) suggests 16 elements of community strength – altruism, common values, communal services, communications, confidence context, information, intervention, leadership, organization, skills, unity, networking, political power, trust and health. According to Bartle, the more any community has of each of the elements, the stronger it is, the more capacity it has, the more empowered it is. The PMP group of retirees has the experience and expertise to help in developing all those elements among the community and can be a driving force for community development. Volunteerism is related to the good of fellow human beings or good of the people in a community. As the CEO of the National Institute of the Negro Women says:

Without community service, we would not have a strong quality of life. It's important to the person who serves as well as the recipient. It's the way in which we ourselves grow and develop.

Organized and Unorganised Volunteering

Literature indicates that less emphasis has been done in both organized and unorganized types of volunteer work preferring instead to account and give value to the organized form of volunteering engaged in by men and women. Perhaps this is again another avenue where bias is taking place in research on volunteerism especially when only the so-called voluntary work in formal groups is duly recognized the result of which is the under-estimation of other type of volunteer work. This has implication on gender where women volunteers tend to draw their interests on unorganized voluntary activities as extension of their so-called feminine roles such as housecleaning, baby-sitting and others.

As defined by the South Australian studies on voluntary work (Ironmonger 2002), *organized volunteering* or *indirect volunteering* refers to unpaid help in the form of time, service or skills willingly given by an individual through an organization or group. *Formal* or *organized volunteering* is indirect as it is mediated through an organization. Reimbursement of expenses or small gifts is not regarded as payment of salary. Work reimbursed by payment in-kind is not regarded as volunteering. On the other hand, unorganized volunteering (direct volunteering) refers to the informal unpaid help and care that occurs within the personal networks of family, friends, neighbours and acquaintances. Informal or unorganised volunteering is direct as it is not mediated through an organization. It includes regular, spontaneous and sporadic help that takes place between friends and neighbours such as giving advice, looking after other people's children or helping an elderly neighbour.

It is interesting to note that in Australia, for example, unpaid work in the household economy must be accounted for in unorganized volunteering to be able to get a

clear picture of the time donated by volunteers to the said type of volunteer service. As argued by Cahn (2002) and the United Nations University (undated), "...if the same calculations were used to assign value to unpaid work in developing countries, where even more of women's work is unremunerated, the differences would be even greater". These and other issues provide the background of this article.

METHODOLOGY

The research was an exploratory study conducted in 2003 designed to understand the status of the retirees who once belonged to the Premier and Managerial and Professional sector of the Malaysian Public Service and who left the service between 1989 and 2000. Of the more than five hundred questionnaires mailed to the retirees throughout Malaysia, 261 retirees replied, representing the various offices such as education, administrative, police, medical, legal and technical.

The survey instrument consisted of nine sections with a total of 215 items with statements ranging from the reasons why retirees engage in voluntary work to their willingness to volunteer in the future. The Likert scale was used to measure the retirees' opinion with one as the lowest and five as the highest. Scores were tabulated and statistical analyses were applied.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Retirees
Of the 261 respondents, 13.4% were female while 86.6% male with 52.1% from both sexes were volunteers. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the volunteer retirees came from Peninsular Malaysia; 5.9% from Sabah; 6.6% from Sarawak and 16.9% from the Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur and Labuan. Ethnically, within the ranks of the volunteers, 66.8% were Malays; 17.8% Chinese; 8.8% Indian; 1.5% Kadazan; less than one percent Iban; and, 4.4% from other ethnic groups.

The overall marital status reflected that the majority (90.3%) of the respondents were married with children. The other 9.7% represented those who were married but had no children (2.7%), single (3.9%) and those who were never married (3.1%). A similar situation was reflected for both the volunteers and the non-volunteers. However, it was noted that the ratio was a little less (89.0%) among the volunteers than the non-volunteers (91.2%). The ratios would be different from the West where the difference between each category would be very little (Cnaan *et al.* 1993).

About half of the respondents had a Bachelor's degree (52.9%) whereas 32.2% were equally divided into diploma and master qualifications. Only 2.3% possessed doctorate qualifications while the remaining 12.6% comprised professional, technical and other qualifications. The proportions were somewhat equally represented among the volunteers and non-volunteers. Generally, it was noted that the volunteers possessed a slightly higher score than the non-volunteers except for the HSC/Diploma qualification. This is true in other studies where it was found that those who volunteered possessed higher qualifications (Fischer and Schaffer 1993). Cheang and Braun (2001) also found that volunteers had higher qualifications than the non-volunteers.

A little more than half (54.8%) indicated that they had no dependent children, while 21.8% with one child and 11.5% and 11.9% with two and three dependent children, respectively. This is quite different from the West where there would rarely be dependent children among the retirees as they retired generally about ten years later around the age of 65. This is a pertinent factor as it is related to the need of working for income after retirement at the age of 56 years. It is noted that more of the volunteers (50.7%) than the non- volunteers (39.2%) have dependent children.

It is interesting to note that slightly more than half (51.7%) had dependent children during their retirement life. This was expected as the compulsory retirement age was set at 55/56 years. Hence, if the respondents had married between the ages 25-30, their children

would have been their tertiary education. This was one strong reason why the retirees were engaged in full-time or part-time work. It was thus seen that more than half of the retirees were doing voluntary work although they still carried the burden of their dependent children. This may not be common in the West where retiriìent was much later.

About a quarter (24.5%) of the total respondents had dependent parents as compared to 21.6% for the non-volunteer and 27.2% for volunteer retirees. This is also a pertinent factor for Malaysians as the value of extended families is a common feature. This aspect is also a special feature among the Malaysian retirees who had not only dependent children but also dependent parents to look after. Again it was noted that the volunteers had more dependents than the non-volunteers.

As the majority of the respondents were Malays, it is not surprising that 59.8% of the respondents practiced Islam. The other religions in order of adoption were Christianity (14.6%), Buddhism (11.5%) Hinduism (6.5%), Non-believers (3.4%) and other minority religious group (4.2%). There was a higher proportion of Muslims (68.4%) and Christians 15.4%) among the volunteers, and a higher ratio of Buddhists (15.2% against 8.1%), Hindus (8.0% against 5.2%), Non-believers (6.4% against 0.7%) and 'Others' (5.6% against 2.2%) among the non-volunteers. This meant that there was a greater % of Muslims and Christians among the volunteers than the non-volunteers; the other religions were less reflected among the volunteers. These religions were again relevant to the people of Malaysia as represented by the proportion of the population of the country.

Only 2.3% of the respondents perceived their financial position to be 'not satisfactory'. On the other hand, 93.1% considered their status as 'satisfactory to good' while 4.6% perceived it as 'excellent'. Only two respondents (1.5%) in the volunteer category and four respondents (3.2%) in the non-volunteer category perceived their status to be unsatisfactory. With about 50% engaged in

productive work and their regular pension as income they should be comfortable. However, there may be a few who have to support the education of their children.

Going by the findings from 10 studies (Fischer *et al.* 1993), there is a likelihood of increase in volunteerism with increase in income. This is to be expected from the retirees who continue to hold high positions in organizations during retirement.

The health status among the overall respondents can be considered as excellent (6.5%), good (43.13%) and satisfactory (44.8%). The remaining 5.4% was perceived as not satisfactory. Generally the ratios for the volunteers and non-volunteers were somewhat similar. The volunteers indicated a slightly better profile. The self-perception was not very different amoìng the volunteers and the non-volunteers. Considering the fact that about 50% of them were gainfully employed, their health status can be assumed to be good. However, there may be some who would succumb to degenerating diseases of aging that make up the 'not satisfactory' category in the range of 4.4% for volunteers and 6.5 % for the non-volunteers.

Various studies have indicated that poor health can be a de-motivation to volunteer (Fischer *et al.* 1993; Chambre 1987). Humanistic theory suggests that humans determine what they want to do at every stage of their lives. This is supported by the comments from the respondents:

> ... Now my health is not so good to do more volunteer service... I have been operated twice on my spine.

> ... I am a diabetic; heart problem, high blood pressure, high cholesterol. Age has caught up; a little weak.

> ... At present I have diabetes and hypertension and therefore not very healthy.

> ... I have less energy – use a number of supplementary vitamins.

It was found that 48.5% of the retirees were living a 'free and easy' life. Of the

remaining 51.5%, 13.8% were in full time job, 11.5% were in part-time jobs, 20.4% were self-employed while 5.8% were in search of jobs. Volunteers were slightly less (13.2%) involved in the full-time jobs than the non-volunteers (14.5%). There were more (14.0%) among the volunteers in the part-time jobs than the non-volunteers (8.9%). More volunteers (25.0%) were also self-employed as compared to the non-volunteers (15.3%). However, fewer volunteers (3.7%) were looking for jobs as compared to 8.1% of the non-volunteers. Less percentage (44.1%) of the volunteers was 'free and easy' compared to 53.2 % of the non-volunteers.

This is in contrast to Cnaan's findings, of which 6.9% of volunteers and 3.2% of the non volunteers engaged in part time work. Those who were not gainfully employed were between 56.4% for the volunteers whereas 42.5% for non-volunteers. There were 36.7% volunteers and 54.3% non-volunteers engaged in the full time work.

Attendance at place of worship is seen to be generally high. The percentage for 'at least once a week and more' is 46.3% for the volunteers, and 35.2% for the non-volunteers. Altogether, they represented 40.75% of the respondents. These would probably be Muslims who were expected to pray five times a day. Among those who attended at least once a month or more, it was found that the volunteers had a higher attendance (97.1%) as compared to the non-volunteers (80.8%). The attendance of the volunteers who attended' 'several times a day' was 34.6% as compared to 21.6% among the non-volunteers. In sum, 10.7% hardly ever attended the place of worship. Among the non-volunteers, they formed 19.2% of the respondents as compared to 2.9% of the volunteers.

This is in line with the western countries where it had been found that there were more churchgoers among the volunteers. It can be agreed therefore, that those who are religious are more inclined to volunteer.

It is observed that all in all 52.1% of the respondents were from the Education service and as shown in Table 1, 61.0% of the

TABLE 1
Percentage respondents by service at time of retirement

Services	Volunteer (n=136) %
Education	61.0
Police	5.1
Finance	1.5
Medical	1.5
Social/Welfare	3.7
Administrative	14.0
Engineering	1.5
Agriculture	2.2
Other	9.5

volunteers were from the Education service as well. This can be associated with the similar percentage of participants in the sample. Among the volunteers the Administrative service comprised of 14.0%. Police service was 5.1%, whereas 9.5% of the volunteers were from other miscellaneous services. Except for the education service, all the other services had a smaller percentage of volunteers than the non-volunteers. The ratio of the non-volunteers to volunteers for the Police service was more than double.

This was reflected in the comments of one respondent, saying "… I feel as an ex-police officer, I have contributed 36 years of my life helping the general public and my colleagues. I feel now is the time to spend on my family…." Only 1.5% of the Medical and Finance persons were volunteers indicating that they were still active in their paid profession.

It was noted that the volunteer retirees had participated more in all the school activities. Among the various school activities, 14.2% had been involved in voluntary activities outside school. The contextual model (Lewis 1997; Pepper 1942) suggests that development is a continuous process intervened by concurrent circumstances and not earlier traits. According to Fischer and Schaffer (1993), "…a number of studies have shown, people who volunteered in old age tend to be those who have volunteered when they were younger…." Cheang and Braun (2001) support the

TABLE 2
Percentage respondents by volunteer activities during working career

Volunteer Activities	Volunteer (n=136)	Non-volunteer (n=125)	Overall (n=261)
Religious Institution	20.6	15.2	18.3
Youth development	5.7	4.2	5.1
Educational	18.2	16.2	17.4
Human services	5.7	5.1	5.4
Health	2.3	4.0	3.0
Work-related	11.3	17.0	13.6
Arts	1.8	1.4	1.7
Cultural and Humanities	2.6	4.0	3.2
Political	4.7	2.9	3.9
Community foundations	4.9	4.7	4.8
Societal benefit	5.7	4.0	5.1
Recreational	7.4	10.1	8.5
Service clubs	5.7	7.2	6.4
Informal (care-giving)	3.4	4.0	3.6

TABLE 3
Distribution of volunteer retirees based on type of services

Type of service	Percent (n=136)
Religious	34.6
Education	33.8
Social	22.1
Community	18.4
Welfare	16.9
Health	10.3
Political	7.4
Recreational	7.4
Work-related	5.1
Societal benefit	3.7
Sports	3.7
Service clubs	2.9
Youth	2.2
Arts & Culture	0

generally more involved than the non-volunteers in voluntary work during their working careers as shown in Table 2. The most popular contributions were for religious institutions, educational, work-related services and leisure activities. This is in support of the findings that retiree volunteers would normally have been involved in service work while at school or during their working career.

A recent research on volunteer retirees in Malaysia showed the various areas where volunteer retirees rendered their services. Following their interests, most of the retirees spent most of their time in religious (34.6%), educational (33.8%) and social activities (22.1%) as depicted in Table 3. The areas where voluntary work took place among retirees were in more or less organized and structured groups and did not in any way account the work that took place outside it.

Putting Dollar Value on Volunteering

Conventional understanding of volunteerism stresses that it is a free service rendered by an individual's desire to lend a helping hand to the community. Some scholars argue that work is not truly a voluntary work if it is remunerated (Smith 1991, as cited in Wilson 2000) and argue further that argue that voluntary work

findings as their study found that 52% of current volunteers performed voluntary service when they were children. However, the 'younger period' could extend from school to one's career.

As for the involvement of the retirees in voluntary work during their pre-retirement careers, it was noted that the volunteers were

whether it is engaged in by retirees or from other age cohorts would lose its spirit and value once it is remunerated.

It is rather important that since retirees' productive contribution within the public service ceased to be given economic, social and political meaning and value after retirement, the urgency to account for the retirees' work beyond their formal employment in the civil service needs to be highlighted. Voluntary work in any form must be included or accounted for in the national data based on the following considerations: firstly, household work such as taking care of the dependent or sick family member, child minding or baby sitting, extending domestic help as housecleaning, etc. must be included both in the local, state and national statistics arguing the relevant role of extended family members vis-‡-vis sustaining the household or family unit (see for example, Ironmonger 2002); secondly, by accounting unpaid household work, it would provide our national leadership, in particular, the different government agencies working on the family and social welfare, the much needed picture of the extent the country is dependent on our own citizens; and thirdly, drawing from the experience of advanced economies where both paid and unpaid voluntary work in the organized and unorganised units/groups are remunerated and accounted in most official documents, e.g. Gross National Products, Human Development Report, Volunteer Services Programme among others. As the United Nations (undated) acknowledges, much of the voluntary action is spontaneous, informal and unstructured and because it lies outside the formal market, it tends to go unrecorded, unregistered and recognized.

The 1995 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Program acknowledged the fact that there was complete disregard of the estimated value of other economic activities and this refers to the unpaid productive activities of women and men for household use, for the benefit of the community, or for the non-monetarized exchange. It further reported that "globally, only slightly more than half of the total time spent on "economically productive activities" was going through formal markets and reported in the standard income measures such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The productive contribution of home, family, community is not included in any of the economists' measurements of the GDP.

To cite a particular case, South Australia believes that calculating the economic value of volunteering is important because it can
- emphasize to government and policy makers that voluntary work makes significant contribution to the community
- encourage the citizens to become volunteers by demonstrating the economic benefits of volunteering; and
- inform the media and the community about the value of volunteer time to the national economy (Ironmonger 2002).

In a study on the public reception and perception of volunteer services in the Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong, volunteers across the life course suggested that if their services were to be given a monetary value it would be HK$76 (RM38) per hour on the average. In the case of Malaysia, aside from accounting the value of voluntary work, perhaps, organized and unorganized volunteering should consider to provide minimal food and transportation allowance to the would-be volunteers during their "working days". Some charity organizations in Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley have been practicing this to most of their volunteers.

Ways to Assign Monetary Value to Volunteer Contributions

The United States has established an Independent Sector group that monitors the volunteer programme in the country, while Canada has instituted the Canada Volunteerism Initiative (CVI). Similarly, Australia, Europe and United Kingdom also promote volunteerism and have strongly emphasized the role of volunteering work outside the market economy, arguing that most human transactions are found outside

TABLE 4
Input-based methods of estimating dollar value of volunteer time

Approach	Feature	Advantages	Disadvantages
Generalist Approach to Replacement Costs	It uses one global figure for all organizations	Useful for surveys of volunteer value	Too general for application to a particular organization or a particular task
Specialist Approach to Replacement Costs	It evaluates volunteer contributions to the organization by comparing them with similar jobstasks in the market	Very precise and likely to result in the most accurate estimate	Necessary information may be difficult to obtain for some organizations
Modified Specialist Approach to Replacement Costs	It evaluates volunteer contributions to the organization by comparing them to the general market value of jobs within a particular field of endeavour	Not as precise as the specialist approach, but more practical	For organizations with a broad range of tasks, could be too approximate

Source: Mook and Quarter 2003

the lure of the market forces in the most cases. In many occasions, voluntary action is considered as co-production (Brudney 1990; Ferris 1984 as cited in Mook and Quarter 2003).

Based on the experience of Canada, as well as reflected in South Australia and Europe, three major approaches, viz, generalist, specialist and modified specialist, are adopted based on replacement costs, that is, how much it would cost if an organization was to pay for the service provided by a volunteer (Mook and Quarter 2003). Table 4 details the different approaches of estimating volunteer time in dollar terms. As is happening in Canada, the type of work is usually classified under a certain category in such a way that its roles are more or less the same or those which likely produce the same end result are placed in the same category. For instance, clerical or administration or secretarial task; consultancy and training of youth; religious or charity work;

house-cleaning, child-minding and care for the elderly, etc. In countries cited above, it seems rather convenient to make an estimate of replacement cost considering that they have readily available data across voluntary work and age cohorts. However, in Malaysia, the paucity of available statistics on volunteering makes the estimation an uphill task. Tables 5 and 6 are theoretical formulation of the estimations and these figures imply that a substantial monetary contribution of volunteers remained unnoticed and unrecognized by the national establishment. This does not bode well as far as accounting the overall national assets of Malaysia is considered.

Table 5 illustrates how the various types of voluntary work can be estimated based on the number of hours spent per volunteer. The generalist approach provides a more general view of the volunteer tasks irrespective of task specificity, time and space. On the other hand,

TABLE 5

Estimated cost of volunteer work per volunteer

Type of work	Hourly Rate* (RM)	Hours per week	Cost per month (RM)	Annual Value (RM)
Training	10.00	3	120.00	1,440.00
Clerical/admin work	5.00	3	60.00	720.00
Tutoring	10.00	3	120.00	1,400.00
Religious	5.00	3	60.00	720.00
Child-minding	5.00	5	100.00	1,200.00
House-cleaning	5.00	5	100.00	1,200.00

* Estimate of hourly value of type of work is theoretically derived

TABLE 6

Estimated total value of work per given year

Type of Work	Total # of (RM)	Hourly rate (RM)	Hours per week	Annual Value Volunteers*
Training	2000	10.00	3	2,880,000
Clerical/admin Work	2000	5.00	3	1,440,000
Tutoring	2000	10.00	3	2,880,000
Religious	2500	5.00	3	1,800,000
Child-minding	1500	5.00	5	1,800,000
House-cleaning	621	5.00	5	447,120
Total Annual Value				8,367,120

* It is assumed that 50% of the total retirees (21,242) as of 2003 would engage in voluntary work. The figure is based on the present empirical study.

the specialist approach demands that the organization tasks and responsibilities are clearly spelled out so as to ascribe the monetary value to the time spent. What is thought to be more practical and effective is the modified specialist approach which takes into consideration the general situation of the job market.

In Table 6, the estimated total value of voluntary work in a given year based on an estimated total number of volunteers in Malaysia is illustrated. In a way, this looks like a very minimal amount especially when taken individually, however, when taken as a group of workers, the scenario would change as reflected in the table. Based on our 2003 data, it is conservatively estimated that about RM8.3

million is contributed by 50% of retirees to the GDP of Malaysia annually.

The total annual monetary value of voluntary work is calculated this way:

Total numbers of volunteers per type of work X Hourly Rate X Hours
per week X 4 weeks X 12 months = Total annual value

Now, if this figure is to be recognized and accounted for in our national statistics as part of the gross national product (GNP) of Malaysia, this would make a great contribution from the older population alone. This means that despite the fact that the public views retirees as a group of elderly needing help, the

TABLE 7

Contribution of hours of voluntary service by organization and level of responsibility (n=136)

Organization	Responsibility (Hours) Levels				Total Service Involvement (hrs/month)
	1	2	3	4	
Health	13	22	8	41	84
Welfare	197	9	73	82	361
Social	40	56	128	233	457
Education	187	82	127	202	598
Religious	125	263	457	794	1639
Service club/group	9	18	90	57	174
Community	48	69	131	171	419
Youth	0	3	9	33	45
Politic	4	18	38	199	259
Work-related	25	15	25	11	76
Arts & Culture	0	16	58	14	88
Societal benefit	28	35	12	40	115
Recreation	0	11	93	0	104
Sports	41	38	24	55	158
Total Hours	718	657	1276	1936	4577
Currency (RM)	X5	X10	X15	X20	
Total Value (RM)	3590	6570	19140	38720	68,020

study shows that, retirees could indeed be a great potential resource for the development of our communities. By rendering service to the community in various ways and forms and when such services are duly accorded with monetary value, this would make their contribution more visible to the national development plan of Malaysia.

Table 7 shows the contribution of retirees in volunteer work based on the actual number of volunteer retirees (n=136) in the study. The value of their contribution is calculated from the number of hours they put into the organization identified as the responsibility level. From the table, it is safe to say that when a certain volunteer task is quantified by the number of hours one spends volunteering and that when there is a standard of measuring it, the value of volunteer retiree's time and contribution could be well-accounted for. What this strongly implies is the visible and tangible contribution of our older population

in the community affairs as shown in their involvement in various types of organization, which is translated into figures as part of the Gross Domestic Product of Malaysia.

Table 8 shows the distribution of educated Malaysians throughout the country who are 55 years or more and have retired from their field of expertise and so if this can be harnessed properly, their potential will not go to waste. For example, the retirees in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur could well be utilized for various volunteer works such as in charitable organizations, among others.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

1. A national or state/community level Voluntary Work Survey (VWS) across ages must be conducted to determine the economic contribution of the volunteer workers, specifically to include their contributions as the national assets of Malaysia, thereby rendering voluntary

TABLE 8

Population distribution of older Malaysians by state based on educational qualification

State	Certificate (college polytechnic)	Diploma (college polytechnic)	Degree Advanced diploma	Postgraduate certificate/ diploma	Postgraduate degree	
Johor	683	800	993	201	427	
Kedah	439	435	544	88	276	
Kelantan	349	354	497	91	166	
Malacca	249	275	374	57	185	
Negeri Sembilan	255	395	475	96	205	
Pahang	291	303	278	61	127	
Perak	806	696	1046	225	535	
Perlis	119	99	103	13	33	
Penang	485	715	1080	288	575	
Sabah	319	458	774	190	428	
Sarawak	228	372	535	150	425	
Selangor	1154	2806	4973	618	2662	
Terengganu	166	185	254	40	102	
Kuala Lumpur	331	1155	2533	450	1727	
Labuan	7	13	17	5	4	
Total	5881	9061	14476	2573	7877	39868

Source: Population and Housing Census of Malaysia 2000

work visible. The survey would include disaggregate data based on gender, age cohorts and the type of voluntary work from both organized and the unorganized groups.

2. It is now timely to conceive of voluntary work more broadly by encompassing every prosocial act within the domain of both unorganized and organized volunteering such as helping, caring and reciprocating.
3. In a multi-ethnic society like Malaysia, volunteering promotes and facilitates cultural understanding and tolerance when volunteer programmes cut across races or ethnicity.
4. The monetisation of work will usher in new emerging issues that are relevant to recognizing voluntary work.
5. There is a need for a disaggregate data based on gender, ethnicity and class.
6. A tripartite council or commission must be established to consist of representative from the government bodies, non-government organizations and the

religious and civic groups and to act as an umbrella organization that initiates, monitors, promotes as well as strengthens volunteerism.

CONCLUSION

Still much remains to be desired as far as making voluntary work a visible social action that carries monetary value in Malaysia. This is based on the fact that volunteerism, firstly, is not given due recognition, especially those engaged by retirees; and secondly, voluntary work is considered as an unpaid employment thereby does not have to be reflected in the national records. The move to document and recognize volunteerism and to accord it with monetary value is a demonstration of the national acknowledgement as well as an expression of tacit recognition that volunteers from all walks of life contribute to the community development. In this way, volunteering becomes a visible feature in the national scene and volunteers as a valuable human capital that the national leadership helps to sustain.

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The Muslim Religiosity-Personality Measurement Inventory (MRPI)'s Religiosity Measurement Model: Towards Filling the Gaps in Religiosity Research on Muslims

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ABSTRAK

Sejak bermulanya bidang religiositi sebagai satu bidang inkuiri saintifik, ia telah berada di bawah domain psikologi religiositi. Pendekatan itu diambil ke arah pengkonsepsian religiositi sebagai makna bagi keagamaan sejagat. Walau bagaimanapun, majoriti limpahan instrumen religiositi jatuh di bawah petunjuk agama Kristian dan kajian terhadap orang Kristian. Bagi mempelajari tentang kehidupan beragama tradisi bukan Kristian, terdapat keperluan untuk konsep dan instrumen religiositi bagi menggambarkan tradisi keagamaan tersebut. Peranan tasawur terhadap religiositi adalah penting untuk diambil kira sebagai instrumentasi religiositi kerana tasawur ini dapat memberi asas falsafah untuk konsep operasional religiositi, pembentukan dan item. Oleh sebab pengaruh besar terhadap instrumen religiositi adalah berasaskan tasawur terhadap keagamaan *Judeo-Christian*, instrumen religiositi yang wujud kini pun adalah yang mencerminkannya, dan seterusnya ia tidak menunjukkan kesamarataan keunikan tasawur terhadap pandangan non *Judeo-Christian* yang lain seperti tasawur Islam. Oleh yang demikian, kajian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan pandangan umum terhadap konseptualisasi keagamaan, bersama-sama dengan beberapa jurang yang besar dalam kajian religiositi bagi Muslim. Secara kesimpulannya, kertas kerja ini membentangkan satu model asas religiositi yang berasal daripada tasawur dari segi tauhid Islam, di mana MRPI diasaskan.

ABSTRACT

Since the advent of religiosity as a field of scientific inquiry, it has been under the domain of psychologists of religion. The approach taken toward conceptualizing religiosity, therefore, has always been one purported to be of religious universalism. However, the overwhelming majority of religiosity instruments to date have fallen under the rubric of Christianity and the study of Christian people. As the desire to learn more about the religious life of the non-Christian traditions and people spreads, there is an increasing need for religiosity concepts and instruments to reflect

these particular religious traditions. The role of religious worldview, therefore, is a major consideration in the instrumentation of religiosity, as worldview provides an underlying philosophical foundation for the operationalization of religiosity concepts, constructs and items. As the preponderance of religiosity instrumentation to date has been grounded in the Judeo-Christian religious worldview, existing religiosity instrumentation is also reflective of it, and as such, does not adequately represent the uniqueness of other non-Judeo-Christian worldviews such as the Islamic *tawhidic* worldview. As such, the current study aimed to provide a general overview of religiosity conceptualization in general, along with some of the major gaps in religiosity research for Muslims. In response, the paper concludes with the presentation of a basic religiosity model rooted in the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam, upon which the Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI) was based.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF RELIGIOSITY: BACKGROUND AND CONSIDERATIONS

From the beginning of its advent as a subject of scientific inquiry, the conceptualization and operationalization of religiosity has been primarily the domain of psychologists and sociologists, who sought to understand the role of different measurable elements of religion on the intra- and interpersonal worlds of man. As opposed to scholars and doctors of religion, psychologists and sociologists of religion aimed to understand the impact or effects of the unique institution of religion in purely sociological and psychological terms.

Those who would become important figures in the history of psychology, for example, focused much of their interest and attention on religion. From the early writings of William James and G. Stanley Hall at the beginning of the twentieth century, religiosity as an independent scientific concept has been an important field of inquiry to social scientists (Spilka *et al.* 2003). One of the earliest and most controversial topics in psychology to date, in fact, has been the relationship between religiosity and delinquency, which was a focus of much of the early work on religiosity dating back to the 1930s (Serajzadeh 1998).

The significance of religion to human beings in so many dimensions of daily living has made it an important area of inquiry to researchers. Nevertheless, the importance of religion as an area of focus has not been a universal effort. Attempts to study religion as a social scientific phenomenon have been primarily a Western, Judeo-Christian

undertaking. Hill and Hood (1999) aggregated and analyzed 126 different psychological measurements for religiosity. However, Grace (2000) noted that researchers interested in finding measures applicable to the non-Western religions and spirituality could not find them in Hill and Hood's work. Grace also argued that those interested in finding instruments applicable to other religions would most likely not find them anywhere else, either, since much of the research focus had been on the Christian religion (in particular, American Protestantism). Spilka *et al.* (2003:3 also note that "most psychological research has been conducted within the Judeo-Christian framework." According to Ghorbani *et al.* (2000:2), studies of English-speaking populations have dominated the literature. Though other societies have received recent attention (e.g. Gorsuch *et al.* 1997; Grzymala-Moszczynska 1991; Hovemyr 1988; Kaldestad and Stifoss-Hanssen 1993), Judeo-Christian commitments still remain the most common object of investigation. They also add that the need to empirically study other religious traditions is obvious.

Attempts to understand religion and religiosity from the individual or personal perspective have naturally been the domain of psychologists of religion. Since psychology has the overall goal of understanding people and their behaviour, psychologists attempt to do this by studying human motivation, cognition and behaviour (Spilka *et al.* 2003). For those whose domain is to understand religion psycholo-gically, There is a major difference between religion per se and

religious behaviour, motivation, perception and cognition. We study these human considerations and not religion as such (Spilka *et al.* 2003: 3). For psychologists of religion, there is little interest in the content and make-up of religion as a body of knowledge, tradition and practice. Thus, there is little interest in the religious knowledge, practices and experiential inputs that dictate how human behaviour, motivation, perception and cognition are arrived at.

In religious psychology, the focus is not on the religion itself, but rather the functionality or output of religion. In most studies on religiosity, the assumption is made that people from all religious traditions express their faith in three ways: through behaviour (e.g. rituals), belief (e.g. belief in the supernatural) and experience (e.g. mystical states) (Spilka *et al.* 2003). Despite such assertions of the universality of religion according to these three constructs, a single definition of 'religion' itself remains elusive for psychologists of religion.

PERSONALITY RELIGIOSITY CONCEPTUALIZATION AND ITS ROOTS

These considerations lead to important questions about how religiosity has been conceptualized, particularly as it pertains to religious groups outside of the Judeo-Christian tradition. According to Kuçukcan (2000: 461-468) stated that:

"One should bear in mind that almost all of the theoretical frameworks [discussed in this article] were developed after studying predominantly Christian believers and manifestations of Christian religious experience. It is therefore questionable whether these methodological approaches can explain non-Christian religious experience...."

The confirmations by Spilka *et al.*, Kuçukcan and others as to the current limitations of religiosity research due to the majority of work having been conducted according to the Judeo-Christian perspective is an important one. For despite the assertion that religion – from the perspective of religious psychology at least – can be approached universally in terms of measuring its impact on human behaviour, the Judeo-Christian influence is significant in terms of the foundational worldview on which conceptualization efforts are grounded.

