HANCHIANG
韩江传媒大学学院
University College of Communication

e ISSN 2773-4935
9 772773 493006

Han Chiang e-Journal of Media and Social Sciences

Series - **Volume 2, 2021**

Han Chiang e-Journal of Media and Social Sciences

Series - **Volume 2, 2021**

Han Chiang e-Journal of Media and Social Sciences

Volume 2, 2021

Han Chiang
e-Journal of
Media and
Social Sciences

Volume 2, 2021

Publisher	Han Chiang University College of Communication
Tel	（+604） 2831088
Fax	（+604） 2829325
Email	hcc@hju.edu.my
Address	Jalan Lim Lean Teng, 11600 Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia
Date	December, 2021

e-ISSN 2773-4935

Han Chiang
e-Journal of
Media and
Social Sciences

Volume 2, 2021

CONTENTS/ KANDUNGAN

Research Paper

Kertas Penyelidikan

Research Paper

Democracy during Pandemic:

A Critical Examination on the Framing of a Public Dissent (#Lawan) by *Utusan Malaysia* and *Malaysiakini*.

Ilaiya Barathi Panneerselvam*

Abstract: Malaysia's climate of political instability coinciding with Covid-19 pandemic resulted in Pakatan Harapan's (PH) government being replaced by Perikatan Nasional (PN). Unlike the previous political environment conducive for public assemblies, the Covid-19 pandemic severity has caused Malaysia to observe a nationwide lockdown as a preventive measure. Mass gatherings such as protests or public dissents alike were prohibited through the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act (PCIDA) 1988 under the pretext of virus containment. In late 2020, the power struggle usurped the Sabah political environment. The politicians from Peninsular Malaysia participated in the Sabah by-election campaigns. Many returnee politicians were exempted from the required 14-day quarantine period as the federal government reduced it to seven days. Several other relaxations that contradict disease containment measures were implemented. Gradually, the long and undecided series of movement control orders not only failed to reduce the Covid-19 cases but also significantly contributed to the rising number of deaths. Although Covid-19 directly contributed to deaths, the psychological trauma of financial stress due to unemployment, loss of income and shutting businesses has led people to commit suicide. The prime minister then imposed a nationwide emergency from 12th January 2021 to 1st August 2021 as the most viable option to contain Covid-19. With the Emergency Ordinance in place, Parliament was suspended, which compromised checks and balances, – and the government now has broad-ranging power. The uncertainties and lack of productive actions were the catalysts for the people, especially the youths, to express their discontent.

*Ilaiya Barathi Panneerselvam, Lecturer at Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: barathi@hju.edu.my

Sekretariat Solidariti Rakyat (SSR), a non-partisan youth group, organised an SOP-adhering protest on 31st July 2021 in Kuala Lumpur. About 2,000 Malaysian youths gathered on that day in addition to the online solidarity received for the protest. The Malaysian media were divided on their reporting of the protest and continued to have mixed responses. Some criticised the protest, as it may trigger a new cluster, while some defended that democratic expression is a constitutional right even if it is during a pandemic. With this in mind, this paper examines the portrayal of protest and protesters of the #Lawan rally as carried out by *Utusan* Malaysia and *Malaysiakini* by locating the discussion within a larger framework of the political economy of the mass media organisations.

Keywords: Public protest, framing, SSR, Malaysia, Covid-19 pandemic

INTRODUCTION

In early 2020, the first-ever Covid-19[1] case was detected in Malaysia (Elangoe, 2020). Originated from Wuhan City, China, the novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) rapidly became a dreaded phenomenon disrupting the routine of the entire world. On 12th March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the disease a pandemic (Elangoe, 2020). Economic activities, educational institutions, tourism sectors, businesses and almost everything came to a standstill due to the severity and the fatalistic nature of the Covid-19. Since the Covid-19 virus did not have any medicinal cure, a stringent guideline was formalised by the Ministry of Health based on WHO's directions (Elangoe, 2020).

During this particular time of health crisis, Malaysia's political climate underwent an equally serious crisis due to an ongoing power struggle between the then ruling party Pakatan Harapan (PH) and oppositions composed of UMNO/Barisan Nasional (the former long-ruling party) and Islamist party PAS (Strategic Comments, 2020). Bowie (2021) summarised the new political coalition was built on the grounds of a

[1]Termed as Covid-19 by World Health Organisation (WHO). See Elangoe (2020).

Malay-Muslim unity which brings in BERSATU with UMNO and PAS, the former political nemesis.

The 'Sheraton Move' on 23rd February 2020 sees the members of Parliament (MPs) of the Muhyiddin Yassin-led faction from BERSATU and Azmin-led Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) faction withdrew their support to PH. Along with 10 other members from the PH coalition parties, they merged with the defeated incumbent UMNO/BN. These defectors formed a new coalition with UMNO/BN, PAS, Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) and Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS), naming themself as Perikatan Nasional (PN) (Reuters, 2020). The political turmoil had forced the prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohammad to resign and be appointed as an interim prime minister while a successor is selected (Reuters, 2020).

Acting on constitutional powers, the Malaysian King Al-Sultan Abdullah interviewed the entire 222 MPs and demanded them to relay their choice of the prime minister through signed declarations. In an unprecedented move in Malaysian political history, Muhyiddin Yassin was appointed as the Prime Minister for commanding a simple majority of 115 in the Parliament (Head, 2020). Relying on the Monarch's intervention was perceived as critical in stabilising the nation's political course.

On the other hand, this *en route* to governance garnered public backlash and criticisms. PN's succession to power was characterised as undemocratic as they did not attain the people's mandate, which bagged them the name 'Backdoor Government' (Ratcliffe, 2020; Strategic Comments, 2020). Muhyiddin, undeterred, immediately strategised several activities to address the pandemic and the affected masses.

Socio-economic assistance like the Prihatin Economic Stimulus Programme (Prihatin), which included automatic moratorium for hire purchases, wage subsidy for employers, and one-off cash aids, helped establish the new prime minister's confidence and garner popularity among the public (Abdul Khalid, 2021). The Department of Statistics Covid-19 survey informed that 96.8% of respondents have benefitted from the Prihatin programme (DOSM, 2020). His paternalistic approach is reflected in his projection of himself as the *'Abah'* (father) of Malaysia.

The redressing actions and total lockdown made Malaysia one of the countries that well-managed the Covid-19 pandemic (Malaysia Now, 2021)

Research results from the Sydney-based think tank, Lowy Institute, revealed that Malaysian response to combat the Covid-19 virus at the initial stage was impressive, which earned them 16th place ahead of Finland, Norway and South Korea (Malaysia Now, 2021). According to Abdul Khalid (2021), between March and August 2020, Malaysia only recorded an average of 52 cases per day - significantly low compared with other countries. Around late August of 2020, Malaysia's Covid-19 cases were reduced to a single digit (Maelzer, 2021).

> "In fact, as of 31 August 2020, Malaysia has one of the lowest deaths per million (4 deaths per 1 million population), on par with New Zealand, which is also among the lowest in the region compared with Singapore (5), Korea (6), Indonesia (23), and the Philippines (24). Even among rich countries, Malaysia's performance is remarkable, only Taiwan (0.3) has a better track record, whereas other countries with higher GDP per capita are performing much more poorly in comparison—France (466), Germany (111), the UK (100.6), and the United States (529) (Worldometer, 2020)." (Abdul Khalid, 2021).

However, things turned unfortunate when the protected environment was affected by several decisions jeopardising the initial efforts implemented to contain, prevent and eliminate the disease (Maelzer, 2021). For instance, the Sabah general election in September 2020 and the subsequent reduction of quarantine days have massively contributed to the spike in Covid-19 cases (Yusof, 2021). Research conducted by the National University of Singapore confirmed the Sabah election has significantly attributed to 70 per cent of Covid-19 cases in the state itself and at least 64 per cent in the rest of the country (Chai, 2021; Yusof, 2021). By May 2021, the cases increased to almost 9,000 per day compared to 3,000, and the average daily toll also drastically increased (Maelzer, 2021).

Since then, Malaysia has undergone various versions of targeted lockdowns, yet the cases were far from being contained (Yusof, 2021). Unlike the first round of total lockdowns dating from March 2020 to May 2020, the subsequent lockdowns proposed and implemented by the PN government garnered serious criticisms (Yusof, 2021). The Health Director-General Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah admitted the decision for factories to operate, although it has been fertile ground for "kluster kilang" (factory clusters) to emerge and causing a massive spike in the number of Covid-19 cases, is a grave mistake (Malik, 2021). The public was generally disappointed as the PN government under Muhyiddin was caught politicking amidst a worldwide pandemic and merely undertaking reactive instead of proactive measures in dealing with the pandemic (Strategic Comments, 2020).

Drawing from this socio-economic and political landscape, a non-partisan civil group, the Sekretariat Solidariti Rakyat (SSR), comprising idealised youths from different non-governmental organisations, political parties and concerned individuals, was formed (Theseira, 2021). They were adamant that a message of disappointment must be delivered to the government over their impression that the government's failure is irredeemable. SSR formed their three primary demands:

1. Resignation of PM Muhyiddin Yassin
2. Automatic moratorium
3. Parliament session to reconvene

A series of events were then launched to register their discontent. This includes a '*buka puasa*'[2] (breaking fast) event at the Parliament on 30th April 2021, a nationwide 'Black Flag' vehicle convoy[3] on 24th July 2021 (Hisamudin, 2021), and a street mass protest named #Lawan[4] at Dataran Merdeka on 31st July 2021 (Loheswar, 2021) was organised. The mass protest was the pinnacle for the SSR-organised civil disobedience act. All these democratic expressions were participated by dissenting Malaysians, mainly the younger generations, both physically and virtually.

---

[2]The 'buka puasa' event held at Parliament (in front of) garnered about 100 participants marching to the Parliament (Theseira, 2021)

[3]The convoy was held simultaneously in different Malaysian states. Sabah, Sarawak, Kedah, Penang, Selangor and Malacca. Eventually, the colour black became synonymous with the #Lawan movement which was adopted as the theme for the #Lawan protest on the 31st July 2021.

[4]It is estimated that about 2,000 protesters attended according to the organisers. However, the Malaysian Royal Police (PDRM) said the crowd was anywhere between 400 to 450.

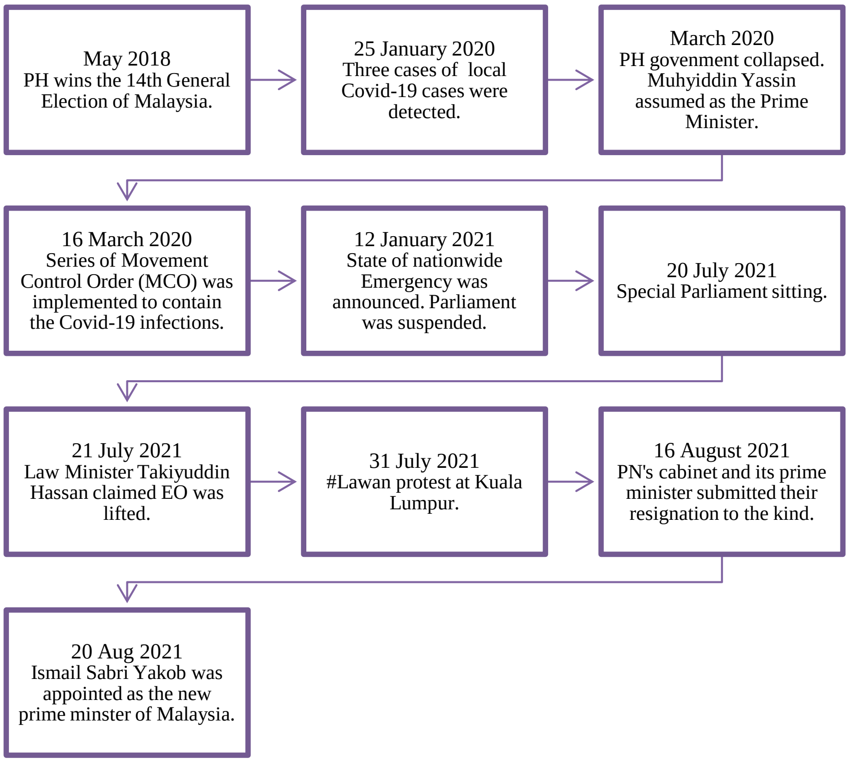

Table 1: Timeline of Malaysia's Political Turmoil and Health Crisis.

The table above illustrates the significant events that have been unfolding since the 2018's General Election in Malaysia until the appointment of Ismail Sabri as the new prime minister. It is noteworthy that Malaysia has seen three different prime ministers (two unelected) in less than four years.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION VERSUS COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Before entering into the discussion that dissects the framing of the SSR-led protest, a primary question that had invited rigorous debates must be addressed. Is a protest necessary during a pandemic?

Views to this question are massively diverse due to two main concerns. Voices supporting protests during a pandemic uphold that freedom of expression is fundamental and shall not be compromised due to material conditions such as a pandemic. In Malaysia, Article 10 of the Federal Constitution, guarantees freedom of expression, including public assembly as a means of expression. Instead of fully curbing them, a proper avenue to facilitate public expression is necessary. Alternatively, the critics of public protest strongly believe a mass congregation will further cause a spike in the infection rates, which reverses the virus containment efforts. Both concerns are valid as each prioritises the well-being of the masses. This context that juxtaposes democratic rights with health and safety requires a mechanism, which incorporates parallel concerns.

A report by CIVICUS[5] Monitor (2021) revealed, about 86 countries had witnessed their population participating in mass protests from February 2020 to January 2021. These protests were staged concerning Covid-19 handling, police brutality (USA, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Cuba), racial justice (USA, Ghana, Sri Lanka, UK), women's rights or gender justice (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Mexico, Singapore) and better labour conditions (France, Kosovo, Malaysia). This comprehensive report shows that people of different classes, ethnic composition, professions and students have either organised or participated in public protest in significant mobilisation as a means of expression. The organisers and some governments of these countries extended their respective cooperation to devise a proper and safe guideline for protesters who intended to participate in an event channelling their discontent during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A few days before the #Lawan protest, SSR released a set of SOPs and precaution measures to diminish the Covid-19 exposure risk of protesters. Briefly, the organisers took the following strategic decisions (CSO Protest Monitoring Report, 2021):

1. Creation of a Telegram communication channel between organisers and the protesters.
2. A guideline to confront intimidation or possible arrests.
3. An invitation to several institutions such as the Bar Council and SUHAKAM as well as civil society organisations as neutral observers.

[5]Established in 1993, CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organisations and activists dedicated to strengthening citizen action and civil society worldwide.

4. Presence of medical personnel and traffic marshals to facilitate the entire protest.
5. A *pro-bono* legal service in the case of police arrests.

PROTESTING CULTURE IN MALAYSIA

The public protest culture is incompatible with the Malaysian lifestyle as it violates the tenets of *'adab*' (culture) deeply valued by Asian societal structures.

The #HartalDoktorKontrak[6] picket encountered similar criticism from pockets of society. Each time a mass protest is held, the organisers and protesters are reminded to behave according to the values and laws of our country. These anti-protest voices emerged even louder in recent times despite the pandemic.

A brief retrospection may enlighten us on the historical roots of mass protests in Malaysia ever since the colonial days. For example, Fahmi Reza's *10 Tahun Sebelum Merdeka* documentary depicts the nationwide *Hartal* (protest) organised by the politically left-leaning groups in Malaya in the 1940s. Arguably the first-ever inter-ethnic political coalition, the joint venture was named PUTERA-AMCJA (Harper & Amrith, 2014).