According to al-Attas (2001), the role of assumptions stemming from one's overall religious worldview is critical in any scientific process. Although the measurement techniques and methodologies (e.g. quantitative/qualitative, sampling, etc.) may be universally acceptable, the assumptions or assertions made at the fore will unquestionably shape the conceptualization and operationalization process that follows. This will then influence the findings and subsequently the overall conclusions of the research. Thus, religiosity scales claiming to be universal may in fact not be. Implicitly, there is a great likelihood that they will undoubtedly reflect the religious worldview of the author(s) and that of his or her particular religious tradition. Hood and Hill (1999) have echoed this sentiment by claiming that in terms of non-Western faith traditions, relevant scales are virtually non-existent as measures of religion are likely to reflect Christian religious biases, even when not explicitly identified as measures of the *Christian* religion (Heelas 1985). Hood and Hill's statement points to the implicit bias of existing religiosity measurements that stem from the use of a predominantly Judeo-Christian religious worldview as the basis for the conceptualization and operationalization of the vast majority of existing religiosity studies and measures.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLDVIEW IN RELIGIOSITY CONCEPT AND INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Numerous authors have offered a variety of definitions of 'worldview'. For example, James Sire (1988: 17) asserts that, "A worldview is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world." Phillips and Brown (1991: 29) state that "A worldview is, first of all, an explanation and interpretation of the world and second, an application of this view to life. In simpler terms, our worldview is a view of the world and a view for the world." Walsh and Middleton (1984: 32) provide the following succinct explanation, "A world view provides a model of the world which guides its adherents in the world".

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz, for example, whose definition of religion as a "system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic" (Geertz 1973:78), speaks of conceptions of a general order of existence. That is, one of the activities of religion is to tell us about the nature of the world and how it works, also known as metaphysics (Peterson 2001).

Essentially, a worldview is how we see and judge the world and its contents. It is our personal vision and understanding of the reality itself. Thus, what that worldview is, what influences it, and how it is constructed is of the utmost concern. Behaviours, values and thoughts all flow from that same core of beliefs about the makeup of reality that we call our worldview. Viewing religion in term of an orienting worldview captures much of what is important and one might say, even essential to understanding religion.

The significance of worldview in regard to understanding the conceptualization and operationalization of religiosity is grounded in the makeup of what a worldview is. According to Funk (2001), a worldview is a set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality that ground and influence all of one's perceiving, thinking, knowing and doing. The elements of one's worldview, the beliefs about certain aspects of reality as explained by Funk (2001), are one's:

- **epistemology**: beliefs about the nature and sources of knowledge;
- **metaphysics**: beliefs about the ultimate nature of Reality;
- **cosmology**: beliefs about the origins and nature of the universe, life, and especially Man;
- **teleology**: beliefs about the meaning and purpose of the universe, its inanimate elements, and its inhabitants;
- **theology**: beliefs about the existence and nature of God;
- **anthropology**: beliefs about the nature and purpose of Man in general and, oneself in particular;
- **axiology**: beliefs about the nature of value, what is good and bad, what is right and wrong.

From Funk's model of worldview composition, a worldview is comprised of many factors that directly influence and are influenced by religion and related beliefs about God, man, the universe and questions of ultimate reality and existence. A developed worldview supplies answers to the questions of origin, purpose and destiny among other things, or as some put it, the "why, whence, and whither" of things (Orr 1948). The beliefs one carries in each of the above listed items, therefore, is greatly carried out in their religious beliefs. Likewise, one's religious beliefs are also dramatically shaped by their beliefs in each of the above items. Each of the subsets of worldview cited by Funk is thus highly interrelated with, and directly affects the others.

In the conceptualization of religiosity, the role of worldview and its impact on the operationalization of measures is an important consideration due to the influence of worldview on the philosophical foundation of

personal religiosity. As highlighted in the previous section and noted by religiosity scholars, the majority of existing religiosity measurements have been developed from the perspective of and according to the Judeo-Christian worldview. This implies not only that the items used to assess religiosity reflect the tenets and practices of Judaism and Christianity, but often that the items are based on specific assumptions about each of the components highlighted by Funk (2001) in his model of worldview composition. This is not to say that every author from a particular tradition has an identical worldview, however, it implies a similarity of certain philosophical considerations and assumptions with other studies from the same perspective (Judeo-Christian), yet different than those from other religious traditions. These considerations, stemming from the differences in religious worldviews, thus influence how religiosity is conceptualized and subsequently operationalized.

HOW RELIGIOSITY HAS BEEN OPERATIONALIZED FOR MUSLIMS

The clear differences in worldview highlighted above raise important questions in term of the operationalization of religiosity instruments for the Muslim populations. Unlike physical or material achievement, standards related to religion are often considered difficult to measure (Family Development Foundation 2002). One such difficulty relates to the different perspectives of religiosity of people, since "... individuals differ in their ways of being religious, as one person might express religion by meditating regularly, another by attending church, another by reading certain literature, and another by participating in a civil rights demonstration" (McGuire 1992: 102). Thus, it follows that differences in religious worldview also have important implications for understanding how measures for the different populations have been developed and applied. Most current scales for Muslims, for example, have been adapted from the scales that were originally designed for the Judeo-Christian populations.

One of the earliest theorists on the dimension of religiosity proposed a four-dimensional model in approaching religious orientation and group involvement (Lenski 1961: 21-24). These dimensions were: 1-'associational' aspect, which includes frequency of religious involvement in worship and prayer services; 2-'communal' dimension, which relates to the preference and frequency of one's primary-type relations; 3-'doctrinal orthodoxy', which refers to the intellectual acceptance of the prescribed doctrines of the church; and 4-'devotionalism', which involves private or personal communion with God through prayers, meditation and religious behaviour (Kuçukcan 2000). This model exemplified the Judeo-Christian focus of the conceptualization of religiosity. It is also multidimensional, which makes it unique among the early models of religiosity, as most early conceptualizations were uni-dimensional in nature.

Religiosity has often been measured with a single-item, such as church attendance or level of participation in various Christian-based religious activities. Much of the early research on religiosity and delinquency, for example, used church attendance as the sole measure of the religious commitment (see Evans et al. 1995; Johnson et al. 1987; Tittle and Welch 1983). Thus, most research that have attempted to examine religiosity has done so in a limited way, typically by assessing a single item of the religious affiliation (Weaver et al. 1998), despite the obvious psychometric shortcomings of the single-item measurements (Emmons 1999).

The ongoing debate among the researchers deals specifically with the question of whether religiosity is best measured as either a uni-dimensional or multidimensional concept. Although single-item measures like church attendance remain relevant within the literature, it is important to acknowledge that treating religion as multidimensional has been more of a methodologically desirable goal (Gorsuch and McFarland 1972). Johnson et al. (2001) examined 40 published studies on religiosity to determine the number of factors used to measure religious commitment. For

instance, they were interested in determining if the church attendance only was used (one factor), if salience and prayer were both used (two factors), or if several indicators were used to develop a multidimensional measure of religiosity (i.e. three factors, or four or more factors) (Johnson *et al.* 2000). According to Johnson *et al.'s* systematic review, salience and attendance were the two most frequently used variables to measure religion (85% and 65%, respectively). Prayer was used to measure religious commitment in 35% of the studies. Participation in religious activities was used in 27.5% of the studies to measure religiosity, whereas denomination and Bible study were used in only 22.5% of the 40 articles.

Although it has been suggested that using multiple factors to measure religion is preferable (Gorsuch and McFarland 1972), most of the studies in Johnson *et al.'s* review failed to do so. Less than half of the studies (19 of 40) used more than two factors to measure religion. Slightly more than half of the articles (21 of 40) reviewed in the study measured religiosity with one or two factors (Johnson *et al.* 2001).

Concerning the literature on religiosity instruments used with the Muslim populations, several studies made use of a measure of religiosity. Among these, two studies (Pouryousefi 1984; Samandari 1982) included Glock and Stark's model (see below), while in others an ambiguous, arbitrary or sometimes subjective single-item definition of religiosity was used (see Hassani 1978; Yahya 1988; Junger and Polder 1993; Afshari 1994) (in Serajzadeh 1998).

In Samandari's work (in which the site of the study was Babol, a city in the North of Iran), the measure consisted of forty items. According to her report, a long process of discussion and consultation with the religious leaders and university professors in Iran was followed to check the validity of the scale. Nevertheless, nothing about the internal validity and the reliability of the scale, as well as sub-scales, was reported in her work. Most surprisingly, in the data processing stage, only five items of forty were used with this short

explanation:'"due to the extensiveness of the list of items measuring the degree of religiosity, only the responses to a limited number of items were utilized for analysis" (Serajzadeh 1998).

In Pouryoussefi's work, a 31-item Likert scale of Glock and Stark's model of religiosity, excluding the intellectual dimension, was constructed to measure the religiosity of Muslim students studying in the United States. Administering a pre-test, he seemed to have constructed and used the scale more precisely. However, in his work the statistical results of the internal validity and reliability of the scale were not reported either (Serajzadeh 1998).

Wilde and Joseph (1997) devised, in English, a 14-item 'Muslim Attitudes Towards Religion Scale' or in short MARS. The scale contained items adapted from the Francis Attitudes Toward Christianity scale (Francis 1978; Francis and Stubbs 1987). According to Hill and Hood (1999), the Attitude Toward Christianity Scale focuses solely on the people's perception of the Christian religion. The MARS, therefore, is an adapted scale for the Islamic faith. Items were developed'"under the guidance and supervision of the University of Essex Moslem society" (Wilde and Joseph 1997: 899).

Glock and Stark's discussion (1965) on the dimensionality of religion turned scholars' attention towards a multidimensional definition of religiosity. This issue has been consistently associated with their name (DeJong *et al.* 1976; Himmelfarb 1975; Roof 1979; Spilka *et al.* 1985). Glock and Stark's model of religiosity, in spite of some criticism, has been predominantly employed, either partly or completely, in different fields. Thus, in order to measure the religiosity of the Muslim respondents, Glock and Stark's model was also adapted to the religion of Islam in Wilde and Joseph's study (Serajzadeh 1998).

Glock and Stark (1965: 19-20) argue that in all religions of the world, in spite of their great variation in details, there are general areas in which religiosity is manifested. These areas, considered by Glock and Stark as the core dimensions of religiosity, are the

'Ideological', the 'Ritualistic', the 'Experiential', the 'Intellectual' and the 'Consequential' dimensions.

- The 'Ideological' dimension or religious belief, encompasses beliefs that are expected to be held by the followers.
- The 'Ritualistic' dimension or religious practice, includes the specific religious practices, such as worship, prayer, participation in special sacraments, fasting and so on, which are expected to be performed by the believers.
- The 'Experiential' dimension or religious feeling, refers to feelings, perceptions and sensations of having communication with a divine essence (i.e. with God) ultimate reality or transcendental authority.
- The 'Intellectual' dimension or religious knowledge encompasses the basic information and knowledge about the tenets of the faith and its sacred scriptures that are expected to be known by the believers.
- The 'Consequential' dimension or religious effects, includes the effects of religious belief, practice, experience and knowledge on the believer's everyday life (Glock and Stark 1965: 20-21).

Serajzadeh (1998), in his study on the Iranian Muslim youth and crime, developed an adapted measure for religiosity based on the Glock and Stark's model. The assumption for using the model was "since the three monotheistic religions (namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam) seem to share similar elements in their structural tenets, some items developed by researchers for Christianity and Judaism seem to be applicable to Islam too" (1998: 138-139). For each of Glock and Stark's five dimensions, Serajzadeh included or applied the aspects of the Islamic faith. For example, for the ''Ideological' dimension, the Islamic 'articles of faith' or the 'five pillars' were used. For the 'Ritualistic' dimension, Serajzadeh included daily prayer (*salat*) and fasting during the month of Ramadan (as part of the "Pillars of Islam"), reading the Holy

Book, the "Koran", attending public prayer (both daily and during the Friday prayer), taking part in ceremonies held on holy days in mosques and others.

The adaptation of the Glock and Stark's model to an Islamic religious context, although more comprehensive than most multidimensional models measuring the Muslim populations, has important shortcomings that must be highlighted. Glock and Stark's model is an attempt to universalize a set of primary religiosity dimensions, based on commonalties in "general areas in which religiosity is manifested" (Glock and Stark 1965: 19-20). This model, although perhaps achieving its general goal, neglects the uniqueness and spirit of the individual religious tradition, however, including each tradition's unique understanding of what religion is and is meant to be in the life of its followers. This stems ultimately from a faith's particular worldview. Accordingly, Glock and Stark's model is suitable for a general religiosity, in that it was developed by looking at commonalities across the religious traditions. However, for measuring Islamic religiosity specifically, the Glock and Stark's model may be inadequate for generalizability and commonalities with other traditions is of less concern. Rather, what is desired is to capture the unique qualities and the most relevant dimensions of religiosity from the perspective of Islam alone.

Thus, the dimensions of Glock and Stark's model, although they can be shown to exist within Islamic religiosity, may not be the most appropriate given the makeup of the Islamic religious worldview and how the worldview is manifested in the daily lives of Muslims. This has been highlighted by Shamsuddin (1992: 105) who indicated that Muslims, in particular, need a relatively different scale to measure religiosity because "... the Islamic concept of religion is fundamentally different from the [above mentioned] concept of religion." In response, Shamsuddin proposed a model of Islamic religiosity"represented by the concept of *taqwa* (God-consciousness) — a multi-dimensional variable of religiosity that includes

knowledge (*'ilm/ma'rifah*), belief (*iman*), practice (*'amal*), consequences (*natajah*) and realization of excellence (*ihsan*). Since the scope of religion, i.e. its dimensions, are defined by the very concept of religion, "... the content dimensions of the Muslim religiosity vary considerably with the Judeo-Christian religious tradition" (Shamsuddin 1992: 105).

In adapted measurements such as the Glock and Stark model, therefore, there remain a lack of integration between the unique religious elements that comprise the Islamic *tawhidic* worldview. The Glock and Stark's model does not reflect the Islamic religiosity elements such as the role of the self in religious practice, the different categories of knowledge that comprise religious worldview, e.g., worldly and other-worldly dimensions of knowledge and others that are inherent within the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam.

GAPS IN THE LITERATURE: ISLAMIC RELIGIOSITY

The gap in the religiosity literature in the area of instrumentation reflective of the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam was identified by Shamsuddin (1992) who indicated that Muslims, in particular, are in need of a relatively different scale to measure religiosity because "... the Islamic concept of religion is fundamentally different from other concepts of religion." Since the scope of religion, i.e. its dimensions are defined by the very concept of religion, "... the content dimensions of the Muslim religiosity vary considerably with the Judeo-Christian religious tradition" (Shamsuddin 1992: 105). Western scholars also raise "the need to empirically study other religious traditions is obvious. Success in meeting that need clearly rests upon the availability of the relevant psychological scales" (Ghorbani *et al.* 2000: 2).

BETWEEN THE EXTREMES: THE *TAWHIDIC* WORLDVIEW OF ISLAM

Islam claims to represent the middle or balanced way as the path between the extremes of worldliness and other-worldliness. Although it posits a God-centred reality, it essentially combines the two attitudes. There are no dichotomies between the spiritual and the material as well as between the religious and secular life, between thought and action, values and facts, theory and practice, ethics and economics, science and arts, knowledge and life, the individual and the community. The *tawhidic* worldview, with its focus on the unity of the Creator, includes the element of what Emmons (2003) calls the 'ultimate concerns', which serve as focal points around which people organize their lives, views of themselves, goals, and activities. He writes,

"With the divine incorporated into one's worldview, a person is able to see various midlevel tasks, plans, and purposes as related to, and perhaps part of, a larger ultimate concern. Theoretically, this would enable the person to organize the various aspects of his or her life in relation to the larger framework. This would also serve as the basis for seeing life in the long view, for long-term motivation and sustained performance of even mundane behaviours as part of a set of spiritual goals or strivings. Imbuing a goal with a sense of the divine is likely to decrease any prior ambivalence in commitment to that goal. Does one need a greater justification than the perception that one's goals are pleasing to God?" (Emmons 2003: 23).

Emmons' 'ultimate concerns' are an integral element of the Islamic worldview and its approach to the world. Ultimate concerns represent the terminal values or end goals for both individuals and societies, and act to the shape worldview (Family Development Foundation 2002). Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (1983), speaking from the Islamic perspective, claims that true civilization, a stable and just human society, can only be built on the foundation of a right concept of God and his attributes, a recognition of the necessity of

divine revelation, and a worldview which places man in his rightful place in the total system of the Theo-centric creation. Thus, as a way of life and religion, Islam has its own distinct worldview that is unique from others (Aziz 2000).

According to al-Attas (2001), a worldview is not merely the mind's view of the physical world and of man's historical, but also the social political and cultural involvement in it. This is because the worldview of Islam is not based upon philosophical speculation formulated mainly through observation of the sensible world or the world of created things. The worldview of Islam is therefore not limited to the existence of this world alone, but encompasses both the''sacred' and the''profane''– this world (*al-dunya*) and the world hereafter (*al-akhira*). Furthermore, these are not two separate, unrelated entities or concepts but are directly related, continuous and inseparable to one another. Thus, the worldview of Islam is the vision of reality and truth that reveals what all of existence is about; for it is the world of existence in its totality, which includes both the seen worlds and those unseen (al-Attas 2001).

In the Islamic worldview, this totality is the eternal Divine principle of unity that pervades and rules all things. It is expressed in the metaphysical world of the hereafter and the Day of Judgment, in the external world of the cosmos and nature and in the inner world of the mind and spirit. Underlying this universal order and totality is a living unity, which is all-pervading and everlasting. Everything has a purpose, which is the realization of the essence of the Divine nature developing within it. To be able to realize and reveal the essence of one's being and of existence in general, Islam points its adherents to the path for realizing the essence of life. The path is *tawhid*, which reveals the unity of God. *Tawhid* comes from the Arabic verb *wahhad*, which literally means 'to unite'. In the Islamic terminology, it means to realize and maintain the unity of God in one's actions (both inwardly and outwardly) (Crane 2004).

It is *tawhid* that comprises the essence and spirit of Islam. It is through the dialectic of *tawhid*, and the worldview that flows from it, that allows Muslims to accept contradiction in their beings, nature and the universe around them. *Tawhid* keeps the balance among diverse multiplicities and contradictions. *Tawhid* gives Islam its spirituality by reminding its followers of the ultimate goal as the testification to and manifestation of the oneness of God (al-Zeera 2001).

The *tawhidic* worldview of Islam is thus a metaphysical one that puts God not only at the centre, but upholds Him as the Ultimate Reality and makes return to Him the inevitable result for everything in creation. The Islamic worldview defines God as not only the Creator and lawgiver, but also worship and service in His way as the very object of life itself. According to the Qur'an, God says, "I have only created the Jinn and Man that they may serve Me" (Qur'an: 51:56). And, "Do they seek other than the religion of God? While all creatures in the heavens and on earth have, willing or unwilling, submitted to His will and to Him shall they all be returned"*(Qur'an: 3:83). Thus, from the Holy book of Islam we can see that the *tawhidic* worldview presupposes a way of life that requires constant and ongoing consciousness of not only the present, earthly world (*al-dunya*), but that of the life-to-come (*al-akhira*). In so much as Islam purports that God is the One from which man came and will return to upon death, the One to whom all are accountable and the One who sustains all life at every moment, the Islamic worldview is thus God-centered.

In being God-centred, however, Islam does not discard or discount the life of this world in the same way as the Traditional or Religious worldview as described by Aziz (2000). As man is told in the Qur'an, "And there are men who say: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire" (Qur'an: 2:201) while, "To the righteous (when) it is said, "What is it that your Lord has revealed?" they say, "All that is good." To those who do good, there is good in this world and the Home of the Hereafter

is even better and excellent indeed is the Home of the righteous" (Qur'an: 16:30).

The concept of continuity of life put forth in the Qur'an offers that the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam is not 'worldly' nor is it 'other-worldly.' Rather, Islam includes the entire spectrum of life, even including the pre-creation stage where the Qur'an claims that the souls of man were made to testify to God's Lordship (see Qur'an 7:172). According to the eighteenth century Muslim scholar Shah Waliullah, the purpose of Islam is to purify the inner life of man and to make him realize the Divine Will by creating a society wherein man is able to develop his potential to the fullest (Nik Mustapah Hj. Nik Hassan 2000). Islamic sources of knowledge therefore posit that Islam cannot be understood except as an all-encompassing way of life that defines reality in both worldly and spiritual terms.

TOWARD FILLING THE GAP – THE MUSLIM RELIGIOSITY-PERSONALITY INVENTORY (MRPI)

To address this need in religiosity instrumentation, one that is reflective of the *tawhidic* (divine unity) worldview of the Islamic faith in particular, a multi-disciplinary research team in Malaysia created the Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI). This religiosity model purports that religiosity from the Islamic perspective can be understood according to two main constructs. The first is called the 'Islamic Worldview'. The Islamic Worldview construct reflects the Islamic doctrine of the divine unity/oneness of God. It is measured or assessed primarily through the Islamic creed (*aqidah*), which details a Muslim should know, believe and inwardly comprehend about God and religion. Thus the Islamic creed is laid down by the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet Muhammad, which represent the two primary sources of the Islamic religious law, belief and practice within (*Sunni*) Islam. Thus, the MRPI survey items developed for the 'Islamic Worldview' construct aimed to ascertain one's level of agreement with statements relating to the Islamic pillars of faith (i.e. belief in: God,

Angels, Messengers and Prophets of God, Books of Revelation, The Day of Judgment, and the Divine Decree).

The second major construct of the Islamic religiosity concept is called the 'Religious Personality'. The Religious Personality represents the manifestation of one's religious worldview in worship (*ibadah*), in the greater sense meaning righteous works (*amalan saleh*), or the particular ways a person expresses his or her traits or adapts to diverse situations in the world - manifested aspects of a personal identity, life definition and worldview – that are guided by the Islamic religious teachings and motivated by God-consciousness. It flows from the relationship with the Master (*Hablun Min'Allah*), which determines the mode of relationship with fellow servants (*Hablun Min'An-Nas*) (Hassan 1995).

The 'Religious Personality' includes a variety of everyday behaviours to assess the extent to which they reflect Islamic teachings and commands. This construct is represented by item statements relating to the formal ritual worship or 'special *ibadat*', that reflect one's direct relationship with God; and daily *mu'amalat*, or religiously-guided behaviours towards one's family, fellow human beings and the rest of creation, i.e., animals, the natural environment, etc., which are known as the general worship or 'general *'ibadah*'. '*Ibadat*' is often translated as 'worship' but is in actuality much broader in meaning. '*Ibadat*' comes from the Arabic word '*abd* or slave. '*Abd* has the connotation of 'being owned' by Him Whom he serves, rather than simply being a 'servant', which is known in Arabic as *khadim* (al-Attas 2001). The '*abid* is thus one who "is indebted absolutely to God, abases himself in service to Him; and hence the act of service appropriate for him is called *ibadah* and the service is *ibadat*, which refers to all conscious and willing acts of service for the sake of God alone and approved by Him, including such as are prescribed worship" (al-Attas 2001: 50-51).

A key underlying aspect of the Religious Personality construct in sum is *akhlaq Islamiyyah*, or the Islamic notion of refined character that underpins a religious

personality. *Akhlaq Islamiyyah* is the manifestation of the *tawhidic* worldview in one's everyday actions, which presupposes a way of life that requires constant and ongoing consciousness of not only the present, earthly world (*al-dunya*), but that of the life-to-come (*al-akhira*).

The *tawhidic* worldview of Islam is thus a metaphysical one that puts God at the centre,

and upholds Him as the Ultimate Reality, making return to Him the inevitable result for everything in creation. The Islamic worldview thus defines God as not only the Creator and law-giver, but also worship and service in His way as the very object of life itself (Al-Attas 2001). These concepts are illustrated in *Fig. 1*.

Islamic Worldview —*Tawhidic* Paradigm –
Fundamental Elements Characterized by:
The Nature of God; Revelation; His Creation; Man;
Knowledge; and Others

Knowledge of the Above Rooted in:

Islamic Creed (*Aqidah*)

and

Islamic Pillars of Faith (*Arkan al-Iman*)

Islamic Worldview
Manifested In:

Religious Personality – Worship
Manifested in *Amalan Saleh*

(Special) *Ibadat*
(Direct) Relationship
with Allah

Pillars of Islam:
1. Testification of Faith
2. Prayer
3. Fasting
4. Alms

Refined Religious

(General) *Ibadah*
Relationship with Self
and Others

Islamic Character
(*Akhlaq Islamiyyah*):
1. State and knowledge of Self
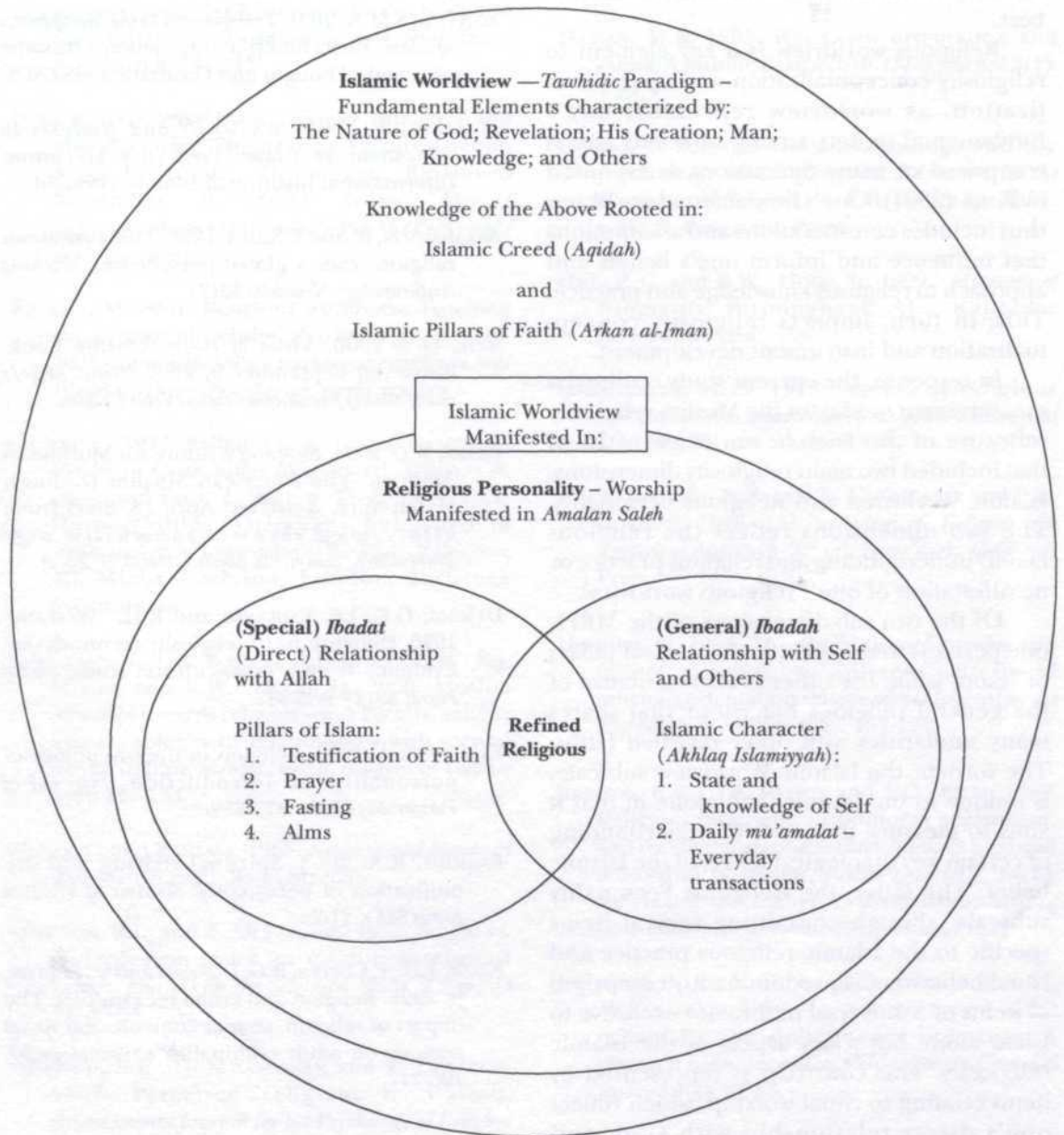2. Daily *mu'amalat* – Everyday transactions

Figure 1: MRPI muslim religiosity measurement model

CONCLUSION

This article aimed to provide a philosophical background and justification for the development of a Muslim religiosity measurement model given existing gaps in the literature in the area of Muslim religiosity measurement. From a review of the religiosity literature, it was determined that existing religiosity instrumentation reflective of a *tawhidic* worldview model of Islam is scant at best.

Religious worldview is a key element to religiosity conceptualization and operationalization, as worldview represents one's fundamental understanding of reality and is comprised of many dimensions as espoused by Funk (2001). One's fundamental worldview thus includes considerations and assumptions that influence and inform one's beliefs and approach to religious knowledge and practice. This, in turn, impacts religiosity conceptualization and instrument development.

In response, the current study outlined a measurement model for the Muslim religiosity reflective of the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam that included two main religiosity dimensions, Islamic Worldview and Religious Personality. The two dimensions reflect the religious belief/understanding and religious practice or manifestation of one's religious worldview.

Of the two sub-dimensions of the MRPI, one pertains to the specific theological pillars of Islam, while the other is representative of the general religious behaviour that shares many similarities with other revealed faiths. The former, the Islamic Worldview subscale, is unique to the Islamic faith alone in that it aims to measure the levels of understanding of certain key theological tenets of the Islamic belief. The latter, the Religious Personality subscale, though containing several items specific to the Islamic religious practice and ritual behaviour, is predominantly comprised of items of a universal nature not exclusive to Islam alone but a key aspect of the Islamic religiosity. This construct is represented by items relating to ritual worship, which reflect one's direct relationship with God; and *mu'amalat*, or religiously-guided behaviours

towards one's family, fellow human beings and the rest of creation, i.e. animals, and the natural environment (Krauss *et al.* 2006). A secondary version of the latter scale is currently being developed at UPM to be used as a universal religious personality scale for use with other faith communities in Malaysia and beyond.

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Benchmarking Best Practices in Youth Associations in Malaysia: A Case Study

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ABSTRAK

Berdasarkan kepada premis ke signifikan persatuan belia dalam pembangunan kapasiti belia, satu kajian telah dijalankan bagi mengenal pasti 'praktis terbaik' dalam kerja pembangunan belia dalam kalangan persatuan belia di Malaysia. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kajian kes dengan menganalisis satu persatuan belia yang menerima anugerah Persatuan Belia Terbaik di negara ini bagi tahun 2004. Data di kumpul melalui temu bual secara mendalam, analisis dokumen, dan kaedah pemerhatian. Data dianalisis menggunakan kaedah statistik kualitatif. Sembilan penggerak utama—merupakan praktis terbaik yang memacu kemajuan dan impak yang dihasratkan oleh persatuan—dikenal pasti: (1) persekitaran yang menyokong kapasiti dan keperluan belia untuk pembangunan, (2) program berasas-keperluan yang mantap yang menarik minat ahli dan komuniti umum, (3) sokongan kuat daripada masyarakat, (4) jaringan mantap dan pendekatan kolaboratif dengan kerajaan dan agensi bukan kerajaan yang terlibat dalam kerja belia, (5) komitmen ahli melalui penglibatan mereka di dalam kerja belia, (6) pemimpin yang komited serta cekap dan ahli jawatankuasa yang berkongsi matlamat dan arah tuju, (7) pentadbiran yang cekap berserta kedapatan infrastruktur yang menyokong, (8) pengawasan dan penilaian berterusan terhadap program dan aktiviti, dan (9) peruntukan kewangan mapan. Implikasi kajian dan cabaran masa depan turut dibincangkan.

ABSTRACT

Acknowledging the significance of youth associations in capacity-building of Malaysian youths, a research was conducted to identify "best practices" in youth development work among the youth associations in Malaysia. This was a case study which analyzed a particular youth association that received the Best "Youth" Association national award in 2004. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews, document reviews and analysis, and observations. The data were analyzed using qualitative statistical methods. Nine key enablers – defined best practices that facilitate the desired progress and impact accomplished by the association – were identified: (1) environment that supports youth development needs and capacities, (2) sound, integrated need-based program that attracts members and the broader community, (3) strong support of the community, (4) strong linkage and partnership/collaborative approach with government and non-governmental agencies on youth work, (5) commitment of the members through their engagement in youth work, (6) committed and competent leaders and committee members who share objectives and directions, (7) reliable administration coupled with availability of supportive infrastructure, (8) continuous monitoring and evaluation of programs and activities, and (9) sustainable funding. Implications of the findings and future challenges were discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In response to the evolving and changing needs and problems of youths in Malaysia, the government has implemented and has a policy to continue to put into practice progressive youth policies and programs to ensure that youths participate and contribute effectively in community and national development. In addition to the institutionalized training on youth development, the youth associations provide a platform for the government to pursue the agenda of capacity-building of the youths for community and national development at the grassroots level.