Not only exclusive to the left-wing political factions, the Malay nationalist party UMNO held nationwide protests against the introduction of the Malayan Union[7] in 1946. Commenting on UMNO's public discontent:

---

[6]About 4,000 to 5,000 contract doctors of government hospitals nationwide stage d a walkout as the government failed to address their demand of granting perman ent positions. See https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2021/07/711788/contract -doctors-nationwide-go-strike

[7]In 1944 the British government adopted a plan proposed by Sir Edward Gent to incorporate the Federated Malay States (FMS), the Unfederated Malay States (UMS), Penang and Melaka into a Malayan Union, while making Singapore a separate crown colony (CAB 66/50, Policy regarding Malaya and Borneo). The plan proposed a centralized government comprising these peninsular possessions, to be known as the Malayan Union. The British idea was to conceive the Malay Peninsula under a single government to simplify administration. This idea would not be a problem to the new group of nationalists but the content of the Union was all against their philosophy of future Malaya, and this is what they are against.

> Contrary to British expectations, the normally apathetic Malay population rose as one in strong protest to this new scheme, called the Malayan Union. They used civil disobedience as a means of protest by refusing to attend the installation ceremonies of the British Governor. They refused to participate in the meetings of the Advisory councils. Malay participation in the government bureaucracy and the political process had stopped (Rahim, Mustaffa, Ahmad & Lyndon, 2013).

Throughout history, Malaysians have actively resisted policies, institutions, imperialists and governments, specifically, when their fundamental rights are either violated by industrial actions or public protests (Stenson, 2019). Similarly, the working class has been extremely vibrant and prone to organise protests to showcase their dissent (Stenson, 2019). A massive group of estate workers from Bukit Asahan in Malacca, launched a strike and marched towards Kuala Lumpur in the 1960s (Sandhu & Mani, 2006; Stenson, 2019).

Between the 1960s to 1970s, before the promulgation of the University and University College Act (1971), tudent groups such as Universiti Malaya Students Union (UMSU) and Socialist Club of Universiti Malaya have organised various protests to defend students' rights as well as the oppressed community such as the landless squatter struggle in Teluk Gong (Hassan Karim & Siti Nur Hamid, 1984). These are some examples to highlight that the protesting culture is not alien to Malaysian soil. Protests help restore justice and equality for the oppressed, discriminated and marginalised communities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF STUDY

In this study, Goffman and Entman's definition of framing shall be employed to examine the portrayal of the #Lawan rally and the protesters. Framing is a process where meanings of certain topics or issues are formulated based on different perspectives or viewpoints (Bullock & Shulman, 2021; Goffman, 1974). For Entman:

> Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more

> salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (Entman, 1993).

Tettah and King (2011) articulate framing theory as a method of presenting (framing) an idea, issue or personality in the media. They posit framing potentially influences the mass media audience's views on issues or personalities, especially with passive audiences who would not be sceptical about the information presented in the media.

Bullock and Shullman (2021) argue that framing theory is a strategic device with two vital attributes - emphasis and equivalency.

> Emphasis framing refers to differences in what information is presented, while equivalency framing focuses on differences in how information is presented (Cacciatore et al., 2016). More specifically, emphasis framing occurs when a communicator includes certain pieces of information and omits other information to define an issue (Entman, 1993). Equivalency framing, on the other hand, examines when logically identical information varies along some presentational dimension, such as the information's valence (Levin & Gaeth, 1988), language complexity (Shulman & Sweitzer, 2018), or presence of risk (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) (as cited in Bullock & Shulman, 2021).

Nevertheless, the simplistic assumption of innate passiveness of audiences that may result in them believing any content eschewed by the media is highly debatable among scholars. Entman (1993) has cautioned on the notion of absolute media effects as an active audience with innate ideologies, faith, and belief would not probably have the same impact as what is commonly said (Panneerselvam & Lee Yuen Beng, 2017).

It is dangerous to exclude a perspective or viewpoint from a maturing democratic society (Schaffner & Sellers, 2009). As a result, the hegemony of a dominant voice or ideology may be reinforced by omitting the 'crucial and equally important' viewpoint necessary in the public sphere for people to express, argue and synthesise in a society (Murudi, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

The following definitions are provided to avoid misinterpretation of key terms used in this study:

1. **Constitutionality and Jurisprudence frames –** The constraints imposed on or freedoms granted to individuals, government, and corporations via the Constitution, Bill of Rights and other amendments, or judicial interpretation. This deals specifically with the authority of government to regulate, and the authority of individuals/corporations to act independently of government.
2. **Political frames –** Any political considerations surrounding an issue. Issue actions or efforts or stances that are political, such as partisan filibusters, lobbyist involvement, bipartisan efforts, deal-making and vote trading, appealing to one's base, mentions of political manoeuvring, and explicit statements that a policy issue is good or bad for a particular political party.
3. **Morality frames -** Any perspective or policy objective or action (including proposed action) that is compelled by religious doctrine or interpretation, duty, honour, righteousness or any other sense of ethics or social responsibility.

NEWS ORGANISATIONS

Utusan Malaysia Digital (previously known as *Utusan Melayu*) is the web version of the now-defunct printed version of *Utusan Malaysia*. The Malay-medium news organisation is currently owned by Utusan Melayu (M) Bhd (Wang 1998; Zaharom and Anuar 1998; Mustafa 2005; Gomez, Mustafa & Lee 2018). Loh and Mustafa (1996) argued that the Malay, English and Tamil newspapers have strong ties with the longest-ruling coalition Barisan Nasional since the 1970s. After a series of mismanagement and financial breakdown due to colossal defamation suits, Utusan had halted temporarily before switching to online platforms. Upon the switch, the new editorial team pledged to eliminate any semblance of the previous *Utusan Malaysia*.

Malaysiakini, the first Malaysian online and alternative news portal, publishes news in English, Malay, and recently, in Chinese and Tamil (Panneerselvam & Lee Yuen Beng, 2017). *Malaysiakini* projects itself as an independent news portal whose financial ownership is not associated with any political parties in the ruling government. A non-government entity is responsible for ensuring its sustainability (Lim, 2014). *Malaysiakini*'s venture capital was a combined effort of the founders Premesh Chandran and Steven Gan. Multiple financial resources, which include Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), Asia Foundation, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Free Voice, provided the operational funding (Murudi 2019).

These media portals have a huge readership of audiences proficient in Malay and English languages. The distinct ownership pattern as established above is also a reason to select *Utusan* and *Malaysiakini*.

A search was conducted on news articles with the term "#Lawan 2021". It resulted in 28 news articles from 24th July 2021 to 7th August 2021 (10 from *Utusan Malaysia* and 21 from *Malaysiakini*) within a total of 15 days (approximately a week before and after the #Lawan protest).

AN ANALYSIS ON NEWS ARTICLES

This research undertakes a critical examination of the selected news articles from the respective media portals. This study aims not to superficially describe the portrayal of the #Lawan protest held on 31st July 2021 but places its interest in identifying the effects on democracy with the exclusion of crucial information in framing a piece of news.

Comparing the selected news articles would inform us of the information disparity between these media organisations, and analysis can be drawn of the necessity of information when it comes to framing. The paper, therefore, would argue whether the inclusion and omission of specific details are democratically justified or a regress in developing a democratic society.

FINDINGS

Media Organisation/ Frames	**Constitutionality & Jurisprudence**	**Political**	**Morality**
Utusan Malaysia	56%	15%	29%
Malaysiakini	37%	30%	33%

A two-week data collection yielded a total of 10 articles in *Utusan Malaysia* and 21 articles in *Malaysiakini*. The collected data were categorised under three different frames as mentioned above.

The reporting in the selected media organisations can be divided into two different timelines, pre- and post-#Lawan protest. The pre-event news framings in *Utusan Malaysia* demonstrate a perspective that enunciates the illegality of a protest and potential consequences for organising inasmuch participating in the protest during a pandemic. Comparatively, *Malaysiakini* included concerns and justification raised by both sides of the divide.

Signs of a balanced approach were slightly visible in the post-Lawan protest coverage of *Utusan Malaysia* with their inclusion of diverse sources and perspectives. *Malaysiakini* maintained its earlier position of not only providing sufficient space for contrasting voices, but enabling a wide coverage and framing that includes an elaborated discussion entailing the post-expression reprisals faced by the protesters and organisers.

CONSTITUTIONALITY & JURISPRUDENCE FRAMES

Under this particular framing, *Utusan Malaysia* sheds prominent attention to an overarching legal framework that justifies the protest during the pandemic as an uncalled action. The medium describes the protesters and the protest as unlawful by citing related legal acts to label the protest as illegal.

In addition, *Utusan Malaysia* mentioned in their news articles that different individuals and organisations had lodged 20 police reports against the #Lawan protest. Hence, police investigations followed by stringent actions are unavoidable, an article in *Utusan Malaysia* claims.

Slightly contrary to *Utusan Malaysia*, *Malaysiakini* incorporated news articles from different authoritative stakeholders concerning public assemblies. For example, *Malaysiakini* featured several news articles extrapolated primarily from the press statements released by the National Human Rights of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) requesting the authorities, especially the police, to "facilitate the protest" as Malaysians have the rights of peaceful assembly. The public assembly as a matter of constitutional rights was not mentioned at all in *Utusan Malaysia*.

Public outcry over an alleged case of police power abuse detaining an activist who went for an investigation at a police station for a tweet urging the public to join the #Lawan protest appeared only in the *Malaysiakini* news portal. This detention news of Sarah Irdina, an activist from MISI Solidariti (a youth collective) published views that criticised the arrest as an act of intimidation against the organisers and potential protesters. The news also mentioned the ongoing solidarity actions such as the candlelight vigil[8] at the Jinjang lock-up where she was detained besides the online plea for her release. *Utusan Malaysia* refrained from addressing this piece of the event in their news coverage.

It, however, does not exclude the fact that *Malaysiakini* also published news articles stating the various laws the participants are said to probably violate in the event of a public protest during the pandemic. Although both news organisations reported about the series of police investigations launched against scores of activists and participants of the #Lawan protest, *Utusan Malaysia* gives more importance to the explanations expressed by the authorities. The police and Ministers were *Utusan Malaysia*'s primary source of the ongoing investigation that may result in legal prosecution. A tone of punitive reprisal could be detected as well.

On the other hand, *Malaysiakini* tried to project objectivity and neutrality in their source selections. For instance, they published views of both the investigated participants and the authorities. *Malaysiakini*'s news articles also mentioned the inappropriateness of calling in neutral bodies such as SUHAKAM and the Malaysian Bar Council for police investigations. In the article, both institutions labelled the practice as an

[8]Fellow activists composed of Pemuda Sosialis, MUDA, MISI Solidariti and other concerned individuals.

unprecedented move that tarnishes Malaysia's image as a democratic country. This angle and story were invisible in *Utusan Malaysia*.

POLITICAL FRAME

Both media organisations had a similar approach under this particular frame. Both news portals published articles that mentioned the three demands of the movement. Yet, the frequency of these demands mentioned might be slightly different where *Malaysiakini* supersedes *Utusan Malaysia*.

Apart from the demands, the articles in *Utusan Malaysia* had briefly and occasionally, stated SSR's rationale of organising such protest is due to the failure of the government in Covid-19 handling. In addition to the demands, *Malaysiakini* had consistently published statements released by SSR which included inviting the public to take part in the protest at Kuala Lumpur, a political clarion to the masses. The English-medium news portal even addressed the claims of intimidation accentuated by the police force against the organisers where a significant group of people were investigated prior and post of the #Lawan protest while a fellow activist was detained and her house raided.

Malaysiakini, in their reports, also included the insights of the general participants articulating their reasons to be a part of #Lawan which appeared nowhere in *Utusan Malaysia*.

MORALITY FRAME

The primary message to morality in *Utusan Malaysia* was razor-sharp - the protest was unnecessary and unethical during the Covid-19 pandemic. Almost every news article highlighted the potential consequences of holding a mass protest when the Covid-19 variants are highly virulent. *Utusan Malaysia* attempted to characterise the participants and organisers as self-centric "stubborn individuals".

A news article that quoted a statement from the Home Ministry claims the attitude of the protesters as irresponsible and reminded them to be mature in handling national crises. They (the protesters) were labelled as trouble-makers who should take responsibility if "*kluster jalanan*" (street cluster) is potentially triggered from this rally.

A news article in *Utusan Malaysia* stated the presence of volunteers to ensure the SOPs are observed at all times. This is the only article that attempted to project the protest in a positive light.

Malaysiakini, contrastingly, assembled the information disseminating the measures and guidelines established by SSR for those interested to join the protest. This includes the forming of a specific communication channel in Telegram (a social media application) to convey the do's and don'ts during the #Lawan protest.

Statements from SUHAKAM and SSR demanding the authorities to behave ethically were published in *Malaysiakini*. Any provocations, they claimed, might reduce the chances of observing the SOPs. Appointments of marshalls for crowd-controlling, legal assistance in case of police arrest, availability of face masks and sanitisers were duly noted in the reports carried out by *Malaysiakini*.

Malaysiakini, in their follow-up reports, included the police's presence at the homes of the activists. SUHAKAM and civil society activists branded the act as overboard since the organisers and identified individuals have given their cooperation on the police's request already. *Utusan Malaysia* did not report this series of alleged intimidation at all.

DISCUSSION

With the use of Entman and Goffman's framing definition, this study identifies and questions the specific frames chosen by the news organisations to portray the current political economy event such as the #Lawan protest and the participating protesters (Goffman, 1974; Entman, 1993). The consequences of obscuring information in the respective news organisations can create a positive or negative effect on the readers.

First and foremost, the findings illustrate a significant difference between the two news organisations. *Utusan Malaysia* consistently sustained a framing skewed predominantly to the voices of the authorities who have expressed their discomfort and disagreement with the #Lawan protest. Although appearing to have an objective viewpoint, Malaysiakini has allowed a great deal of space and importance for the voices in support of the protest or a public assembly to be included in their news reporting. This contrasting approach can be attributed to the different philosophical foundations of these news organisations.

As the protest was launched against the PN government composing of UMNO members, it is understandable for Utusan Malaysia, which is largely funded by the Malay-dominated political party, to evade comprehensive news reporting perspectives and views on the #Lawan protest. Extensive coverage of the intentions or justifications laid by the protesters could jeopardise the ruling regime consisting of UMNO. Meanwhile, *Malaysiakini*, an independent organisation that emerged as an alternative media since its inception, could afford a more liberal approach in its reporting.

Vilifying the #Lawan protest and protesters occupied the central theme of *Utusan Malaysia*'s reporting. Rather than continuously carrying the views or perspectives of both divides, *Utusan Malaysia'*s framings were subjective in mainstreaming the ideas of the authorities. In comparison, *Malaysiakini* attempted to project the contrasting views of the authorities, organisers, and neutral institutions such as SUHAKAM and the Bar Council. The inclusion of various stakeholders or voices regarding the #Lawan protest enables the readers to formulate their thinking based on the reports produced by the news organisations.

The concentration on archetype sources obscures the emergence of various voices and viewpoints. Will this be a digression in a democratic society? A culmination of diverse voices in a public sphere like news organisations is a conducive factor to build a democratic society. By limiting or marginalising specific voices, concerns and/or dissents, the basic tenets of democracy are greatly eroded.