In an effort to streamline and mobilize the youths and their association's potential as partners in nation building, the government introduced a National Youth Policy which was later replaced with the Youth Development Policy (YDP) in 1997. Although the revised policy maintained the definition of youth as those between the 15 and 40 age-group, the development and implementation of strategies and activities of youth development was targeted more towards youths between the ages of 18 and 25 years. One of the six broad strategies specified in the YDP is unleashing the potentials of youth associations i.e. to empower the youth organization to become an agent of change and as provider of continuing education programs. The effectiveness and sustainability of the youth associations as a delivery system of youth development, education and training, however, has been a central issue in the context of national capacity-building of the youth.

In the year 2005, there were about 8,000 registered youth associations in the country. Sadly, it is reported that only about 30% are considered active (*Utusan Malaysia Online* 13 January 2005) and this state of affairs is worrying to government. Therefore, the Ministry of Youth and Sports allocated the sum of RM10 million in the Eighth Malaysia Plan to rejuvenate the inactive registered youth associations.

In light of the pressing issue of inactivity and unsustainability among many of the youth associations in the country, it is imperative to learn from the experiences of a successful association which has been recognized as the best youth association, in the country. One such is the Youth Association of Sungai Gulang-Gulang in Kuala Selangor which received a national award as Best Youth Association, in 2004. In addition, there have not been many empirical studies which examined "best practices" in particular in youth development among the youth associations, except for three studies by Azimi and Turiman (1994), Azimi *et al.* (2002), and Saifuddin (2000) all of which focused on certain factors that contribute to a successful youth association.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research was to examine the "best practices" of youth development of youth associations in Malaysia. The research details the case of the Youth Association of Sungai Gulang-Gulang, situated in the rural area of Kuala Selangor District, Selangor, which won the best youth association national award in 2004. The study specifically attempted to identify the key enablers – best practices – that contributed to the success and sustainability of the Sungai Gulang-Gulang Youth Association. The findings of this case study validated some of the facilitating factors of successful and sustainable youth associations observed in past studies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The need to develop "best" youth development practices among the youth associations is becoming considerably more vital because youth associations are expected to play a greater role in community and national development. Best practices may be described as optimum ways of performing work to achieve high performance, according to Ramabadron *et al.* (1997) and Bassi and Cheney (1997). Although there is no single "best practice", as the word best is not best *per se* to everyone, "best" practices are those that have been shown to produce superior results, selected by a systematic process and judged as

exemplary, good, or successfully demons-trated, as argued by Jarrar and Zairi (2000).

Geringer *et al.* (2002), asserted that best practices are those that facilitate effectiveness within specific organizational and societal contexts that an organization operates. Some "best" practices may be unique to an organization's societal and organizational contextual factors, while others may not be so unique as to preclude their utility and applicability elsewhere. This conception of "best practices" underscores that there are three categories of best practices: context-free, context-specific, and context-dependent. Context free best practices are generally applicable and effective across different organizations or situations, regardless of societal and organizational contextual factors. Context-specific best practices refer to practices found to be effective in one organization or setting and might be transferred successfully to another organization or situation with a similar contextual background. Context-dependent best practices imply that the societal and organizational conditions are so important that the best practices cannot be effectively replicated in other organizations.

Drawing on the above arguments, the present study focused on the context-specific best practices that the youth association in this case-study adopted. The study, nevertheless, does not rule out the possibility of applicability and utility of the identified best practices across situations with a similar contextual background.

There are two ways of benchmarking best practices, one, is to identify a common denominator across different organizations which are related to organizational success and effectiveness. This method would yield 'proven' best practice and this could be context-free best practices – a good practice that has been determined to be the best approach for many organizations. The other is using a case study approach – the method employed in the present study. This method would yield 'good' practice: method, procedure or process that has been implemented and has improved the

performance of an organization (and satisfying some element of stakeholders' need) and substantiated by data collected from the organization (Jarrar and Zairi 2000). The case study approach is useful in identifying context-specific and context-dependent best practices.

While the practice of awarding, the annual the best youth association in the country has been going on for the past eighteen years, a systematic empirical study on the successful or exemplary youth association is lacking. The few related studies conducted in this area are those by Azimi and Turiman (1994), Saifuddin (2000), and Azimi *et al.* (2002). In their exploratory qualitative study of factors that contribute towards the sustainability of youth organizations, Azimi and Turiman (1994) identified twelve key deter-minants: (1) supportive infrastructure, (2) proactive leadership, (3) clear agenda of development for both members and the community at large, (4) development and training program based on problems and needs, (5) good organizational structure with clear division of tasks and focus, (6) sharing of training experiences among members and community at large, (7) stable financial support, (8) economic and spiritual development concerns, (9) support and active participation from members and the community at large, (10) continuous monitoring of programs and activities, (11) strong linkage with development agencies, and (12) recognition and continuous motivation. Some of these factors were also observed in a small survey conducted by Saifuddin (2000).

These factors were validated in a follow-up survey of sustainability among youth associations and as a result a model was suggested specifying the relationships of key factors affecting performance of youth associations (Azimi *et al.* 2002). The model postulated three thrust activities of a successful youth association, namely program development, spiritual development and economic developments. According to Azimi *et al.* (2002), youth resource development, financial resource management, and infrastructure development are critical input factors, while leadership, governance, and

networking are the critical support factors. In a study of best practices in project management, Loo (2003) noted that best practices do not emerge from a vacuum. Rather, an organizational culture must exist, which values and nurtures best practices.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using the case study approach. In-depth interviews, review and analysis of documents, and observation methods were employed in collecting data. The data were collected in the month of January 2005. All the interviews, document analysis, and observations were conducted entirely by the researchers. Prior to data collection, decisions were reached on the variables of the study, the interview protocol, interviewing technique, the documents to be analyzed, and things to observe.

The semi-structured interviews involving systematic probing procedure was first conducted on the first week of January 2005. The second interview was on the fourth week of January. The same respondents participated in the two interviews. The respondents were the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and two committee members, all of whom have been involved in the organization for at least ten years prior to the interviews. Both interviews lasted about two hours each. The semi-structured interviews revealed very useful and detailed information. The interviews focused on the following aspects: (1) program and activities, (2) organizational structure, leadership and management practices, (3) membership, (4) development and training of committee members, (5) financial resources, (6) achievement and impact, (7) strength of the association and unique features, and (8) constraints and challenges. Interviews with four members of the association who owned and operated economic projects were also conducted to learn about their perceptions and thoughts of their association and how the youth association has helped them in their project (particularly with regard to development and training) and the impact of the project on the community.

The project owner-cum-operator respondents were also interviewed twice, on the first and fourth week of January 2005. As an incentive, they were paid a small fee for participating in the research. All interviews were tape-recorded.

Minutes of meetings, annual reports, program proposals, photos, certificates and letters of acknowledgement and recognition, and reports especially prepared for presentation to the panel of jury during the evaluation for best youth association at the state and national levels, were the documents reviewed. The document analysis was found to be critical in arriving at details about the organization and its activities. Similarly, the observation method was useful in gathering facts on the activities and achievements accomplished by the Association. It enriched and verified the information obtained through both the in-depth interviews and document analysis.

The data were qualitatively analyzed based on the objective of the study, wich was, facilitating factors and best practices of youth resource development identified based on the experience of The Youth Association of Sungai Gulang-Gulang. The first step in the data analysis was transcribing the notes taken during the interviews followed by identifying the themes related to an effective and successful youth association. Qualitatively, key enablers and lessons related to best practices were identified.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A discussion of the relevant organizational and program attributes of the Association is appropriate as it provides the context for interpreting the present analysis of "best practices".

Organizational and Program Profile of the Association

When the Association was initially formed, unity among the youths and between the youths and the community was the agenda of its movement, thus, economic-based project initiatives were not the priority. But over the

years, the role of the Association expanded to include not only income generating projects but also a provider of continuing education – at the community level. The responsibility to organize the Association and provide the link to the community during its formative years was the village leader. He was very supportive of the Association and served as an advisor, motivator and resource link. His endorsement was echoed with support and cooperation from the villagers and this enabled the first chairman of the Association to lead and manage the Association smoothly and successfully. After the first chairman's era, the Association was led by five different youth leaders and the Association continued to maintain good relationship with the various community leaders over the years. Further discussion on the organizational structure and programs and activities follow.

Organizational Structure

As at 2004, there were 344 male and 104 female members, and their age ranged from 16 to 40 years. About 52% of the members were between 31 to 40 years old, 24% were between 21-30 years, and about 9% in the 15-20 years age group. Associate membership made up about 14%, suggesting that the Association had the support of the elders even though they did not hold any administrative position in the Association.

In terms of organizational structure, the Association was headed by a president, assisted by a vice president and two deputies, secretary, treasurer, and supported by a 16 members committee comprising 9 males and 7 females and three advisors. All positions were for a two-year term, through democratic elctions in an annual general meeting of the association. The chairman at the time of this study, the fifth chairman of the Association, was in his 30s and a secondary school teacher. Being a teacher, he is a strong proponent of life long education and is very much interested in youth work. His professional training helped him in managing the Association. He spent about three to four hours a week on the Association, mostly during weekends.

The main committee meets once a month, on a regular basis, to plan, implement and monitor programs and activities. Inputs from various stakeholders including the advisors were sought during these meeting. One important feature of the composition of the main committee is that it comprised a mixed background of volunteers - government servants, workers in the private sector and self-employed business people - who are interested in youth work. This was one of the strengths of the Association. Eight members of the main committee were teachers and the rest were self-employed or had worked in the private sector. The self-employed business members brought in their experiences into the Association particularly in terms of implementing economic projects. One of them headed the economic bureau of the Association. In addition to their experience, working as a team was highly valued in the Association, as indicated by all the respondents.

The organization was structured into eight bureaus with each is headed by one of the committee members. The Association's set-up appears to be a flat structure and each bureau had a well defined responsibility and task. The bureaus were established around core themes in youth development work, and consistent with their goals and priorities. The bureaus are also relevant in the context of changes and progress occurring in the community. For instance, in 2002 the Association formed an Information Technology and Communication Bureau when the village was identified as one of the sites of the national project on Rural Information Port undertaken by the government to provide information technology to the rural area.

The Association has a clear shared objective, as stipulated in the organization's constitution. Its main objective was to impart good knowledge, positive attitude and to promote a healthy lifestyle among the youth through programs and activities which were organized or participated by the Association. The Association was guided by their motto "Progressive, Interesting and Profitable". The

philosophy behind this motto was each member should strive for emotional, intellectual, spiritual betterment, and physical development. This motto does not only appear in official documents but is mentioned frequently in speeches and talks by leaders, as indicated by the president and committee members.

Program and Activities

The Association has been active since its formation. Its programs and activities were well received and participated by its members and the community. The viability of the program and the visibility of the Association were perhaps attributed to the fact that it received strong support from the Village Security and Development Committee. The continued strong support from the Village Development Committee was ensured even when there were changes in leadership in the village leadership.

The programs and activities were designed to be appealing to members and the community, and strove towards providing equal opportunity for all to participate. The Association believes that all programs and activities must bring benefits to the members, the association and the community at large.

The Association had no problems in getting sponsorship for implementing programs and this indicates the support and the trust the Association got from the public. In addition to a fixed income from membership fees and rental from a shop house owned by the Association, it relied on sponsorships either in kind or financial support from individuals, groups and agencies. To ensure accountability and transparency, utilization of fund needed the approval of the main committee in their monthly meetings. Report on their financial standing were also presented in the monthly committee meetings and annual general meetings.

With regard to programs and activities, the Association actively pursued relevant programs towards improving all aspects of youth development. Programs implemented or participated in the Association are clustered into social, academic, spiritual, and economic programs. Some of the programs were regularly conducted, such as tuition classes and computer literacy classes; while others were periodical or a one-time project, such as the Youth Carnival Day. The main intention of the non-economic programs was to create an environment that supports the youth development needs and capacities, particularly in the domain of identity and ability. It is hoped that through the activities e.g. "For the Youth and By the Youth", the village youths would imbibe a sense of safety, awareness, spirituality, high self-worth, a sense of responsibility and would experience quality relationships with peers and adults, and have a sense of hope or purpose for their future.

One important feature of the Association was the organization and/or participation in a range of attractive programs that are relevant to the youths and the community. In order to enhance a broad participation from the youths and support from the community, the Association worked on the principle of organizing integrated programs, which addressed social, psychological, spiritual, educational and economic needs of the youth. All the programs were determined and implemented in consultation with many of the stakeholders (youth and community representatives and the relevant agencies such as Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry to mentioned a few). The consultation was done not only during the monthly committee meetings but also through informal survey or discussion with some youths to air their opinions on any proposed program. Another important aspect that guided the Association in designing a program was to focus on the community resources, in addition to issues and needs of the youths and the community.

The Association also adopted the idea of service-learning program. It is hoped that the youths would learn social and management skills through their participation in program implementation. Some programs were tailored for specific age groups while others were catered to various age groups. The

Association placed emphasis on wide participation of members and non-members when designing a program. It was also noted that monitoring of programs was done regularly during the monthly committee meetings. In most cases, post-mortem discussions were held to talk about lessons learnt from the implemented programs.

While the non-economic programs were mostly decided based on consultation with the youth and the community, the economic programs were determined based on individual interests and needs. Some of the income-generating projects were initiated by the youth members themselves and some were initiated by the Association. The Association encouraged the members to venture into business, expand existing business, or match business opportunities offered by the development agencies with relevant business interests of members. In both cases, the Association functions as a resource link.

As a provider of non-formal education, the Association actually conducted many informal, hands-on training and development activities and the youths were directly involved in the implementation of a program which thereafter developed their social and organizing skills. One of the most salient features of the training and development approach is the idea of 'serve and learn', and this seems to be widely practiced. The participants of the program, on the other hand, benefited from the programs in terms of social and cognitive development.

Although there was no proper instrument used in identifying development and training needs, one important positive feature of the Association's program was the selection of training subjects based on current issues and community needs which were identified during meetings and through informal surveys. Most of the programs were planned in consultation with the Village Security and Development Committee and the youths, and where appropriate with the relevant development agencies.

The Association kept track of training and development opportunities offered by the

relevant government agencies for its members, particularly for the committee members and potential committee members. Such training was meant to increase their managerial and facilitative skills in dealing with the youths. In addition to the institutionalized training, the Association also organized visit and study tours to relevant organizations and participated in study tours organized by other organizations. The Association also provided recommendation letters in support of members who needed to attend courses offered by other organizations including government agencies. Due to its status as a successful "model" youth association, the Association received numerous visitors with whom they exchanged experiences and learnt from each other about youth work. The visitors were also shown some of the economic projects managed and owned by the members of the Association. In a sense, the visits served as recognition to the members and this motivated them to be successful in their projects.

In terms of technical training related to economic projects undertaken by members of the Association, all basic technical courses were obtained from the relevant development agencies. While the Association played a minimal role here, it also helped members, who owned and operated projects, in identifying follow-up entrepreneurship courses. In addition to attending short-courses, the project owner-cum-operators also upgraded their technical knowledge through self-learning and visitation.

Best Practices

Having described the organizational and program profile of the Association, what are the practices that proved promising to the Association in order to effectively enact its role as a partner in community and national development and as a provider of continuing education for the youths? The present analysis has identified nine key enablers, seen as best practices contributing to the success of the Association. These are:

1. Creation of an Environment that Support Youth Development Needs and Capacities

The youth were provided with meaningful and real support and opportunities needed to develop their potential and to utilize their capacities for self-development and their contribution to the community through the programs and activities. They were also given opportunities to practice and expand on what they know and learn in meetings and the structured programs they participated. To ensure that this support and opportunity factor is met, the Association adhered to the idea that programs are based on needs of the members and the community.

Participative decision making is a well accepted mechanism that was in place to get the necessary input in designing programs at the Association's monthly committee meetings. The meetings were attended by the Association's advisors and, when necessary, officers from government and non-government agencies. Opinion of ordinary members was also sought through informal surveys or discussions. This practice was considered important by the committee members because it enhanced receptivity of the members and the community.

2. Sound Integrated Programs and Activities that Attract Members and Community Support

Another key to the success of the Association was program relevance in terms of addressing needs and having a positive impact on the youth and the community. The management of the Association viewed the youths in terms of their strengths and assets – and, not just their problems. The youths were viewed as a resource and, as such, they were actively engaged in planning, implementing and evaluating the programs. It is pertinent that instead of approaching youth development solely from a problem-based perspective, the Association supplemented its program with asset-based approach to youth development. In addition, the need-based development program principle was adopted; and, to ensure greater support from the members and the community, the Association implemented

diverse programs (instead of focusing on a particular type of program and placing less emphasis on the other types that were of interest to the Village Development Committee and community). Accordingly, the Association focused on a range of programs with the intention of producing a balanced outlook among the youths. The Association successfully integrated the concern of the community into its programs, particularly the need for better educational achievement and spiritual development among the young people, to prepare them for the challenges of a K-society, in addition to income generating programs.

The incumbent president's and the vice-president's background in education influenced their views on education as a tool to inculcate culture of change and progress. They stressed that all programs must implicitly or explicitly contain certain elements of training and development. This is explained through the emphasis on the "serve and learn" approach in youth development programs adopted by the Association. In short, a high value on project-based or experiential learning was placed on education within the integrated programs.

3. Strong Support of the Community

Embarking on program-focused and relationship-focused initiatives towards an effective youth-adult partnership environment is another key enabler. The Association considered youth and adult partnership as part of its objectives. It was a practice of the Association not to use a program strategy only but also community strategy to youth work. Establishing and sustaining good relationships with the institutions at the grassroots and the community at large was an obvious practice. The mechanisms in place, particularly through regular meetings, do not only create a sense of belonging but it also provided opportunities for the youths to develop a relationship with a caring adult connected to the program and with the community. It is noticed that the Association is fortunate to have a development-receptive community, and this facilitates in implementing programs for the youth. As an

outcome of the relationship-focused program, the Association obtained a strong and continuous support of the community. The atmosphere of mutual respect among the youth Association, the Village Development Committee and the community at large was clearly evident.

4. Strong Linkage Partnership Approach to Youth Work with Governmental and Non-governmental Agencies

The practice of collaborative planning with relevant government and non-government agencies which were responsible for youth development proved to be a beneficial approach to youth development work. The Association emphasized partnership and collaboration with other agencies in order to provide more opportunities and support for young people, as is evident from the fact that most of its programs with the Village Development Committee and/or government agencies are collaborative. More importantly, it has been responsive to the opportunities created by the government for social and economic development. The Association was able to achieve the desired impacts of the youth development programs because it made partnerships an organizational priority.

The active involvement of relevant officers in related development agencies through mechanisms such as regular participation in meetings and program implementation as well visits to the project site enhanced the capacity of the Association to deliver effectively the development programs for the youths. The participation of the officers was not limited to technical and social know how, but occasionally they were also invited to officially open or close a program. The meaningful participation of many stakeholders is a manifestation of the viability and progressiveness of the Association. Frequent formal and informal contact and interaction with development workers further promote good interpersonal relations and, in turn, further develop strong commitment from the officers of the participating development agencies.

The leaders of the Association have been effective in playing their role as a resource link. They linked the members/programs to the related development agencies for guidance and support. The Association not only welcomed any form of help from government or non-government agencies, it also actively pursued opportunities for collaborative work. Consequently, the members and the villagers have high regard for the Association and they have full faith in the sincerity of the Association's intentions.

5. Support and Commitment of the Members Through Their Active Engagement

Youth engagement in program planning and evaluation is highly visible in the Association, as evident in the minutes of meetings. The Association received strong support from its members and the community because they saw the benefits or they anticipated positive impacts from the programs. The programs offer development/enrichment opportunities such as skill building and service learning activities. The existing communication system such as the regular monthly meetings effectively allows the involvement of its members in determining and setting expectations from participation. The members are viewed as a resource, contributors and leaders in their program rather than consumers or recipients of services. In this way, the members become actors rather than recipients. The Association encouraged its members to work together to determine, develop and give leadership to the program. Accordingly, it is not a surprise to find that most of the members have a sense of pride of their Association and its accomplishments.

Support and commitment of the members came not only because the programs are beneficial and that they can make meaningful contribution, but the fact that the Association recognized their participation and contribution it further enhanced their commitment towards the Association. It has been a practice that a certificate was given to

those who had successfully completed a program organized by the Association. The practice of giving a certificate or letter of appreciation to the members who had shown excellent performance is highly valued. The certificate was found useful by most of the members either for job seeking purposes or to apply for government aids or development/ training programs.

6. Committed, Competent Leaders and Committee Members who Share Objectives and Directions

Any organization must have a critical mass in order to function effectively. This is the case of the Youth Association of Sungai Gulang-Gulang. The critical mass has the proper attitude and knowledge of youth work. The presence of well received and effective leaders who strongly advocate youth participation and non-formal education in youth development is clearly a key enabler. The leaders being government servants have been exposed to many courses and training which are applicable in managing the Association. As youth leaders they had also attended several training programs specifically related to youth work. A strong team comprising members having mixed but complementing backgrounds and experiences are the strength of the Association.

The willingness of the key leaders to commit time and energy to the Association and their ability to lead are widely recognized as a major success factor. Not only the key leaders were very much interested in youth work but it is reckoned that the committee members themselves exuded enthusiasm and commitment and therefore were selected and supported by the community. When the leadership in youth work is openly accepted by the members and the community, the activities will have the benefit of both moral and material support from the community and grassroots institutions.

The spirit of volunteerism is put into practice throughout the Association. They wanted to serve regardless of their position in the organization. Their involvement in the Association and youth work is not motivated by personal and political gains. To support this point, one of the present committee members was a past president, and this somehow reflects the non existent of any leadership struggle within the Association's top leadership.

The organization and all its bureaus were clear about their goals and mission. All initiatives were undertaken in accordance with the motto "Progressive, Interesting and Profitable," and based on the philosophy that encouraged autonomy and the development of self-esteem. Each bureau had clear division of tasks and focus, and considered both the development and needs of members and the community at large in attaining sustainable development and complying with the vision of leaders at the state and national level as the goals and mission.

7. Reliable aAdministration Coupled with Availability of Supportive Infrastructure

The Association has a reliable administrative structure. It has its own office or "operational" space to serve as an administrative and documentation centre. Situated next to the office of the Village Development Committee within the same administrative complex, the Association effectively shared and utilized available facilitied and resources with the Village Development Committee which readily facilitates the work of recording and presentation of relevant data for the members as well as visitors'perusal. The Association's physical environment is welcoming to young people, their families and visitors alike. At the same time, the physical proximity not only facilitates and improves coordination of activities of the Association and the Village Development Committee but also eased access to facilities for program implementation.

8. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation of Activities

The practice of monthly committee meetings not only provided a platform for participatory decision making, but it also allowed for continuous monitoring and evaluation of

program implementation. Through the system of constant monitoring of programs, any weakness that arose from the programs were readily remedied. The practice of post-mortem discussion of completed programs was useful as it permitted the Association to identify lessons learned during the implementation of programs.

9. Sustainable Funding

Another key practice is making funds readily available to support program implementation on a sustainable basis. Although sponsorships from individuals, groups, and organization were readily available, the Association had its own constant source of income from small projects to ensure that administrative activities and implementation of core programs were not interrupted. Good interpersonal relationships with key individuals including politicians has enabled the Association to readily secure sponsorships. In fact, the leaders and committee members were proactive in seeking funds to support youth development programs.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Nine key enablers were identified from the "best practice""analysis of a "model" youth association – the case of the Youth Association of Sungai Gulang-Gulang. Considering the fact that the Association is situated in a rural area, the key enablers identified are readily applicable to other youth associations in other rural areas. This is because the contextual situations of many of the youth associations in rural areas are similar. Some of the identified – "best practices" seem generic organizational processes, for instance, partnership and collaborative planning, problem and need-based programs, good team work and strong leadership, and effective acquisition and utilization of resources. Thus, the identified practices are also applicable to youth associations in urban areas.

Nevertheless, the ability of youth associations to sustain their success depends on how the identified key enablers could be retained and improved. With the present

trend in media growth and globalization, youth associations face greater challenges to attract youth participation in youth development programs. Thus, it is very crucial for youth associations to be more innovative in its programs and activities. The programs must not only be perceived beneficial but should be seen as those which could highly impact the youths and community. A collaborative and partnership program with the appropriate agencies is no longer an option but a requisite as it will increase the availability of support and opportunity factors for the youths to meet their needs and further develop their capacities.

In order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of youth associations as a delivery system of non-formal education, leaders and/ or workers who are involved in leading the youths must maintain a high degree of professionalism in their work and should adopt "best practices" in youth development work. In fact, the demand for professionalism in youth work is all the more pertinent when society becomes more educated and critical especially on issues like ethnic relations and human rights.

Another challenge is the availability of second-line leaders. Considerably, migration of educated and skillful rural youth to the urban areas will remain a common landscape in population distribution; hence, it is imperative that youth associations must ensure the availability of able second-line leaders who are willing to serve and understand the philosophy of youth development work.

While the present study pinpoints several "best practices" for wider adoption, quantitative indexes of success (key performance indicators) has not been well established. This gap in knowledge must be promptly addressed. Key performance indicators are useful in formulating the objectives of development programs and in monitoring and evaluating the impacts of youth development programs at both the individual and community levels.

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Debunking the Myth:
The Involvement of Malaysian Retirees in Volunteerism[1]

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ABSTRAK

Ini adalah satu kajian rintis yang melibatkan pesara Malaysia dari peringkat atasan, pengurusan dan profesional daripada sektor Perkhidmatan Awam Malaysia. Ia menilai sejauh mana penglibatan, motivasi dan keutamaan pesara melibatkan diri dengan kerja sukarela di negara ini. Secara metodologinya, borang soal-selidik telah digunakan di kalangan 261 pesara di seluruh Malaysia termasuk Sabah dan Sarawak bagi mendapatkan maklumat dan pendapat. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa, pesara adalah lebih dari sanggup untuk melibatkan diri secara sukarela di dalam organisasi keagamaan, sosial, pendidikan atau komuniti terutamanya yang memerlukan kepakaran mereka. Para pesara menyuarakan kebimbangan mereka terhadap tanggapan orang ramai bahawa mereka tidak lagi produktif dan dirasakan kurang penting.

ABSTRACT

This is an exploratory study involving the Malaysian retirees from the Premier and Managerial and Professional sectors of the Malaysian Public Service. It examined the extent of the retirees' involvement, motivation and preference in relation to engaging in volunteerism in the country. Methodologically, a mailed-survey questionnaire was conducted to elicit the information and opinion of 261 retirees throughout Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak. Based on the findings, these retirees were more than willing to volunteer in religious, social, educational or community type of organization especially to those who needs their expertise. These retirees expressed concerns about the widely-accepted public conditioning that they were no longer productive and could therefore be relegated to the background as far as their relevance was concerned.

INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism is an intrinsic social value of a community and does not exist in a vacuum. This means that in any given community there is bound to be unselfish, selfless and altruistic actions that individuals demonstrate as products of their own social conditioning. It is apparent that volunteerism exists in more ways than one and it is portrayed differently from one culture to another, depending on the economic and social development of certain communities. Volunteerism comes in many forms, depths and dimensions (Wilson 2000) and these circumstances largely depend

on whether there are conditions that facilitate or hinder the growth of the voluntary actions of the individuals in the society. It is also believed that practically the nature of volunteerism changes as the society evolves from that of peasant economy to cash-crop economy (Foner and Schwab 1983). As the body of literature would show, there is a clear connection between the changing economy and the extent people engage in volunteerism in their social relations with the members of the community (see for example, Cherline 1983). For example, in the Philippines, the concept of *bayanihan* [mutual helpfulness] is an age-old practice that involves the participation of the members of the local people in community-based actions e.g. lifting/transporting a wooden house using human hands and requires that all able-male members of the village must participate (*www.worldvolunteerweb.org*). Another example is among peasant farming households, there is *hunlos* —a bisayan term which means 'alternate', to emphasise the strength of the community helpfulness reflective of the fact that farming households are dependent on another to be able to continue the farming cycle from weeding and plowing to planting and harvesting. In many respects, the nature of volunteerism is engaged in these two forms of community practices in the sense that one's involvement is crucial in the overall functioning of the local peasant community, and only in the selfless form of service to the community that it is able to sustain its'"life".

Indeed, volunteerism is common among most communities, for example, it is *yi wu* among the Mandarin-speaking Chinese or *yi mo* among the Cantonese Chinese or *sewa* among the Indian communities. Both Indonesian (*www.worldvolunteerweb.org*) and Malaysian rural communities share the same meaning of *gotong royong* which means "working together hand in hand". While *sukarela* speaks of the spirit of volunteerism, *gotong-royong* is the concrete manifestation of that spirit. However, how does volunteerism as a selfless form of action become really wanting in these modern times? Some theorists argue that altruism and volunteerism

remain a feature in most communities though they are no longer as prominent as a pro-social behaviour in the sense that individuals have various "avenues" over which they could search for assistance henceforth volunteerism becomes a "dormant" feature in the community. To illustrate, it is noted that before the advent of the Green Revolution in the early 70s and the cash economy even before this period, peasant farmers were dependent on the manual labours to sustain their farming activity; *gotong royong* and *bayanihan* enriched and beautify the cultural and economic life of the village communities in the sense that, in literal term, one farmer could not live without the other. This refers to the constant, cooperative and coordinated farm labour that each household engages in the survival of another. That was when "use" labour was primarily the dictating element in both the social and economic relations. However, the introduction of the mechanised farming gradually changed the farming landscape of the village communities in most Asian countries in a manner that the traditional form of labour was no longer in tandem with the existence of machines. This led to the gradual erosion of the spirit of *bayanihan, gotong royong* or *hunlos* as farmers' roles in the farm economy diminished.

The central thesis of this paper is influenced by the argument that the involvement of individuals in altruistic and pro-social action such as those that reflect voluntary actions hinges on whether the social system readily recognizes their positive contributions, especially those contributive roles that ageing or older individuals provide in the local community. As argued by Merriam and Mazanah (2000) the older persons, for intance, the public service retirees, must be viewed as a social capital in the social system and that their productive function must be viewed in relation to their cultural, social and economic contributions. This article specifically examines the involvement of public service retirees in voluntary work in the community and the retirees' own perception towards their contributions. It is in their invaluable contribution that one needs to

examine the extent of their present involvement in the local community affairs, their motivations, potential and preferences. In as much as they are highly-skilled and English-proficient Malaysian retirees, their contributions may be sought after by both a number of social and charity groups and the non-government organisations (NGOs) that are in need of volunteer service. This paper also provides recommendations on how to encourage the future involvement of retirees in the community development.

Volunteerism Defined

As mentioned earlier, volunteerism is viewed differently from one situation to another. However, the common feature is that it is a form of service or help to others without expecting any reward or payment. Snyder and Omoto (2000) describe volunteerism "as a form of pro-social action in which people seek out opportunities to help others in need, make considerable and continuing commitments to offer assistance, and they may do so in stressful circumstances without any bonds of prior obligation to the recipients of the services". Volunteering is related to the motive or desire to volunteer. The motivation for volunteering varies from one person to another. Based on 41 references to the theory and research for the period 1982-1991, Fischer and Schaffer (1993) identified "eight categories of motivation for volunteering: altruistic, ideological, egoistic, material/reward, status/ reward, social relationship, leisure time, and personal growth motivations." Riley and Riley (1994) argue that "all older people, everywhere," want to remain contributing, productive members of society and will be able to do so if the social norms and structures allow for their participations". Indeed this is a very significant argument to follow considering the situation of the ageing population in many countries today where the social system fails to understand the role of the ageing persons.

In this paper, volunteerism is defined as an act of providing unpaid service or helping regularly or occasionally in the form of time, service or skills to a non-governmental, non-profit formal organizations (e.g. societies, community, welfare, educational, political party, service clubs) by retirees from the Malaysian public service who may or may not be engaged in paid jobs for other organizations during their retirement life. The term does not include informal voluntary work of care-giving or helping of individuals on one-on-one basis, in the form of service or charity among friends and relatives on a long term or temporary period of time. In this study, the involvement of volunteerism is measured in terms of time contributed, responsibility held and the number of organizations served, for the voluntary service rendered.

Myths About Retirement and Old Age

An important assumption about life transitions at any point in the life course is that such transitions will be accompanied by stress, especially if they entail major changes in the person's life. The evidence indicates that many types of changes can affect mental and physical functioning (Foner and Schwab 1983). Older persons do not react to change in their lives at retirement in isolation from the social and economic context in which retirement occurs; they are affected by the climate of opinion in the society and by the economic, political as well as social environment. True decisions are made by individuals, but the calculation of costs and benefits and attitudes regarding work and leisure are developed within a field of influence that in itself continuously changing (Foner and Schwab 1983).

Myths are the products of social conditioning and are as common as they are practised and reinforced by both the beliefs and everyday social actions. Myths surrounding the retirement and ageing are abundant both in advanced and developing countries (Foner and Schwab 1983) and Malaysia is not an exception to this. It is argued that myths precisely mirror our own articulation of certain social reality and, more often than not, are not based on the objective understanding of the reality. It is when this social conditioning inculcates a certain view that retirement and old age are equated with

unproductivity, "silence", "passivity,""exit", dependency or ill-health, words which strongly suggest their becoming "surplus" and a "bundle of needs" that retirement issue becomes muddled and loses its real value and significance. When this prevailing notion of old age becomes a guiding compass in education, social policy and in the intervention agenda of the government, then it loses its usefulness *ab initio.* Both advanced and developing economies are guilty of this false consciousness that older populations are a bundle of needs citing from the fact that the development agenda caters only to the children, youth and adults, and the cycle stops there. It fails to capture the whole spectrum of the human development which includes, of course, the ageing sector. It implies that the elderly no longer needs a continuing education after reaching a certain age. This development bias is reminiscent of most intervention policies affecting the older population in the world today (Foner and Schwab 1983).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study involved the retirees in the Premier and Managerial and Professional groups (PMP) in the Malaysian public services who had retired between 1989 and 2000 representing all the states in Malaysia including Sabah, Sarawak and the Federal Territories. It is assumed that between the time they had started retiring and when the research was conducted, the respondents would be around the age of 60 or 70 and were nearing the life expectancy year ceiling of Malaysians. Of the 21,242 retirees falling under this group, a cross-sectional sample was taken randomly from the monthly clusters (Maxim 1999) within 12 years. The Pension Division of the Public Services Department of Malaysia provided the complete list of mandatorily-retired personnels and out of whom 613 names were identified including their addresses, year of retirement, month, gender, type of service and position held prior to retirement.

A survey questionnaire was utilised based on the research objectives. In addition to available literature, exploratory interviews with selected respondents and interviews with prominent non-government organisation representatives were carried out to substantiate the paucity of available materials on local volunteerism. The findings of the interviews and the literature material were merged and an instrument comprising nine sections with 215 items was developed. The questionnaire was then pre-tested using randomly selected respondents from the sample and a validity test using the Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) and factor analysis.

Data collection was conducted through a mail-survey. From the list of 613 retirees, a mailing list of 576 names were prepared, excluding those who that participated in the preliminary interview and pilot study. The response rate was 45.3 percent, a rather high turn-out for a mail-survey mode of data collection. Data in the completed questionnaire were analyzed using the SPSS. Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted to further analyse the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Retirees

Of the 261 retirees involved in this study, 136 or 52.1% were volunteers with 32.3% belonging to the early retirees while 67.5% from the later retirees. There seems to be a wide gap in term of the percentage distribution of retirees within the 12-year's period alluding to the fact that as the age of retirees advances, their participation to voluntary work becomes limited. Age also predicts the level of volunteering for both men and women. This is in consonance with the findings of the Independent Sector survey of 1992, a U.S. based group incharged of promoting volunteerism initiatives, which showed that 42% of people aged 65-74 said that they had volunteered in the previous year. Other studies also showed the comparable rates of decline (Chambre' 1987; Herzog & Morgan 1992). It seems that increasing age

Characteristics	Volunteer (%)	Non Volunteer (%)
Gender		
Male	82.4	91.2
Female	17.6	8.8
Race		
Malay	66.8	50.4
Chinese	17.8	35.2
Indian	8.8	11.2
Kadazan	1.5	.8
Iban	.7	.8
Others	4.4	1.6
Educational Qualification		
HSC/Diploma	12.5	20.2
Bachelor's Degree	55.9	49.2
Master's Degree	16.1	16.1
Doctorate or equiv.	3.7	.8
Professional/Technical	5.9	3.2
Others	5.9	10.5
Residence/Location		
Peninsular Malaysia	70.6	68.8
Sabah	5.9	7.2
Sarawak	6.6	6.4
Federal Territories	16.9	17.6
Marital Status		
Married (with children)	89.0	91.2
Married (no children)	2.2	3.2
Single (widowed, divorced, separated)	4.4	3.2
Never married	4.4	1.6
Religion		
Islam	68.4	50.4
Buddhism	8.1	15.2
Christianity	15.4	13.6
Hinduism	5.2	8.0
Non-believer	.7	6.4
*Other	2.2	6.4

influences volunteering independently of health status. However, the decline in volunteering seems to be occurring at much later ages, i.e. after the age of 75 or 80 (Chambre' 1987; Fischer & Schaffer 1993). One study found that the rate of volunteerism after 80 declined much more sharply for men than it did for women: with 14% of women were still participating in volunteering as compared to only 7% of men (Chambre' 1987). It has been pointed out that it may not be age itself that influences the rate of volunteering.

Table 1 shows the social and demographic profile of both the volunteer and non-volunteer retirees. A majority of the retirees were male, Malay, married, Muslim, residing in Peninsular Malaysia and possessed a bachelor's degree. As these ex-public servants were from the Professional and Managerial Group, their educational qualifications were rather high, noting that 50% were holders of a bachelor's degree while others even have master's (16.1%) and doctorate (3.7%) degrees. In other studies, the level of education has been indicated as the most consistent predictor of volunteering as it boosts volunteering because it heightens the awareness of problems, increases empathy and builds self-confidence. Educated people are also more likely to be asked to volunteer which is partly a function of the fact that they belong to several organizations where they develop more civic skills, such as the ability to run a meeting (Brady et al. 1995). The 50% rate of volunteerism among the retirees clearly shows this trend.

The role of gender in volunteerism has yet to be established as there is a scarcity of local materials on this. However, research studies in the West showed that women tend to be more active in both organised and unorganised voluntary work simply because women are more numerous than men. This has implication on the local scenario in Malaysia considering that the life expectancy for women is higher by five years as compared to men. In contrast looking at the labour force participation of women in the professional and managerial level in the country, it is safe to argue that women should be given both equal access and opportunity so that future retirees of women will most likely to involve in volunteer work. Studies which were conducted on both local and abroad point to the fact that those who engaged in voluntary work are more likely those who have high education and

TABLE 5

Percentage distribution of respondents' sustaining factors for volunteerism

Sustaining factors	Volunteer (n=136)			Non-volunteer (n=125)		
	NI (%)	SI (%)	I (%)	NI (%)	SI (%)	I (%)
The joy of success in voluntary work	5.1	18.4	76.5	7.2	23.2	69.6
Congenial environment	6.6	36.8	56.6	7.2	40.8	52.0
Opportunities to socialise	9.5	30.9	59.6	12.8	37.6	49.6
Feeling of being wanted	10.3	24.3	65.4	12.0	26.4	61.6
Treated well by others	10.3	34.6	55.1	9.6	35.2	55.2
Accepted as a team member	4.4	21.3	74.3	4.0	27.2	68.8
Contribution is appreciated	9.6	19.9	70.6	8.6	31.2	63.2
Family supports volunteerism	9.6	33.8	56.6	14.4	36.8	48.8
Belief in the cause/mission of voluntary organization	5.9	16.9	77.2	1.6	21.6	76.8
Having been in the voluntary service for a long time	12.5	34.6	52.9	35.2	34.4	30.4

NI - Not Important; SI - Somewhat Important; I - Important

involved in voluntary work in later life. Nevertheless, the volunteer-retirees' participation in voluntary work during their career may have left an imprint of influence as far as continuing to provide service to the community is concerned.

Table 5 reflects the retirees' responses, with regards to issues affecting the factors that sustain their volunteerism spirit. It is interesting to note that both the volunteers and non-volunteers believe in the sanctity of the mission of voluntary organization (77.2% and 76.8%, respectively) followed by the sheer joy of having contributed to the success of any voluntary work (76.5% and 69.6%).

It is interesting that the findings above are similar to the survey conducted in 1995 and 1996 in New Zealand's by Volunteering Canterbury (www.cvc.org.nz/paper) showing more or less common reasons for choosing to do voluntary work. These were:
- To do something useful in the community (87%)
- To meet people (69%)
- To use experience and skills (66%)
- To have fun (65%)
- To use spare time (65%)

Preference of Retirees in Voluntary Work

Both volunteers and non-volunteers seemed to have the same choice pertaining to the organization they would work for or wish to work. These types of organizations include religious, education, social or community-based groups. Bearing in mind the availability of volunteers and prospective volunteers to work on critical areas – religious education, training and education and community development – that concern the Malaysian society, relevant agencies and authorities must take note of this vast untapped resources who are simply waiting to be called to–"active" service. Based on the informal interviews with the selected retirees, they are willing to share their time and expertise to the community. They are however reluctant to engage in voluntary work once they experience certain glitches in the management of organizations, and thus preferring a high standard of management to manage them. Volunteer-retirees also disliked the idea of other retirees who used their voluntary work as a platform to advance their personal and political interests and argued that politics and vested interests should not interfere with any selfless form of voluntary work. The retirees'

TABLE 6
Organizational preferences of retirees
in voluntary work

Preferred type of organization	Volunteer (n=136) (%)	Non Volunteer (n=125) (%)
Religious	34.6	28.8
Education	33.8	28.0
Social	22.1	18.4
Community	18.4	27.2
Welfare	16.9	21.6
Health	10.3	16.8
Political	7.4	5.6
Recreational	7.4	7.2
Work-related	5.1	10.4
Societal benefit	3.7	8.0
Sports	3.7	7.2
Service clubs	2.9	2.4
Youth	2.2	3.2
Arts & Culture	0	2.4

preference in community work also indicates a positive attitude towards helping the broader community of which retirees and their families are a part. The verbal expressions "giving back" and""it's high time to give back" presuppose a very strong connection between the retirees and their immediate local community where they are a part, suggesting that economic productive work has somehow "detached" them from the local community and it is only during retirement that they want to return or ""give back" what they feel they have owed to the broader community. Nevertheless, it is not definite what it is that they want to give back and/or what they have received during their "working" life but it is surmised that now they want now to spend time with the people in their neighbourhood or charity groups in need of their experience and skills. It is heartening to note that retirees, after having been through with their fair share in working in the public sector, are a ready resource to work in the community where their expertise can be tapped. Looking at the social problems drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, sexual permissiveness and the

like (see Azimi 2005) – that Malaysian society is confronted with in the recent times, it is best to avail of the services of the retirees and acknowledge their experience and wisdom. It is when they are recognised as a valuable resource that other retirees lurking in their homes are also emboldened to take part in assisting others to transform our community.

Why volunteers tend to converge in religious and social activities is explained by the influence of the eastern cultural values system that puts overriding importance of the community and "personal relationships". This is consistent with the qualitative study conducted by Merriam and Mazanah (2000) on the role of cultural values in shaping their learning on older adulthood. Furthermore, emphasis on dependence, community, family and relationships take a frontseat as people approach retirement. Learning is both communal and informal and is usually embedded in social interaction, whether it is with their families or with the larger community. The preference for religious social activities could be an indication of retirees' preference for less stressful working environment after having spent most of their working lives in the formal organizations where time, skills and energy are requisites.

Potential of Retirees as Volunteer Workers
Table 7 provides a clear picture of retirees who are engaged in voluntary work. It is noted that they are willing to accept more responsibilities by participating in voluntary work should another one comes along. However, the non-volunteers are non-committal as far as their willingness to join in voluntary work is concerned though they may still be "free and easy" (53.2%) and do not have any form of productive employment (see Table 3). Volunteers who were also giving their free service to the community gave an ambiguous position as far as discontinuing their service; nonetheless, only 3.7% of the volunteer-retirees responded that they wished to discontinue their voluntary work. In the comments they shared, it showed that they had experienced some form of disappointments

TABLE 7
Percentage distribution of retirees as potential volunteers (N=261)

Statements	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Response (%)
Volunteers willing to accept more voluntary work.	48.5	42.6	8.9
Volunteers wishing to discontinue from voluntary work.	3.7	35.3	61.0
Non-volunteers willing to do voluntary work.	3.7	8.8	87.5

TABLE 8
Frustrations in volunteerism as perceived by respondents (N=261)

Statements	DS* (%)	ASW (%)	AS (%)
Absence of expected rewards.	70.6	22.8	6.6
Service effort is not appreciated.	42.7	29.4	28.0
Mismatch of individual needs to tasks.	23.5	43.4	33.1
Inability to carry out the tasks successfully.	22.7	40.4	36.7
The spirit is willing; the flesh is weak.	25.8	27.2	47.0
Lack of adequate resources	19.9	43.4	36.7
Lack of dynamic leadership	21.3	30.1	48.6
Personal agenda not fulfilled.	52.9	33.1	14.0
Burnout from workload overload	47.8	28.7	23.5

* DS-Disagree Strongly; ASW-Agree Somewhat; AS-Agree Strongly

and frustration implying that they may have expectations of a better-run voluntary organization prior to engaging in voluntary work.

The Hong Kong study on the reception and perception of the volunteer services would point to the fact that non-volunteers were willing takers of the future voluntary work provided they were well-informed of the activity. The present research however strongly shows that non-volunteer retirees have non-committal response when asked of their propensity to engage in voluntary work in the future giving an ambiguous position with regards to volunteerism.

Of the nine statements related to volunteer's frustrations, the lack of dynamic leadership seemed to be the main issue followed by the apparent physical inability of some to carry out volunteer work, especially those who might have experienced some health problems or when the place of work was far from their place of residence. There

seems to be a strong indication that one of the negative factors that discourages retirees from volunteering is the lack of dynamic leadership in the organisation that they wish to work in or have already worked and these frustrations do not bode well for both parties. While it shies away potential volunteers, it also stifles enthusiasm of other people who are now working within the organisation. On another level, volunteers indicated that rewards for engaging in voluntary work was the least of their concerns and thus, it implies that their personal agenda or interest in this matter takes a backseat.

Table 9 shows volunteers' and non-volunteers' perception of their satisfaction towards volunteerism. While volunteer retirees stressed the importance of sharing their experiences as a source of satisfaction, the non-volunteers, on the other hand, stressed the issue of "creating a sense of civic responsibility" as an important criterion in measuring satisfaction. This however is not consistent with

TABLE 9
Respondents' satisfaction on voluntary work (N=261)

Satisfaction items	Volunteer (n=136)			Non-volunteer (n=125)		
	NI (%)	SI (%)	I (%)	NI (%)	SI (%)	I (%)
Provides a sense of purpose.	1.5	14.0	84.6	2.4	19.2	48.4
Contribution to national unity.	2.2	16.2	81.6	7.2	17.6	75.2
Reduces feeling of isolation.	5.1	28.7	66.2	14.4	27.2	58.4
Maintains satisfactory mental health.	.7	24.3	75.0	12.0	21.6	66.4
Sharing of experiences.	1.5	9.6	88.9	4.8	19.2	76.0
Enhancing self-esteem.	10.3	32.4	57.3	15.2	34.4	50.4
Spending free-time usefully.	.7	23.5	75.8	4.8	26.4	68.8
Creating a sense of civic responsibility	.7	14.0	85.3	1.6	15.2	83.2

the non-volunteers' non-committal attitude if they were to be given the opportunity to do any voluntary work.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Most of the retirees were Malay males and are from peninsular Malaysia and the majority of them were from the education sector. The retirees were generally in fairly good health and had a comfortable financial standing. Being more or less financially sound, the search for rewards for their service was not really wanting. The volunteer retirees were involved in volunteerism not for the financial gain but more as a selfless service to the society taking note that they felt duty-bound to give back what that society had given to them during their "productive" years.

Slightly more than half of the retirees were engaged in voluntary work and said to be productive with more than 50% were still having full, partial or self-employment while others were "free". This finding alone contradicts the prevailing myth that once the productive Malaysian workers pass their "prime" i.e. 55/56 years old, they are now considered a "'rocking chair relics' or, to use the colloquial expression, as a "household decoration". In the same vein, knowing that a majority of them are still working productively with specifically about 25% are self-employed,

it is safe to say that they have actually not left employment at all. It also reflected the satisfactory health status of retirees dispelling further a predominant notion that once they reached the retirement age, were faced with numerous health problems and therefore become a 'liability' in the organization rather than a productive asset. This finding also, strongly suggests that perhaps what have made them real healthy, at least, during the time of the survey, due to the fact that they have been working productively and this in itself impresses the community that active work brings with it a healthy lifestyle. A rather common expression and also carries some truth is, 'alzheimer's disease is the best partner of a non-working elderly.'

Retirees' propensity to get involved in voluntary work which has religious, educational or social nature has been indicated. As shown in the study of Merriam and Mazanah (2000), the cultural values greatly influenced this tendency, arguing that as compared to the western values, with the former stresses on the importance of the community and personal relationships and close friendships, not to mention the aim for spiritual fulfillment as reflected in the retirees' tendency to get involved in religious activities.

Based on the findings, a number of recommendations on how to attract more retirees towards volunteerism are proposed

how government and NGOs could help advance the issue of volunteerism and how retirees could make the right choice of organization.

1. In attracting more retirees to volunteer, the present volunteers themselves should play an active role in getting more members. This is dependent on whether volunteers are happy with their current work.

2. In as much as most of these volunteers are working for religious entities, these can be utilised as the communication channels on the information regarding retirees, pensioners, senior citizens and the like.

3. A systematic recruitment, selection and placement of volunteers can aid in determining the motivation, abilities and skills, the type of work preferred and availability of time of the retirees vis-a-vis the need of various organizations.

4. There should be a national policy on providing healthy and meaningful living for all categories and gender of the ageing population in the country. As the retirees tend to withdraw from their active life as age advances, it is important to provide appropriate geriatric facilities to cater for their ageing needs and to enhance their productive lifestyle.

5. As a large number of retirees are from the education service, they can be engaged in coaching or tutorial classes organised by the Government; while others in managerial and consultancy work within the community.

6. There is a need to change the attitude of the public towards retirees as unproductive or inactive. The formation of the Pensioners' Association and the Senior Citizens Association could assist in finding/matching suitable and meaningful activities for retirees.

7. Educational institutions should give prominence to voluntary work by incorporating service learning in the curriculum.

8. Organizations should encourage voluntary work among the staff by giving recognition to those who join NGO voluntary work.

9. There is a need for the Government to set up a special task force to review the social policy for the ageing population and to incorporate among others their concerns and needs and how the government bodies can enhance and attract retirees to contribute to voluntary woork.

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The Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI): Towards Understanding Differences in the Islamic Religiosity among the Malaysian Youth

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ABSTRAK

Dalam usaha Malaysia untuk mencapai wawasan 2020, para belia semestinya menjadi pemimpin utama bagi negara Malaysia yang telah membangun sepenuhnya. Walau bagaimanapun, perubahan gaya hidup belia semakin menunjukkan kebimbangan terhadap penglibatan mereka dalam tingkah laku yang berbahaya. Walaupun Islam dan kekayaan sejarahnya adalah bukti kesempurnaan agama di dalam mengubah manusia tidak kira tempat atau masa, namun, pelbagai masalah sosial di kalangan Muslim kini telah menimbulkan pelbagai persoalan yang berkaitan dengan pemahaman dan praktis di dalam Islam. Justeru itu, adalah amat diperlukan pemahaman dan penilaian terhadap bahagian penting di dalam komitmen beragama di kalangan belia dan mengenal pasti bagaimana caranya ia dapat berkelakuan sebagai satu aset di dalam proses pembangunan negara. Bagi maklum balas terhadap keperluan ini, Institut Pengajian Komuniti dan Keamanan (PEKKA), UPM bersama-sama para penyelidik dari UKM, menjalankan kajian IRPA selama dua tahun setengah untuk membentuk 'norma' religiositi bagi kumpulan terpilih di kalangan belia Muslim di Malaysia sebagai satu langkah permulaan ke arah memahami religiositi dalam konteks yang lebih luas. Secara keseluruhannya, tiga fasa inisiatif ini bertujuan untuk: 1) memberi pengertian religiositi daripada perspektif Islam; 2) membentuk instrumen pengukuran bagi menilai religiositi Islam; dan 3) memperoleh skor norma religiositi bagi kumpulan terpilih di kalangan belia Muslim. Kertas kerja ini telah mengemukakan model religiositi Islam dan pembentukan instrumen, beberapa dapatan awalnya mendapati secara relatifnya responden bagi Tasawur Islam (pemahaman tentang Islam) mempunyai skor yang tinggi berbanding dengan Personaliti Keagamaan (aplikasi pengajaran Islam dalam kehidupan seharian). Kajian ini akhirnya bertujuan untuk memberikan saranan kepada pembuat polisi dan golongan profesional daripada semua peringkat kerja belia dengan matlamat untuk membentuk intervensi bagi menambah lagi aspek religiositi belia.

ABSTRACT

As Malaysia continues towards its goal of Vision 2020, the youth of today move closer to becoming the first leaders of a fully developed Malaysia. Currently, however, youth's – the Muslim youth in particular – lifestyles are changing and there is great concern over the socially precarious behaviours in which many young people are engaging. Though Islam and its rich history are evidence of the efficacy of religion in upwardly transforming human beings in any time or place, the current prevalence of a variety of social problems among Muslims has raised many questions in relation to the Islamic understanding and practice. As such, there is an urgent need to understand and assess the key areas of the religious commitment among the youth – also known

as religiosity – and begin to explore in the what ways it might act in as an asset within the nation building process. In response to this need, the Institute for Community and Peace Studies (PEKKA) at UPM, along with the researchers from UKM, undertook a two-and-a-half year IRPA initiative to develop the religiosity 'norms' for the selected groups of Malaysian Muslim youth as a first step toward understanding their religiosity in a broader context. Overall, the three-phase initiative aimed to: 1) define religiosity from the Islamic perspective; 2) develop a measurement instrument for assessing Islamic religiosity; and 3) obtain religiosity normed scores for the selected groups of Muslim youth. The current paper presents the Islamic religiosity model and instrument constructs, along with some initial findings that indicate relatively higher scores by the respondents on the Islamic Worldview construct (Islamic understanding) than on the Religious Personality construct (application of Islamic teachings in everyday life). This research ultimately aims to inform policy makers and practitioners at all levels of youth work with the goal of developing interventions to enhance the aspects of the youth religiosity.

INTRODUCTION

The development that Malaysia and its people have undergone over the past thirty years is nothing short of astounding, and the rate of change on all levels of society continues essentially unfettered. For the majority Muslim population in particular, the changes have had somewhat mixed results. The Malaysian Muslims – most of whom are ethnic Malays – have reaped much benefit from the economic success that has been achieved mainly over the past two decades. Such economic success has translated into greater opportunities in all areas including educational advancement, business and economic opportunities as well as social and cultural liberalization.

Despite the material success that has resulted from the Malaysia's ongoing economic development of Malaysia, there have been social costs to the nation in the form of social ills that have risen steeply, especially among the younger Malaysians over the past decade or so (Badaruddin 2002). A list of such ills common to the Americans, Europeans and many other Asians, such as the rise in rates of divorce, crime, out-of-wedlock pregnancy, drug abuse and HIV infection, have increased in great numbers (Badaruddin 2002). Child-abuse, incest, runaways, drug abuse, truancy, school dropouts, vandalism, gangsterism, *bohsia* and others have also been rising for several years (Cheu 1997). Such a high prevalence of social problems among our youth directly threatens the current and future direction of the nation, which in turn jeopardizes every other aspect of the national importance including the growth that has made Malaysia the economic jewel of Southeast Asia.

As the nation continues to move forward with its Vision 2020 plan, the youth of today are in line to be the future inheritors of a fully developed and modern Malaysia. The current number of children in Malaysia is estimated to be around 48 percent of the total population. This number is significant considering that they will comprise the working class group in the year 2020—the target for the year of Malaysia's 2020 Vision, where the country is targeted to become a fully developed nation (Badaruddin 2002). Due to the increasing levels and alarming nature of the social ills, however, the health and well being of the young generation, along with the future success of the nation, are in question.

With the dramatic change in the youth lifestyles over the past twenty years, the role of religion in the lives of the Muslim in Malaysia has come under scrutiny. Suggestions by a small minority that religion is important for the national development have jarred a range of people. To the majority, the two worlds are in fact often seen as far apart; with religion as seen dealing with spiritual matters, whereas development is very much in the material world (Marshall 2001).

With the ongoing debate on the appropriate role of Islam in the Malaysians' public life, little room is afforded to substantive dialogue and action toward obtaining a better understanding of the role of Islam in the lives of youth and how the Islamic understanding and practice impacts the development of the country. Consequently, little is known about

how and to what degree the young Muslims in Malaysia apply their knowledge and practice of Islam toward such ends. As such, there is a gap in understanding how the Islamic religiosity among our youth contributes to the communal goal of nation building, and to what extent different 'types' of youth vary in this regard. The terms 'nation building' and 'Islam' have rarely been used together. It leads many to believe, that Islam and religion in general do not contribute positively to the work of nation building in any substantive way. As such, serious efforts to better understand the role of the Islamic religiosity in the lives of Muslim youth and its impact on the national development are clearly needed.

Islam and Nation Building

Nation building is primarily a philosophical study in social-political science and constructed from multiple layers of foundations including economic, political will and polity, social agency, nationalism, citizenship and others (J. Abdul Hamid, personal communication, August 20, 2003). "Nation-building" has always been a highly complex term, encompassing the description of historical experiences, a set of assumptions about "development" of the Third World societies, and the policies of governments that were driven, among other considerations, by the desire to control and expand their own power (Hippler 2002). In its most fundamental form, nation building implies the political, economic and social development and formation of a nation and the institutions that comprise it.

Islam as a religion and comprehensive way of life is part and parcel to any nation building process in which Muslims are involved. This is due to the inherent nature of Islam as *al-din* – or the comprehensive way of life that results from one living in a state of surrender to God. *Al-din* implies the sanctification of all daily living into worshipful acts that unify life in a manner consistent with the *tawhidic* principle of the divine unity. According to the Qur'an, "*Who can be better in religion (din) than one who submits (aslama) his face (i.e. his whole self) to Allah…*" (Al-Qur'an, 4:125). Practice of Islam

as' *al-din*, therefore, should make Muslims dynamic, and to always moving forward and progressing in their quest for self-purification and self-perfection through worship, the ongoing acquisition of knowledge and performing of selfless works. This is evidenced by the history of a 1,000+ year Islamic civilization that was responsible for major breakthroughs in all aspects and at all levels of human life. In addition to promoting an individual dynamism, Islam preaches the importance of working righteousness with and on behalf of one's neighbours, families, religious community and greater society. Nation building, therefore, becomes a natural outgrowth of the Islamic religious practice as well as part and parcel to it as a complete way of life.

METHODS

Mixed Method Approach

In the attempt to meet the aforementioned challenge of understanding the current levels of the Islamic religiosity among the Muslim youth in Malaysia, researchers at the UPM's Institute for Community and Peace Studies (PEKKA) in UPM partnership with the researchers from UKM, recently completed a two-and-a-half-year IRPA study titled "Religiosity and Personality Development Index: Implications for Nation Building." The project aimed to develop the Islamic religiosity norms for the selected categories of the Muslim youth or young adults (16 – 35 years old). The initiative included both qualitative and quantitative research methods, and began with the conceptualisation of a definition for religiosity from the Islamic perspective.

To develop the religiosity model (see Diagram 1), in-depth interviews with the noted Islamic scholars in Malaysia were undertaken along with a review of the literature to develop the concept. The second phase of the project entailed the development of a measurement instrument, the Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI), based on the operational definitions and religiosity dimensions resulting from the first phase of the study. Finally, once

the measurement instrument had been pilot tested, the reliability and validity established, a field test involving nearly 1,700 youth respondents from across Malaysia was undertaken and the resulting data used to develop norms for each of the six sampled groups of young people previously mentioned.

Sampling

The selected groups included in the study sample were: IPTA (public university) youth, youth affiliated with youth organizations, youth in Serenti drug treatment centres, youth affiliated with political parties, young factory workers and 'at-large' youth sampled at shopping centres. The six cluster groups or sub-populations were chosen from a master list of youth populations in Malaysia through brainstorming/feedback from the members of the Research Team that included several youth experts. The six clusters represented the "successful" or "achieved" youth, (i.e. IPTA students and degree holders);""general" or "unaffiliated" youth, (i.e. Youth At-large); "troubled" youth, (i.e. Serenti youth); "affiliated" youth, (i.e. Youth Organization members), and so on. The diversity of the sampling framework, though challenging to complete, included many different 'types' of young people broken down according to a variety of social groupings. The sample size according to cluster is illustrated below.

TABLE 1: Sample description by cluster

Variable Cluster	Category	Frequency	Percent
	IPTA	399	23.6
	Youth Organization	429	25.4
	Serenti	277	16.4
	Political Party	147	8.6
	Youth At-Large	244	14.4
	Factory Workers	196	11.6
	Total	1692	100.0

MRPI Religiosity Model and Instrument Development

Prior to assessing the differences in religiosity among young Muslims in Malaysia, a religiosity model and instrument reflective of the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam was developed. The need for such an instrument has been identified by Shamsuddin (1992) who indicated that Muslims, in particular, are in need of a relatively different scales to measure their religiosity because "...the Islamic concept of religion is fundamentally different from other concepts of religion." Since the scope of religion, i.e. its dimensions are defined by the very concept of religion, "... the content dimensions of the Muslim religiosity vary considerably with the Judeo-Christian religious tradition" (Shamsuddin 1992: 105). Spilka *et al.* (2003), in their comprehensive text,""The Psychology of Religion" also noted that "most psychological research has been conducted within the Judeo-Christian framework (p. 3)." According to Ghorbani *et al.* (2000), "Studies of English-speaking populations have dominated the literature. Other societies have received greater recent attention (e.g., Gorsuch *et al.* 1997; Grzymala-Moszczynska 1991; Hovemyr 1988; Kaldestad and Stifoss-Hanssen 1993), but the Judeo-Christian commitments still remain the most common object of investigation (Hood *et al.* 1996: 2)." They add, "The need to empirically study other religious traditions is obvious. Success in meeting that need clearly rests upon the availability of relevant psychological scales (Ghorbani *et al.* 2000: 2). Finally, Wilde and Joseph (1997) added, "Work on religiosity has tended to focus almost exclusively on Christianity (p. 899)." The disproportion of research efforts being almost exclusively from a Western, Judeo-Christian perspective and worldview raises important questions pertaining to how religiosity has been conceptualised in much of the current literature and depicts a clear need for organic measurement instruments reflective of other non-Judeo-Christian faiths (Krauss *et al.* 2006).