Extrapolating from the notion above, the framing adopted by both news organisations has played a significant role, not only in the public's cognitive process regarding the #Lawan protest, but also in making an informed decision about the rally and the demands forwarded by the protesters. Failing to highlight the raison d'etre possibly leads the readers to construct a negative meaning, opinion or bias over a specific event. Utusan Malaysia's readers did not have an opportunity to introspect or even analyse the demands of the group. Justification of SSR in refusing the current moratorium, demanding the resignation of prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin and for the Parliament to reconvene are unknown to Utusan Malaysia's readers. Only the population who could access alternate sources of information would encounter the reasons behind it and eventually comprehend them. Elaborated explanations about the demands raised by SSR were available to the readers of Malaysiakini.

A few other articulations locating the entire conundrum entailing the notion of a public assembly during a pandemic are disregarded in *Utusan Malaysia*. The freedom of expression enshrined under Article 10 of the Malaysian Federal Constitution - a fundamental right to the public - was articulated only in the articles of *Malaysiakini*. As a mass media, *Utusan Malaysia* has failed in their responsibility to educate and guide public understanding. Due to the current reporting, *Utusan Malaysia*'s readers might deduce that the protesters are violating the law, but the law itself allows for a peaceful, public assembly.

Alleged abuse of power by the police and authorities were absent in *Utusan Malaysia*'s reporting as well. Unprecedented actions, as claimed by the activists and legal fraternity, such as detaining and visiting the houses of the activists, were unethical. This breach of constitutional rights went unreported in *Utusan Malaysia*. Instead, *Utusan Malaysia* produced a news article through social media curation highlighting an entrepreneur Dato' Sri Vida's exasperation over the protest (Abdul Karim, 2021). The glaring differences in the news choices evoke questions of priorities, ethics and whether *Utusan Malaysia* is a watchdog - a fourth estate in a democratic society. Contrastingly, *Malaysiakini* chose to highlight relevant stakeholder insights such as SUHAKAM, Suaram and the Bar Council. A possible interpretation is that *Utusan Malaysia* tuned its reporting to evoke irrational fears about the public assembly, while *Malaysiakini* chose to be rational in their reporting.

Conclusion

A study that dissects the question of framing and the direct or indirect impact on their readers are highly debatable. The study, however, has posited the framing of a specific event where the #Lawan protest had left an excruciating impact on the virtues of democracy.

One argument strongly validated in this study is that the political economy of news organisations cannot be written off in any circumstances. To a certain extent, the news organisations have to comply with the existing laws created by the political masters and the ownership structure where the minds of the masses could be controlled by controlling the mass media.

As Gramsci (2003) strongly argued, the consent seeking process through force or dialogue always leaves sufficient space to negotiate for the emergence of relative autonomy. Despite the existing constraints, mass media organisations like *Malaysiakini* strive to expand the democratic space to allow diverse voices to emerge. More importantly, voices that are marginalised for being critical of the ruling regime should not be silenced. Democracy should not be taken for granted as rights to information are strangulated to ensure the status quo in the society is kept intact.

REFERENCES

Abdul Khalid, M. (2021). Covid-19: Malaysia experience and key lessons. *Asian Economic Papers*. Vol. 20(2). https://doi.org/10.1162/asep_a_00801

Bowie, N. (2021, February 24). The duo who stole Malaysia's democracy. *The Asia Times*. https://asiatimes.com/2021/02/the-duo-who-stole-malaysias-democracy/

Boydstun, A.E., Ledgerwood, A., & Sparks, J. (2017). A Negativity Bias in Reframing Shapes Political Preferences Even in Partisan Contexts. *SAGE Journals*. Vol 10(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617733520

Bullock, O.M., & Shulman, H.C. (2021). Utilizing Framing Theory to Design More Effective Health Messages about Tanning Behavior among College Women. *Communication Studies.* Vol. 72(3). https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2021.1899007

Chai, J. (2021, August 3) Malaysia: from Covid role model to a mini-India. *Al-Jazeera*. https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/8/3/malaysia-from-covid-role-model-to-a-mini-india

CIVICUS Monitor. (2021). Freedom of peaceful Assembly and the Covid-19 pandemic: A snapshot of protests and restrictions. https://monitor.civicus.org/COVID19September2021/

Elengoe, A. (2020). Covid-19 outbreak in Malaysia. *Osong Public Health and Research Perspectives*. Volume 11(3). https://doi.org/10.24171/j.phrp.2020.11.3.08

Entman, R.M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*. 43(4). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x

Gramsci, A. (2003). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Lawrence & Wishart Limited: London.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harvard University Press.

Harper, T., & Amrith, S.S. (2014). *Histories of Health in Southeast Asia: Perspectives on the Long Twentieth Century*. Indian University Press: Bloomington & Indianapolis.

Head, J. (2020). How Malaysia's government collapsed in two years. *BBC News*. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-51716474

Hisamudin, H.A. (2021, July 24). 'Black flag' vehicle convoy in KL to protest govt's handling of Covid-19. *Free Malaysia Today*. https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2021/07/24/black-flag-vehicle-convoy-in-kl-to-protest-govts-handling-of-covid-19/

Human rights organisations working on freedom of expression. (August 2021). 31 July 2021 #Lawan Protest Monitoring Report. *Centre for Independen t Journalism*. https://cijmalaysia.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/LAWAN-Protest-Monitoring-Report-AUG-2021.pdf

Karim, H., & Nor Hamid, S. (1984). *With the people! the Malaysian student movement, 1967-74*. INSAN: Petaling Jaya.

Latiff, R. (2021, August 19). Monarchy reshaped as Malaysia's king looks to end political turmoil. *Reuters.* https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/monarchy-reshaped-malaysias-king-looks-end-political-turmoil-2021-08-19/

Loheswar, R. (2021, July 31). Malaysian youth converge on Dataran Merdeka for #Lawan protest. *The Malay Mail.* https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2021/07/31/thousands-converge-on-dataran-merdeka-for-lawan-protest/1994104

Maelzer, R. (2021, June 5). Analysis: Where it went wrong for Malaysia in the COVID-19 fight. *CGTN.* https://news.cgtn.com/news/2021-06-04/Analysis-Where-it-went-wrong-for-Malaysia-in-the-COVID-19-fight--10NdGnXQW4M/index.html

Malik, H. (2021, June 14). Covid-19: Sektor kilang rekod 95,156 kes, 639 kluster – KP Kesihatan. *Astro Awani.* https://www.astroawani.com/berita-malaysia/covid19-sektor-kilang-rekod-95156-kes-639-kluster-kp-kesihatan-303151

Malaysia Now. (2021, January 28). Study ranks Malaysia among top 20 countries which best handled Covid-19. *Malaysia Now*. https://www.malaysianow.com/news/2021/01/28/study-ranks-malaysia-among-top-20-countries-which-best-handled-covid-19/

Panneerselvam, I., & Lee Yuen Beng, A. (2017, November). *Masking or Unmasking? The portrayal of the Women's Day March (2019) and LGBT community in Utusan Online and Malaysiakini* [Paper presentation]. International Conference of Communication, Language, Education and Social Science, MMU University, Malacca.

Ratcliffe, R. (2021, February 25). Malaysia's political turmoil: everything you need to know. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/feb/25/malaysias-political-turmoil-everything-you-need-to-know

Reuters. (2020, March 1). Timeline: A week of political crisis in Malaysia. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-malaysia-politics-timeline-idUSKBN20O1CP

Sandhu, K.S., & Mani, A. (2006). *Indian Communities in Southeast Asia*. ISEAS: Singapore.

Solhi, F., Krishnan, D.B. (2021, July 26). Contract doctors nationwide go on strike. *New Straits Times.* https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2021/07/711788/contract-doctors-nationwide-go-strike

Sparks. J., & Ledgerwood, A. (2017). When good is stickier than bad: understanding gain/loss asymmetries in sequential framing effects. *American Psychological Association*. Vol. 0(999). http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/xge0000311

Theseira, L. (2021, April 30). Buka Puasa, Buka Parlimen: marchers demand MPs reconvene. *The Vibes*. https://www.thevibes.com/articles/news/25771/buka-puasa-buka-parlimen-marchers-demand-mps-reconvene

Yusof, A. (2021, August 5). Timeline: How the Covid-19 pandemic has unfolded in Malaysia since January 2020. *Channel News Asia*. https://www.channelnewsasia.com/asia/timeline-how-covid-19-pandemic-has-unfolded-malaysia-january-2020-2082081

(2020). Malaysia’s political crisis. *Strategic Comments*. Vol 26(2). https://doi.org/10.1080/13567888.2020.1756352

MALAYSIAKINI NEWS ARTICLES

Alhadjri, A. (2021, 30 July). #Lawan: Youth activist released at 1am, after 10-hour grilling for sedition. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585162

Alhadjri, A., Yap, V., & Ramlan, Y. (2021). Hundreds of #Lawan protesters in KL demand PM's resignation. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585291

Ghazali, N.F. (2021, August 1). #Lawan protesters have right to speak up but be ready for consequences – Annuar. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585446

Lee, A. (2021, 29 July). #Lawan: Cops detain activist overnight, raid home. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585103

Malaysiakini. (2021, July 21). Cops to question five #Lawan protest organisers. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585350

Malaysiakini (2021, July 21). #Lawan street protest planned for July 31. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/583922

Malaysiakini. (2021, July 26). Unfazed by 'intimidation', #Lawan protest to proceed on July 31. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/584502

Malaysiakini. (2021, July 28). Group decries 'intimidation' as police probe protest slated for July 31. *Malaysiakini*.

Malaysiakini. (2021, 30 July). #Lawan protest: SOPs and what to expect tomorrow. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585212

Malaysiakini. (2021, July 30). Suhakam urges authorities to facilitate #Lawan protest. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585263

Malaysiakini. (2021, July 31). Youth activist recounts harrowing detention, intimidation against family. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585276

Malaysiakini. (2021, August 1). Cops identify 29 individuals in #Lawan rally probe. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585408

Malaysiakini. (2021, Aug 1). Suhakam says #Lawan protest peaceful, no untoward incidents. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585433

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 2). Police quiz 11 #Lawan participants, activists insist protest followed SOP. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585567

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 3). Muda activists among the latest batch of leaders quizzed on #Lawan protest. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585678

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 3). Ismail Sabri fears #Lawan protest may cause further spread of Covid-19. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585359

Malaysiakini. (2021, August 4). Cops visit homes of #Lawan participants, organiser decries 'unethical intimidation'. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/585853

Malaysiakini. (2021, August 6). Cops question lawyer, media workers in mass gathering probes. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/586203

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 7). IGP vows stern action against protesters, after #Lawan 2.0 plan emerge. *Malaysiakini*. https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/586313

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 7). Resign or we #Lawan again in 2 weeks - protest organisers tell PM. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/586275

Malaysiakini (2021, Aug 8). Suhakam disappointed commissioners called by cops over #Lawan protest. *Malaysiakini.* https://www.*Malaysiakini*.com/news/586383

UTUSAN MALAYSIA NEWS ARTICLES

Abdul Karim, M. A. F. (2021, August 3). Awak semua tak mati ke? – Datuk Seri Vida. *Utusan Malaysia.* https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/awak-semua-tak-takut-mati-ke-datuk-seri-vida/

Hadzman, M. (2021, July 31). Lima Sekretariat Solidariti Rakyat dipanggil. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/07/lima-sekretariat-solidariti-rakyat-dipanggil/

Hadzman, M. (2021, July 31). Polis anggar 450 individu terlibat protes #Lawan. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/07/450-individu-terlibat-protes-lawan/

Hadzman, M. (2021, July 31). Polis kenal pasti penganjur protes #Lawan. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/07/polis-kenal-pasti-penganjur-protes-lawan/

Mohamad Shofi, M.I. (2021, July 31). Tindakan berhimpun, protes rugikan negara yang sedang berdepan wabak Covid-19. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/nasional/2021/07/tindakan-berhimpun-protes-rugikan-negara-yang-sedang-berdepan-wabak-covid-19/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 1). #Lawan: 47 individu sertai perhimpunan diburu. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/lawan-47-individu-sertai-perhimpunan-diburu/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 1). Penganjur, peserta perhimpunan langgar SOP, 29 individu dipanggil – Acryl Sani. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/penganjur-peserta-perhimpunan-langgar-sop-29-individu-dipanggil/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 2). #Lawan: Lima NGO desak polis ambil tindakan tegas. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/lawan-lima-ngo-desak-polis-ambil-tindakan-tegas/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 2). #Lawan: Penganjur dakwa perhimpunan ikut SOP, akan terus desak Muhyiddin letak jawatan. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/lawan-penganjur-dakwa perhimpunan-ikut-sop-akan-terus-desak-muhyiddin-letak-jawatan/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 2). #Lawan: 47 individu sertai perhimpunan diminta tampil. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/lawan-47-individu-sertai-perhimpunan-diminta-tampil/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 3). Kerajaan gagal urus Covid-19, pemimpin MUDA desak Parlimen dibuka. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/berita/2021/08/kerajaan-gagal-urus-covid-19-pemimpin-muda-desak-parlimen-dibuka/

Nuraina Hanis, A.H. (2021, August 3). #Lawan: Tian Chua, empat pemimpin MUDA diambil keterangan. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/08/lawan-tian-chua-empat-pemimpin-muda-diambil-keterangan/

Roslan, S. (2021, July 31). Kota Kinabalu lengang tanpa perhimpunan Lawan. *Utusan Malaysia* https://www.utusan.com.my/berita/2021/07/kota-kinabalu-lengang-tanpa-perhimpunan-lawan/

Zin, O. (2021, July 31). Laungan ‘lawan’ bergema berhampiran Dataran Merdeka. *Utusan Malaysia*. https://www.utusan.com.my/terkini/2021/07/laungan-lawan-bergema-berhampiran-dataran-merdeka/

Attributes of Leadership Communication towards the Empowerment of Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia:

Challenges Faced by Lecturers in Delivering Online Lessons during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Prakash Velloo* **& Beh Kok Hooi** **

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has taken the world by storm including the education industry. Thus, the work quality of lecturers is an important contribution to sustain the number of students in a university especially during the pandemic. Lecturers are put through the transition from the traditional learning method to the e-learning method, finding new ways of conducting classes, maneuvering technology, applying fresh skills and utilizing one's own knowledge. Thus, the impact of the implementation of online teaching and learning on students' experience is crucial during the pandemic (Ramírez-Hurtado et al., 2021). In-line with the notion, this study carries out a secondary research to investigate the attributes of leadership communication in facilitating the challenges of lecturers in conducting online teaching-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic to satisfy their students' needs. It examines existing studies on leadership communication in higher education institutions and the quality of lecturers' work during the pandemic. The findings of this study show that developing an acceptable leadership style is a critical aspect that determines the performance of Malaysian higher education institution leaders. Leadership communication with resource supply and innovation support plays an important role to empower the lecturers at higher education institutions in Malaysia. In a nutshell, this study has shed some light to Malaysian higher education institutions especially during the Covid-19 pandemic to redeem themselves in providing a better service to

*Prakash Vello, Centre for Languages, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: prakash@hju.edu.my

**Beh Kok Hooi, Vice Chancellor, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: khbeh@hju.edu.my

the community. It is also recommended that a comprehensive primary research is carried out in the near future to gauge the productivity of lecturers in conducting online teaching-learning during the pandemic.

Keywords: Leadership communication, higher education institutions, Covid-19 pandemic, online lessons

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 is not only a global pandemic and public health crisis; it has also severely affected the global economy and financial markets. The disease mitigation measures that have been imposed in many nations have resulted in significant income reductions, increased unemployment, and disruptions in the transportation, service, and industrial industries, to name a few (Ratten, 2020). The impact on Malaysia is similarly devastating, thanks to the Malaysian government's movement control measures, which have been in place since February 2020. Many economic sectors have struggled to keep their operations afloat due to numerous uncertainties. This has had a significant impact on the education sector as well.