To address this need in religiosity instrumentation, the MRPI was created to reflect the unique *tawhidic* (divine unity) worldview of the Islamic faith. This religiosity model purports that religiosity from the Islamic perspective can be understood according to two main constructs. The first is
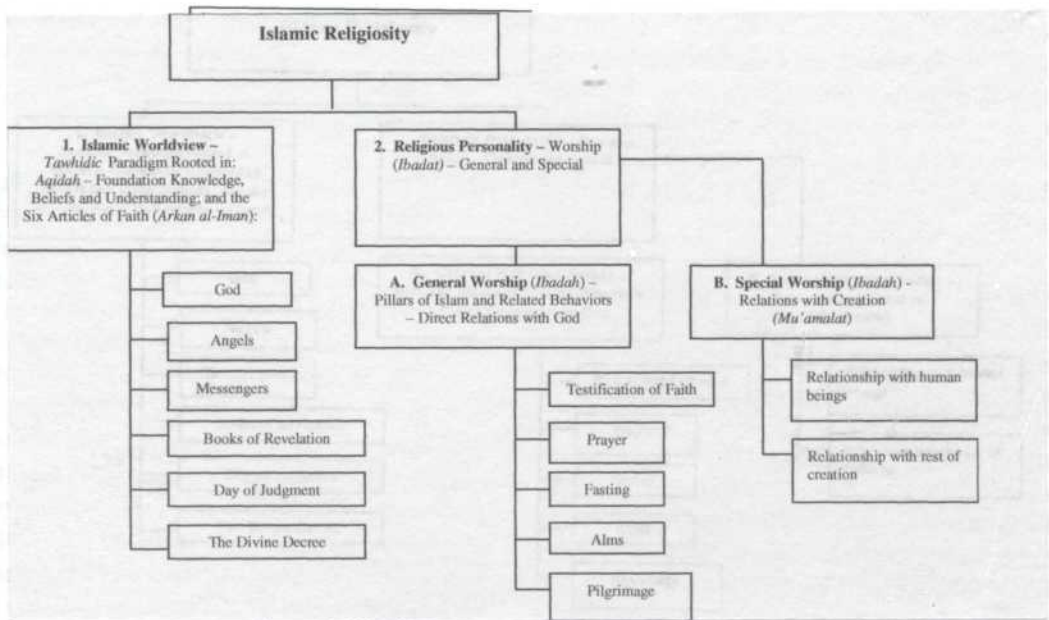
Figure 1: MRPI Muslim religiosity measurement model

called the 'Islamic Worldview'. The Islamic Worldview construct reflects the Islamic *tawhidic* paradigm (doctrine of the divine unity/oneness of God) and is measured or assessed primarily through the Islamic creed (*aqidah*), which details what a Muslim should know, believe and inwardly comprehend about God and religion as laid down by the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet Muhammad, representing the two primary sources of the Islamic religious law, belief and practice within (*Sunni*) Islam. Thus, the MRPI survey items developed for the 'Islamic Worldview' construct aimed to ascertain one's level of agreement with the statements relating to the Islamic pillars of faith (*arkan al-Iman*) (i.e. belief in: God, Angels, Messengers and Prophets of God, Books of Revelation, The Day of Judgment and the Divine Decree), which represent the foundation of the Islamic creed (*aqidah*).

The second major construct of the Islamic religiosity concept is called the 'Religious Personality'. The Religious Personality represents the manifestation of one's religious worldview in the righteous works (*amalan saleh*), or the particular ways that a person expresses his or her traits or adapts to diverse situations in the world - the manifested aspects

of a personal identity, life definition and worldview – that are guided by the Islamic religious teachings and motivated by God-consciousness. The Religious Personality includes behaviours, motivations, attitudes and emotions that aim to assess personal manifestation of the Islamic teachings and commands. This construct is represented by item statements relating to the formal ritual worship or 'special *ibadat*', that reflects one's direct relationship with God; and the daily *mu'amalat*, or the religiously-guided behaviours towards one's family, fellow human beings and the rest of creation i.e., animals, the natural environment, etc. known as the general worship or 'general '*ibadat*'.

The underlying key aspect of the Religious Personality construct in sum is *akhlaq Islamiyyah*, or the Islamic notion of refined character that underpins a religious personality. *Akhlaq Islamiyyah* is the manifestation of the *tawhidic* worldview in one's everyday actions, which presupposes a way of life that requires constant and ongoing consciousness of not only the present, earthly world (*al-dunya*), but that of the life-to-come (*al-akhira*). The *tawhidic* worldview of Islam is thus a metaphysical one that puts God at the centre, and upholds Him as the Ultimate

Reality, making return to Him the inevitable result for everything in creation. The Islamic worldview thus defines God as not only the Creator and lawgiver, but also worship and service in His way as the very object of life itself (Al-Attas 2001). These concepts are illustrated in *Fig. 1*.

The Development of the MRPI Sub-Dimensions
From the two main MRPI survey dimensions described above, sub-dimensions were created using a rationale method. Though in scale development this step usually takes place before creating and selecting item, given the fact that the items were pulled directly from the Islamic sources of knowledge, i.e. the Qur'an and hadith, a 'master list' of items was first selected and then the sub-dimensions were used to further determine the items to be included and discarded. According to Norrie (2004), there are multiple ways of conducting instrument development and item selection, depending on the specific nature of the study and item content.

For the Islamic Worldview construct, the items were broken down into three sub-dimensions derived from the Islamic Worldview definition. The sub-dimensions for the Islamic Worldview construct and their definitions are:
1. Creator and Creation. Items in this dimension were designed to assess the relationship between man and God – man as the highest form of creation and God as the Creator of all life and existence. 'Creator and Creation' reflects the core elements of the *tawhidic* paradigm and assesses one's understanding of dependence on God as the Sustainer of all life, and how one is to approach his/her relationship with the Creator as such. Unlike other religiosity models that include similar dimensions, e.g., the 'relationship with the divine', this dimension is unique in its 'two-wayness' of not only including man's relationship with God, but also man's understanding of God's relationship with His creations.

This sub-dimension acts as an indicator of one's understanding of the relationship between man and God, implying God-consciousness.

2. Existence and Transcendence. Items in this dimension are comprised of statements regarding unseen realities based on the Islamic knowledge of such. This includes key elements of the six articles of faith, namely, the Hereafter; the Day of Judgment; the Angels; reward and punishment; continuity of existence after death; and the different states of the self in its journey through life. This dimension aims to assess the spiritual understanding of events and awareness of the different spiritual and non-corporeal realities according to the Islamic perspective. Such realities are a major tenet of an Islamic worldview that puts forth a notion of reality that views life as a multi-dimensional continuum.

3. All-encompassing Religion. Items in this dimension are aimed to assess the understanding of Islam as a religion for all times, situations and places. To uncover this, the sub-dimension includes items related to *fitra* (man's natural state); the universality of Islamic teachings and texts; the applicability of Islamic law and *Sunnah* (way) of the Prophet; the applicability of the Islamic teachings in the modern age, and others. This sub-dimension includes items that are related to the universal applicability of the Islamic teachings that act as an indicator for a consistent outlook and approach to life, consistent with the Islamic *tawhidic* paradigm. This sub-dimension is designed to capture the key worldly aspects of the Islamic worldview to complement the first two, which focus on spiritual and other worldly elements.

The MRPI Islamic Worldview sub-dimensions comprise the six articles of faith as described in *Fig. 1* as follows.

The breakdown of items for each sub-dimension was conducted using a rational

TABLE 2
Sub-dimensions of the Islamic worldview construct with related Islamic theological concept

MRPI Sub-dimension		Islamic Theological Concept - (from six Articles of Faith)
1. Creator/Creation:	=	Belief in Allah
2. Existence/Transcendence:	=	Belief in 'Fate and Predestination'
		Belief in Angels
		Belief in Day of Judgment
3. All-Encompassing	=	Belief in Revealed Books
Religion:	=	Belief in Messengers

method, as opposed to a statistical or factor analytic method.

For the Religious Personality construct, items were originally grouped using the rational method and according to the literature on the Islamic personality and character. Based on the work of al-Hashimi (1997), the religious personality items were originally broken down into 47 separated sub-dimensions, with three items in each, but were later re-grouped into three larger sub-dimensions, based on further examination of the literature and to coincide with the Islamic Worldview dimension. The three sub-dimensions for Religious Personality were thus defined as follows:

1. Self (self-directed). This dimension was aimed to assess the self-directed aspects of religious-based personal strivings from the Islamic perspective. This refers to the internal aspects of the Self both the state/condition of our internal selves (*nafs*) as well as the external or physical self, which refers to our physical health and condition. The internal aspects of the self include virtues and vices such as humility, modesty, courage, compassion, truthfulness, jealousy, envy, tranquility and others. This dimension captures these 'states' through the statements on attitude, motivation, emotions and practices or behaviours. This dimension represents one's relationship with Allah based on the state or health of one's Self.

2. Social (interpersonal - interactive). Items in this dimension were aimed to assess the social and interpersonal aspects of the religious-based personal strivings from the Islamic perspective. These include the ability to understand, work with and relate to one's neighbours, family, co-religionists and others. This dimension also measures the extent to which one responds to the motivation, moods and feelings of others. Specifically, this dimension includes some interpersonal constructs that are consistent with the Islamic religious personality as defined by the Qur'an, *Sunnah* (way of the Prophet) and scholarly works based on them. This dimension represents one's relationship with Allah based on one's behaviour toward others and the rest of creations.

3. Ritual (formal worship). Items in this dimension were aimed to assess the personal strivings related to the Islamic ritual worship. Unlike the prior two dimensions, the ritual dimension reflects one's direct relationship with Allah through his or her ritualistic acts such as prayer, fasting, reading Qur'an, charity and others. This dimension also includes obedience to the external Islamic discipline such as one's dress and appearance, as well as items specific to the Islamic legal rulings. This dimension thus aims to assess one's level of commitment (*iltizam*) toward the ritualistic strivings.

TABLE 3
Sub-dimensions of religious personality construct
with related Islamic theological concept

MRPI Sub-Dimension		Islamic Theological Concept (from 'general' and 'special' worship constructs)
1. Self:	=	Relationship with Self
2. Social:	=	Relationship with man and creatio
3. Ritual:	=	Direct relationship with Allah – (Commitment to Islamic ritual worship)

TABLE 4
Factor loadings, communalities, eigenvalues and variance percentages
for the principle component analysis with varimax rotation

	Communality (h2)	Factor I Islamic Worldview	Factor II Religious Personality
Creator	.773	.869	00
Existence	.637	.779	00
All-encompassing	.704	.796	.00
Self	.865	.00	.909
Social	.911	.00	.926
Ritual	.841	.00	.895
	Eigenvalue	1.300	3.432
	% Variance	21.668	57.198

The re-organization of the 47 sub-dimensions into three was in line with the Religious Personality conceptual framework as presented in Diagram 1. Table 3 illustrates how the three MRPI Religious Personality sub-dimensions were broken down according to the framework presented above.

PSYCHOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF THE MRPI

The Principal Component Analysis
The principal component analysis on the survey pilot test data was conducted using all the six MRPI sub-dimensions, as a confirmatory technique to determine the level of correlation between the different sub-dimensions (as variables) and the two main factors (dimensions) of the study. This was done to confirm the fit of the particular sub-dimensions under each of the main dimensions.

Before conducting the analysis, the results indicated that Bartlett's test of Sphericity was significant at the .01 level (p<.001) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was greater than 0.6 (Blaikie, 2003). These findings indicated that all variables in the analysis had factorability values.

Using the principle component analysis with varimax rotation, results indicated that the top two factors accounted for 78.9% of the total variance. The number of factors was determined by an Eigenvalue greater than one. Table 4 illustrates the factor distribution. Each factor had an Eigenvalue of more than one and when combined, accounted for 78.9% of the total variance. The results showed that all variables exceeded the factor loading criteria of more than .40 in one extraction (Blaikie 2003).

The factor loading values, variances, communalities and variance percentages resulting from the principal component analysis with varimax rotation are also listed

TABLE 5

The normed mean scores for the Islamic religiosity dimensions – by cluster group

Cluster	Islamic Worldview		Religious Personality	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
IPTA	3.89	.878	3.61	.925
Youth Organization	3.60	.980	3.60	.998
Serenti	2.98	1.014	3.00	1.009
Political Party	3.76	1.108	3.82	.956
Youth At-Large	3.24	.918	3.30	.995
Factory Workers	3.48	.914	3.86	1.086
Overall	3.51	1.007	3.51	1.027

in Table 4. The variables are arranged from high to low and are clustered based on the loading size. Loadings below .30 were changed to .00 (.30 considered as meaningful by potential). Both factors I and II had three loading values of more than .70 and all factors had communality values of more than .30.

Reliability - Internal Consistency

The internal consistencies of the two main religiosity dimensions were tested using the Cronbach Alpha. The internal consistencies greater than .70 were considered adequate (Epps, Park, Huston and Ripke 2003). For the Islamic Worldview scale, the alpha was .86 whereas, for the Religious Personality scale, the alpha was .94.

RESULTS

From the field test data, the raw scores were obtained and normed using a standardized (z-score) method (see Rodriguez 1997). Standard or z-scores, usually between –3 and +3 for a normal distribution, can be converted into a linear scale. For the present study, the z-scores were 'transformed' or converted into a scale of 1 – 6, indicating the six 'levels' of religiosity: very low, low, moderate-to-low, moderate-to-high, high and very high (Krauss 2005).

A comparison of the normed mean scores for both the religiosity dimensions across the six cluster groups indicated that the IPTA youth, Youth Organization members and Political Party youth all recorded scores above

the mean on both dimensions, while Serenti youth and Youth At-large scored below the mean for both dimensions. Factory worker youth scored below the mean on the Islamic Worldview, but higher than the mean on the Religious Personality. The IPTA youth scored the highest on the Islamic Worldview, while the political party youth scored highest on the Religious Personality and Serenti youth scored lowest on both dimensions. The findings are reported in Table 5.

The normed score results for the religiosity dimensions were further broken down into individual sub-dimensions. Starting with the Islamic Worldview sub-dimensions, the results indicated that the IPTA youth scored the highest on all the three sub-dimensions, with the Serenti youth indicating the lowest scores on all three. Furthermore, five out of the six cluster groups scored highest on the All-Encompassing Religion sub-dimension, with the exception of IPTA youth who scored highest on the Creator-Creation dimension. Furthermore, three of the groups (IPTA, Youth Organization, Serenti) scored lowest on the Existence-Transcendence dimension while the remaining three scored lowest on the Creator-Creation dimension. The results are illustrated in Table 6.

For the Religious Personality sub-dimensions, the results indicated that the Factory Worker youth scored highest on the Social and Ritual sub-dimensions, while Political Party youth scored highest on the Self-dimension. Again, the Serenti youth scored

TABLE 6
The normed mean scores for THE Islamic worldview sub-dimensions

Cluster	Creator-Creation		Existence-Transcendence		All-Encompassing Religion	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
IPTA	3.90	.816	3.80	.930	3.87	.894
Youth Organization	3.56	1.010	3.50	1.061	3.59	.991
Serenti	3.03	1.070	2.92	1.018	3.10	1.041
Political Party	3.62	.995	3.71	1.170	3.73	1.050
Youth At-large	3.20	1.103	3.23	1.006	3.36	.889
Factory Workers	3.45	1.014	3.45	.951	3.52	.942

TABLE 7
The normed mean scores for the religious personality sub-dimensions

Cluster	Self		Social		Ritual	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
IPTA	3.69	.939	3.68	.941	3.48	.984
Youth Organization	3.56	1.023	3.63	1.010	3.64	1.008
Serenti	3.05	1.054	3.00	1.037	2.99	.971
Political Party	3.75	1.052	3.64	.929	3.91	.979
Youth At-large	3.36	1.039	3.36	1.019	3.30	.966
Factory Workers	3.69	1.086	3.82	1.099	3.93	1.038

lowest on all three dimensions indicating the strong possibility of a significant relationship between religiosity and social ills such as drug abuse. Three of the groups (Factory Workers, Political Party, Youth Organization) scored highest on the Ritual sub-dimension while the remaining three scored highest on the Self-dimension. None of the groups (with the exception of the Youth At-large who indicated the same score as the Self sub-dimension) scored highest on the Social sub-dimension. The results are shown in Table 7.

DISCUSSION

Religiosity Dimensions– The Islamic Worldview and Religious Personality

The findings presented in Table 5 for the overall religiosity dimensions indicated that the IPTA youth were strongest in term of of

the Islamic Worldview. This finding lends support to the Islamic Worldview scale as a knowledge-based construct, implying that there is some level of correlation between the religious understanding, as represented in the MRPI, and academic attainment. This could be explained by the fact that religious education is a compulsory subject for all the Muslim students in the Malaysian public schools, and as such, higher levels of educational advancement imply a higher potential for synthesizing religious knowledge.

As for the Religious Personality dimension, the high score indicated by Factory Workers is a somewhat surprising result. Many considered the factory workers in Malaysia to be affiliated with crime, drug abuse and behaviours not often affiliated with high religiosity (Doraisamy 2002). Doraisamy (2002) claims that "Social problems among young workers and youth in general are

alarming. For instance, the largest proportion of young workers, especially the unemployed, is infected with HIV/AIDS. So are the alarming figures of 400,000 young workers addicted to drugs" (Para. 9). The picture painted by Doraisamy (2002) of the young workers in Malaysia seems to contradict the findings in the current study in relation to the Religious Personality. One way the current study findings can be explained is by examining the sample itself. Upon examining the factories from which the Factory Worker sample was drawn, most included in the study engaged in some kind of regular religious programming for their staff such as religious-based retreats and regular religious-based morning motivational sessions. Therefore, the culture of several companies included in the study may have worked to attract individuals with already higher levels of religiosity through a religiosity-promoting work culture.

Religiosity Sub-Dimensions – The Islamic Worldview and Religious Personality

The results for the Islamic Worldview sub-dimensions indicated that five of the six cluster groups scored highest on the All-Encompassing Religion sub-dimension. According to its operational definition discussed above, All-Encompassing Religion focuses on understanding Islam as a religion for all times, people and places, which is represented through item statements that pertain to many of the worldly aspects of the faith, i.e., the Islamic external discipline, universality of Islamic religious teachings, Islamic law, Islam's relevance to contemporary life, etc. Accordingly, this sub-dimension represents the 'material' level of the Islamic metaphysical worldview. The findings indicated that in terms of the worldview, most of the youth groups leaned towards a materialistic understanding of Islam. There are numerous possible explanations for this finding. The fact that the findings relate to knowledge could mean that the numerous educational factors and institutions that play a part in shaping the religious worldview of Muslim youth are more focused on the

material subjects within the Islamic knowledge. This has been alluded to by certain regional scholars such as Syed Farid Alatas of the University of Singapore who commented, "Religious education in Malaysia amongst the Muslims has become very legalistic. The stress in the Islamic education is on the allegiance to rules and regulations. There has been less emphasis on Islam as a culture, as a way of life and more emphasis on certain specific rules and regulations; for example, how women should dress, the rituals involved in prayer, [and that] Muslims are required to avoid certain prohibited practices such as the drinking of alcohol. Islam becomes reduced to a series of rules and regulations" (Jagdish 2001). The focus of legalism in the Islamic education has also been prevalent in other parts of the world, due to the rise of many modern exoteric Islamic movements such as the Wahhabi phenomenon of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, which condemn many traditional esoteric elements of the Islamic knowledge and practice such as *tasawwuf* (Sufism) and *tariqat* (Sufi orders). Such movements condemn many of the traditional spiritual practices of Islam as unlawful innovations and due to their influence and resources, they have had a major influence on the contemporary Islamic education and discourse (Krauss 2005).

In addition to the possible contribution of the formal religious education is the role that the non-formal and informal learning plays in shaping the youths' religious worldview. The emphasis on improving the economic status of the Malaysian society that has steadily risen over the past decade or two, with its emphasis on the national economic development, has perhaps seeped into the religious thinking and educational philosophy of the nation. Perhaps the ongoing push to greater material heights has also shifted the focus of religious education – in all its forms – towards a more material understanding and approach to Islam, in an effort to make the religious teachings more applicable to the nation's current development goals. An over-emphasis on the exoteric religious knowledge can have major ramifications on the nature of

religious understanding among our youth, however, just as too much emphasis on the esoteric can likewise be problematic, as both extremes indicate a loss of balance between the'*zahir* (external) and *batin* (internal) elements of Islam. An over-emphasis on the exoteric, for one, can result in a decrease in spirituality and an overly legalistic approach in education, which in turn can produce hard-heartedness and intolerance among the Muslims if taken to an extreme.

Another possible explanation to the above findings is that high scores on the All-Encompassing Religion sub-dimension reflect the open-mindedness and tolerance of the Muslim youth in Malaysia and their belief that Islam is applicable to contemporary times. This alternative possibility is based on the operational definition of the sub-dimension and items statements themselves, which include several items relating to the universality of the Islamic teachings being for all mankind, all places and all times. Items such as "Islamic teachings are of benefit to all creations," indicate that the youth sampled perceive Islam as a universal creed that is relevant to both the times and nation's chosen path. However, a more thorough analysis of this sub-dimension is needed to further determine this.

For the Religious Personality sub-dimension results, the IPTA youth indicated a considerable drop in the score for the Ritual sub-dimension. This cluster indicated moderate-to-high scores for the Self and Social sub-dimensions (3.69 and 3.68, respectively). Nevertheless, for the Ritual sub-dimension, the normed mean score dropped below the mean and into the moderate-to-low level (3.48). This indicates that although the IPTA youth may have a stronger grasp of the Islamic Worldview than other groups in the sample, their practice in the area of religious rituals is noticeably lower.

Similar to the IPTA youth, the Political Party youth also indicated considerable differences across the three Religious Personality sub-dimension scores, i.e. 3.75, 3.64 and 3.91, respectively. In contrast to the IPTA youth, the Political Party members'

scores indicated their best result for the Ritual sub-dimension. This shows the differences in the nature of the Religious Personality scores for these two groups, the IPTA youth and Political Party members. Likewise, for the Factory Worker cluster, the highest scoring group on the Religious Personality dimension as a whole, the scores were also somewhat diverse, i.e. 3.69, 3.82 and 3.93, respectively. This group indicated similar results as the Political Party cluster, with their highest score being for the Ritual sub-dimension.

At the low end of the spectrum, the Serenti youth indicated a score of 2.99 for the Ritual sub-dimension and 3.00 for the Social sub-dimension. The Social sub-dimension is an indicator of one's religiosity from the perspective of interpersonal relations. It acts as a relevant indicator of the quality of one's interactions with others, including one's family, neighbours and fellow citizens. Accordingly, this particular sub-dimension could potentially be an indicator for the social integration and capital, as many of the item statements relate to positive contributions to the social harmony and integration (e.g., 'I am willing to help old people when they need it', 'I establish good relations with my neighbours', 'I immediately apologize if I wrong someone', etc.). In such a way, the Social sub-dimension could be said to act as a potential secondary indicator for the societal well being. As the focus of the other two sub-dimensions is inward, i.e. towards oneself and God, the focus of the Social sub-dimension is outward, towards others within one's community and society. From this perspective, the Social sub-dimension could act as a key indicator for one's potential contribution to the nation building insomuch as positive interactions and interrelations with others are an important element within the greater scope of nation building.

From this perspective, the results of the Social sub-dimension indicate that the Factory Worker youth stood out from the other groups at 3.82, followed by three other groups – the IPTA, Political Party youth, and Youth Organization members at 3.68, 3.64 and 3.63, respectively, followed by the Youth At-large and

Serenti Youth at 3.36 and 3.00. Accordingly, four groups scored in the moderate-to-high range while two scored moderate-to-low.

Although more examination of the Social sub-dimension is required to determine its potential role as a societal well-being indicator, the results from the current study indicate that four of the groups that indicated a moderate-to-high score on the Social sub-dimension appear to have a greater possibility of being positive contributors to the well being of society from the perspective of interpersonal relations with others.

CONCLUSION

The religiosity scores for the six cluster groups that consistently scored higher than the mean, i.e. the IPTA youth, Political Party members and Youth Organization members, reflect a level of consistency with the literature on the positive relationship between the educational attainment, social group affiliation and religiosity. The mixed findings for the factory worker cluster, however, are less clear and possibly the result of the nature of the sample, or the religious-based programming of the specific factories from which respondents were drawn.

From the differences in the scores between the cluster groups, the social group affiliation appears to be a primary indicator of religiosity among the youth sampled. Earlier discussion highlighted the importance of social affiliation according to the Islamic teachings as Muslim scholars have written much on the importance of 'keeping good company'. Accordingly, the importance of socialization on the youth religiosity appears to be universal. This is not discounting the possibility that youth with already high levels of religiosity seek formal group memberships with those similar to them. Rather, the authors are suggesting merely that there is a positive association between the higher levels of religiosity and formal group membership among the Muslim youth in Malaysia. Further support of this conclusion came from the findings for the lowest two scoring groups, the Youth At-large and Serenti youth groups, which represent unaffiliated youth and young drug addicts, respectively. The findings by the cluster group, therefore, present a fairly strong evidence of a relationship between religiosity and the positive group membership among young Muslims in Malaysia, and that such group membership can be mobilized as a positive force for nation building.

The findings also indicated higher Islamic Worldview scores for those more advanced in the formal education. This not only conforms with the findings of many previous studies on the educational advancement and religiosity, but leads to many questions for future research in Malaysia. As the Islamic Worldview construct aims to assess the Islamic religious understanding according to the *tawhidic* worldview of Islam, further inquiry is required to understand the extent to which higher educational attainment can foster a better understanding of the *tawhidic* Islamic worldview, above and beyond the obvious possibility that the results are due to such youth having acquired more formal Islamic education on the way up the educational ladder.

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The Relationship of Exposure to News Media with Attachment to the National Ethos

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini menguji andaian bahawa media berita memainkan peranan penting dalam meningkatkan etos bangsa dalam kalangan masyarakat Malaysia. Memandangkan belia adalah pengguna media yang paling ramai dan berperanan penting dalam membangunkan ekonomi dan politik negara, maka adalah amat bertepatan untuk meneliti kekuatan etos bangsa dalam kalangan belia Malaysia dari pelbagai kumpulan etnik, dan perkaitan antara pendedahan kepada media berita dengan etos bangsa. Sejumlah 606 orang pelajar, berumur antara 18 hingga 27 tahun, daripada sepuluh universiti dan kolej telah ditemu bual dengan menggunakan borang soal selidik tadbir sendiri. Tiga dimensi etos bangsa terhasil daripada data kajian dan responden mempunyai persepsi positif terhadap beberapa ciri negara ini. Namun demikian, terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan di antara tiga kumpulan etnik dalam tahap ikatan mereka dalam ketiga-tiga dimensi etos bangsa yang dikenal pasti. Pendedahan kepada media berita mempunyai perkaitan yang positif dan signifikan dengan dimensi identiti kolektif dan masa depan, dan dimensi nilai dan perkongsian sejarah.

ABSTRACT

This study tested the assumption that national media played an important role in promoting a strong national ethos among Malaysians. As youth are heavy consumer of media and play important roles in further progressing the country economically and politically, it is very pertinent to examine the strength of the national ethos among the Malaysian youth of various ethnic groups, and the relationship between the exposure to the news media and strength of their national ethos. A total of 606 students from ten universities and colleges aged between 18 to 27 years were interviewed in a national survey using a self-administered questionnaire. Three dimensions of the national ethos emerged from the data and the students had positive perceptions toward selected characteristics of the country. However, there is a significant difference among the three ethnic groups in their degree of attachment to the three different dimensions of the national ethos. An overall exposure to the news media has a positive and significant relationship with the shared identity and future dimension, and shared history and values dimension of the national ethos.

INTRODUCTION

The significance of strong identification with the national ethos in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religion Malaysian society is obvious, but studies that specifically examined the influence of the mainstream news media as a powerful socializing agent on the degree of attachment to the national ethos

among Malaysians are noticeably lacking. When it come to defining a nation, group boundaries, collective memory and social allegiance to national characters are particularly essential.

Identification with ethos of the nation in the context of pluralistic and multicultural Malaysian society should provide a unifying force and function as an enabling factor in effective management of a culturally diverse society. As argued by Mohd Nor (2005), a collective memory and attachment to the distinctive characters of the country provide the socio-psychological mechanism for positive intercultural relations among the various social groups of the different ethnic and religious backgrounds, particularly in the times of conflict.

While celebrating diversity is logical and expected in a pluralistic Malaysian society, a more important issue in managing a pluralistic society is promoting and ensuring unity in diversity. A strong identification with ethos of the country, therefore, is imperative and is one of the strategies of achieving unity in the diversity. This requirement is fundamental and very critical in the context of sustaining economic and political development of the country. Building peaceful and harmonious Malaysian society has been an important political agenda since Malaysia gained independency and will continue to be one of the thrusts of national development in all the Malaysia Development Plans pursued by the country.

In realizing the development agenda, the local mainstream news media is expected to socialize the Malaysian public to the ethos of the country. Indeed, news on national aspiration and achievement, social cohesion and harmonious co-existence of the various ethnic and religious groups in the country have been and will continue to be among the dominant themes and narratives in the local mainstream media (Abdul Ghani 2003). In spite of the centrality of the national ethos to nation-building and integration objective, an empirical evidence on the nature of identification to the national ethos and its

theoretical linkages with exposure to the news media has not been examined; thus not clearly and adequately understood.

To address this knowledge gap, the present study assessed and discussed the strength of attachment to the national ethos among the Malay, Chinese and Indian university students, and identified the relationship of exposure to news of public affairs in the mainstream news media with the strength of attachment to the national ethos. The present study focused on youth of 18 years to 25 years because they made up a large section of the Malaysian society. Policy, theoretical, and methodological implications of the findings of the study are discussed in the paper.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

National ethos can be viewed as the expressed wishes of those who command authority within a nation and it is the means by which individuals within the country are committed to what is deemed natural, proper and right. Al-Haj (2005) argued that national ethos can be considered a major part of the collective cultural rights, and every group should be autonomous in deciding what sort of national ethos is required for maintaining its collective memory and developing its identity. In conceptualising the meaning of the national ethos (a society collective identity), Lomsky-Feder and Rapoport (2001) tied the concept of the national ethos with the nation's moral demand. Along the same line, Donnelly (2000) purported that ethos are both formal expressions of the authorities' aim and objective that wield a certain amount of power to condition people to think and act in an acceptable manner, and informal expressions of the members emerging from the social interaction that tend to reflect the prevailing assumptions, beliefs and norms. Donnelly (2000) further commented that ethos learned formally in official document or defined by the authorities often departs considerably from the ethos that emerges from the intentions, interaction and behaviour of the public.

For a country to embrace a truly distinct and uniform ethos, the values and belief of those in the authorities must reflect and reinforce those of the public. When respect for the authority is considerably weakened, the disparity and incongruence between formal and informal ethos will be more noticeable. While perception of the public may differ and depart from that required by the government, some degree of congruence must be established. This is due to the fact that the way people define their attachment to the ethos of their country can have a profound consequence on the intercultural relations practices in a pluralistic country. Thus, the agenda of strengthening identification to the national ethos is too crucial to be taken lightly. Meier-Pesti and Kirchler (2003) pointed out that since a nation is a large category, people develop their social representation of their nation and conceive the nation as an imagined community. The higher the subjective congruence between the self perception and social representation of the nation the more likely people feel close to their nation and show high identity.

The present study assumed and argued that the collective memory and consciousness of the selected national characters is an enabling environment that can foster a mutual respect and understanding in times of normal and problematic situations regarding events and issues of inter-ethnic relations. An attachment to the national ethos reinforces civic responsibility. It is also viewed that adherence to national characters and hence. Malaysianness must be ideological rather than pragmatic. In the context of building a progressive, peaceful and harmonious Malaysian society as envisioned in the Vision 2020, the previous Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammad strongly argued that:

"Building a nation out of diverse people with differing historical, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and geographical backgrounds is something more than just fostering consensus on the basic character of a state or nation. It involves the fostering of (1) shared historical experiences, (2) shared values, (3) a feeling of common identity, (4) shared destiny that transcends ethnic bounds without undermining ethnic identity, (5) loyalty, (6) commitment, and (7) an emotional attachment to the nation, and the flowering of distinctly national ethos." (Jalaluddin *et al.* 2004: 9).

Accordingly, educating the public, involves a conscious effort by state and the news media institutions particularly the youth of today who live in an information society characterized by greater access to the mass media, with the specific national aspirations and values to serve state interest involves a conscious effort by state and the news media institution.

A meta-analysis study of the media effect by Emmers-Sommer and Allen (1999) showed that mass media are a significant source of learning, and media can influence attitude and behaviour. Many social sciences scholars (see for Al-Haj 2005, for instance) believe that the social instrument such as the news media can be effectively used for the creation of social beliefs that together constitute a national ethos and strengthen the nation to cope with emerging intercultural tension and conflict. Accordingly, messages and narrative presented to the Malaysian public by the local news media, which is regulated by the state should foster intercultural understanding, civic culture and society. Abdul Rahim (1992) and Kim (2003) in their studies of ethnic integration in Malaysia argued that the news media has the potential as a determinant of the ethnic integration provided the messages in the new media educate the public towards intercultural understanding.

While knowledge on how the media affects the perception, attitude, emotion and behaviour is still not clear, many studies have found that the media has a profound influence on the audience. Many studies have observed that students and adults at all level are heavily influenced not only by their families and schools but also by the media, as pointed by Zevin (2003). For instance a recent study of college students' media use and stereotype on the different ethnic groups, revealed that the

respondents' perception is influenced by the media used (Lee *et al.* 2003).

In the age of increasing media availability and influence, it is very pertinent to examine how the young people in the higher institutions declare their allegiance to the country or their social belief and representation of the country. Both the agenda setting and the cultivation theories are particularly relevant in anticipating the role of the news media in promoting and enhancing collective memory and identification to core characteristics of a nation. The question of identity has become increasingly central in studies on media with more attention being paid to the role the media plays in the cultural constitution of collectivities, specifically the nations, as pointed out by Schlesinger (1993).

As suggested by previous studies (e.g., Wanta *et al.* 2004), news coverage does indeed have an agenda-setting effect. The agenda setting function of the news media is expected as the news organizations usually subscribe to a particular ideology, which in turn shape the nature the direction of their coverage. As part of the national agenda in nation building, editors and journalists of the Malaysian news media should advocate the objective of building a Malaysian society characterizes with strong attachment to the national ethos by informing and reinforcing the national ethos narratives in the mainstream news media, as advocated by many for instance, Karim (2003) and Abdul Ghani (2003). As pointed by Wills and Mehan (1996) critics of multiculturalism argued that what is needed in a multicultural society is not an emphasis on diversity through multiculturalism, but a unifying of society through a common core curriculum and a common historical narrative. The cultivation theory postulated that the more time people spend with the news media (research on cultivation theory has primarily been on television effect), the more likely it is that their conception of social reality will reflect what is seen or read in the media (Synder *et al.* 1991).

The national narratives of national interest in the mainstream news media are a good instrument to cultivate the sense of togetherness and collective consciousness. The narratives offer opportunities for teaching moral demand in fostering mutual respect and a sense of partnership and belonging. Collective narratives, as defined by Salomon (2004), are stories, beliefs, aspirations, histories and the current explanation that a group holds about the group itself and its surrounding, viewing that collective narratives are accounts of a community's collective experience, embodied in its belief system and present the collective's symbolically constructed shared identity. Thus, it is proven that the news media has become one of the most effective tools of any political socialization provided that it is used properly. A missed opportunity by the news media in fostering strong identification with the national ethos is something that should not be allowed to happen. An ambivalent identification to the national ethos would pose risk to the nation building process. Constructing a collective identity for diverse people is the key principle of the socio-cultural and political economic cohesion. Soen (2002) aptly pointed out that creating a civic collective identity is a pre-condition for a harmonious multicultural society.

Given the centrality of the national ethos in a multicultural Malaysian society and the power of the media in influencing people as discussed above, the present study, posed two research questions: (1) What is nature of attachment to the national ethos among Malaysian university students in the country? and (2) What is the relationship between exposure to news media and attachment to the national ethos? The findings of the study will provide insight into contours of the identity and national ethos, and the role of the mainstream news media in fostering strong attachment to the national ethos.

METHODOLOGY

The study reported here is part of a larger national study on "Youth as a foundation of unity: A survey of ethnic tolerance among Malaysian youth". The study employed a survey design as it attempted to assess the

TABLE 1
Profile of the respondents

Attribute	Statistics (N=606)		
	Malay (n= 325)	Chinese (n=211)	Indian (n=40)
Gender			
Male	30.5%	30.8%	32.5%
Female	69.5%	68.2%	67.5%
Age			
Range	20-27 years	19-25 years	20-30 years
Mean	22.3 year	22.1 year	22.8 year
Discipline of study			
Business, humanities and social sciences	41.1%	30.3%	17.5%
Hard sciences & IT	58.9%	69.7%	82.5
Place where you were raised			
City	33.4%	51.7%	64.1%
Town	30.7%	29.4%	17.9%
Rural	35.9%	19.0%	17.9%

perception and attitude towards a multicultural society. The dependent variable of concern in this report is attachment to national ethos. In addition to the key socio-demographic variables, the survey also included variable on exposure to news media, the key independent variable. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the students in class and participation was voluntary. The survey took approximately twenty-five minutes to complete.

Samples
A random sample of 606 students in ten universities and colleges in the country participated in the study. A proportioned stratified random sampling was used in selecting the samples. Effort was made so that the samples adequately represented the Malay, Chinese and Indian student population in the country. From this total sample of students, Indian youth samples constitute about 7.0%, while the Malay and Chinese samples constitute 54.0% and 35.0%, respectively. The other category constitutes about 4.0%. The samples were also stratified by discipline of studies so that humanities and social sciences,

and hard sciences students were adequately represented.

About 53.7% of the student respondents were from business, humanities and social sciences discipline, and another 46.3% from hard sciences and IT. A majority of the samples were females, i.e. 69.3%, and 30.4% were males. The Muslim respondents constituted 54.3% of the samples, while the non-Muslim were 45.7%. The age of the respondents ranged from 18 to 27 years, with an average age of 22.3 years (SD=1.441). Table 1 summarizes the profile of the samples.

Instrument
Attachment to national ethos was measured by asking the respondents to indicate their agreement (from 1= strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) to all the 16 five-point Likert items developed for the study. The items were developed and used by one of the research team member in his previous study based on the notion of the national ethos as defined by Mahathir Mohamed. Two of the items were about shared historical experience, two items related to shared values, two items focused on the sense of common identity, two items on shared emotional attachment, two items on

TABLE 2
Factor analysis and reliability of attachment to national ethos scale

Item	Factor 1 Shared identity and future/ destiny	Factor 2 Shared history and values	Factor 3 Shared loyalty/ commitment
I accept Islam is the official religion of the country.	.739		
I will not leave the country, regardless of what ever happen to the country.	.793		
I am confident that this country will always care of my well being.	.696		
I try act in responsibly relating to national problem faced by the country, although I questioned the action taken by the government.	.548		
I will sacrifice my life and wealth to defend the country when it is under threat.	.755		
I fully accept the view that Malaysia is an Islamic country.	.668		
Monetary control introduced in 1998 make the country free from being colonized by rich countries.		.562	
Power sharing among the various ethnic groups has ensured political stability in the country.		.685	
I accept the democratic system practiced in the country.		.635	
I am proud that this country is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious country.		.704	
I accept the vision 2020 wholeheartedly.		.559	
Ethnic clash such as the May 13 1969 incident must be avoided.		.631	
I am proud when a Malaysian's achievement is recognized internationally.		.428	
It is not important to abide to the government PLKN program			.719
I don't care if the country is not respected.			.747
It is not important to give priority to Malaysian made products			.829
Eigenvalue	5.591	2.881	2.001
Percentage of variance explained	22.44	18.01	12.51
Alpha value	.834	.776	.695

commitment, two items on loyalty, and finally four items on shared destiny that transcends ethnic bounds without undermining the ethnic identity. A rotation factor analysis of the attachment to national ethos scale yielded three distinct factors. The three dimensions of attachment to the national ethos were labelled as shared identity and future/destiny (Factor 1, Eigenvalue= 5.75, percentage of variance explained= 33.83), shared history and values (Factor 2, Eigenvalue= 1.81, percentage

of variance explained= 12.08) and shared loyalty/commitment (Factor 3, Eigenvalue= 1.32, percentage of variance explained= 8.82). The Alpha values of the three sub-scales were .834 for shared history and values, .767 for shared identity and future/destiny, and .695 for shared loyalty/commitment.

The respondents were asked to indicate how frequent they used television, newspaper, radio, newsmagazine, and the internet to

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

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question of the present study addressed the issue of the nature of attachment to the national ethos among the Malay, Chinese and Indian university students. Although the measurement has been used before, no information is available on the nature of the national ethos construct. Three dimensions of the national ethos emerged from the data: (1) shared identity and future/destiny, (2) shared history and values and (3) shared loyalty/commitment to the country. Tables 3a, 3b and 3c summarize the distribution of respondents on their attachment to the three dimensions of the national ethos.

The data revealed that, on the whole, the respondents had positive perceptions and attitudes toward the selected characteristics of the country. In short, they shared the social representation of the nation. As shown in Table 3a, many of the respondents fell into the moderate and high degree of attachment towards the shared identity and future/destiny, with a large majority in the high category. The finding suggests that the respondents readily identify Malaysia as an Islamic nation and Islam as the official religion, and they also share the perception that the country has a good future and have a social belief that their well-being is adequately addressed by the country. Although the degree of attachment to the shared identity and future/destiny was favourable, there was a significant difference among the three ethnic groups in their degree of attachment to the shared identity and

future/destiny (F=14.043, p=.000). The results of a Scheffe test showed that the mean score for the Malay is significantly higher than the mean score for the Chinese, suggesting that the Malay respondents are significantly or more strongly attached to the shared identity and future/destiny than that of the Indian respondents. The Scheffe test also showed no significant difference in the mean difference between Malay and Indian, and Chinese and Indian.

Similarly, the study revealed that the respondents had favourable identify with selected history and values of the country. They had collective memory of the May 13 riot incident and the monetary control introduced by the government, shared acceptance of the practiced democracy system in the country and the sharing of power among the various ethnics groups as well as readily identify with the vision 2020. As shown in Table 3b many of the respondents fell in the moderate and high categories with a majority in the high category, except for the Chinese group. A test of group means difference was found significance (F=11.325, p=.000). The Scheffe test showed that the mean for the Malay respondents was significantly higher than that of the Chinese, suggesting that the Malay respondents are significantly more strongly attached to shared history and values dimension of national ethos although both had favourable identification.

The respondents were also found to have a favourable degree of loyalty/commitment towards the country, that is, they take pride in the country and supported the national service program and Malaysian-made products and the country. As shown in table 3c, many of the respondents fell in the moderate and high category of attachment to loyalty/commitment. A majority of the Malay and the Indian group were clearly in the high category, except for the Chinese group. A test of group means difference showed significant difference. The result of the Scheffe test showed that the mean for the Malay respondents was significantly higher than that of the Chinese, suggesting that, the Malay

TABLE 3a
Attachment to shared identity and future dimension of national ethos by ethnic

	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Percentage		
		Low	Moderate	High
Malay (n=325)	26.03 (3.22)	1.5	15.4	83.1
Chinese (n=211)	24.49 (3.49)	3.8	32.2	64.0
Indian (n=40)	25.15 (3.19)	2.5	22.5	75.0

Note: Higher mean indicates greater attachment to the shared history and values.
ANNOVA test of group means (F= 14.043, Sig.= .000).
Scheffe test of mean difference showed that the mean for Malay is significantly higher than the mean for Chinese at the .05 level.

TABLE 3b
Attachment to shared history and values dimension of national ethos by ethnic

	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Percentage		
		Low	Moderate	High
Malay (n=325)	26.45 (3.03)	4.0	34.5	61.5
Chinese (n=211)	25.13 (3.33)	8.5	44.5	46.9
Indian (n=40)	25.77 (4.52)	2.5	47.5	50.0

Note: Higher mean indicates greater attachment to the shared identity and future.
ANNOVA test of group means (F= 11.325, Sig.= .000).
Scheffe test of mean difference showed that the mean for Malay is significantly higher than the mean for Chinese at .05 level.

TABLE 3c
Attachment to shared loyalty/commitment dimension of national ethos by ethnic

	Mean (Standard Deviation)	Percentage		
		Low	Moderate	High
Malay (n=325)	11.96 (2.55)	7.1	30.2	62.7
Chinese (n=211)	11.28 (2.46)	7.1	43.1	49.8
Indian (n=40)	11.55 (2.73)	10.0	25.0	65.0

Note: Higher mean indicates greater attachment to the shared loyalty/commitment.
ANNOVA test of group means (F= 4.835, Sig.= .008).
Scheffe test of mean difference showed that the mean for Malay is significantly higher than the mean for Chinese at the .05 level.

respondents have a significantly stronger sense of loyalty/commitment to the country. The Scheffe test also showed no significant difference in the mean difference between Malay and Indian, as well as between Chinese and Indian.

The second research question is used to reveal the relationship between exposure to the news media and the degree of attachment

TABLE 4

Degree of overall exposure to news media by ethnic

	Mean (Std. Deviation)	Percentage		
		Low	Moderate	High
Malay (n=315)	3.26 (1.27)	19.7	55.6	24.8
Chinese (n=207)	3.01 (1.34)	30.4	50.7	18.8
Indian (n=37)	3.61 (1.67)	21.6	35.1	43.2

Note. Higher mean indicates greater exposure to news media
ANNOVA test of group means (F= 4.173, Sig.= .016).
Scheffe test of mean difference showed that mean for Indian is significantly higher than mean for Chinese at the .05 level.

TABLE 5

Bivariate correlations of exposure to news media and attachment to national ethos

	Dimension of Attachment to National Ethos		
News media	Shared Identity and Future	Shared History and Values	Shared Loyalty/ Commitment
News in television	.151 (.000)	.137 (.001)	.023 (.585)
News in newspaper	.066 (.110)	.086 (.038)	.007 (.864)
News in newsmagazine	.038 (.361)	.065 (.116)	.045 (.276)
News in radio	.086 (.038)	.103 (.013)	.033 (.427)
News in internet	.063 (.127)	.025 (.548)	.004 (.932)
Overall news media exposure	.114 (.006)	.103 (.012)	.014 (.731)

Note. Two-tail tests of significance

to the national ethos. It is worthwhile to first look at the distribution of the respondents in term of their extent of exposure to the news media. As shown in Table 4, the data revealed a variation in the extent of utilization of the media for news among the respondents. A majority was in the moderate category, except for the Indian group. Nevertheless, the overall findings suggest that the respondents frequently keep themselves updated with the news in the media. A test of group mean difference showed a significant difference (F=4.173, p=.000). The Scheffe test showed a significant difference between the mean of the Indian group with the mean of the Chinese group. Nevertheless no significant difference was observed between the Malay and Chinese groups, or between the Malay and Indian groups. The findings suggest that when

comparing among the groups only the Indian respondents are significantly more exposed to the news media when compared with the Chinese but not with that of the Malay group. The Malay and the Chinese have no significant difference in their degree of exposure to the news media.

A bivariate correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationship of exposure to the news media and the strength of attachment to the three dimensions of the national ethos. Table 5 summarizes the patterns of findings of the association between exposure to the news media and its attachment to the national ethos. Overall exposure to news media was computed from the individual media used. Table 5 clearly shows that generally, the exposure to the news media had a positive and significant relationship with the

shared identity and future/destiny (r=.114, ρ=.006) as well as with shared history and values (r=.103, ρ=.012), but not with shared loyalty/commitment. The examination by individual news media revealed that the exposure to both the television and radio news positively and significantly correlated with the attachment to shared history and values, but not with shared loyalty/commitment. Exposure to newspaper correlated positively and significantly with only one dimension of the national ethos, i.e. shared history and values. The patterns of findings suggest that, while the overall exposure to the news media is positively related with shared identity and future/destiny dimension and shared history and values dimension of the national ethos, it is important to closely examine the influence of the different mainstream news media individually as observed in the present study.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The present analysis provides insight into the sense of identification to the national ethos among the university and college students in the country, and the role of news media in fostering identification with the ethos of the country. The construct of attachment to the national ethos is a multi-dimensional. Three dimensions emerged from the study, namely shared identity and future/destiny, shared history and value as well as shared loyalty/commitment dimension.

It was argued earlier that a strong attachment to national ethos is fundamental in this multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religion country. A strong attachment o national ethos is viewed as a unifying force. On this point is encouraging to observe that the university and college students surveyed are not ambivalent in their perceptions and attitudes toward the selected characteristics of the country. They identify with the core socio-cultural, economic and political characters of the country, that provide the basis for common or collective social identity. On the shared identity and future/destiny dimension of the national ethos, they readily accept that Malaysia is an Islamic country with Islam being

the official religion. More importantly, they collectively see the country as having a good future and care for the well being of its people. They also see that they have a social obligation in ensuring a peaceful, harmonious and progressing pluralistic Malaysian society, in spite of the cultural and ideological differences and contradictions across the ethnic groups. With regard to the shared history and values dimension of national ethos, the respondents perceived some of the major historical events in the country such as the racial riot and the economic crisis encountered as collective memory. They also readily accepted that power sharing among the ethnic-based political parties, democratic system of governance and shared aspiration of the country as envisioned in the Vision 2020 as unique characteristics of the country. Finally, the respondents also readily identified and supported the major national program and product of the country, such as the Malaysian-made good and national service training program. In sum, a feeling of common identity and sense of partnership that is the building block for unity in diversity is there; hence what the government need to do further is to ensure is that such environment is sustained and enriched.

Based on the observed relationship of the news media exposure and identification with national ethos, at a practical level it can be concluded that the observed association means that the news media in the country to some degree has functioned as a change or development agent in the nation building, i.e. in the context of the present study, the news media are harnessing a strong attachment to national ethos. One practical implication of the relationship is that the news in the media should be used as educational material in relevant civic and citizenship courses with the aim of building a civil multicultural society and promoting better intercultural relations. A discussion of the relevant content of the media pertaining to the issues of intercultural relations in class should sensitise and educate the students towards the cultural competency. However, in light of the implied differential

influence of the different news media in the country on instilling attachment to national ethos, more attention should be given on the content of each news media.

Theoretically, given the observed relationship of the the news media exposure with the attachment to national ethos, it can be concluded that the news media exposure is a potential determinant of attachment to national ethos. However, an interestingly exposure to the news media has an influence merely on the attachment to shared identity and future/destiny dimension and shared history and values dimension of national ethos but not on the shared loyalty/commitment dimension. The reason for the difference is not understood. It could mean that the effect of the news media exposure is more apparent on the instrumental rather than the emotional aspect of attachment to the national ethos. Another theoretical contribution of the present analysis is it lends support on the agenda setting and framing function of the news media as a partner of the national development.

While the findings of the present study could be generalized to a larger young adult student population, readers have to be careful in doing so because of some methodological weakness. The sample size for the Indian respondents is very small as compared to the Malay and Chinese respondents and this may have influence on the test of the mean difference among the groups. Another issue is the analysis is limited to only bivariate correlation analysis. The influence of intervening or moderating variables has not been addressed. An additional analysis using a multivariate analysis is required to determine the actual contribution of exposure to the news media on attachment to the national ethos. Potential confounding variables need to be controlled by employing a more rigorous research design or controlled statistically.

Finally, items in the measurement of the national ethos need to be further refined so as to include items that really reflect the distinctive characters of the country. Identifying the core and distinctive characters of the country is imperative in the nation building process.

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To Volunteer or Not to Volunteer:
The Case of Malaysian Public Service Retirees[1]

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ABSTRAK

Terdapat ribuan pesara peringkat atasan, pengurusan dan profesional (PMP) sektor perkhidmatan awam Malaysia, di mana, selepas persaraan mandatori pada umur 55 atau 56 tahun, dapat menyumbang kepada komuniti dengan meningkatkan indeks kelanjutan usia bagi lelaki dan wanita di Malaysia. Kertas kerja ini cuba untuk menjelaskan perbezaan antara pesara sukarelawan dan bukan sukarelawan dengan mengambil kira peranan faktor psikososial dan altruistik, dan apakah perbezaan ini dapat membantu dalam memotivasikan pesara untuk terlibat dalam kerja sukarela untuk pembangunan masyarakat Malaysia. Dimensi psikososial termasuk persekitaran, gaya hidup, personaliti dan sumber manakala altruistik pula melibatkan pemahaman yang mendalam, timbal balas dan spiritual. *Independent sample t-test* telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti sama ada terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan bagi pemboleh ubah psikososial dan altruistik dengan sukarelawan dan bukan sukarelawan. Hasil kajian mendapati terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan antara sukarelawan dan bukan sukarelawan dengan melihat kesan psikososial dan altruistik. Ia juga mendapati sukarelawan adalah lebih altruistik dan faktor psikososialnya banyak mempengaruhi kecenderungan sukarelawan untuk memberi perkhidmatan sukarela kepada komuniti.

ABSTRACT

There are thousands of retirees from the Premier and Managerial and Professional (PMP) group of the Malaysian Public Service who, after the mandatory retirement at the age of fifty-five or fifty-six, could contribute to the community gleaning from an improved longevity index for both male and female Malaysians in the recent years. This article attempted to decipher the difference between volunteer and non-volunteer retirees as far as the role of psychosocial and altruistic factors are concerned and what this difference would imply as far as motivating other retirees to engage in the voluntary work for the development of the Malaysian society. The psychosocial dimension includes the environment, lifestyle, personality and resources while altruism includes empathy, reciprocity and spirituality. Independent sample t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference for the psychosocial variables and altruism between the volunteers and non-volunteers. Findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers by looking at the effects of both psychosocial and altruism further indicating that these volunteers were more altruistic and whose psychosocial factors greatly influenced the volunteers' propensity to render voluntary service to the community.

INTRODUCTION

Retirees play a significant role in volunteerism. Various studies have been carried out on the different aspects of volunteerism among the older people and the common feature that arises is that volunteerism is an indicator of a healthy lifestyle (Hart 2002). Gillette (1998) also argues that volunteering enriches life and because life is enriched, the ageing process is more successful. The common belief is that retirement is marked by the drastic changes in lifestyle and productivity. However, studies have also shown that the elderly who maintain their activity levels similar to their middle years is called the "successful ageing" and one way to do that is to render socially useful services (Gillette 1998). In fact, Gillette adds that volunteers are motivated to render useful services because of the empowerment and personal affirmation that people receive. It is believed that volunteerism helps develop a more positive attitude and healthier outlook. As Hart Research Associates (2002) further suggests:

> Volunteers are more likely to say that they feel optimistic about their future, productive, supported by friends, empowered to improve their community, and motivated to help others (Hart 2002).

Volunteerism is as old as human civilization itself and it exists in various forms and dimensions. As observed in other countries, it seems that the level of volunteerism is viewed in relation to which a certain society achieves a higher sense of civic consciousness. As studies would have shown, volunteerism is a socially defined action that bears the society's basic sense of value towards other human beings, as most motivation for volunteering points to a strong "desire to help others" and it can be formal, informal or ad hoc. Formal volunteering comes in the form of formal "enlistment" to an organized group or institution with a well-defined social structure, role and function. In contrast, informal volunteering is engaging in voluntary action outside the domain of organized group or charitable organizations. This includes extending help to an extended family or neighbourhood such as child-care, care to a dependent member of the family, etc. Fischer *et al.* (1991), as cited in Michel (2003), provide a tripartite conceptualisation, suggesting that volunteering includes unpaid work for organizations (formal volunteering), unpaid assistance in one's neighbourhood (informal volunteering) and helping kin (personal volunteering). Models of the characteristic and determinants for volunteerism among the volunteers and non-volunteers have been developed by researchers such as Chambre' (1987) and Herzog and Morgan (1993).

In this particular study, a limited definition of volunteerism is adopted, as follows:

> Volunteerism is an act of providing unpaid service or help regularly or occasionally in the form of time, service or skill to a non-government, non-profit formal organization (e.g. societies, community, welfare, educational, political party, service clubs) by retirees from the public service who may or may not be engaged in paid jobs for other organizations, during their retirement life. The term does not include informal voluntary work of care-giving or helping of individuals on the one-to-one basis, in the form of service or charity, among friends and relatives on a long term or temporary period of time.

In this article, the involvement of volunteers is measured in terms of time contributed, the responsibility held and the number of organization served for voluntary service rendered by the volunteers. A lot of people view voluntary work as a source of both satisfaction and benefits, just as in any work organization. People volunteer because of the psychological benefits, the attainment of self-esteem, higher energy, and healthier attitudes to ageing and lower levels of depression. Fischer and Schaffer (1993) revealed that pertinent reasons for volunteering included the gesture of helping others, contribution to community, feeling useful, a worthwhile course, religious concern, self-development, using free time, meaningful work and good feeling. The 1991 Commonwealth Fund survey

also provided some cues to the potential for activating volunteerism by identifying some major barriers such as employment and family obligations, health and lack of knowledge of good volunteer opportunities while, personal expenses incurred, lack of skills, lack of transportation and the belief that people should be paid for their work were considered minor barriers. These factors are supported in studies by Chambre' (1987), Okun (1993), Smith (1994), and Hergoz and Morgan (1993).

PSYCHOSOCIAL ATTRIBUTES AND ALTRUISM

Studies have shown that personal attributes in the form of beliefs and attitudes, needs and motives, and personality characteristics are consistent and relatively strong predictors of volunteering and related behaviours (such as organizational citizenship behaviour-voluntary prosocial behaviour performed by employees or large businesses and organizations (see Borman and Penner 2001).

Altruism has been a bone of contention among many researchers and continues to be to this day. Altruism has been variously conceptualised overtime as hard-core altruism, helping behaviour, emphatic concern, reciprocity or exchange behaviour, extrinsic reward expectation, or intrinsic desire (Batson 1991). This is supported by the above findings that the attributes can fall into three different components or nuances of altruism. This multi-dimensional concept has been contradicted by Cnaan et al. (1991) whose research directed towards a uni-dimensional model. Sorokin (1948) suggests that the intensity of altruism ranges from a minor act of sympathy, perhaps motivated by the "expectation of pleasure or profit, to the boundless, all-giving, and all-forgiving love formulated in the Sermon of the Mount. Between these poles, specific forms of intensity show friendliness, kindness, benevolence, compassion, loyalty, devotion, respect, admiration, reverence, adoration and infatuation (p. 61). At the top of the intensity scale of altruists are the persons the scope of

whose love is widest, being coterminous with the whole universe and God; the intensity of whose love is highest; whose love is wisest and most creative, and whose acts are motivated only by love itself, continuous and durable (p. 61). In a U.S. study on the predictors of volunteerism among older persons (Peters-Davis et al. 2001 as cited in Lewis 2000), it indicated that personality traits alone could not determine their propensity to volunteering work; it proposed that a rather relevant factor could be the role of altruism in studying volunteerism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample
The sample consisted of 261 Malaysian retirees who had retired between 1989 and 2000 and represented the various states in the country. The study was restricted to the experienced and educated members of the Public Service of Malaysia, and this particular group would have been involved in the implementation of the Five-Year Malaysia Development Plans during their working life in the establishment. With their broad view of the socio-economic development, they would have great potential for volunteerism during the retirement years.

Data Collection
As the study was spread throughout the country, the mailed survey approach was used for collecting data. A 215 item-instrument was developed and pre-tested before it was mailed to 576 subjects with 261 (45.3%) completed questionnaires returned. The variables for the research were selected from the literature review and from the preliminary interview conducted in the earlier part of the research process. A Cronbach Alpha test was carried out to test the reliability of the instrument.

Data Analysis
The data analyses were carried out using descriptive and inferential statistics. Independent sample t-test was also used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the volunteers and non-

volunteers for both psychosocial and altruism dimensions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings were based on the analysis of a nation-wide mail survey of the retirees from the Malaysian Public Service. It should be noted that due to the paucity of the local research studies done on retirees and volunteerism, most of the comparison will reflect those situation in advanced countries like the United States, Australia and Canada. The comparative literature was selected mostly from the sources outside the country where the profile of retirees was generally different in age, culture, context and environment from that of the Malaysian retirees. The discussion would therefore be substantiated wherever possible with the findings from the exploratory interviews held with some local retirees selected from the sample frame; newspaper articles and comments shared by the respondents in the survey questionnaires. Pertinent aspects of the findings are discussed with reference to relevant data.

Socio-demographic Profile of Volunteer and Non-Volunteer Retirees

The findings provided a snapshot of the characteristic profile of the population under study. From the 261 respondents 52.1% (136) were found to be involved in voluntary work during 2003; with the remaining 47.9% (125) were non- volunteers as shown in Table 1.

The non-volunteer female retirees only accounted for 8.8% across the races. The distribution of the respondents based on their gender indicated a highly disproportionate number of the male professional and managerial civil servants in Malaysia alluding to the observation that women occupied a negligible or insignificant number in Malaysian public service thereby reinforcing the fact that only a few women could advance their career and professional interests brought about by institutionalised constraints (see for example, Jamilah 1996; Maimunah 2003; Aminah 2003) to their professional growth. It reflects the legitimisation of social processes

TABLE 1
Socio-demographic characteristics of the retirees

Characteristics	Volunteer (n=136) %	Non-Volunteer (n=125) %
Gender		
Male	82.4	91.2
Female	17.6	8.8
Race		
Malay	66.8	50.4
Chinese	17.8	35.2
Indian	8.8	11.2
Kadazan	1.5	.8
Iban	.7	.8
Others	4.4	1.6
Educational Qualification		
HSC/Diploma	12.5	20.2
Bachelor's Degree	55.9	49.2
Master's Degree	16.1	16.1
Doctorate or equiv.	3.7	.8
Professional/Technical	5.9	3.2
Others	5.9	10.5
Residence/Location		
Peninsular M'sia	70.6	68.8
Sabah	5.9	7.2
Sarawak	6.6	6.4
Federal Territories	16.9	17.6
Marital Status		
Married (with children)	89.0	91.2
Married (no children)	2.2	3.2
Single (widowed, Divorced, separated)	4.4	3.2
Never married	4.4	1.6
Religion		
Islam	68.4	50.4
Buddhism	8.1	15.2
Christianity	15.4	13.6
Hinduism	5.2	8.0
Non-believer	.7	6.4
Other	2.2	6.4

that women may not have to occupy higher positions in the organization as they primarily perform feminine roles in the society. The predominance of the Malay retirees is explained by the fact that a greater majority of the past and present civil service are Malays. A majority of the retirees, both volunteers and non-volunteers, had finished their bachelor's

TABLE 2
Percentage distribution of respondents according to year of retirement

Year of Retirement	Volunteer (n=136)	Non-volunteer (n=125)	Overall (n=261)
Earlier Retirees	(n=44)	(n=39)	
1989	3.7	3.2	2.7
1990	5.1	.8	2.3
1991	2.9	10.4	6.5
1992	5.1	2.4	3.8
1993	7.4	4.0	5.7
1994	8.1	10.4	10.0
Total	32.3	31.2	31.0
Later Retirees	(n=92)	(n=86)	
1995	8.1	8.0	8.8
1996	2.9	8.8	5.7
1997	6.6	8.8	7.7
1998	10.3	8.8	9.6
1999	13.2	17.6	15.3
2000	26.4	16.8	21.8
Total	67.5	68.8	69.0

degree (55.9% and 49.2%, respectively) with a few volunteers finished their doctorate studies. On the average, 90% of the retirees are married with children with the non-volunteers have more number of married retirees (91.2%).

In terms of the number of dependent children, the volunteer-retirees have more dependent children (50.7%) compared to the non-volunteer-retirees (39.2%). In relation to having dependent parents, these volunteer-retirees have to combine parenthood with taking care of dependent parents (27.2%) while the non-volunteers account for about 21.6%.

It is noted that both the volunteer and non-volunteer retirees did not consider finance as a problem as reflected in the way they viewed their own financial standing during their retirement. More than one-half of the respondents have satisfactory financial status, 56.6% and 69.9% for volunteers and non-volunteers, respectively. This can be explained by the fact that more than one-half of the respondents are also engaged in either full-time, part-time or self-employment. It is also interesting to note that in as much as half of the retirees are working to generate income,

another half is also spending their time freely. When this is analysed in relation to the financial status of the two groups of respondents, it can be inferred that both have particularly prepared their retirement life considering the resources they have at their disposal i.e. time and money, which is also contrary to what the mainstream media have suggested that retirees are facing some financial and health problems during their retirement, although this contention needs to be supported by hard facts on the status of other retirees from the rank-and-file of the Malaysian public service. The health status of volunteer and non-volunteer respondents was also commendable considering that more than 90% have either excellent, good or satisfactory health condition with as low as 5% claiming that their health was not satisfactory with the onset of age-related diseases like arthritis, high blood pressure, heart disease, etc. In Foner's opinion the "most important correlates of satisfaction with retirement are health and money" (1983:74).

Still within the domain of socio-demographic characteristics of the retirees, Table 2 shows the distribution of these retirees over a twelve-year period classified into "earlier

retirees" i.e. before 1995 and "later retirees" i.e. after 1995. It was found that among the volunteer group there were 32.3% 'earlier retirees' and 67.5% 'later retirees'. As for the non-volunteers the ratio was 31.2% and 68.8% respectively. Overall, there were 31.0% (82) 'earlier retirees' and 69.0% (179)''later retirees' within the two groups.