Malaysia's higher education institutions are classified into two categories: public and private. When it comes to running their businesses, public institutions receive a steady stream of applications from potential students. Locals regard them as prominent because the government provides education, with costs that are reasonable, and the curriculum is well acknowledged by the approving authorities. Every year, public universities enrol between 20,000 and 30,000 students at their schools. On the other side, the situation is different in Malaysian private universities, where only local students who can afford to pay the tuition fees. Furthermore, compared to public universities, the fees charged can be at least 100 percent greater. According to the new household income classification, the median household income was RM3,000 in the B40 tier (RM3,000 - RM6,275; 16.4 percent), RM6,276 in the M40 tier (RM6,276 - RM13,148; 37.4 percent), and RM13,149 in the T20 tier (RM13,149 - RM13,149; 37.4 percent), and RM13,149 in the T20 tier (RM13 Table 1 shows the details of the three levels' classification income and income thresholds in Malaysia.

Table 1: New Income Classification
(as per Household Income & Basic Amenities Survey Report 2019)

Income Classification		**Income Threshold**
T20	T1	RM10,961 - RM15,039
	T2	RM15,040 <
M40	M1	RM4,850 - RM5,879
	M2	RM5,880 - RM7,099
	M3	RM7,110 - RM8,699
	M4	RM8,700 - RM10,959
B40	B1	< RM2,500
	B2	RM2,501 - RM3,169
	B3	RM3,170 - RM3,969
	B4	RM3,970 - RM4,849

Source: https://www.propertyguru.com.my/property-guides/housing-schemes-for-b40-based-on-2020-income-classifications-34188#:~:text=A%20refresher%20on%20our%20old%20income%20classifications&text=Previously%2C%20Malaysians%20were%20considered%20to,you%20in%20the%20T20%20tier

Based on the foregoing characteristics of the household income classification, it can be concluded that due to the relatively high fee structure, only the M40 and T20 categories are able to benefit from private university education. Due to the constraints, most Malaysian private colleges have shifted their focus to recruiting more international students in order to preserve their operations, while local students may prefer to enrol in state institutions amid the current economic downturn.

Nonetheless, the quality of a professor' work is critical in maintaining a university's student population, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. Because students are a university's primary clients, it is critical to examine the influence of their learning experience in order to preserve or improve university leadership communication, which has an impact on lecturers' work quality. Universities will need to devise new strategies for disseminating strategic marketing and corporate information to the general public, particularly potential and current students. In turn, the quality of their lecturers' work will be critical in ensuring that the primary consumers are satisfied during the teaching-learning process

(Tan, 2021). In line with this idea, the purpose of this secondary research is to assess existing studies on leadership communication in higher education institutions and the quality of lecturers' work during the pandemic. It will also assess the influence of online teaching and learning on students' experiences throughout the pandemic (Ramrez-Hurtado et al., 2021).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the influence of leadership communication towards administering the delivery of online teaching among higher education institutions in Malaysia during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. To study the challenges of lecturers in conducting online teaching-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic to satisfy their students.

CHALLENGES OF LECTURERS IN CONDUCTING ONLINE TEACHING

The sudden lockdown imposed in Malaysia in early 2020 brought about a considerable change in many industries including the education industry. The nature of delivering effective lessons to students took a sudden turn where an extra burden had to be shouldered by the industry players. The biggest challenge was the preparation to transit from the traditional learning method to e-learning method leaving both educators and students of both public and private institutions to gauge and find new ways of conducting classes, maneuvering technology, applying skills, and utilizing own knowledge (Giatman & Irma Yulia, 2020). Nevertheless, the change during the transition was significant as some elements such as course content and delivery styles had pushed more students to be self-reliant and independent learners as compared to the teacher-led methods (Pandya et al., 2021).

Independent learning, whether asynchronous or synchronous, has distinct characteristics that distinguish it from traditional face-to-face classes. The key differences are in group discussions, student involvement, assessment, and learning methods (Tan, 2021). As a result of this trend, educators will have to strike a balance between maintaining the same degree of engagement online as they would in a face-to-face setting (Ratten, 2020). It empowers educators to choose the types of learning projects they can use to improve learning qualities such as critical thinking and higher order problem-solving skills in order to reach the same degree of engagement online and offline (Ratten, 2020).

Empowerment in education is believed to allow professors to play to their own strengths in terms of intelligence and abilities, motivating them to be more committed to helping students obtain high results. They are also given the authority to make decisions as a result of this empowerment (Suriansyah et al., 2019). In the realm of digital learning, empowerment, according to Agustini et al. (2014), permits initiatives that rely heavily on interactive forms of learning, which adopt flexibility in terms of teaching, creating assessments, and assessing learning outcomes, and which, in turn, are invariably effective (Bordoloi et al., 2021).

The move to online instruction as a result of Covid-19 is a wake-up call for lecturers who want to improve their self-efficacy. The self-efficacy of lecturers, as well as their particular goals and code of conduct while using the online platform to teach, play a significant effect. More productive lecturers find it easier to engage with students while teaching online, which leads to greater work satisfaction. This also allows them to experiment with numerous creative techniques for assisting students in comprehending tough subjects (Ma et al., 2021). It is critical for lecturers to develop the necessary abilities to teach online since it increases student involvement and motivation (Xu et al., 2020). Due to the necessity to constantly learn new abilities and become an expert, professors will be able to assist students throughout the learning process (Martin et al., 2018).

The productivity of lecturers can be measured in a variety of ways, and it is extremely extensive. The pandemic has forced lecturers into a predicament where using technology to conduct their lessons is required. We can use technology to improve the efficiency and quality of a lecturer. A lecturer's productivity is boosted by an increase in course development time, which is linked to the need to master new tools and pedagogies. Student engagement is enhanced by the opportunity to build a well-designed course that includes a variety of learning resources. It is critical to place a premium on instructional design because it improves student learning outcomes and promotes teaching productivity (Meyer, 2011).

Satisfaction is the pleasant consequence of having a certain need or want realised; it might be the outcome of a service or product meeting consumers' expectations. Students are service consumers in the context of an academic institution, and student satisfaction is shaped by experiences of students who have used campus facilities, perceived performance quality in terms of teaching and services rendered, the university's reputation, and social community attributes. Effective teaching is deemed necessary regardless of the activities that take place at a university, and the most significant stakeholders to be the torchbearers of service providing would be its professors (Bilal et al., 2021).

A course that is designed to be taught online typically includes a well-planned lesson plan, audio or video content, and technological support. During the Covid-19 epidemic, lecturers experienced considerable problems, including a lack of online teaching expertise, a lack of time to prepare before sessions, and minimal technical support from the technical support teams (Bao, 2020). Despite the difficulties, lecturers will need to adjust to the new teaching norms, and it is critical to guarantee that students' needs are satisfied throughout the teaching and learning process.

During online sessions, a learning module might be broken into smaller chapters or themes to ensure that students understand the subject matter of what the lecturers are supposed to present. Students will be able to concentrate for a brief period of time, allowing them to interact with their instructors throughout that time. Lecturers should also create an alternate strategy in case of any unanticipated technological difficulties that may arise before or during the lecture. Students are more likely to feel important if they have an alternative strategy. Lecturers must be able to provide enough feedback for each evaluation provided by students within a set time frame in order to achieve productivity. Feedback can be given through a shared discussion board, which can also serve as a learning tool for other students. Throughout the conversation, students will enjoy a unique learning experience (Bao, 2020).

After looking into the various aspects of empowerment and their effects on teaching effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity, as well as student satisfaction, it is undeniable that putting these factors first would satisfy students and lead to increased enrollment, retention, and financial viability for an institution. As a result, it is concluded that student satisfaction can be achieved through various aspects of an institution's teaching capability in order to increase the longevity of the relationship between an institution and its students by providing them with a better educational experience and possibly increasing the likelihood of them returning for more courses and spreading positive word-of-mouth (Carter & Yeo, 2016).

EMPOWERMENT OF LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

Theory of Transformational Leadership clearly revealed that transformational leadership communication changes followers' attitude and behaviour (Mhatre & Riggio, 2014), and there is a significant conceptual gap studying transformational leadership theory's function (van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). It is able to accommodate the leadership communication process between leader-followers. For example, a leader who carries intercultural knowledge and understanding of his or her followers is able to bring social change among the followers (Bakar et al., 2014).

However, it was determined that previous research on transformational leadership communication from a contextual perspective, specifically leadership communication in a multicultural context, was still in its early stages and had not been extensively investigated (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). Thus, this preliminary study adopts the above framework to further explore the influence of leadership communication in enhancing the effectiveness of the delivery of online teaching among higher education institutions in Malaysia during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The method a leader communicates with her or his staff is referred to as communicative leadership. In fact, most leadership theory glosses over the communication aspects of leadership, resulting in communication being viewed as an afterthought to other managerial tasks and responsibilities. For instance, effective leadership communication is a critical component of corporate success, especially today. According to Arendt et al. (2019), transformational leadership is a leadership philosophy in which a leader works with teams or followers to identify essential change and create a vision to guide that change beyond their immediate self-interests.

Because the scenario has had far-reaching ramifications for human resource development (HRD) through recognising necessary competences for academic leaders, the importance of systematically developing human resources during the Covid-19 pandemic is very difficult. Thus, academic leaders' leadership characteristics can help leaders be more effective during this tough period.

The most important function of a higher education institution's leadership is to create a pleasant environment for faculty members with high-quality education, and to do so, leaders must have new knowledge, abilities, and skills in order to effectively deal with organisational changes (Drucker, 1999).

Academic leaders must understand the hurdles in order to be able to employ competencies by selecting the optimal leadership styles based on the leader's circumstance and the followers' readiness. They must also improve their abilities and skills in order to lead higher education institutions. The most crucial aspect of being an academic leader is that you don't have to keep to one style; instead, you have to find your own style for each occasion. The academic leaders' advised that answers to this type of obstacle were to create competencies with suitable training and to try to persuade them to catch vital competencies (Shahmandi & Silong, 2013). They also argued that any improvements desired in the operations of quality and that required training by academic units would be left up to them to do as needed. This means that deans, heads of departments, professors, senior lecturers, program coordinators and others who have strategic roles in faculties through managing committees and courses would be required to interpret what competencies would be needed to inform their operational quality and so engage in self-development.

Another study conducted by Ghasemy et al. (2018) attempted to identify the main issues in the Malaysian higher education (HE) system and its sectors from the perspectives of Malaysian academic leaders. According to the findings, the top five priorities identified in the

Malaysian HE System were completely equivalent to the top priorities found in the Malaysian Public Research & Comprehensive HE sector. All activities linked to Achieving Goals, KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), and Standards; Teaching & Delivering Programs; Conducting Research; Producing Publications; and Finance, Budgeting, Grants, and Fundraising were covered in these priorities. In addition, some similarities were also identified between Malaysian HE and the HE system in other countries. In other words, they did denote that some of the major issues being faced by HEIs were global. Considering these challenges by Malaysian HE policy makers in developing and updating professional development programmes, as well as formulating new policies to ensure a quality provision of HE in Malaysian institutions, is the study's distinctive contribution in comparison to comparable studies.

Jamal (2016) further argued that the relationship between crisis responsibility and perceived organisational reputation during a crisis is partially mediated by the dynamic mechanisms of charismatic leadership communication and organisational credibility. The established mediated model can serve as an informative guidance for both organisations and leaders in managing crises and reputations, according to empirical evidence. Her research further stressed on the contributions to Situational Crisis Communication Theory's development and identified crucial qualities in corporate reputation processes. To lessen the impact of a crisis on an organization's reputation, the research suggested that a leader should participate in charismatic leadership communication and improve organisational trust.

Abdullah et al. (2018) conducted a study to determine the interconnection between leadership styles and Integrated Marketing Communication in selected Malaysian Private and Public Higher Learning Institutions based on the perceptions of administrators and lecturers. The findings of this study showed that uniting functional operations by aligning Higher Learning Institutions' activities toward serving customers, gaining support from Higher Learning Institutions' top management, thoroughly studying their customers, and using social media to communicate with current and prospective customers are all important factors in developing and implementing a successful Integrated Marketing Communication plan in Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions. Furthermore, the interviewees' institutions' leadership styles reveal that intellectual stimulation was the most mentioned dimension, followed by laissez-faire, inspiring motivation, and management-by-exception. When comparing the leaders of the selected Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions to the leaders of the selected Malaysian Private Higher Learning Institutions, the leaders of the selected Malaysian Public Higher Learning Institutions showed a higher inclination to practise transformational leadership style who showed a proclivity towards transactional leadership style.

From the above study, it can safely be concluded that developing an acceptable leadership style is a critical aspect that determines the performance of Malaysian higher education institution leaders. This study has certainly shed some light to Malaysian higher education institutions especially during the Covid-19 pandemic to redeem themselves in providing a better service to the community.

In addition, a study conducted by Subramaniam (2007) revealed that leader-member exchange correlated significantly with support for innovation. Leader-member exchange, leader role expectation and intuitive problem-solving style correlated significantly with individual perception of adequacy of resource supply for innovation. This study proved that there was a significant relationship between psychological climate and innovative behavior. Leader-member exchange, leader-role expectation, systematic problem-solving style and intuitive problem-solving style correlated significantly with innovative behavior. The diversity in individual incentive behaviour was largely influenced by the quality of the leader-subordinate relationship (37 percent). However, it is important to note that support for innovation without resource supply reduces the impact of innovative behavior. In a nutshell, it is safe to say that leadership communication with resource supply plays an important role in innovative behavior among lecturers at higher education institutions in Malaysia. The perceived psychological climate that is conducive of innovation includes elements such as support for innovation and resource supply.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that the education industry has considerably changed the mode of teaching-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic adjusting to the new landscape of delivery. It has been reasonably a tough challenge in the transition from the traditional learning to e-learning, which required both educators and students from public and private institutions to explore and discover new ways of conducting classes, maneuvering technology, adapting to new norms and acquiring new knowledge. Furthermore, independent learning has taken a new transformation encompassing more interactive group discussions, an enhanced level of student participation, new self-assessment techniques and virtual learning methods. Keeping all factors in mind, there is an immediate need for significant empowerment of the education providers. The greatest impact of such a move will improve the self-effectiveness, self-efficiency and productivity of the lecturers at the higher education institutions. The outcome is an enhanced engagement and satisfaction level among the local and international students. This is utmost important because student experience on perceived performance and quality of online teaching-learning together with services and facilities shadow the reputation and social community qualities of a higher education institution. The longevity of the relationship between an institution and its students can be enhanced with a better educational experience (Carter & Yeo, 2016).

With the notion above, this study examined the influence of leadership communication in enhancing the effectiveness of the delivery of online lessons among higher education institutions in Malaysia during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was discovered that effective leadership communication, for example, is a crucial component for the success of an organisation, particularly during the challenging Covid-19 pandemic. A leader may collaborate with teams or followers to identify critical change and establish a vision to steer transformation beyond self-interest. The results of this study showed that there was a link between psychological environment and innovative behaviour. Thus, leadership communication with resource supply and innovation support plays an important role to empower the lecturers at higher education institutions in Malaysia. Dynamic mechanisms of charismatic leadership communication and organisational credibility can steer lecturers to deliver higher quality lessons to students.