It is noted that in America, every second adult serves as a volunteer (The Independent Sector 2001) but that does not seem to be the situation in Malaysia. It is observed that the participation among the seniors is 32.3% half of that seen among the later retirees. This can be related to the increase in the number of Premier and Managerial and Professional (PMP) retirees over the period (i.e. 1989-2000) with 1004 in 1989 to 2122 in 2000 and also the decrease in mortality rate in the later period (4.6/1000 in 1995 and 4.4/100 in 2000). This trend can be associated with disengagement theory of successful adjustment and gradual withdrawal from the active life in society with the advancement in age. It operates on the basis of the functional premise that the individual and society seek to maintain equilibrium (Cumming and Henry 1961 as cited in Lo and Brown 1999).

DIFFERENCES IN THE MEANS OF TWO GROUPS (VOLUNTEERS AND NON-VOLUNTEERS)

Psychosocial Variables
Independent sample t-test was carried out to determine the significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for the four major components of psychosocial dimension, namely, environment, life style, personality and resources. The results are shown in Table 3 where there were significant differences between the volunteers and non-volunteers for lifestyle (t = 1.964, $p \leq 0.05$) and resources (t = 5.532, $p \leq 0.05$). When we look at the individual items of lifestyle, only one item i.e. contact with friends (t = 2.768, $p \leq 0.05$) was found to differ significantly for volunteers and non-volunteers. In the case of resources, there was a significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for generative concern (t=

4.154, $p \leq 0.05$), spirituality (t= 4.293, $p \leq 0.05$), family upbringing (t = 3.666, $p \leq 0.05$) and psychological well being (t =4.054, $p \leq 0.05$). The ETA square (η^2) was calculated and interpreted, as recommended by Cohen (1998), to describe the effect size of the selected variables and its components.

Among the variables, 'resources' has a moderate effect size ($\eta^2 = .10$). Generative concern explained 8%, followed by psychological well-being (5.6%) and spirituality (5.4%). The rest of the variables have small contribution towards the variance. There is a glaring difference between the variables 'resources' and the other three variables in their effects on volunteerism on volunteers and non-volunteers. This could be attributed to the personal experiences of the volunteers as manifested by the high scores for all the components. It could also indicate lesser concern for the components of resources by the non-volunteer retirees.

ALTRUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS AMONG THE RETIREES

Seventeen items describing the attributes of altruistic persons were selected to describe the dimension of altruism as shown in Table 6. Both the volunteer and non-volunteer retirees were asked to assess the accuracy of each attribute/characteristic as it applied to them. The volunteer and the non-volunteer retirees were agreeable on the first five of the same attributes as shown below, the sixth (f) and seventh (g) are for volunteers and non-volunteers, respectively:

a. To you helping act is a sense of social responsibility.
b. You believe that helping is serving God
c. You have an internal desire to help without expectations of any reward or reciprocity.
d. You feel that you have a moral obligation to render help to those in difficulty or need.
e. You have concern for welfare of others.
f. You are spiritually motivated to help other humans.
g. You are inclined to feel the events of happiness or pain experienced by another person.

TABLE 3

Mean difference between volunteer and non-volunteer respondents towards
psychosocial variables and their components

Variables	Mean		t	p	η^2
	Volunteer (n=136)	Non-Volunteer (n=125)			
Environment					
Community integration	4.07	4.11	-.622	.535	.001
Neighbourhood affiliation	3.75	3.69	.944	.346	.003
Neighbourhood quality	4.08	3.96	1.681	.094	.011
Overall	3.97	3.92	.897	.371	.003
Lifestyle					
Contact with family	3.84	3.78	.736	.462	.002
Contact with friends	3.04	2.85	2.768	.006	.029
Overall	3.44	3.31	1.964	.051	.015
Personality					
Agreeableness	3.69	3.68	.276	.782	.000
Conscientiousness	3.91	3.88	.351	.726	.001
Neuroticism/emotion	3.70	3.64	1.070	.286	.004
Extraversion	3.74	3.57	2.489	.013	.026
Openness to experience	3.57	3.54	.496	.620	.001
Overall	3.72	3.67	1.134	.258	.007
Resources					
Generative concern	3.80	3.50	4.514	.000	.080
Spirituality	4.27	3.91	4.239	.000	.054
Family upbringing	4.28	4.03	3.666	.000	.042
Psychological well-being	4.00	3.74	4.054	.000	.056
Overall	4.07	3.77	5.532	.000	.107

It was also observed that all the percentage scores for the volunteers were higher than those for non-volunteers. The attributes considered 'not at all accurate' to the volunteers and non-volunteers were the same as shown below:

a. To giving is receiving (33.1% and 29.6%)
b. Helping others enhances you self-esteem (30.9% and 24.0%)
c. You would help if the value of outcome of the consequence of the service rendered will be positive (35.3% and 33.6%).
d. Helping others makes you look good in the eyes of others (44.9% and 39.2%).
e. To you doing good is an investment for return of good from others (50.0% and 48.0%).
f. Your priority to help depends on the closeness of the relationship or

acquaintance of the person needing your service (50.0% and 36.0%).

The percentage scores indicated that these attributes would be less applicable to the PMP group of Malaysian retirees. It meant that the retirees were not motivated by expectation of rewards, increasing self-esteem or reciprocity for service given. From the comparison of the high scores and low scores, the third category of the characteristics is observed with moderate scores. This category ranges from 41.9% to 77.2% for volunteers and 37.6 to 65.6% for non-volunteers. In this study, these three categories make up the three components of the continuum of altruism related to empathy, reciprocity and spirituality.

The scores on the level of altruism in Table 5 suggest that among the three components, empathy has the highest mean of 3.93 with

TABLE 4
Percentage distribution by dimensions of altruism items

Altruism Items	Volunteer			Non-Volunteer		
	NA %	SA %	VA %	NA %	SA %	VA %
Empathy						
You have concern for welfare of others	0	18.4	81.6	0	31.2	68.8
You have an internal desire to help without expectations of any reward or reciprocity.	0	13.2	86.7	.8	27.2	72.0
You are inclined to feel the events of happiness or pain experienced by another person.	0.7	22.1	77.2	1.6	32.8	65.6
You have the capacity to empathize the emotions of suffering experienced by another person.	0.7	27.9	71.3	2.4	40.0	57.6
You have a yearning to contribute to the community.	2.2	25.7	72.1	6.4	40.0	53.6
To you the helping act is a sense of social responsibility.	0	8.8	91.1	2.4	25.6	72.0
You feel that you have the moral obligation to render help to those in difficulty or need.	2.2	13.2	84.5	4.0	28.0	68.0
Reciprocity						
Helping others makes you look good in the eyes of others.	44.9	28.7	26.5	39.2	40.0	20.8
To you doing good is an investment for return of good from others.	50.0	27.2	22.8	48.0	32.8	19.2
Helping others enhances your self-esteem.	30.9	29.4	39.8	24.0	43.2	32.8
The act of helping others will depend on the situation.	19.1	39.0	41.9	13.6	48.8	37.6
You would help if the value or outcome of the consequence of the service rendered will be positive.	35.3	33.8	30.8	33.6	42.4	24.0
Your priority to help depend on the closeness of the relationship or acquaintance of the person needing your service.	50.0	34.6	15.4	36.0	38.4	25.6
Spirituality						
You believe that helping is serving God.	3.0	7.4	89.7	12.8	18.4	68.8
You are spiritually motivated to help other humans.	1.4	16.2	82.3	10.4	29.6	60.0
To you service is a preparation for the hereafter.	8.1	23.5	68.4	6.4	40.0	53.6
To you 'giving is receiving'.	33.1	25.0	41.9	29.6	33.6	36.8

NA=Not at all accurate   SA=Some what accurate   VA=Very accurate

spirituality as a second highest 3.72. Reciprocity has the lowest mean score of 2.88. Empathy also had the highest rate (72.8%) of the respondents at the high-level followed by spirituality. Reciprocity had the highest rate (62.1%) of respondents at the moderate-level. Overall rating suggested a mean of 3.51 and a higher moderate-level response 64.8%. The findings suggest that empathy and spirituality were more favoured by the PMP group of retirees. They had high regard for these values than reciprocity. This is consistent with Merriam and Mazanah's (2000) qualitative study of the older adults in Malaysia who emphasized spirituality as an important component.

The findings seem to agree with the postulate that there is no absolute altruism (Horton-Smith 1981; Pinker 1981; Titmus 1971). This is more aligned to Cnaan and Goldberg-Glen's uni-dimensional theory as the respondents seem to be motivated not by any single aspect of motivation but by a meaningful whole that comprise all the three components of altruism or any one or two of them

TABLE 5
Percentage distribution of respondents by level of altruism

Level	Freq.	%	Mean	SD
Empathy			3.93	.53
Low				
Moderate	71	27.2		
High	190	72.8		
Reciprocity			2.88	.76
Low	68	26.1		
Moderate	162	62.1		
High	31	11.9		
Spirituality			3.72	.73
Low	12	4.6		
Moderate	91	34.9		
High	158	60.5		
Overall Altruism			3.51	.48
Low	2	.8		
Moderate	169	64.8		
High	90	4.5		

TABLE 6
Mean differences between volunteer and non-volunteer respondents towards components of altruism

Variables	Mean		t	p	η^2
	Volunteer (n=136)	Non-Volunteer (n=125)			
Altruism					
Empathy	4.05	3.79	4.141	.000	.061
Reciprocity	2.87	2.89	-.274	.785	.000
Spirituality	3.90	3.53	4.193	.000	.063
Overall	3.60	3.41	3.166	.002	.032

commensurate to their 'rewarding experience'.

Independent Sample t-test was carried out to determine whether there was a significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for the three components of altruism i.e. empathy, reciprocity and spirituality as well as the overall altruism. The result of this analysis is presented in Table 6.

From the results, it can be seen that there is a significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for altruism as a composite index (t= 3.166, p≤ 0.05). When

we look at the individual component of altruism, we find that there is a significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for empathy (t= 4.141, p≤ 0.05). However, there is no spirituality (t=4.193, p≤ 0.05). There was no significant difference between the volunteers and non-volunteers for reciprocity (t= -.274, p≥0.05). This suggests that both the volunteer and non-volunteers did not differ in their expectations from the services rendered.

A study of the effects size of the variables shows that spirituality has a moderate effect size (η^2 =.0634) which is able to explain 6.3%

of the variance in the difference in means. Empathy also shows moderate effects size (η^2 =.061), and is able to explain 6.1% of the variance in the difference in means.

CONCLUSION

Definitely, there is a lot more to be done as far as creating an environment where volunteerism among the retirees comes to the forefront in the societal development without much coaxing from the government. For this to happen, it is not just a matter of creating a program for the retirees and the elderly population in the country. It is more of instilling a value on the primary importance of humanity such that people and individuals are the overriding concern of everyone in the society, and not just the promotion of economic development to make up the development of the nation. When national development ushers in a people-centred development – referring to the vitality of man's contribution to the onward development of the nation – surely, other national issues will revolve around the people's interests, and, not otherwise. For this to happen what circumstances do we need to shape and what enabling factors do we have to create and need to have access to?

From the sociological point of view and as a prefaced in this paper, volunteerism is a socially defined action and, as such, it requires a community "ritual" to sustain it. The psychosocial dimension is but a reflection of the community's extent upon which volunteerism is well-embedded in its local structure. Both the psychosocial dimension and the embeddedness of the spirit of volunteerism in the local community are not mutually exclusive, which means that for the people to participate in any voluntary work, their psychosocial components as well as the extent to which volunteerism is a common ritual in the social and cultural landscape form part of the community life.

The same goes with altruism - expressed in people's empathy, reciprocity and spirituality. When people are the centre of the development process, thus, creating the space to helping others, volunteerism comes

naturally. This is based on the assumption that when pro-people policies take the centre stage in the development agenda, the likelihood that the social consciousness is geared towards helping others would be real.

Slightly more than half of the total retirees were engaged in voluntary work and they could be said to be productive contrary to the popular myth that retirees spent their time as 'rocking chair relics'. There are about 48% of retirees spending their time 'free and easy'. Now, if this group could be tapped not just for the economic productive function but also for the non-economic type of service. They could be a suitable target group to be attracted into volunteerism. There is an opportunity to attract them to provide their expertise by devising a systematic strategy for attracting, recruiting and retaining volunteers.

There were four psychosocial variables namely, environment, life style, personality and resources. Out of the four variables, lifestyle and resources influenced whether or not retirees would become volunteers. In general, altruism (empathy, reciprocity and spirituality) is more prevalent among the volunteers than non-volunteers.

Empathy and spirituality of the altruism component have more influence on the retirees' willingness to do voluntary work while reciprocity has the least influence. At their advancing ages, these retiree volunteers are not expecting rewards for their effort and that explains why reciprocity has the least influence on the retirees' propensity to volunteer.

Volunteers are more likely than non-volunteers to be members of an organized religious group and they hold stronger religious beliefs. These differences remained even when we excluded those people who volunteered at a religious organization (Penner 2002). This may seem true in this present study where the volunteer retirees are more attuned to the altruistic attitude especially those who have higher spiritual and empathic tendencies.

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Self-Esteem of Youth Participating in Theatre Performance: A Malaysian Scenario

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ABSTRAK

Satu daripada aspek pertumbuhan yang penting di peringkat awal dewasa adalah pembentukan identiti. Kejayaan pertumbuhan di peringkat ini menjadi asas kepada pembangunan belia di mana aspek pertumbuhan seterusnya ialah pembentukan hubungan intim. Belia yang mempunyai konsep kendiri yang sangat tinggi berupaya membentuk hubungan dan keintiman hubungan dengan individu lain. Dalam konteks ini, teater dikira sebagai satu program pembangunan kerana melalui persembahan belia boleh menonjolkan identiti baru dan boleh menerokai diri mereka sendiri. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti tahap kendiri belia yang menyertai persembahan teater dan mengenal pasti elemen di dalam persembahan teater yang menyumbang kepada pembentukan konsep kendiri. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa belia yang menyertai persembahan teater mempunyai tahap kendiri yang tinggi.

ABSTRACT

A major developmental task during adolescent is the development of a sense of identity. The success of this stage of development will be the basis for development in the next stage of the developmental as a youth; where the development task is to build intimate relationship. Youth with a strong sense of self-esteem will establish better relationship and greater intimacy with another person. In this aspect, theatre is identified as one of the common developmental programs used because through performing, the youth are able to project a new identity and discover themselves. The study was aimed at identifying the extent of the self-esteem development among the youth as a result of participating in theatre performances and identifying the most influential theatre performance elements that contributed to the development of self-esteem. The findings of the study indicated that youth who participated in the theatre performances had a higher level of self-esteem.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent is a critical stage for development because it is a stage of identity versus role confusion (Erikson 1950). A major developmental task during this stage is the development of a sense of identity. Though identity is not formed exclusively in adolescent, identity is significantly transformed during this period of life (Kroger,

1996). This is a period where they feel insecure about themselves; about who they are and what they will become. Without developing a positive self-esteem, this phenomenon will lead to a sense of isolation during the stage of young adulthood or *youth* in the context of Malaysia[1]. As described by Erikson, youth at the age of young adulthood are expected to establish a close and committed relationship with another person.

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[1] Malaysia defines youth between the ages of 15 to 40.

However, only after the Industrial Revolution in the 60's and 70's, there is a gradual increased in the age of adolescence into the late 20's as the period of exploration, education and interim status extended; a continuous dependence on family or the state and thus delay role definition and security of identity as described by Erikson (1968). Therefore, many models of the past that were built on the assumption that college students were young adults who were ready for the developmental task of building intimate relationship may not be relevant. In an age where adulthood is delayed and adolescence is lengthening, each stage of the psychosocial development may vary as well.

Similarly, the United Nations General Assembly defined youth, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years inclusively. This definition was made for the International Youth Year, held around the world in 1985. However, the operational definition and nuances of the term 'youth' often vary from country to country, depending on the specific socio-cultural, institutional, economic and political factors. As or Malaysia, youth is defined between the ages of 15 to 40 years old but for operational purposes, youth activities are targeted for youth between the age of 15 to 25.

According to Harper and Marshall (1991), adolescent who admit to experiencing more serious problems tend to have poor self-esteem. They become highly dependent upon the peer group for support and susceptible to peer pressure. Hence, adolescents with low self-esteem are associated with a host of problems including drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, depression and suicide. This makes it difficult for them to form a positive and healthy relationship as they move to the next stage of life and into the society. This concept of self-esteem is founded on the premise that it is strongly connected to a sense of competence and worthiness as well as the relationship between the two as one lives life. Worthiness might be considered a psychological aspect of the self-esteem, while competence might be considered as a behavioural or sociological aspect of the self-

esteem. Self-esteem stems from the experience of living consciously and might be viewed as a person's overall judgment of himself or herself pertaining to self-competence and self-worth based on reality (Reasoner 2000). Therefore, a positive self-esteem is indispensable to normal and healthy adolescent and youth development because it provides resistance, strength and a capacity for regeneration (Branden 1992).

Developmental scientists, policy makers and practitioners working with youth believe that enhancing the lives of youth with positive opportunities and experiences can reduce the likelihood and magnitude of youth related problems (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development 1995; Dryfoos 1996). Realizing this, many youth developmental programs have been organized to help youth to develop. Performing arts, theatre specifically, is one of the common developmental programs used primarily in the United States, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and Australia (Courtney 1980). Performing allows the youth to discover about themselves and their lives. Performing gives them the ability to project a new identity and this kind of developmental activity is vital (Courtney 1980). Studies show that sustained involvement in theatre arts associates with a variety of development for youth: gains in reading proficiency, self-concept and motivation and higher levels of empathy and tolerance for others. One of the most important functions of theatre in human society is to give one the experience of situations that they do not encounter often enough in real life (Wilson 1994). Live performance is not just a simulation of everyday behaviour, it is a biological stimulator (Pradier 1990). According to Wilson (1994), the study of theatre is of great value to psychologists because it is a vital part of life. Essentially human preoccupations and conflicts are played out on stage and in films, not just for entertainment, but also for self-discovery, catharsis and impetus for social change. Psychology, then, as 'the science of behaviour and experience' and theatre as 'a mirror to life' each has a lot to offer the other.

In order to rise to the challenges and cope with the effects of rapid economic development and globalization, Malaysia too has many youth development programs that aim to benefit the youth. However, the focus is mainly on sport activities, leadership trainings, healthy lifestyle programs and community social services (Seventh Malaysia Plan, 1996) with the most recent approach, the National Service. Unlike in most developed countries where theatre has been introduced as an art in the school curriculum, Malaysia's attempt in introducing theatre in school is still at the infant stage.

It was encouraging to note that there is an increased in the number of youth participating in theatre based on the increasing number of theatre groups in Malaysia. Hence, there is a need to explore the potential of theatre as a vehicle for youth identity development in Malaysia. Firstly, this study will look into the level of self-esteem of youth participated in theatre performance specifically. Secondly, the study will identify the elements in the theatre performance, namely role-playing, script development and analysis, speech, improvisation, gesture and physical movement as well as characterization have the greatest influence towards the development of self-esteem.

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the theatre students of two higher learning institutions, namely Academy Seni Kebangsaan and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), (N = 138) offering diploma courses in Theatre with very well established and systematic syllabus. A total of 10 items with a five point Likert format (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree) were used to assess the respondents' level of self-esteem. The 10 items questionnaire was adapted from Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES), 1986. The original Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale has high reliability: test-retest correlations in the range of .82 to .88 whereas, Cronbach's alpha for various samples are in the range of .77 to .88.

The levels of self-esteem were categorized into three levels based on the items and score using the equal class interval method. There were low, moderate and high and were calculated as follows: The minimum score for self-esteem were 1 point x 10 variables = 10 points and the maximum score were 5 points x 10 variables = 50 points. The class interval is $(50 - 10)/3 = 13$. The level of self-esteem was then categorized into:

a. Low $(0 - 13)$
b. Moderate $(14 - 26)$
c. High $(27 - 40)$

Before the adapted questionnaire can be used, content validity and reliability tests were conducted. Firstly, informal interviews with the lecturers who teach theatre and some alumni who had graduated from the theatre class were conducted. These informal interviews were conducted in order to obtain a better understanding of the overall picture of theatre in relation to the students' development in both the lecturers and student's point of view. This had become the background in understanding the outcome of the survey at the later stage. It also gave a general information and background understanding of the population. The initial observation from these interviews indicated that theatre helped, boost self-confidence, develop creativity, improve speech and expression and develop understanding of human relation-ships through learning the characters and analysing the script and story lines. The lecturers and alumni were also asked to check the content of the questionnaire for content validity.

A pilot study was conducted with a smaller group consisting of 18 students to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire in the local context. This pilot study also served to collect feedback from the respondents pertaining to anything related to the construction of the questionnaire. This step was taken to avoid cultural bias, as the questionnaire used was adopted. The test-retest reliability and the Cronbach's alpha were also tested.

After pilot testing, necessary amendments were made to the questionnaires before giving out to 109 students for the actual survey. Initially, the students were asked to gather in a spacious and comfortable classroom, where their lecturer then brief them on the purpose and intention of the survey. The questionnaires were distributed and the students were free to ask anything they did not understand on the questionnaires. There was no time limitation for them to complete the questionnaire. Therefore, the students had ample time to read and understand the questions before answering them and sufficient time to complete all the questions. This was very crucial as it ensures all questionnaires were valid for further testing. The returned questionnaires were coded, computed and analysed using the SPSS.

The actual data collected were tested for reliability using the Cronbach's Alpha analysis. It was observed that the a coefficients of all the scales for the pre test were in the range of 0.70 to 0.77, while for the final test they were in the range of 0.70 to 0.78. Such high a coefficient indicated the reliability of the instrument and dimensions used. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the data in this study.

FINDINGS

The cumulative mean average ratings were used to determine the level for items in the instrument of the self-esteem. Frequency was used to determine the level of self-esteem measured. The descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation were used to discuss on each theatre element, which has the greatest influence towards the development of self-esteem.

From the descriptive statistic generated, the respondents' average age is 20.6 year old with the minimum and miximum ages of 19 and 25 years, respectively. The results showed that majority of the respondents (81.7%) had a high level of self-esteem while 18.3% reported a moderate level of self-esteem. No respondents reported a low level of self-esteem. The chi-square value is 43.68 with the p value

of 0.05. This indicates that the proportion of the respondents with high level of self-esteem is significantly higher than the moderate level.

TABLE 1
Distribution of respondents by their level of self-esteem

Level of Self-Esteem	Frequency	Percent
Moderate	20	18.3
High	89	81.7
Total	109	100.0

$\chi^2 = 43.679$ df = 1   p-value = 0.05

The high level of self-esteem indicates that these students are positive about themselves. They have a strong sense of personal worth and self-competence. According to Taylor and Brown (1988), individuals with high self-esteem are able to access more positive thoughts about themselves after failure.

The 10 items questionnaire was used in the scale to measure self-esteem and out of which, 5 items were reverse in values, namely items no. 3, no. 5, no. 8, no. 9 and no. 10. As shown in Table 2, three items were rated very highly. The items were item no. 6 followed by item no. 1 and then item no. 2. Item no. 6 indicated that the respondents took a positive attitude towards themselves and item no. 1 indicated that the respondents had self-worth or at least on an equal plane with others. Finally item no. 2 indicated that the respondents felt that they were competent and possessed a number of good qualities. Theoretically, these three items are related with the characteristics of high self-esteem. According to Blascovich and Tomaka (1991), self-esteem refers to an individual's sense of his or her value or worth or the extent to which a person values, approves of and appreciates himself or herself. The high scores for these 3 items corresponded directly to the overall high level of self-esteem among the students.

On the other hand, item with the lowest ranking (lowest mean value) is item no. 8. This item indicates the level of respect the respondents have for themselves. As this is one

TABLE 2

Measures of central tendency and variability for self-esteem by items

Statements of Self-Esteem	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sum
1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	4.20	0.73	454
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	4.12	0.59	449
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	3.93	0.79	428
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	3.74	0.73	408
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	4.00	1.02	435
6. I take a positive attitude towards myself.	4.27	0.69	465
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	3.82	0.86	416
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	3.50	1.22	382
9. I certainly feel useless at times.	3.89	0.96	424
10. At times, I think I am no good at all.	4.00	0.89	435

of the items in the reverse value, the lowest mean value of 3.50 indicates that the majority of the respondents do respect themselves and they do not look down upon themselves. Hence, the overall result of this study is very positive as it indicates that the respondents doing theatre performances have a high level of self-esteem despite the fact that most adolescence or young adults at these ages are believed to have a decrease in their self-esteem.

According to Malhi and Reasoner (2000), the general characteristics of individuals with a high self-esteem involves self confident, assume responsibility for their own lives, accept themselves unconditionally, tolerate frustrations well, assertive, seek continuous self-improvement, outgoing, have peace within themselves, willing to take calculated risks, enjoy good interpersonal relationships, loving and lovable and self-directed. Self-esteem does not involve feelings of superiority. "High self-esteem people tend to be free of arrogance or contempt for others or to manifest other behaviour that we associate with the idea of superiority" Rosenberg (1989). They recognize their weaknesses or limitations and constantly seek to change what they can for personal improvement. Therefore, the result is very significant as it demonstrated the benefits of the theatre performance towards the development of self-esteem among the youth.

In order to answer the second objective of the study, several elements in theatre performance were selected for this study to determine their influence or effects towards the development of the respondents' self-esteem. The theatre elements selected for this study include role-play, script development and analysis, speech, improvisation, gesture and physical movement as well as characterization. These few elements were selected because they are the major elements in theatre performance. Besides, the six elements also cover both the preparatory and performance stages in a theatre performance.

TABLE 3

Mean for each theatre element for self-esteem

Theatre Elements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Role Play	3.376	0.825
Improvisation	3.174	1.070
Characterization	3.055	1.104
Speech	2.688	1.324
Gesture and Physical Movement	2.679	1.380
Script Development and Analysis	2.358	1.431

Results in Table 3 show that role-play has the highest mean value for self-esteem followed by improvisation and

characterization. The theatre element with the least mean value for self-esteem is script development and analysis. This indicates that among the six theatre elements, role-play has the greatest influence towards the development of the participants' self-esteem whereas the script development and analysis has the least influence towards the development of the participants' self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

As youth struggle with the crisis of identity versus role confusion, it is important to assist them in resolving this issue in a healthy and safe manner. Success in resolving this conflict will build a solid foundation for them when they enter the next phase of life – adulthood. In light of this, theatre was explored as a youth identity development program because the experience entails repetition of actions, thoughts or emotions, role-playing, improvisation, characterization, script development and analysis, over which the adolescent gains increased tolerance or mastery. These are essential in helping the youth to mediate their confusion and develop their identity, self-esteem primarily as they struggle with the issues of identity, independence, competency and social role. This study has identified that role-playing, improvisation and characterization specifically that have the greatest influence on the development of self-esteem.

Generally, the youth who participated in theatre, experienced the development in self-esteem because the theatre performance provides them with a vehicle for a safe expression of their inner most feelings and built on their competency that brought about satisfaction, confidence, hope and positive thinking. These are mainly important for the youth in Malaysia because it comprises of a multi ethnic society. In order to live in peace and harmony in such a society, it requires great tolerance and understanding is required , the element which stems from positive thinking, confidence and high level of self-esteem.

Though the population of this study is small (109), the theories from the literature review supports the results obtained in this study. Young people need to develop their inner resources such as identity and skills in order for them to be able to cope with the pressures and challenges that might lead them into unhealthy and confused behaviours. According to some psychological theories, development is not what happens to people; it is the people engaging in the process of growing, transforming and creating new options for how to be and relate to the world. Theatre performance has elements that allow the youth to keep growing, transform their weaknesses, challenge their limitations and provide a lot of opportunities for them to create new options and to test out the different roles. Therefore, these elements in the theatre performance do help the youth to develop their self-esteem.

Role-play for example, is a dramatic form where the actors try out possible futures in role (Courtney 1980). For Erikson, youth is an age of struggling with identities and therefore, role confusion occurs. Many of their improvisations and role-play in the theatre performance enable them to test out the qualities of the characters in terms of what is most desirable and comfortable with the participants. Hence, as actor on stage, they explore the different roles in life, without fear of making mistakes and experience spontaneous improvisation in a formal theatre. Upon this basis, they can plan their actions – both intuitively as they proceed and prior to the action in pre-planning. In this manner, the participants develop the feelings of self-competence and personal worth. Thus, role-play and improvisation have a great influence towards the development of the participants' self-esteem.

Besides, both role-play and improvisation are action oriented activities and through the real experience gained on stage, the participants feel good about themselves. As compared to the element of script development and analysis, the impact towards the development of self-esteem is lesser. This is because without taking action, trying out the roles and self- experience the roles, what is

described in the script will remains as merely a script. Script analysis is only capable to provide a theoretical and background understanding of the story and characters. Therefore, the script development and analysis has the least influence towards the development of self-esteem.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main implication of this study is that theatre appears to be a beneficial activitiy for the development of the youth's identity. The elements in theatre helps to fill in the gap in the developmental stages of these youth and act as a suitable programme for the self-esteem development of the youth. In relations to practices, this study implies that theatre can be incorporated as a youth identity development program in Malaysia. Therefore, both the youth development organizations from the government and NGOs can put more efforts looking into theatre as a suitable youth identity development program on top of the existing developmental programs. More awareness should also be created among the youth organizations and youth officers on the benefits of theatre performance towards youth identity development of the youth identity. Unless they are aware of the scenario, incorporating theatre performance into the curriculum of youth identity development will therefore be difficult.

The result of this study also indicated that youth participating in theatre performance have developed a high level of self-esteem. Therefore, theatre is recommended to be used as a developmental program at the early stage of the youth development to provide them with a healthy environment for identity formation, as most characteristic of a person is formed at the early adolescence if not younger. This study also indicated that role-play, improvisation and characterization are the elements in the theatre performance as perceived to have the most influence towards the development of self-esteem. Therefore, this posed another implication for practice that is; more emphasis needs to be given to enhance and improve these theatre

performance elements in developing the future theatre programs. Besides theatre, these elements can also be incorporated into other youth developmental programs or classroom activities that aimed to develop youths' self-esteem.

Another implication of this study is that the involvement in arts not only will produce outcomes related to arts but the non-arts outcomes as well such as the spiritual development or character development of the youth. Therefore, future research may place importance on other arts elements such as music, dance or non-performing arts such as painting, sculpting or photography as promising agents in developing self-esteem. It is recommended that the future research can look into more challenging area regarding the sustaining effects of this development into adulthood. This is an important stream to follow the sample through into adulthood to explore the sustaining effects of the self-esteem development as a result of participating in the theatre performance. The sustaining effects of the development will depend on the strength of impact theatre has upon these youth. Therefore, future research may want to include up-close longitudinal studies of students heavily involved in theatre at the single or multiple-school level to explore continual changes. While this study focused on the self-esteem as an outcome of the theatre performance participation, there are still a number of other characteristics that may be the outcome of theatre performance and have yet to be explored. Hence, future research can look into the benefits of the theatre performance towards the development of such unexplored potential.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, theatre performance has been proven to be a beneficial activity for the youth identity development specifically the youth at the transition stages of identity versus role confusion and intimacy versus isolation. Role play, improvisation and characterization are the elements of the theatre performance that assist the youth to develop a higher self-esteem

to face life challenges and engage in problem solving in a safe and deep personal way. Theatre provides the youth with a different perspective of their lives and a chance to imagine a different outcome. Though theatre is not life, it is so meaningful to them as it reaches down into their inner self and develops their identity. Hence, in the pursuit of educating the youth and helping them develop their identity and move smoothly into fine young adults, theatre performance will help plays an important role as part of the youth identity development program.