In summary, developing the right leadership style is critical for the benefit of an education institution and its students. This study has certainly shed some light to Malaysian higher education institutions especially during the Covid-19 pandemic to redeem themselves in providing a better service to the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As this systematic review is at a preliminary stage, it is recommended for future research to embark on a primary study investigating a wider spectrum of the issue at stake. Carrying out a primary data collection on a larger scale will definitely shed more light to the challenges faced by the management and the educators of higher education institutions in Malaysia in delivering quality online teaching-learning to the community. It would also be interesting to explore the different income groups and their relationship with the satisfaction level of perceiving the online classes from the higher education institutions in Malaysia. In addition, the research sample could include managers and lecturers while not forgetting the administrative and other support staff as well who together engineer the notion of providing a high-quality service to the community. Then, more accurate and reliable data can be published which will directly and indirectly enhance the quality of education rendered to local and international students in Malaysia.

Online learning has certainly brought a new wave of challenges for the education players during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unearthing the repercussions of this new landscape is seen as extremely important for the future of Malaysian education.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, S.A.C., Md Yusoff, M., & Mustafa, H. (2018). The Relationship Between

Integrated Marketing Communication and Leadership Styles – In The Context of Malaysian Higher Education. *Indonesian Journal of Business and Econ omics, 1*(1), 1-17. ISSN: 2621-4466.

Agustini, F., Amanah, D., & Harmen, H. (2014, May). The Lecturer Empowerment For Increasing Work Productivity Of Management Lecturer Through Development Of Learning Material In Medan City. *The Lecturer Empowerment For Increasing Work Productivity Of Management Lecturer Through Development Of Learning Material In Medan City*, 227–233. https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/BXE4P

Arendt, J.F.W., Verdorfer, A.P., & Kugler, K.G. (2019). Mindfulness and Leadership: Communication As A Behavioural Correlate of Leader Mindfulness and Its Effect on Follower Satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*(667), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00667

Ayman, R., & Korabik, K. (2010). Leadership: Why gender and culture matter. *American Psychologist, 65*(3), 157-170. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/a0018806

Bakar, H. A., Jian, G., & Fairhurst, G. (2014). Where do I stand?; The interaction of leader-member exchange and performance ratings. *Asian Business & Management, 13*(2), 143-170.

Bao, W. (2020). COVID -19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, *2*(2), 113–115. https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.191

Bilal, A. R., Fatima, T., bin Dost, K., & Imran, M. K. (2021). I am engaged, therefore my students are satisfied! Unleashing the role of teachers' interaction and sensitivity based on self-determination perspective. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *35*(1), 341–361. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijem-05-2020-0258

Bordoloi, R., Das, P., & Das, K. (2021). Perception towards online/blended learning at the time of Covid-19 pandemic: an academic analytics in the Indian context. *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal*, *16*(1), 41–60. https://doi.org/10.1108/aaouj-09-2020-0079

Carter, S., & Yeo, A. C. M. (2016). Students-as-customers' satisfaction, predictive retention with marketing implications. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *30*(5), 635–652. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijem-09-2014-0129

Drucker, P (1999). *Management challenges for the 21st century*. Harper Collins.

Ghasemy, M., Hussin, S., Megat Daud, M.A.K. , Md Nor, M. , Ghavifekr, S., & Kenayathulla, H.B. (2018). Issues in Malaysian Higher Education: A Quantitative Representation of the Top Five Priorities, Values, Challenges, and Solutions From the Viewpoints of Academic Leaders. SAGE Open, Jan-Mar 2018, 1-15. SAGE. DOI: 10.1177/2158244018755839

Giatman, M., Sriwati, S., & Irma Yulia, B. (2020). Online learning quality control in the pandemic Covid-19 Era in Indonesia. *Online Learning Quality Control in the Pandemic Covid-19 Era in Indonesia*, *6*(2), 168–175. https://doi.org/10.15294/jne.v6i2.25594

Jamal, J. (2016). *The Mediating Effect of Charismatic Leadership Communication and Organisational Credibility in The Relationship Between Crisis Responsibility and Perceived Organisational Reputation*. Doctoral Dissertation. Universiti Utara Malaysia.

Ma, K., Chutiyami, M., Zhang, Y., & Nicoll, S. (2021). Online teaching self-efficacy during COVID-19: Changes, its associated factors and moderators. *Education and Information Technologies*. Published. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10486-3

Meyer, K. A. (2011). The Influence of Online Teaching on Faculty Productivity. *Innovative Higher Education, 37*(1), 37–52. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-011-9183-y

Mhatre, K. H., & Riggio, R. E. (2014). Charismatic and transformational leadership: Present and Future. *The Oxford Handbook of Leadership and Organizations,* 221–240.

Pandya, B., Patterson, L., & Cho, B. Y. (2021). Pedagogical transitions experienced by higher education faculty members – "Pre-Covid to Covid." *Pedagogical Transitions Experienced by Higher Education Faculty Members – "Pre-Covid to Covid."* Published.

Ramírez-Hurtado, J. M., Hernández-Díaz, A. G., López-Sánchez, A. D., & Pérez -León, & V. E. (2021). Measuring Online Teaching Service Quality in Higher Education in the COVID-19 Environment. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 18*(5), 2403. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18052403

Ratten, V. (2020). Coronavirus (Covid-19) and the entrepreneurship education community. *Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy*, *14*(5), 753–764. https://doi.org/10.1108/jec-06-2020-0121

Shahmandi, E., & Silong, A.D. (2013). Organizational Strategy, Resource Management, Communication, Collaboration, Higher Education Advocacy, Professionalism and Effective Academic Leadership Styles in Malaysian RUs. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research, 3*(6), 50-57. TextRoad Publication.

Subramaniam, I.D. (2018). Determinants of Innovative Behaviour in the Workplace: A Case

Study of a Malaysian Public Sector Organisation. *European Journal of Social Sciences, 5*(3), 96-108. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/250306672.

Suriansyah, A., A., N., Winardi, I., & Dalle, J. (2019). The relationship between university autonomy, lecturer empowerment, and organizational citizenship behavior in Indonesian universities. *The Relationship between University Autonomy, Lecturer Empowerment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Indonesian Universities, 10*(4), 127–152. https://jsser.org/index.php/jsser/article/view/1080

Tan, C. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on student learning performance from the perspectives of community of inquiry. *Corporate Governance: The International Journal of Business in Society, ahead-of* (ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/cg-09-2020-0419

van Knippenberg, D., & Sitkin, S. B. (2013). A critical assessment of charismatictransformational leadership research: Back to the drawing board? *The Academy of Management Annals, 7*(1), 1-60.

Xu, B., Chen, N. S., & Chen, G. (2020). Effects of teacher role on student engagement in WeChat-Based online discussion learning. *Computers & Education*, *157*, 103956. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103956

Caught Off-Guard by COVID-19:

Perspective on Emergency Remote Teaching and Learning

Josephine Chan Ie Lyn*

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc and disrupted not only businesses but also the lives of many. The higher education sector was not spared as many higher education institutions were caught off-guard by the unprecedented situation. Emergency remote teaching and learning had to be immediately implemented with limited follow-up on those impacted by it. Thus, the purpose of the study is to examine the students' initial experiences on the sudden implementation of emergency remote teaching and learning due to COVID-19, and the factors influencing students' continued intention in e-learning. An online survey was conducted on a cohort of 22 students from a private higher education institution in Penang, Malaysia. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data. The results indicated that if not for COVID-19, face-to-face classes were still preferred. Furthermore, satisfaction significantly influenced students' continued intention to use e-learning. Between the two factors of confirmation of expectation and post-adoption expectation, only post-adoption expectation has significant influence on satisfaction. New insights gained from this study are crucial for private higher education institutions to establish a mechanism for future emergency remote teaching and learning. Limitations of the study and future research direction were also discussed.

Keywords: Emergency remote teaching, emergency remote learning, expectation-confirmation model, private higher education in Malaysia, COVID-19

---

*Josephine Chan Ie Lyn, Centre for Languages, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: chanil@hcu.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND

In December 2019, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), which causes the COVID-19, shook the whole world when it was first reported in Wuhan City, China (WHO, 2020). On January 25, 2020, Malaysia reported its first case of COVID-19 patient who was a Chinese tourist. Subsequently, on February 4, 2020, Malaysia had its first local COVID-19 patient. Initially, the COVID-19 situation in Malaysia was under control, until the Tabligh Congregation in Sri Petaling which took place in March 2020. The ill-fated event proved to be the catalyst of more COVID-19 cases which drastically spiked to 553 patients. During this time, the country was placed under a lockdown or Movement Control Order (MCO) from March 18 to 21, 2020 to break the chain of the COVID-19 spread among Malaysians. Only essential services were allowed to operate.

On April 20, 2020, private higher education institutions were forced to drastically shift their face-to-face (F2F) teaching to e-learning (Arumugam, 2020). This was Malaysian teachers' and students' first exposure towards what we now know as emergency remote teaching and learning. According to Whittle et al. (2020), emergency remote teaching refers to an alternative responsive online teaching during crisis. Thus, education that took place during MCO is equated to emergency remote learning which differs from online or virtual learning which is usually a well-structured online experience for the students. Specifically, emergency remote teaching and learning is delivered online as a triage, mainly to provide immediate access to education amid a catastrophic situation or crisis (Rahiem, 2020).

2. E-LEARNING IN MALAYSIA

In Malaysia, e-learning had already started in the late 1990s (Hussin et al., 2009). Unfortunately, not all private higher education institutions (HEIs) embraced e-learning. In a recent study, Chan and Muthuveloo (2019) reported that out of 155 private HEIs in Malaysia, only 38.06 percent perceived that they had strong technology management system; 49.03 percent used blended learning; 47.74 percent had e-learning platforms; 24 percent used flipped classroom; and only 9 percent offered massive open online courses (MOOC). Their findings indicated that private HEIs, which largely comprised private colleges at 71.6 percent, lacked technology usage and management. Different decisions made by private HEIs to invest differently in technologies have resulted in different results on their organizational performance (Chan & Muthuveloo, 2019; Hodges et al., 2020).

When COVID-19 pandemic happened, it caught everyone off-guard. Emergency remote teaching and learning had to be implemented while under lockdown. Vast gaps in the technological infrastructure and facilities as well as technological capabilities of the public and private higher education sectors were further exposed. Due to COVID-19, private HEIs had to scramble and quickly assemble e-learning modules regardless of the technological capabilities of the teaching and administration staff, and students. The Malaysian Association of Private Colleges and Universities (MAPCU) President Datuk Parmjit Singh reported that most universities in the private higher education sector had initial challenges due to internet accessibility, sudden overloading of existing digital learning platforms, varied technological capabilities of the teaching staff in handling e-learning platforms and tools, and new pedagogical e-learning demands that were different from the conventional F2F teaching (Arumugam, 2020). Students were also challenged with the abrupt switch to emergency remote teaching and had to experience a whole new paradigm shift from raising their hands to ask questions and getting immediate feedback to one where they had to do more self-directed learning and engagement in online discussions.

While everyone is adjusting to the new normal caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Malaysian Higher Education Ministry decided that all higher education institutions should conduct their programmes through online learning platforms until December 31, 2020, with the exception of research mode postgraduate students, final year, and new intake students (Landau, 2020). As students had encountered their first emergency remote learning experience, whether they would continue to use e-learning when the F2F classes resume remains questionable.

3. EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING

According to Whittle et al. (2020) and Hodges et al. (2020), emergency remote teaching is defined as an alternative responsive online teaching during crisis, while Milman (2020) described emergency remote teaching and learning as “pandemic pedagogy” and warned that emergency remote teaching and learning is not the same as F2F classes or the well-designed and planned online learning. In a similar vein, Hodges et al. (2020) highlighted that for an online course to be delivered, it would usually take six to nine months of conception, design, and development time. It would then probably take at least two to three rounds of delivering the online course before the teachers would feel comfortable in teaching the particular course online.

Nevertheless, when it comes to emergency remote teaching, it is ultimately exploiting available online teaching tools to deliver educational materials that would normally be physically delivered in F2F classes or in blended learning courses (Hodges et al., 2020). Emergency remote teaching should not be seen as equivalent to online learning as the hurried approach in emergency remote teaching may reduce the delivery quality of courses. This is unlike online learning courses that may take months dedicated towards developing and ensuring their quality. Therefore, emergency remote teaching and learning should only be considered as a temporary solution to an immediate crisis situation, and should not be viewed as a long-term solution.

In the West, emergency remote teaching is nothing new. In fact, as reported by Allen and Seaman (2010), 67 percent of the contingency plans for the 2009 H1N1 swine flu involved F2F classes being substituted by online classes in Fall 2009. Hurricane Katrina’s effect in August 2005 saw a rapid deployment of online learning where colleges and universities grouped together under a consortium to quickly develop more than 1,300 online courses (Lorenzo, 2008). During the COVID-19 crisis, 100 percent of the universities declared emergency remote e-learning (Murphy, 2020), as in the past, during the occurrence of H1N1, closures of schools and HEIs had attributed to the reduction of influenza cases. However, such situations are rarely experienced in Malaysia which only saw short-term temporary closure of schools in several parts of Malaysia due to worsening transboundary haze from Kalimantan, Indonesia (The

Straits Times, 2019) and chemical air pollution in Pasir Gudang, Malaysia (Suhaini, 2019).

On this basis, the purpose of the study is to examine the students' initial experiences on the sudden implementation of emergency remote teaching and learning due to COVID-19. Additionally, the study also intends to examine the factors that influence students' intention to continue using e-learning once the COVID-19 curve has been flattened and classes reverted to the conventional F2F classes. Not all private HEIs have embraced e-learning systems in their existing business model, but because of the pandemic, these institutions were forced to adopt e-learning to cater for emergency remote teaching and learning. As it is difficult to predict a future crisis that could again trigger emergency remote teaching and learning, private HEIs need to have a better understanding of the current situation so as to establish a better structured e-learning system to cope with any eventualities in the future (Lyons et al., 2020).

RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

The research model below depicts the relationship of all variables conceptualised in the study (refer to Figure 1). Students' initial experiences of emergency remote learning were first examined. Subsequently, the expectation-confirmation model by Battacherjee (2001) was used to underpin the factors influencing students' continued intention towards e-learning.

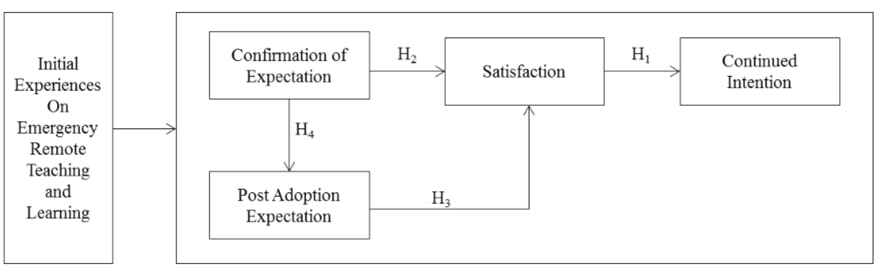

Figure 1: Research Model

According to Battacherjee (2001), the fundamental concept of the expectation-confirmation model is based on the similarity between a person's continued intention to adopt IT and repeated purchasing decision. It is a proven model for continued IT adoption which focuses on three variables, that of confirmation of expectation, post-adoption expectation or also known as perceived usefulness, and satisfaction against a continued intention behaviour.

First, extant marketing research has indicated that the main reason why consumers decided to repurchase certain products or services is their satisfaction level with the products or services (Bhattacherjee, 2001). As there is congruence between repurchasing of products or services and continued usage of IT products or services, it is postulated that private HEI students' satisfaction with e-learning positively and significantly influences their intention to continue using e-learning. This is further reinforced by empirical evidence that the fundamental of the IT continuance model is the direct influence of satisfaction on continued IT intention (Bhattacherjee, 2001). Moreover, there are also evidences from past studies that higher satisfaction levels of IT usage will have stronger IT usage intentions (Idemudia et al., 2016; Wani et al., 2017). As such, the following hypothesis is formed:

> H1: Students' satisfaction with e-learning has a positive and significant influence on their continued intention to use e-learning.

Second, students' satisfaction with e-learning depends on the confirmation of their expectations. Here, confirmation of expectation refers to the situation where students obtained expected benefits through their e-learning experience. When this happens, they will be feeling satisfied with their experiences using e-learning. Thus, the following hypothesis is formed:

> H2: Students' confirmation of expectation has a positive and significant influence on their satisfaction with e-learning.

Third, besides confirmation of expectation, students' satisfaction with e-learning also depends on their post-adoption expectation on e-learning which is also seen as students' perceived usefulness of e-learning. According to Davis (1989), perceived usefulness arises when there is the belief that IT or in this case e-learning can help enhance individual performance. In most IT adoption research, perceived usefulness is a critical predictor of IT adoption or behavioural intentions (Chen & Tseng, 2012; Veloo & Masood, 2014). Furthermore, Lwoga (2014) revealed that perceived usefulness influenced Tanzanian university students' satisfaction which eventually led to their continued intention to use e-learning management systems. Hence, the following hypothesis is formed:

> H3: Students' post-adoption expectation has a positive and significant influence on their satisfaction with e-learning.

Finally, students' confirmation of expectations will have a positive and significant influence on their post-adoption expectation/perceived usefulness of e-learning. The initial perception of usefulness for e-learning might not be present as students are still uncertain over their expectations from using e-learning (Bhattacherjee, 2001). It is only after experiencing e-learning, that their expectations are confirmed, and then only will the students perceive that e-learning is useful. As such, the following hypothesis is formed:

> H4: Students' confirmation of expectation has a positive and significant influence on post-adoption expectation of e-learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. SAMPLING

Determining the sample size is crucial in any research so as to ensure efficient resource usage and data accuracy (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The minimum sample size for this study was ascertained as the same or ten times more than the largest number of paths pointing at a specific latent construct in the research model e.g., 10 x 2 paths pointing at the satisfaction construct (Hair et al., 2016 p. 20; Ramayah et al., 2019 p. 43). Thus, the minimum sample size for this study was determined at 20. The study used a purposive sampling method. A cohort of 22 Year 2 students from a private higher education institution (17 female and 5 male students) formed the sample of the study. These students had to attend synchronous emergency remote learning classes via Google Meet for a 14-week English writing module which started from the end of April to end of July 2020.

Based on Cohen's power primer table, the study's sample size of 22 met the barest minimum sample size criteria to detect minimum R2 values of 0.75 for a significance level of 10 percent under the assumption of a statistical power of 80 percent in a PLS-SEM path model (Hair et al., 2016 pp. 20-21). De Beuckelaear and Wagner (2012), who conducted a detailed examination of 75 studies (from 1998 to 2007) that used small survey samples, suggested that implications of a small sample size study should be discussed as there are several concerns of conducting small sample size studies. Some of the concerns are related to the lack of statistical power which attributes to inaccurate findings of false negative (Type II error) or a false positive (Type I error) when detecting significant differences, reduction of external validity, and the bias representation that prevents generalisation of the findings (Becker et al., 2013; De Beukelaer & Wagner, 2012).

Nonetheless, the current study was conducted during MCO, a lockdown imposed by the government to combat COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency remote teaching and learning had to be immediately carried out so as to prevent disruption to the students' education. During such extreme circumstances, there was limited collaboration and accessibility to other cohort of students aside from the author's own class of 22 students. While the nature of the population determines situations where small sample sizes are acceptable (Rigdon, 2016), concession should be given when such a situation is affected by COVID-19 pandemic. According to Hakshaw (2008), careful interpretation is needed for small sample studies and that strong conclusions should not be made. The current study is exploratory as it intends to find out students' intention to continue using e-learning if classes were to revert to F2F classes. Moreover, the measurement items used were adapted from validated measures of Bhattacherjee (2001). Thus, the findings of this study could be used to design future confirmatory research that involves a larger sample size (Hakshaw, 2008).

2. Data Collection And Analysis

An online survey conducted via Google Form was distributed to the students at the end of the semester. The response rate was 100 percent. The survey contained 12 questions adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001). There were three measurement items for each of the respective constructs of confirmation of expectation, post-adoption expectation, satisfaction, and continued intention (see Appendix A). The 5-point Likert scale of "1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree" was used to measure the respective items. In addition, the online survey also contained the following open-ended questions in order to gain further insight into the survey responses – "If not for Covid-19, would you use online learning?", "Which do you prefer – online learning or F2F learning?", and "What e-learning applications were used throughout the semester? Which do you prefer?" Upon completion of the survey, all the responses were downloaded and coded for PLS-SEM data analysis. There were no missing data as all the responses were on compulsory setting.

The PLS-SEM path modelling approach is capable of representing the factors examined in this study, thus, it was used to test the relationships conceptualised in the research model of the study (Gudergan et al., 2008). Furthermore, PLS-SEM is appropriate for the data analysis of this study as it is flexible, and performs well with small sample sizes while achieving significant statistical power levels (Hair et al., 2016 p. 16).

Results And Discussion

1. Students' Initial Emergency Remote Learning Experiences

More than half of the respondents did not have any prior experience in online-learning. This could be the main reason why approximately 64 percent of them responded that if not for Covid-19, they preferred face-to-face (F2F) learning in the classroom. This finding is consistent with a study conducted by Abbasi et al. (2020) where they found students from a private medical college in Pakistan preferred F2F teaching instead of e-learning during MCO.

In the current study, the top two reasons given for preference of F2F learning were internet connection instability and the lack of interaction or discussion as aptly summed up by Respondent 16: "I think online learning or teaching is more suitable during this Covid-19 as the students are not allowed to go back to college to study. However, if the college is going to use online learning or teaching it might be hard for the students to understand because sometimes our connection will lag. Besides, face-to-face classes, we will have more interaction with the lecturer but as for the e-learning there is less interaction". These reasons were also given by university students from Indonesia where they too faced internet access difficulties, bad internet connection, and lack of data plan (Rahiem, 2020).

Upon closer analysis of the responses, it was clear that nearly half of the respondents deemed online learning as having a different atmosphere of teaching (Respondent 15) where it did not provide students with good interaction or two-way communication between classmates and lecturer (Respondents 9, 10, 12, and 15) in comparison with F2F classes. They viewed online learning as hampering asking questions whenever they wanted to.

On the other hand, 36 percent of the respondents indicated that they prefer online learning mainly due to its convenience. These respondents revealed that online learning helped save commuting time, avoid being late for classes, assign group work clearly and faster among members, and not being distracted by classmates. For instance, Respondent 7 shared: "I prefer to study from the comfort of my own home. I can focus more without the classmates and friends talking". Interestingly, for Respondent 20, who preferred F2F classes, the distraction came not from classmates but the home environment itself: "This is because I might be distracted by my family or even the environmental noise during online learning".

The paradoxical situation of Respondent 7 and Respondent 20 is actually similar with the findings from Rahiem (2020). He discovered that during the COVID-19 crisis, some of the university students in Indonesia revealed that they could study comfortably and peacefully at home while others had problems focusing on their e-learning classes due to distractions from their siblings and disturbances from their home environment. Based on these sharings, it is apparent not to assume that every student will have a home environment conducive for studies. Neither should it be assumed that everyone (including teachers) will have good internet connection to conduct online learning smoothly.

The respondents also highlighted online applications that were used throughout the 14-week English writing module (refer to Figure 2). They preferred the e-learning applications that they were familiar with such as Moodle learning management system, Google Documents, Google Forms, Google Slides and Kahoot! When introduced to Padlet, a free web-based application with wall posting features for texts, photos, and videos that anyone with its link can view (Rashid et al., 2019), and Coggle, a collaborative mind-mapping online tool for brainstorming of ideas (coggle.it, n.d.), only a small percentage of the students were appreciative of those applications.

Figure 2: Various eLearning applications used

2. FACTORS INFLUENCING CONTINUED INTENTION OF E-LEARNING

The research model was assessed using the two-step approach of Ringle et al. (2015) via SmartPLS 3.0 partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). First, the measurement model was tested for convergent and discriminant validity, and reliability. Table 1 indicates that the measurement model has convergent validity and reliability as the factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted values for all the constructs exceeded the recommended values of 0.5, 0.7, and 0.5 respectively (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 1: Measurement Model Results (Convergent Validity and Reliability)

Construct	Composite Reliability	Factor Loading Range	Average Variance Extracted
Confirmation of Expectation	0.909	0.821-0.931	0.769
Post-Adoption Expectation	0.968	0.931-0.977	0.911
Satisfaction	0.960	0.911-0.965	0.889
Continued Intention	0.978	0.956-0.981	0.936

Table 2 shows the measurement model has discriminant validity as all the constructs met the Fornell-Larcker criterion where the average variance extracted (AVE) square root of each construct exceeded its higher correlation with any other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Also, the cross-loading results indicated that all outer loadings of the respective constructs were higher than its cross-loadings with other constructs (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 2: Measurement Model Results (Discriminant Validity)

Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
Construct	**Confirmation of Expectation**	**Post-Adoption of Expectation**	**Satisfaction**	**Continued Intention**
Confirmation of Expectation	**0.877**			
Post-Adoption of Expectation	0.827	**0.954**		
Satisfaction	0.736	0.816	**0.943**	
Continued Intention	0.417	0.566	0.690	**0.968**

Cross-Loadings				
Items	**Confirmation of Expectation**	**Post-Adoption of Expectation**	**Satisfaction**	**Continued Intention**
C1	0.875	0.811	0.762	0.529
C2	0.931	0.702	0.663	0.267
C3	0.821	0.638	0.465	0.260
PAE1	0.782	0.977	0.771	0.541
PAE2	0.798	0.931	0.747	0.494
PAE3	0.787	0.955	0.818	0.583
S1	0.704	0.708	0.951	0.625
S2	0.714	0.756	0.965	0.658
S3	0.663	0.837	0.911	0.665
CI1	0.411	0.581	0.640	0.956
CI2	0.421	0.516	0.700	0.981
CI3	0.379	0.548	0.660	0.966

Having confirmed the convergent and discriminant validity, and reliability of the measurement model, the structural model was then tested for the hypothesized relationships through identifying the significant path coefficients, factor loadings, and weights via a 1,000 sub-sample bootstrapping. Table 3 reveals the summary of the results in which all hypotheses were supported except for Hypothesis 2.

Table 3: Structural Model Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Dev.	t-value	Decision
H_1	Satisfaction → Continued Intention	0.690	0.175	3.938**	Support
H_2	Confirmation → Satisfaction	0.193	0.224	0.859	Reject
H_3	Post Adoption Expectation → Satisfaction	0.657	0.191	3.447**	Support
H_4	Confirmation → Post Adoption Expectation	0.827	0.060	13.732**	Support

Note: **$p < 0.01$, *$p < 0.05$

Figure 3 clearly shows the significant and non-significant path coefficients of the hypothesized relationships. The results also indicate that confirmation of expectation is a significant predictor of post-adoption expectation/perceived usefulness, while post-adoption/perceived usefulness is a significant predictor of satisfaction, and satisfaction is a significant predictor of continued intention to use e-learning, explaining 68.4 percent, 67.8 percent, and 47.6 percent of the variance respectively.

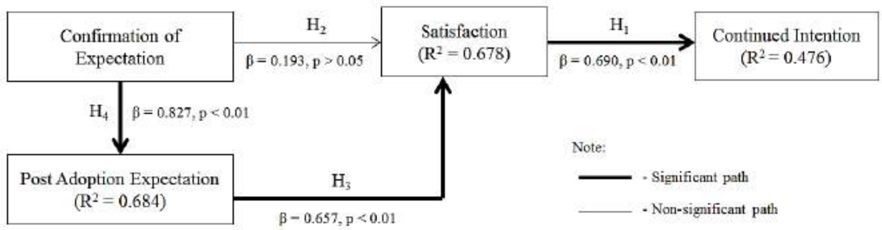

Figure 3: Significant Path Coefficients

Therefore, based on the results, confirmation of expectation does not influence satisfaction at all (β=0.193; p>0.05). A possible explanation for this could be despite students experiencing expected benefits from e-learning, these benefits were not enough to provide satisfaction towards e-learning. For instance, although students learn something new through e-learning, it could be because they were forced to do it due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and thus, do not acquire the necessary satisfaction in using e-learning. Nonetheless, confirmation of expectation was found to be positively and significantly influencing post-adoption expectation (β=0.827; p<0.01). This means that it is only through post-adoption expectation/perceived usefulness will confirmation of expectation affect students' satisfaction in using e-learning. This also indicates that post-adoption expectation or perceived usefulness acts as a mediator between confirmation of expectation and satisfaction (β=0.544, p<0.01) as its confidence interval bias corrected did not straddle a zero (2.5 percent LL=0.228; 97.5 percent UL=0.920). The findings of the relationships between post-adoption expectation/perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and continued intention were all consistent with past studies where if students' perceived e-learning to be useful in helping them perform better in their studies, they would feel satisfied using e-learning, thus increase the possibility of them continuing to use e-learning in the future.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The current study has provided new evidence for the expectation-confirmation model when applied in a crisis situation. Among the factors examined, confirmation of expectation factor did not have any influence on satisfaction. One of the reasons given was that during the COVID-19 pandemic, students had no choice but to experience emergency remote learning, thus the expected benefits might not be enough to provide them with a satisfactory e-learning experience. However, when e-learning is perceived as useful, students will feel satisfied with their e-learning experience, thus more inclined to continue using e-learning in the future. On this basis, private HEIs which intend to leverage and improve their impromptu emergency remote teaching via e-learning approaches need to ensure that there is the presence of perceived usefulness of e-learning among their students.

Despite this study being conducted on a small sample of students from a private higher education institution in Penang, Malaysia, the findings have managed to provide new insight into the emergency remote learning experiences of students. By further understanding these experiences and adapting other emergency remote teaching-learning frameworks such as that put forth by Whittle et al. (2020), the HEIs in Malaysia would be better equipped to develop an effective emergency remote teaching-learning framework for future crises.

First, there is a need to address the hidden curriculum. This means that both teachers and students should be clear of the learning goals and how to interact with the learning technologies. Clear directives need to be given on what platform to use for learning e.g., Google Classroom or Moodle e-learning platform, and what conferencing platform to use for e-learning classes e.g., Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, Microsoft Teams, etc. Hardcopy and softcopy instructions on how to use the appropriate platforms need to be disseminated to all staff and students in the private HEIs. In future, all these instructions should be part of the private HEIs' policies where new academic staff and students need to undergo training on how to interact with the learning technologies.

Second, there is a need for student engagement and synchronicity. This involves teachers' ability to engage students during e-learning. This can be challenging for the private HEIs, especially private colleges which are still at the infancy stage of e-learning implementation. Here, teachers could use synchronous learning which involves real-time teaching. It is somewhat similar to F2F learning in classes, except now it is via online. Teachers could use collaborative writing through Google Doc and Padlet during online class time. This indirectly increases the teachers' online presence. Another option could be if there is time-constraint during online classes, teachers could use asynchronous learning where lectures could be pre-recorded for students to view at their own leisure. Asynchronous learning activities could be via Google Form or Moodle e-learning platforms which are great avenues for teachers to prepare quizzes for students to complete within a certain time-frame. General feedback could be given by the teachers which could be automatically set in Google Form or Moodle. Additionally, the teachers could follow-up with students with poor quiz scores via WhatsApp or phone calls. All these can attribute to increasing the teachers' social presence during emergency remote teaching and learning.