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Encouraging Voluntary Work Among Public Service Retirees:
How Policy Intervention Can Help[1]

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ABSTRAK

Kertas kerja ini merupakan sebahagian empirikal dan sebahagian lagi teoretikal. Ia menyarankan
kesukarelaan boleh menjadi satu ciri yang kekal dalam masyarakat, jika terdapat polisi yang
menggalakkan, memotivasikan dan menghargai nilai-nilai kerja sukarela dan seterusnya diperakui
di dalam masyarakat. Bagi merealisasikannya, satu pandangan pembangunan yang baru terhadap
sumbangan populasi yang berumur perlu diwujudkan dalam intervensi polisi. Malaysia, sebagai
salah sebuah negara yang sedang membangun di Asia, harus mengenal pasti sejumlah pesara
yang sanggup dan komited sebagai pekerja sukarela yang berpotensi ke arah pembangunan yang
berterusan dalam komuniti yang lebih luas.

ABSTRACT

This paper is part empirical and part theoretical. It argues that for volunteerism to be a permanent
feature in the society there must be a public policy that encourages, motivates and appreciates
the value of volunteerism, and that it should be consciously acknowledged in the community. To
be able to create this sense, a new developmental view on the contributive roles of the ageing
population must be in place in the policy intervention. Malaysia, a rapidly industrializing country
in the Asian region, must recognize the fact that a great number of willing and committed retirees
could be tapped as potential volunteer workers for the continuing development of the broader
community.

INTRODUCTION

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun
Razak said in his address during the Malaysian
Strategic Outlook Conference 2005 that, "no
group would be left behind as Malaysia
progresses to become a developed nation in
2020" (*New Straits Times*, 3 February 2005). He
added further that "our aim will be to develop
an efficient and talented workforce and thus
increase overall national productivity and

growth". The above statement coming from
no less than the national leadership could be
the basis upon which the promotion of
voluntary work from the highly knowledgeable
sector of the ageing population be a part of
the national agenda. In another development,
one of the leading radio stations in the country
plugged in an interesting advertisement on
volunteerism exhorting all Malaysians to take
part in volunteer work to find more meaning

in their life. The two scenarios provide the preface of this paper. It is based on the contention that voluntary work among retirees, or even among the younger age cohorts, will face an uphill battle when volunteerism is not promoted in the form of national policy, instruments or conventions that would spur the spirit or desire to render service to the society of which people are a part. But for this to happen, a few important points should be raised. The first concerns how the national government perceives the ageing population vis-a-vis their role and contribution in the country. The second concerns the readiness of the government to face an ageing population like Malaysia, and the third, over and above the two, pertains to the kind of framework or paradigm that best answers the needs and interests of the older population.

The objective of this paper is to provide a glimpse of volunteerism in Malaysia and how policy intervention initiatives could propel or create an environment where volunteerism becomes an ultimate landscape in the local community. Such social landscape is only possible when a new perspective that the human capacity for learning and growth continues well into later life provided incentives and opportunities are available (see parallel argument by Moody 1988).

The empirical findings of the paper were drawn from an exploratory study conducted in 2003 among 261 pubic service retirees in particular the Premier and the Managerial and Professional Groups who had retired between 1989 and 2000. Most of the retirees had once worked in the education service and claimed to possess expertise and skills which can be very useful in the local community. The purpose of the research was to come up with benchmark information of the status of public service retirees in Malaysia in as much as there has been no empirical study done about them and their propensity to engage in volunteerism. A mailed-survey questionnaire was sent to retirees based on the list provided by the Public Service Department.

AGEING POPULATION IN MALAYSIA

Ageing means acknowledgement of finitude: of limited time, a limited span of organic life. It is a common knowledge that the improved economic status of Malaysia has correspondingly improved the longevity of the general population. In the same manner, the whole world is facing an ageing population and the number is still growing. Even in less developed countries, demographic consequence of longer life course is projected based on the U.N. Population Report:

> The developing countries will also reach that stage (percentage of persons aged 60 years and over as the more developed regions did in 2000) over a much shorter period of time than that required by the more developed regions. In many cases, rapid population ageing will be taking place in countries where the level of economic development is still low (United Nations 2002:34).

Table 1 presents the increasing number of the population in Malaysia from 1980 to 2000, in particular, the increasing number of older persons from 55 years old and beyond. Curiously enough, there is also a gradual shrinking of the younger cohorts (5-25 years old). Is Malaysia ready to face this challenge where the once called "baby boomers" have reached a distinctly crucial transition in their life?

Three or four decades ago the situation would have been different where life expectancy did not go beyond 65 (Table 2). In fact, the Human Development Index 2003 of Malaysia puts the overall life expectancy at 73.2. Today, Malaysia is confronted with issues related to the ageing population, whether or not the government is an "enabling force" that understands the situation of the elderly not as a "bundle of needs" but as a particular sector of the population that can offer productive roles in development. Three common prescriptions operate within the development agenda, namely, liberal, conservative and developmental view. The conventional liberal solution to the problems of old age is the

TABLE 1
Malaysian population by age group (1980, 1991, 2000)

Age Group	1980		1991		2000	
	N ('000)	Percent (%)	N ('000)	Percent (%)	N ('000)	Percent (%)
0-4	1,779.6	13.5	2344.6	12.8	2,612.7	11.2
5-9	1,782.8	13.6	2333.3	12.7	2,646.5	11.4
10-14	1,633.5	12.4	2030.9	11.0	2,491.8	10.7
15-19	1,493.5	11.4	1832.9	10.0	2,367.0	10.2
20-24	1,265.1	9.6	1682.8	9.2	2,087.2	9.0
25-29	1,058.4	8.1	1627.7	8.9	1,921.1	8.3
30-34	874.7	6.7	1469.1	8.0	1,800.2	7.7
35-39	671.3	5.1	1217.7	6.6	1,705.0	7.3
40-44	624.0	4.8	969.4	5.3	1,487.5	6.4
45-49	473.3	3.6	699.7	3.8	1,168.5	5.0
50-54	414.8	3.2	635.3	3.5	918.9	3.9
55-59	319.8	2.4	467.8	2.5	616.6	2.6
60-64	269.7	2.1	388.9	2.1	551.0	2.4
65-69	188.2	1.4	252.9	1.4	346.7	1.5
70-74	146.6	1.1	203.2	1.1	264.1	1.1
75+	140.6	1.0	223.6	1.2	286.5	1.2
Total	13,136.1	100.0	18,379.7	100.0	23,274.7	100.0

Source: Department of Statistics (1983, 1995, 2001)

TABLE 2
Life expectancy at birth of Malaysian by gender, 1957-1996

Year	Malay		Chinese		Indian		National Average	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1957	50.2	53.4	59.5	66.7	57.5	54.6	55.8	58.2
1966	61.3	62.5	66.2	71.2	62.5	61.9	63.1	66.0
1970	63.8	65.5	65.1	73.4	60.2	63.9	61.6	65.6
1980	66.5	68.9	68.0	74.0	62.1	67.0	66.4	70.5
1990	69.0	72.4	70.6	76.3	64.4	70.4	68.9	73.5
1996	68.8	72.7	71.9	77.6	65.0	72.8	69.3	74.0

Source: Ministry of National Unity and Social Development, 1999

expansion of the welfare state i.e. more services, more professional intervention, greater dependence on government. The conventional conservative solution is reliance on the private marketplace i.e. on production and consumption of goods and services mediated by the cash nexus of monetized transactions (Moody 1988). The third policy alternative views government as an enabling force meaning it is neither getting the "government off our backs" nor expecting the government to provide all the desired services. The liberal and conservative prescriptions are mirrors of one another, each emphasizing a "monetized solution" to the ageing problem. Both view the ageing group as a structured dependency of old age and as object of government support. The alternative view

however perceives older persons as subjects who possess latent strengths and capacities and whose contributive roles to the community are vital in the development initiatives. This paper takes the position of the alternative view. That which acknowledges the positive contributions of the ageing population by virtue of their strengths and abilities as opposed to viewing them as "surplus" population, dependent and unproductive, would elevate the position of the ageing population in Malaysia.

In an interesting study by Merriam and Mazanah (2000), they stressed that perhaps ageing, as a natural life course pattern, cannot be understood in its totality without connecting it with the cultural values and beliefs of the society. This meant that understanding the ageing issues demands that they should always be seen in relation to the society's view of life, death, relationships with others and God, etc. This brings into focus the different perspectives between western values and eastern values within the context of ageing. Western values stress autonomy, independence and individualism while eastern values stress dependency, interdependency, cooperation, spirituality, filial piety, etc. The differences in values and their importance also affects the way ageing issues are understood in each social setting and orientation. This in return differentiates the way we perceive the older population in the family and community as well as the government's direction of policy intervention.

It is in this view of government as an enabler in the creation of a quality-of-life among the elderly that volunteerism and the promotion of self-reliant/self-help groups and lifelong learning initiatives should be appreciated. Looking at the how Malaysian elderly fares with the rest of the population is reflected in most national blueprints especially the various Malaysia Plans. For instance, while there was an emphasis on volunteerism among the youth in the Eighth Malaysia Plan (Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001: 557, 580, 582, 585) there was no explicit programme provided by the government whereby the potentials of retirees could be harnessed for their contribution to

society through voluntary service. While the Seventh and Eighth Malaysia Plans provided for the care of older persons, the emphasis was on health education, social, recreational and day-care centers for the needy and the invalid (p. 516). Besides leaving out the so-called older persons who are not "sick", the Plans did not cater to the elderly from 55 to 59 years old (see also National Policy for the Elderly 2002). The 55 to 59 years old cohort who is now considered retirees does not fall in any of the categories. What would then happen to this particular age cohort as far as participation in national development is concerned?

In Malaysia, volunteerism across the life course is promoted with the founding of Yayasan Salam Malaysia in 1997 (*www.salam.gov.my*), a local version of Peace Corps Volunteer Service in the United States. It aims to encourage Malaysians to take part in community activities by listing a wide range of non-governmental organisations that are in need of volunteer full-time or part-time workers to run their administrative, language, training, and social and educational programmes among others. It is noted that SALAM Malaysia as a volunteer service centre does not confine its service within the country, in fact it tries to position itself outside the country by sending highly motivated and qualified volunteers to selected countries like Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Timor Leste where care services are felt most needed.

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF VOLUNTEERISM

It is often asked why in certain communities, volunteerism seems to be an intrinsic value while in other communities it remains an elusive social act? Definitely, volunteerism does not exist in a vacuum; it is founded on the belief that the desire to help others, without expecting a return or reward, forms part of the moral and social responsibility in living within a human society by the very people who are actors in the everyday social drama. This shared belief has social and economic relevance reinforced by certain rituals, as seen in earlier subsistence economies or peasant

societies. It is argued that the transformation into cash economies has in most respects eroded commonly shared beliefs about people's understanding of their human environment. This has therefore also changed people's view about other people in the sense that private ownership of property and hitherto accumulation of it, takes its unprecedented role than say, desiring to help others first. When people are now viewed in economic terms, such desire to help others takes a backseat.

But how is it that in western and advanced countries where economies do not deter the unlimited accumulation of private property, or to put it simply, the capitalistic form of economy, people across ages have higher turnout for volunteering work (see Table 3)? How is it that the tenets of capitalism no longer contravene the desire to volunteer? It is surmised that the promotion of civil society revives the sense of concern towards others, and only when the level of civility, or civic consciousness is raised to the highest plane that the basic sense of human value is placed back in the forefront.

Penner (2004) has suggested that volunteerism has three important attributes that separates it from any other type of social action.

> First, it is planned action; people think and weigh their options before they make the decision to volunteer. Second, it is a long-term behaviour; most people who volunteer continue this activity for an extended period of time (Independent Sector 1999; Penner and Finkelstein 1998). Third, as Allen Omoto and Mark Snyder (1995) have pointed out, volunteering involves "nonobligated" helping (Penner 2004).

Most literature on volunteerism underlines the salience of volunteer's willingness or desire to "give themselves" to others in need (e.g. Sorokin 1948; Wilson 2000). This involves selfless action and is mainly motivated to give their free service to people they feel so strongly about. In a

beautifully worded statement of Pitrim Sorokin (1948:57), "a society consisting of only thoroughly egoistic members could not survive; likewise, no peaceful or creative society could be made up of wholly egoistic members".

TABLE 3
Percentage of people volunteering

Country	Percentage of people volunteering
Australia	32% of people over 18 years of age
Canada	27% of people over 15 years of age
Germany	34% of people over 18 years of age
Japan	25% of people over 18 years of age
United Kingdom	48% of people over 18 years of age
United States	44% of people over 18 years of age

Source: Penner, 2004

Tomy Koh, a prominent Singapore diplomat and scholar shared that one in 10 people did volunteer work in Singapore in 1994, while in America, 1 in 3 of the 80 million Americans "donate time to a cause (*www.salam.my*). Penner (2004) provides an overview of people who volunteer in advanced countries in the world noting that of the six countries, the United Kingdom seems to volunteer the most with almost half of the population over 18 years of age actively sharing their time. It is interesting to note that in advanced countries, the high rate of volunteering among people is commendable. Table 3 shows that volunteering is not only confined within a particular age cohort but rather it cuts across the whole adult population. In the present study among volunteer retirees in Malaysia, of the 261 respondents surveyed, more than half were involved in some form of organized volunteering.

John Wilson (2000:219) suggests that: "education boosts volunteering because it heightens awareness of problems, increases empathy, and builds self-confidence". While some consider education as an important variable to raise the level of awareness towards volunteerism, others view the primary

responsibility of the transmitter of volunteerism in the society. It reckons the role of parents whose volunteerism emanates from their altruistic behavior that is learned and passed on to their children. Pancer and Pratt (1999), for example, argue that "generosity and altruistic behaviours are strongly influenced by the presence of a positive role model, more often the parent", as expounded in the socialization theory. This theory provides that the propensity of the children to engage in voluntary service is influenced by the parents' active involvement in voluntary work as well through the process of socialization (see also Park and Smith 2000 on the role of religious socialization of parents to the children). In social transmission theory, on the other hand, it assumes that the motivation to volunteer is randomly distributed, but the ability to do so is not. It focuses on the parents' role in bestowing resources on their children (Featherman and Hauser 1978 as cited in Mustillo *et al.* 2004). It points directly to the possibility that "parents do not transmit specific values and beliefs but, rather, access to social, cultural, and economic resources and position in the larger social structure (Moen *et al.* 1997). In other words, children received their early exposure and education to volunteering from the parents, either by motivating the children to engage in helping others or parents themselves are engaged in voluntary work and children simply follow where parents have left off. Other research has highlighted that early volunteering experience with religious institutions act as a significant force in promoting volunteering behaviour when people reach adulthood (Hodkison 1995; Wuthrow 1995; Wilson and Janoski 1995 as cited in Park and Smith 2000).

WHY ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEERISM (AND PARTICIPATION) IN COMMUNITY SERVICE?

There are several reasons why retirees are encouraged to volunteer and participate in community affairs. Firstly, research studies have shown that retirement is a status transition from active working life to ageing; secondly, Malaysia is not immune to problems related to the changing economies of rapidly industrializing countries; thirdly, mapping of available human resources in the local community to answer community-related services; and, fourthly, volunteerism comes with hiring retirees to engage in selected jobs.

Research findings show that the absence of work (both paid and unpaid) immediately after the mandatory retirement age creates a vacuum both in their social and personal life, depending of course on whether they are ready to leave the portals of their working place or the workplace being the center upon which social life revolves (Moen *et al.* 1997). For instance, Moen *et al.* (1997) demonstrated that retirement is a status transition of many economically productive workers from their working life to old age and it does not have to mean complete withdrawal from work in the sense that their unpaid work in the community provides that transition of their status as productive workers. More often than not, work connects people's personal and social well-being and, by working during retirement, though sometimes without renumeration, it could maintain the social and mental health of the people. It is argued that work boosts people's image and well-being. Friedmann and Havighurst (1954) developed a five-point typology of the meanings of work as: (1) a source of income, (2) a life routine structuring the use of time, (3) a source of personal status and identity, (4) a context for social interaction, and (5) a meaningful experience that can provide a sense of accomplishment (Moen and Fields 2002). Along the same line, Dr. Guy McKhann, professor of neurology and neuroscience at John Hopkins University School of Medicine argued that staying mentally and physically active in later years can also keep one younger. "When you continue to do new things, you're making connections in your brain and keeping it more dynamic. Recent studies have shown a relationship between sustained mental activity and delayed onset of Alzheimer's disease".

Secondly, Malaysia is not immune to the social problems associated with a rapidly industrializing country and having faced problems such as drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, domestic violence, etc., there are multifaceted ways where retirees could work as volunteers especially at the level of raising awareness or counseling. It is assumed that retirees' scope of understanding of the social problems and issues is something that has to be utilized in order to assist the national leadership in its fight against these problems.

By reading the newspapers, watching the TV, and/or hearing stories from friends, there is more than one way to alleviate the seemingly worsening social problems caused by relative deprivation, modernization and urbanization. Engaging in a meaningful community work could greatly help the government to minimize expenditures on personnel salary in social services, and instead redirect resources to other problems that need immediate assistance.

Thirdly, the potential of retirees to do work is not a far-fetched reality provided that proper mapping of their capacity is done. Job-matching is essential in identifying the retirees' interests in relation to available voluntary work that retirees could participate.

Fourthly, it concerns the extent Malaysia a variety of workers from other countries without looking into the possibility of hiring retirees to engage in selected job areas in the form of voluntary service or, maybe, in paid work.

But a note of caution is worth mentioning. Given the diverse nature of the ageing population, retirees who fall within the same category are a group of individuals with diverse needs and interests depending on their socio-demographic characteristics, economic situation, educational achievement, gender orientation, to name a few. Over and above all these, retirees have differing motivations for engaging in voluntary work in the community. It is assumed that when there is a high sense of volunteerism in the community, the people in that community also develop a high sense of civic consciousness, thus, creating a community of sensitive, concerned and empowered individuals living a quality life. This augurs well for the state machinery indicating that it does not need to spend millions of dollars to initiate campaigns to sensitize the people, as the people themselves played that role.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The empirical data of this paper were taken from an exploratory study conducted in 2003 on volunteer retirees as potential resources for community development. The study attempted to determine the involvement of retirees in volunteerism, identify the relationship between their psycho-social variables towards altruism and volunteerism, and to ascertain their inherent potential for volunteerism. Most of the retirees were men and came from Peninsular Malaysia and Malays.

In this study, volunteerism is strongly viewed by volunteer retirees as reconnecting themselves to the community where they belong. As they experienced, prior to retirement, their time (and life) was focused on their work so much so that they seldom participated in community affairs. After retirement, with so much time at their disposal, they are more encouraged to share whatever expertise they could share to the community saying, "I want to give back to the community".

Table 4 shows the various areas or services that both volunteer and non-volunteer retirees were working before retirement, while Table 5 shows where they worked or volunteered at the time of the survey.

PROMOTING ACTIVE AND
PRODUCTIVE AGEING

Earlier it is mentioned how other countries have developed their sense of volunteerism among the people and, in a way, the role of the government is crucial in the promotion of volunteerism, be it for the retirees or the younger members of the society. Statistics in Malaysia already tell us that the signs of an increasing number in the ageing population demand a new social meaning and policy change towards ageing. In as much as there is

TABLE 4
Percentage distribution of respondents by service at the time of retirement

Services	Volunteer (n=136) %	Non-Volunteer (n=125) %	Overall (N=261) %
Education	61.0	42.4	52.1
Police	5.1	11.2	8.0
Finance	1.5	4.0	2.7
Medical	1.5	6.4	3.8
Social/Welfare	3.7	4.8	4.2
Administrative	14.0	19.2	16.5
Engineering	1.5	2.4	1.9
Agriculture	2.2	3.2	2.7
Other	9.5	6.4	8.1

TABLE 5
Percentage distribution of volunteer respondents by type of voluntary service preferred

Preferred Service	Volunteer (n=136) %	Non-Volunteer (n=125) %
Religious	34.6	28.8
Education	33.8	28.0
Social	22.1	18.4
Community	18.4	27.2
Welfare and societal benefit	20.6	29.6
Health	10.3	16.8
Political	7.4	5.6
Recreational	7.4	7.2
Work-related	5.1	10.4
Sports and service club	6.69	9.6
Youth and Culture	2.2	5.6

pervasive public opinion that retirees and, henceforth, the older population, are no longer useful after leaving the portals of public service, changing public perception is all the more pressing. How do we do this? The government should commence its campaign to promote active and productive ageing in Malaysia, which includes among others, a series of awareness, information and advocacy campaigns, research activities that focus on the welfare of the elderly, job-matching of industry/organization needs with elderly job needs, promotion of lifelong learning programs, a review of the national social policy for the elderly , to mention a few. Key players

in the promotion campaigns must cut across different sectors of the society including the education sector, civic groups, religious-based organizations, village-based and people-initiated groups, political parties and government-bodies concerned. For example, certain groups could pick up one programme and let it be its own flagship for promoting productive ageing e.g. in the area of life-long learning as observed among certain groups in Malaysia.

Productive ageing should not be construed within the purview of economics alone. This means that both the monetary and non-monetary transactions should constitute

the concept of productive ageing by virtue of the fact that being productive does not only mean engaging in waged employment rather it also means social productive roles such as engaging in voluntary work in both formal and informal organizations. It is reckoned that defining productive ageing within the purview of economics is definitely to recast its value within the domain of rural work roles thereby discounting equally productive work roles among the rural elderly. It is noticeable that the remuneration of productive roles that are rural-based is much lower compared to those performed in urban areas. Following the conceptual definition that productive ageing is a relative construct, it also has to be situated within a certain cultural context, in this case, the Malaysian eastern culture which primarily places importance to the values of interdependency as opposed to autonomy, cooperation as opposed to competition and personal and familial relationships as opposed to individualism. This implies that the type of rural work that the older persons could possibly be engaged in is basically informal. Informal volunteering includes the non-organizational help that people offer to friends and neighbors, from taking soup to a sick neighbor to baby-sitting for a friend.

Awareness, Information and Advocacy Campaign
The prevailing notion that older people can no longer perform productively and therefore of less relevant in the development of society must be tackled head on. This can be done by a series of sustainable awareness and advocacy campaigns on the role of retirees in particular, and the productive responsibilities of older Malaysians in general. This involves understanding the crucial support that retirees could contribute to the community. It is also about time to re-evaluate the commonly uttered jokes and anecdotes, prejudices and stereotypes addressed to the older adults, because by continuing its usage, it therefore sustains and strengthens their existence to the detriment of the elderly psyche.

Pertinent to the awareness and advocacy campaign on ageing is installing a collaboration mechanism where the stakeholders of the programme, namely, non-government organisations, government bodies, religious and civic groups (e.g. Senior Citizens' Association) are well equipped with the right education on ageing issues.

Promotion of Research Activities on the Elderly
There is no substitute to acknowledging the fact that, indeed, there is a missing link between what information we have at hand and the reality affecting the elderly. It therefore calls for an intensive research on the status of the elderly and what they can contribute to the ever-changing economic and social landscape of Malaysia. It is also very important to disaggregate data according to gender, class and ethnicity as each dimension could present a different situation with regard to volunteers and the ageing adults. As the Deputy Prime Minister and the country's prominent leaders have espoused, Malaysians across races and economic class should be able to enjoy the fruits of Malaysia's progress and, therefore, no one should be left out in the development process. If this statement rings true, then, a lot more should be done to change the scenario of our elderly population in the country. Malaysia cannot afford to ignore the fact that the elderly population's interests and needs must also be recognized before one can say that it is truly creating a caring society. The fact remains that the country's image as a caring society, one of the guiding slogans of then Prime Minster Tun Mahathir Mohamand, is reflective in the way society cares for the elderly, a vulnerable sector which gave their time, talent and resources during their younger years. It should be within this premise that the whole society should look at how this particular group's interest has been addressed in light of their conditions.

The founding of the Institute of Gerontology in Universiti Putra Malaysia in 2002 to engage in a multi-disciplinary research and extension services to the aged and the ageing population in Malaysia is a positive step towards understanding the status of the elderly. It is supposed that the formation of

more research-based organizations that look into the status of the elderly would give way to a more informed public in Malaysia.

Institutionalising Volunteerism and Making it Visible

It is already a known fact that there has to be a way of institutionalizing volunteerism in the community in particular, and the wider society in general. Institutionalizing volunteerism means that a formal structure, functions/ responsibilities, role, and incentives among others, are well defined and delineated. It is surmised that with incentives given to volunteers, especially among the younger members, in the form of tax reduction or work promotion, it encourages wider and faster involvement of everyone in the community. A very good illustration is the Philippine experience, where volunteerism is institutionalized at the University level. The University of the Philippines (UP) established the *Ugnayan ng Pahinungod* [Oblation Corps] in 1998 in all UP branches throughout the country to promote volunteerism within the ranks of the faculty and staff, with the idea that volunteerism is only "effective if it is backed by policy at the university level". In order to promote it, faculty members are given certain incentives in the form of promotion points if they are involved in volunteer work. The attractive rank promotion feature in the programme has served 40,000 Filipinos which involved 4,500 volunteers (University of the Philippines 1998) to work on various programs, including Affirmative Action, Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation, Peer Counselling, EcoCamp, Coastal Resource Management, Cooperative and Livelihood projects, Agrarian Reform Communities and Farmer-Scientists.

In like manner, Malaysia could establish volunteer offices throughout the country especially in big cities and towns where there is a felt need for community service to be initiated. There should be an added value in volunteering, in particular if the bulk of the volunteers will come from the retirees, for example, some degree of monetary remuneration to cover transportation and food needs while rendering their free service.

Creating an atmosphere of a participative and humane approach should also be part of the process in order to attract volunteer-workers. It should be remembered that one of the many motivating factors why people volunteer is because it gives them a sense of satisfaction in fulfilling the needs of others. It is not sufficient that volunteerism is institutionalized in the sense that a structure is well placed. It is also equally important that an organization is visible, which means that the society is aware of its existence and what it offers to others. Many of the retirees in the study, for example, asserted that they have no idea of what is going on in their community, more so, of what they could contribute. In other words, volunteerism could be developed through proper campaign and dissemination of its programme to attract more volunteers into the fold. The formation of Yayasan Salam Malaysia is a step towards that direction. With its clearly-defined structure and programmes however, it still needs a horde of committed volunteers to provide for the needy both within Malaysia and abroad.

Programmes Drawing Retirees' Interests

At the outset, it should be borne in mind that the elderly population is a heterogeneous group with diverse interests, needs and capacities. Using this as a benchmark, drawing a lifelong programme for the elderly must cater to these needs and capacities. It is likely that organizations in Malaysia can enlist the assistance from the retirees or draw their interests towards volunteerism where their interests are. For instance, in a recent study on volunteerism among retirees, it showed that retirees drew their interests on religious, social or community-based organizations. This in itself is a good indication for local leaders to tap the retirees in their own communities by encouraging them to serve in organizations of their own liking.

In the same manner, gender should also be accounted for when designing a programme in as much as women form part

of the greater majority of the elderly population in Malaysia. The literature shows that older women are active across the whole spectrum of volunteer service. Some studies suggest that there may be differing motivations when comparing older and younger women, with younger women more likely to cite gaining knowledge or advocacy as a motive. Older women may be more motivated by the traditional desire to give back to the community. One study on volunteers pointed out the difference in motivation between older women and men. The women gave dual reasons for volunteering, both altruism and socializing. The men described only altruism as a motive (Morrow-Howell and Mann 1999).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A Need for Policy-shift

Statistics have shown that there is an increasing number of ageing population within the 55-75+ age cohorts since the 1980s. The Department of Statistics Malaysia found that the ageing population grew in number from 140,600 in 1980 to 286,500 in 2000 or an increase from 7.9 percent to 8.8 percent of the total population in Malaysia. Contrasting this to the longevity index, men have 71 years while women, 76. What does this imply? It implies that with the improved economic and health status of most Malaysians, there is a corresponding increase in their life expectancy. By leaving the public service at the age of 55/56, it amounts to wasting another 10-15 years of productivity of our valued human resource. The waste is so much more conspicuous when there are no tangible or concrete measures to utilize the bulk of committed retirees back into the mainstream of public service. If 55/56 as the mandatory age of retirement is to be maintained, a viable continuing education for the older adults must be put in place and this includes the promotion of volunteerism at the local, state and national level of governance.

Perhaps, it is also interesting to note the demographic change as far as the issue of average marital age is concerned and how it influences the status of retirees in the country. Generally, it is observed that, observation, as people's aspirations change caused by economic improvement, there is a change in outlook towards education and marriage. These days, men and women postpone marriage and family in favour of pursuing higher education or a career. Directly and indirectly, the delay in marriage affects the number of children who are still dependent in terms of daily sustenance, education or hospitalization after the parents' retirement. With parents out of work and dependent on the monthly pension, children's financial dependence itself causes tremendous stress and anxiety, assuming that retirees have not adequately planned the domestic budgeting and accompanied by the rising cost of basic commodities.

There are several international lessons that Malaysia could draw inspiration from when redesigning its social policy for the elderly such as the 1992 United Nations International Year of Volunteers, the 1982 World Assembly on Ageing in Vienna as well as incorporating those international issues that are relevant for Malaysia.

CONSISTENCY IN OPERATIONALIZING DEFINITIONS: 55/56 OR 60?

Within the context of Malaysia, there has to be a more or less consistent application of terms and concepts that has something to do with the ageing population - the retirees - in particular. At present, there seems to be a glaring disparity regarding the application of the National Policy for the Elderly (NPE), for example, to the retirees in Malaysia in relation to the age qualification of the elderly. While the NPE, following the World Assembly on Ageing in 1982, adopted the cut-off age as 60 years old to be considered as elderly, Malaysia would have a considerable proportion of the population that are within the 55-59 age cohort

that would be left out in the policy agenda. This has implications to any lifelong education and whatever social security policy for retirement beneficiaries that the government may wish to conduct and develop in the near future. Even at this stage, with the current definition of an elderly person as applied in Malaysia, it automatically deprives 55/56-59 year-old retirees from being covered in the NPE. Inevitably, we would have in our midst a particular sector of the population that is consciously or unconsciously devoid of social policy protection.

In a similar vein, what differentiates retirees from the elderly or senior citizens? It is suggested that if Malaysia were to peg the retirement age of 55/56 for civil servants, the NPE and other national instruments should reconsider those whose age fall within 55/56– 59. In the absence of any clear mandate from the relevant authorities, people within this age cohort will be in limbo and whose needs and interests are not well-taken care of by the mainstream society. In addition, it would be another stress in life having to think that after having contributed to the broader society during their most productive years of their working life, they are left to fend for themselves or, worse, considered as "surplus population" or as a""bundle of needs" (Moody 1988).

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Typing and Paper
The manuscript should be typed double spaced on A4 paper with 4cm margins on all sides. It should be limited to 25 pages including tables, illustrations and references.

Titlepage
The title of the paper, name of author and full address of the institution where the work was carried out should appear on this page. A short title not exceeding 60 characters should be provided for the running head-lines.

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English and Bahasa Melayu abstracts of 200 words each should follow the title page. Papers from outside Malaysia may be submitted with an English abstract only.

Keywords
About six to ten keywords are required and these should be placed directly above the abstract.

Tables
Tables should be typed on separate pages and numbered using Arabic numerals. Each table should be referred to in the text, have a brief title and include explanatory notes, if necessary below it. Vertical rules should not be used. Footnotes in tables should be designated by symbols or superscript small italic letter. Tables should conform to page size.

Equations
These must be clearly typed, triple-space. They should be identified by numbers in square brackets placed flush with the right margin.

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Illustrations including diagrams and graphs are to be referred to in the text as 'figures' and photographs as 'plate' and numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. All photographs (glossy black and white prints) should be supplied with appropriate scales.

Illustrations should be of print quality; an output from dotmatrix printers is not acceptable. Illustrations should be on separate sheets, about twice the size in print. All letters, numbers and legends must be included on the illustration with the author's name, short title of the paper, and figure number written on the verso. A list of captions should be provided on a separate sheet.

Spelling & Measurements
The Oxford English Dictionary should be consulted for spelling. Metric units must be used for empirical measurements.

Citations and References
Citations to the literature in the text should be indicated by the author's name and year of publication in parentheses, e.g Barnett and Lewis (1982) state that "............" Citation of a particular page follows the date and is preceded by a comma, e.g. Humphrey 1990, p. 26-27.

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Shamsher Mohamad, Shamsudin Ismail & Annuar Mohd. Nasir. 1989. *Asas Belanjawan Modal.* 197p. Serdang: Universiti Putra Malaysia Press.

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