Third, there is a need to prevent the diminished social presence of the teacher. This is extremely challenging because students in Malaysia are not used to self-directed learning environments. They are still very much dependent on the teachers. As such, the social connection that the teacher has with the students was badly affected when emergency remote learning had to take place. Here, teachers will have to take more initiatives in increasing their social presence. For instance, they could set up a group chat in social media, use of collaborative online writing during online class time, or use Padlet which enables users to post text, photos, and videos onto an online corkboard/wall.

Finally, there is a need to address the loss of student social presence. Private HEIs need to prevent this from happening because there is a strong connection between student social presence and satisfaction with the e-learning experience. The shift to emergency remote learning drastically affected student social presence where students felt isolated from their friends due to MCO. One way to prevent this could be to provide a good mix of individual work and group activities or projects. Besides working on individual assignments, students could also be given the opportunity to work with one another out of class time. For instance, a group project could be in the form of conducting and recording interviews, and writing an interview report, etc.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has definitely caught everyone off-guard where the crisis dictated immediate implementation of emergency remote learning. Students, teachers, and administrators of the private HEIs are thrown into the deep end of being exposed to a whole new experience which is unprecedented. During such times, empathy and patience should be given and practised. There would be much relief when we recover from COVID-19 and revert to F2F classroom teaching, however, the emergency remote learning will leave a huge impression on both teachers and students alike. Ironically, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated new opportunities and unintentionally became a driver for online innovation for the private higher education sector in Malaysia. It would be difficult to predict future crises, nevertheless, we can be ready for them provided we learn from handling the emergency remote learning experiences triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Undoubtedly, the main limitation of the study is its small sample size. Even though it met the minimum sample size criterion, care should be given in the interpretation of the findings. Nevertheless, the outcome of the study did provide interesting insights into the factors influencing continued intention to use e-learning and students' emergency remote learning experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Future research could extend the current research model to a larger sample size. Not only that, the research model could be extended to combine theories such as technology acceptance model and theory of planned behaviour where more factors could be studied on continuance of behavioural intentions. In addition, future research could also consider examining emergency remote teaching and learning from the perspectives of teachers, administrators, or even parents.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY ITEMS

Construct		Measurement Item
Confirmation of Expectation	CE1	My experience with online learning was better than expected.
	CE2	The support level provided by the online learning IT personnel was better than I had expected.
	CE3	The online learning can meet demands in excess of what I required from it.
Post Adoption	PAE1	Using online learning can improve my learning performance.
Expectation	PAE2	Using online learning can increase my learning effectiveness.
	PAE3	I find online learning to be useful to me.
Satisfaction	S1	I am satisfied with the performance of online learning.
	S2	I am satisfied with the experience of online learning.
	S3	My decision to use online learning was a wise one.
Continued	CI1	I will use online learning on a regular basis in the future.
Intention	CI2	I will frequently use the online learning in the future.
	CI3	I strongly recommend that others use online learning.

Source: Adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001)

REFERENCES

Abbai, S., Ayoob, T., Malik, A., & Memon, S. I. (2020). Perceptions of students regarding e-learning during Covid-19 at a private medical college. *Pakistan Journal of Medical Sciences*, *36*, S57-S61. https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.36.COVID19-S4.2766

Allen, I. E. & Seaman, J. (2010). Learning on demand: online education in the United States. *Babson Survey Research Group* (Original work published 2009).

Arumugam, T. (April 20, 2020). Covid19: MCO force education sector to grapple with technology, virtual classrooms. *The New Straits Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/04/586033/covid19-mco-force-educationsector-grapple-technology-virtual-classrooms

Bhattacherjee, A. (2001). Understanding information systems continuance: An expectation confirmation model. *MIS Quarterly*,*25*(3), 351-370.

Chan, J. I. L. & Muthuveloo, R. (2019). Investigating technology and organizational performance of private higher learning institutions in Malaysia. *International Journal of Information and Learning Technology*, *36*(5),453-466. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJILT-02-2019-0015

Chen, H. R. & Tseng, H.-F. (2012). Factors that influence acceptance of web-based e-learning systems for the in-service education of junior high school teachers in Taiwan. *Evaluation and Program Planning, 35*(3), 398-406. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2011.11.007

Coggle.it. Retrieved from https://coggle.it/about

De Beuckelaer, A. & Wagner, S. M. (2012). Small sample surveys: Increasing rigor in supply chain management research. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management, 42*(7), 615-639. https://doi.org/10.1108/09600031211258129

Fornell, C. & Larcker, D. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variable and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1),39-50.

Gudergan, S.P., Ringle, C.M., Wende, S., & Will, A. (2008). Confirmatory tetrad analysis in PLS path modeling. *Journal of Business Research, 61*(12), 1238-1249.

Hakshaw, A. (2008). Small studies: Strengths and limitations (Editorial). *European Respiratory Journal*, *32*(5), 1141–1143. https://doi.org/10.1183/09031936.00136408

Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M., & Sarstedt, M. (2016). *A Primer on Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed.).Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Hodges, C., Moore, S., Lockee, B., Trust, T., & Bond, A. (2020). The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning. *EDUCAUSE Review*, Retrieved from https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remote-teaching-and-online-learning

Hussin, H., Bunyarit, F., & Hussein, R. (2009). Instructional design and e-learning: examining learners' perspective in Malaysian institutions of higher learning. *Campus-Wide Information System, 26*(1), 4-19.

Idemudia, E. C., Raisinghani, M. S., & Samuel-Ojo, O. (2016). The contributing factors of continuance usage of social media: an empirical analysis. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 1–14.

Landau, E. (May 27, 2020). University lectures to go online until Dec 31, except for 5 groups. *The New Straits Times.* Retrieved from https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/05/595758/university-lectures-go-online-until-dec-31-except-5-groups

Lorenzo, G. (2008). The Sloan semester. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, *12*(2), 5–40.

Lwoga, E. T. (2014). Critical success factors for adoption of web-based learning management systems in Tanzania. *International Journal of Education and Development using Information and Communication Technology*, *10*(1), 4-21.

Lyons, K. M., Christopoulous, A., & Brock, T. P. (2020). Sustainable pharmacy education in the time of COVID-19. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *84*(6), 667-672.https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe8088

Milman, N. B. (2020). Pandemic Pedagogy. *Phi Delta Kappa*. Retrieved from https://kappanonline.org/pandemic-pedagogy-covid-19-online-milman/

Murphy, M. P. A. (2020). COVID-19 and emergency e-learning: Consequences of the securitization of higher education for post-pandemic pedagogy. *Journal of Contemporary Security Policy*, *41*(3), 492-505. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2020.1761749

Rahiem, M. D. H. (2020). The emergency remote learning experience of university students in Indonesia amidst the Covid-19 crisis. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *19*(6), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.6.1

Ramayah, T., Cheah, J., Chuah, F., Ting, H., & Memon, M. A. (2019). *Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.0* (2nd ed.). Kuala Lumpur, MY: Pearson Malaysia Sdn. Bhd.

Rashid, A., Yunus, M., & Wahi, W. (2019). Using Padlet for Collaborative Writing among ESL Learners. *Creative Education*, *10*, 610-620. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.103044

Rigdon, E. E. (2016). Choosing PLS path modeling as analytical method in European management research: A realist perspective. *European Management Journal, 34*(6),598-605.https://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2016.05.006

Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J.M. (2015). *SmartPLS 3*. Retrieved from www.smartpls.com

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. (2013). *Research methods for business: A skill-building approach* (6th ed.). West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Suhaini, A. (June 24, 2019). Pasir Gudang air pollution: 16 schools ordered shut. *New Straits Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2019/06/498570/pasir-gudang-air-pollution-16-schools-ordered-shut#:~:text=It%20is%20understood%20that%20the,be%20closed%20for%20two%20weeks

The Straits Times. (September 18, 2019). More than 1,000 schools across Malaysia closed as haze worsens, affecting hundreds of thousands of students. *The Straits Times*. Retrieved from https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/more-schools-closed-in-malaysias-sarawak-as-haze-worsens-138384-students-affected#:~:text=MIRI%20(THE%20STAR%2FASIA%20NEWS,hundreds%20of%20thousands%20of%20students.&text=Kuching%20district%20has%20the%20most,students%20forced%20to%20stay%20home

Veloo, R. & Masood, M. (2014). Acceptance and intention to use the iLearn system in an automotive semiconductor company in the northern region of Malaysia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 1378-1382.

Wani, M., Raghavan, V., Abraham, D., & Kleist, V. (2017). Beyond utilitarian factors: User experience and travel company website successes. *Information Systems Frontiers*,*19*(4),769–785.

Whittle, C., Tiwari, S., Yan, S., & Williams, J. (2020). Emergency remote teaching environment: A conceptual framework for responsive online teaching in crises. *Information and Learning Sciences, 121*(5/6), 311-319. https://doi.org/10.1108/ILS-04-2020-0099

WHO. (2020). *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report-94*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200423-sitrep-94-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=b8304bf0_

The Impact of Lean Strategy on Organisation Operational Performance in the Malaysian Manufacturing Industry

Kamonwan Chaiprachong[*],
Teoh Siau Teng[**], Kunasegaran A/L Muthukumaru[***]

Abstract: The lean production system is widely adopted in manufacturing companies globally as one of the mechanisms to maintain the organisation's competitive advantages. In spite of its popularity among manufacturing firms, the sustaining part still remains challenging for many firms. This paper aims to investigate the relationship between lean strategies and operational performance among the manufacturing firms in Malaysia. Current research will visit the three major dimensions of lean strategy, namely, Just-in-Time, waste minimisation, flow management and its impact on organisational performance. A quantitative approach was adopted by using non-probability convenience sampling to distribute the electronic self-administered questionnaires to the respondents. A total sample size of n=40 was obtained for the statistical analysis. The results indicated that lean strategy, Just-in-Time and waste minimisation are positively related to operational performance. On the contrary, flow management was found to have no significant relationship to the firm's operational performance. This paper provides additional evidence to support the lean strategy-performance linkage.

Keywords: Lean strategy, Just-in-Time, Waste minimization, Flow management, Operational performance, Resource-based view, Manufacturing, Malaysia

---

[*]Kamonwan Chaiprachong, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Email: meencha.c@gmail.com (Corresponding author)

[**]Teoh Siau Teng, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Email: teohst@hcu.edu.my

[***]Kunasegaran A/L Muthukumaru, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Email: kunasegaran@hcu.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

As globalisation increases the intensity of competition in the market, many manufacturing firms are under great pressure to offer better quality products and services to maintain the firm's competitive edge. Among all, lean strategy is one of the mechanisms that is used by many organisations to improve their operational performance (i.e., increase productivity, reduce costs and etc) (Muslimen, Yusof & Abidin, 2012). Despite the lean strategy concept was introduced more than half a century ago, Malaysia's manufacturing sector only had its first official lean transformation report in the automotive industry through the Malaysia Japan Automotive Industries Cooperation (MAJAICO) programme in 2006 (Muslimen et al., 2012).

The lean strategy was firstly introduced by Toyota Motor Company by Taiichi Ohno in 1950 (Ohno, 1988). The lean strategy concept is mainly focused on the production processes through systematically identifying and eliminating waste to lower down the overall production cost (Motwani, 2003). This lean strategy-performance linkage was well established and verified by many empirical research. For instance, the lean strategy practice will help the firm to eliminate the waste (Tapping, 2006); increase organisational competitiveness (Oliver, Delbridge & Lowe, 1996; Doolen & Hacker, 2005); increase product quality (Nicholas, 1998) and greater customer responsiveness and effectiveness (Krafcik, 1998). Today, lean manufacturing has become widely accepted and endorsed as the best manufacturing practice in many countries and industries due to its noticeable benefits to organisations (Jain & Lyons, 2009; Jaaron & Backhouse, 2011).

Notwithstanding the numerous benefits of the lean strategy to the organisation, the effect of each of the lean strategy dimensions is underexplored. According to Cagliano, Caniato and Spina (2004), there are several studies examining lean and performance, however, most of them only focus on the limited aspects of lean. Thus, this study aims to determine the relationship between lean strategy (Just-in-Time, waste minimisation and flow management) and operational performance in the manufacturing industry in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. RESOURCE-BASED VIEW THEORY

According to Barney (1991) and Wernerfelt (1984), the firm must be able to have access or handle the resources which are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable to maintain its competitive advantage. For years, the Resource-based View (RBV) was widely used to explain the business strategy as a resource for the firm in establishing its sustainable competitive advantages and improving the economic performance (Newbert, 2007; Pertusa-Ortega, Molina-Azorín & Claver-Cortés, 2010; Wu, 2010; Lin & Wu, 2014). RBV considers companies with superior systems and structures as more likely to have lower production costs and higher product quality (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). Numerous literature have denoted the lean strategy as the firm's resources that are embedded in the organisational processes for the firm to gain its competitive advantages (Teece et al., 1997; Peteraf & Barney, 2003).

2. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The fundamental objective for every organisation is to increase the firm's performance. The performance measurement can be varied for different types of businesses and industries. Generally, operational performance can refer to any operational process or supply chain in fulfilling its internal and external customers and prospective customers.

Based on the literature, previous research mainly measures operational performance in terms of product performance, and product durability, product acceptance within the limits of design requirements, lead time, on-time delivery and et cetera (Chavez et al., 2013; Rahman, Laosirihongthong, & Sohal, 2010; Williams, 2013).

3. LEAN STRATEGY

The lean philosophy, also known as the Toyota Production System (TPS), is a multidimensional approach that surrounds a wide range of management practices in an integrated system (Shah & Ward, 2003). The multiple management practices mainly refer to the quality-focused practice, supplier management, and waste reduction through Just-in-Time and inventory management (Shah & Ward, 2003). In addition, previous literature discoursed that those lean companies generally outperformed their competitors (Narasimhan, Swink & Kim, 2006; Pakdil & Leonard, 2014; Jasti & Kodali, 2015). It is hypothesised:

H1: The lean strategy has a positive relationship to operational performance.

Just-in-Time (JIT) delivery has been a key element in the development of lean manufacturing in many companies (Hines, 1996). JIT can be achieved by following a number of well-known practices such as Kanban, short set-up times, multi-skilled workers and others. JIT also proposes the concept of inventory management to be more effective to minimise waste. In manufacturing, the inventory in the form of work-in-process is especially wasteful. Keeping those sections and products in stock will incur more costs to the firm (Karlsson & Åhlström, 1996). This notion is further supported by Fullerton and McWatters (2001) that JIT improves performance by reducing inventory levels and operating costs. Thus,

$H1_A$: JIT has a positive relationship to operational performance.

Waste minimisation is the process of reducing the quantity and activity of waste materials as low as possible. Ojovan et al. (2019) characterised the act of reducing waste from the source to be reusing it through recycling. One of the most efficient ways to reduce waste output is to make the processes more efficient (Rosenfeld & Feng, 2011). Waste minimisation must be thought through at the beginning of the project from the design stage to the whole manufacturing process (Yasin & Wafa, 1996). Taj and Berro (2006) found that there was a positive correlation between waste elimination and maximising the productivity of manufacturing organisations. Henceforth,

$H1_B$: Waste minimisation has a positive relationship to operational performance.

Flow management can be defined as the effort in lowering the management or coordination costs, such as by using small runs or small lot production (Voss & Robinson, 1987) and reducing coordination efforts by less contact with fewer suppliers (Coyle, Bardi & Langley, 2003). As lean manufacturing requires a rapid flow of goods and information along with the value chain, therefore, the goal of flow management is to ensure that a product or item moves as quickly as possible through the process without compromising customer satisfaction and product quality. Effective flow management will help the firm reduce waste and unproductive expenses (Hasle et al., 2012; Hashmi, Khan & Haq, 2015). Therefore,

> $H1_C$: Flow management has a positive relationship to operational performance.

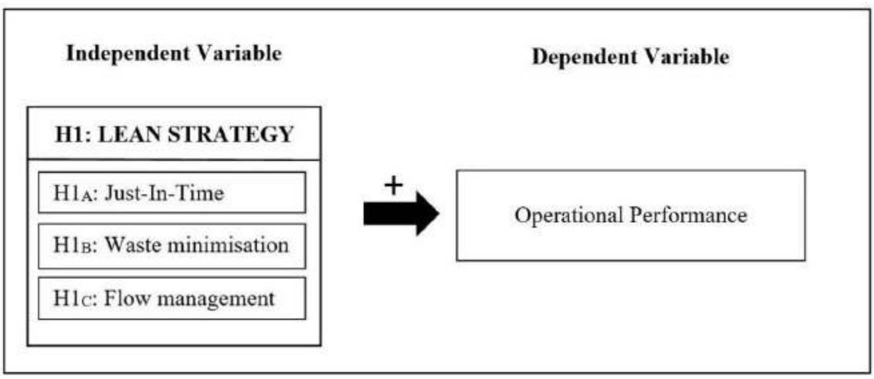

Figure 1: Theoretical framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sample frame adopted in this research focused on those who are working in all types of manufacturing firms in Malaysia. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used to distribute the self-administered questionnaires to the target respondent due to cost and time concerns.

The measurement of the constructs for the questionnaire was mainly adopted from Rahman et al.'s (2010) study on a similar topic in Thailand that makes the constructs more relevant to the present research. The questionnaires comprise three main sections, which include company profile, independent variable constructs and dependent variable constructs respectively. The items were fully adopted from Rahman et al. (2010) for JIT (6 items), WM (4 items), FL (3 items) and OP (4 items). A 5-point Likert scale was used for the independent variable (1= Not at all to 5= To a great extent) and dependent variable (1= Worst in the industry to 5= Best in the industry). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic conditions, the researchers used an online questionnaire (Google Form) to conduct the survey to reduce social interaction. The whole data collection took one and a half months (mid-April to end of May 2021) to complete.

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Frequency Analysis

From Table 1, the majority of the respondents held a position as supervisor (47.5%). In addition, nearly half of the respondents are working in a large corporation that has more than 200 employees (47.5%) and a foreign-owned company (50%). Whereas in terms of working experience, there are 18 respondents (45%) who have two to five years of working experience.

Table 1: Frequency analysis

	Sample	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
POSITION	40			
CEO		0	0.0	0.0
Executive		7	17.5	17.5
Supervisor		19	47.5	65.0
Manager		14	35.0	100.0
Others		0	0.0	100.0
EMPLOYEE	40			
Less than 50 employees		4	10.0	10.0
Between 51-100 employees		2	5.0	15.0
Between 101 - 150 employees		13	32.5	47.5
Between 151 - 200 employees		2	5.0	52.5
More than 200 employees		19	47.5	100.0
WORKING	40			
Less than 2 years		13	32.5	32.5
Two to five years		18	45.0	77.5
Six to ten years		8	20.0	97.5
More than ten years		1	2.5	100.0

OWNERSHIP	40			
Malaysian owned		10	25.0	25.0
Foreign owned		20	50.0	75.0
Joint venture		10	25.0	100.0

2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 2 provides the descriptive analysis results for all the measurement of construct items. From the output, all the independent variables (JIT, WM and FM) have reported a mean value ranging from 3.90 to 4.40 indicating that most of the respondents agree to the given statements about the firm's lean strategy implementation. For the dependent variable, OP, the mean value is also prone to the agreement (3.65 to 4.13).

Table 2: Description Analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. Error
JIT1	40	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.71611	-.971	.733
JIT2	40	3.00	5.00	3.9000	.77790	-1.299	.733
JIT3	40	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.68641	-.786	.733
JIT4	40	2.00	5.00	3.9750	.89120	-.694	.733
JIT5	40	3.00	5.00	4.1000	.77790	-1.299	.733
JIT6	40	3.00	5.00	4.0750	.69384	-.827	.733
WM7	40	3.00	5.00	4.2750	.67889	-.747	.733
WM8	40	3.00	5.00	4.1500	.66216	-.637	.733
WM9	40	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.82236	-1.480	.733
WM10	40	2.00	5.00	4.4000	.70892	1.952	.733
FM11	40	2.00	5.00	4.0250	.83166	-.770	.733
FM12	40	1.00	5.00	3.9750	.83166	2.794	.733
FM13	40	3.00	5.00	4.0750	.61550	-.202	.733
OP1	40	3.00	5.00	3.9000	.67178	-.680	.733
OP2	40	3.00	5.00	3.6500	.62224	-.592	.733
OP3	40	2.00	5.00	3.9750	.65974	1.232	.733
OP4	40	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.56330	.227	.733

Notes. JIT, Just-in-Time; WM, Waste Management; FM, Flow Management; OP, Operational Performance.

2. PEARSON'S CORRELATION

Table 3 shows the Pearson coefficient (*r*) result for all the variables. Among all, L shows a significant coefficient to all of the variables. For instance, JIT (*r*= 0.85**), WM (*r*= 0.75**), FM (*r*= 0.58**), OP (*r*= 0.38*). A negative correlation was found ($r < 0$) between FM and OP ($r = -0.43$) indicating that these two variables move in opposite directions.

Table 3: Summary of Pearson's Correlation

Variables	L	JIT	WM	FM	OP
L	**1**	.851**	.748**	.363	.378*
JIT	.851**	**1**	.444*	.208	.419
WM	.748**	.444*	**1**	.303*	.363
FM	.581**	.208	303*	**1**	-0.43
OP	.378*	.419	.363	-0.43	**1**

Notes:

1. JIT, Just-in-Time; WM, Waste Management; FM, Flow Management; OP, Operational Performance.
2. The value below the diagonal is lower-level correlation ($n = 40$); above the diagonal is upper-level correlation ($n = 40$).
3. *$p \leq 0.05$; **$p \leq 0.01$; *** $p \leq 0.001$

3. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Prior to the regression analysis, a reliability analysis was conducted to check on the construct reliability. In Table 4 all the variables show a moderate to good reliability (α> 0.6) according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Since all construct reliability fall within the acceptable ranges, thus there is no item that needs to be deleted prior to hypothesis testing.

Table 4: Reliability Result

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
Lean strategy	.759	.756	13
Just-In-Time	.712	.708	6
Waste minimization	.603	.593	4
Flow management	.606	.607	3
Operational performance	.644	.639	4

Notes. JIT, Just-in-Time; WM, Waste Management; FM, Flow Management; OP, Operational Performance.

4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

To test the hypothesis, a regression analysis was conducted, see Table 5. The results indicate that all hypotheses are supported, except for $H1_c$. For H1, L shows a positive relationship to OP (β= 0.378, *p*< 0.01**). Among the three dimensions in Lean Management, JIT displays the strongest positive relationship to OP (β = 0.419, *p*< 0.01**). This positive relationship is also found in WM to OP (β= 0.363, *p*< 0.05*). Lastly, FM has no relationship to OP as the standardized beta shows a negative value (β= -0.043, *p*> 0.05).

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Hypo-thesis	**Relation-ship**	**Standardized Beta**	**Std. Error**	**t-value**	**p - value**	**Decision**
H_1	L→ OP	0.378	2.781	3.062	0.004**	Supported
H_{1A}	JIT → OP	0.419	3.12599	2.847	0.007**	Supported
H_{1B}	WM→ OP	0.363	1.88091	2.398	0.021*	Supported
H_{1C}	FM→ OP	-0.043	1.73187	-.266	0.792	Rejected

Notes:

1. JIT, Just-in-Time; WM, Waste Management; FM, Flow Management; OP, Operational Performance.
2. $*p \le 0.05$; $**p \le 0.01$; $*** p \le 0.001$

DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, lean strategy has a positive relationship to a firm's operational performance (H1). The current research findings have further verified the lean-performance linkage as previous literature discoursed (Dora et al., 2013; Rasi, Rakiman & Ahmad, 2015). Among the three dimensions, JIT and waste minimisation have exhibited a positive relationship to operational performance. The present study supported this direct performance linkage, in terms of productivity increment, quality improvements, reduced lead time, and better customer service (Lawrence & Hottenstein, 1995; Fullerton & McWatters, 2001; Taj & Berro, 2006).

Flow management is the only dimension that did not associate with operational performance. Flow management refers to production lot size reduction, emphasis on a single supplier, and continuous/one-piece flow. Previous research indicated there could be a few possibilities that lead to implementation failure. For example, supplier firm size issue (Wong et al., 2009), misunderstanding of the concept and purpose (Ballé, 2005; Schonberger, 2006), slow adoption of lean tools and techniques (James, 2006), misuse of lean tools (Pavnaskar, Gershenson & Jambekar, 2003; Herron & Braiden, 2007), and lack of the lean culture (Jorgensen et al., 2007).

In sum, the firm should treat lean strategy as a continuous improvement process that requires a long term organisational commitment to reap its benefits. As the previous section elaborated, a well-implemented and controls lean strategy would help the firm to reduce costs, save space, improve processes, reduce lead time and improve product flexibility.

There are several limitations to this research. Firstly, the imposition of the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the Malaysian government has restricted the researchers from obtaining more samples. As many companies have implemented the Work-from-Home (WFH) policy to curb and contain the virus spreading, it increases the difficulty for the researchers to reach the target respondents. Secondly, as many companies are implementing the WFH policy, the whole communication process has taken a longer time than usual. The respondents took a long time to respond to the survey invitation in spite of the several reminders sent out. Thirdly, the current research only covers Peninsular Malaysia due to time limitations, which leads to generalizability issues.

Thus, there are a few recommendations for future research direction in this area. For instance, an in-depth qualitative study can be conducted to triangulate the current research findings. The qualitative study approach would be able to provide an insight into lean strategy literature, especially in the flow management area. Additionally, the scope of the geographic area (include Sabah and Sarawak) and sample size also can be extended in order to increase the effect size and the representativeness of the findings for lean strategy literature.

References

Ballé, M. (2005). Lean attitude [considering attitude in lean production]. *Manufacturing Engineer*, *84*(2): 14-19.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management*, *17*(1): 99-120.

Cagliano, R., Caniato, F. & Spina, G. (2004). Lean, agile and traditional supply: How do they impact manufacturing performance?. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, *10*(4-5): 151-164.

Chavez, R., Gimenez, C., Fynes, B., Wiengarten, F., & Yu, W. (2013). Internal lean practices and operational performance. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, *33*(5): 562-588. https://doi.org/10.1108/01443571311322724

Coyle, J. J., Bardi, E. J., & Langley, C. J. (2003). *The management of business logistics: A supply chain perspective* (7th ed.). South-Western, Mason, Ohio.

Doolen, T.L. & Hacker, M.E. (2005). A review of lean assessment in organizations: An exploratory study of lean practices by electronics manufacturers. *Journal of Manufacturing Systems*, *24*(1): 55-67.

Dora, M., Kumar, M., Van Goubergen, D., Molnar, A., & Gellynck, X. (2013). Operational performance and critical success factors of lean manufacturing in European food processing SMEs. *Trends in Food Science & Technology*, *31*(2): 156-164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2013.03.002

Fullerton, R. R., & McWatters, C. S. (2001). The production performance benefits from JIT implementation. *Journal of operations management*, *19*(1): 81-96.

Hashmi, H., Khan, N. R., & Haq, M. A. (2015). The impact of lean management implementation on organizational operational performance. *Scientific Journal of Logistics*, *11*(4): 375-385. https://doi.org/10.17270/J.LOG.2015.4.6

Hasle, P., Bojesen, A., Jensen, P. L., & Bramming, P. (2012). Lean and the working environment: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, *32*(7): 829-849. https://doi.org/10.1108/01443571211250103

Herron, C., & Braiden, P. (2007). Defining the foundation of lean manufacturing in the context of its origins (Japan). *IET International Conference on Agile Manufacturing (ICAM 2007)*. https://doi.org/10.1049/cp:20070021

Hines, P., Holweg, M. & Rich, N. (2004). Learning to evolve: A review of contemporary lean thinking. *International Journal of Operations Production Management*. *24*(10): 994-1011. https://doi.org/10.1108/01443570410558049

Jaaron, A. & Backhouse, C.J. (2011). A methodology for the implementation of lean thinking in manufacturing support services. *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, *9*(4): 389-410.

Jain, R., & Lyons, A. C. (2009). The implementation of lean manufacturing in the UK food and drink industry. *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, *5*(4): 548-573.

James, T. (2006). Wholeness as well as leanness [lean production]. *Manufacturing Engineer*, *85*(5): 14-17.

Jasti, N.V.K. & Kodali, R., (2015). Lean production: Literature review and trends. *International Journal of Production Research*, *53*(3): 867-885.

Jørgensen, F., Matthiesen, R., Nielsen, J., & Johansen, J. (2007). Lean maturity, lean sustainability. *Advances in production management systems*. Springer, Boston, MA.

Karlsson, C., & Åhlström, P. (1996). Assessing changes towards lean production. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*. *16*(2): 24-41. https://doi.org/10.1108/01443579610109820

Krafcik, J.F. (1988). Triumph of the lean production system. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *30*(1): 41.

Lawrence, J. J., & Hottenstein, M. P. (1995). The relationship between JIT manufacturing and performance in Mexican plants affiliated with US companies. *Journal of Operations Management*, *13*(1): 3-18.

Lin, Y., & Wu, L. Y. (2014). Exploring the role of dynamic capabilities in firm performance under the resource-based view framework. *Journal of Business Research*, *67*(3): 407-413.

Motwani, J. (2003). A business process change framework for examining lean manufacturing: A case study. *Industrial Management & Data Systems*. *103*(5): 339-346. https://doi.org/10.1108/02635570310477398

Muslimen, R., Yusof, S. M., & Abidin, A. S. (2012). A case study of lean manufacturing implementation approach in Malaysian automotive components manufacturer. Lecture Notes in Electrical Engineering, 327-335. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2317-1_27

Narasimhan, R., Swink, M. & Kim, S.W. (2006). Disentangling leanness and agility: An empirical investigation. *Journal of operations management*, *24*(5): 440-457.

Newbert, S. L. (2007). Empirical research on the resource-based view of the firm: An assessment and suggestions for future research. *Strategic Management Journal*, *28*(2): 121-146.

Nicholas, J.M. (1998). *Competitive manufacturing management: Continuous improvement, lean production, customer-focused quality*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin, New York.

Ohno, T. (1988). *Toyota production system: Beyond large-scale production*. Productivity Press, New York.

Ojovan, M. I., Lee, W. E., & Kalmykov, S. N. (2019). An introduction to nuclear waste immobilisation. Elsevier, United Kingdom.

Oliver, N., Delbridge, R. & Lowe, J. (1996). Lean production practices: International comparisons in the auto components industry 1. *British Journal of Management*, *7*: S29-S44.

Pakdil, F. & Leonard, K.M. (2014). Criteria for a lean organisation: Development of a lean assessment tool. *International Journal of Production Research*, *52*(15): 4587-4607.

Pavnaskar, S. J., Gershenson, J. K., & Jambekar, A. B. (2003). Classification scheme for lean manufacturing tools. *International Journal of Production Research*, *41*(13): 3075-3090.

Pertusa-Ortega, E. M., Molina-Azorín, J. F., & Claver-Cortés, E. (2010). Competitive strategy, structure and firm performance: A comparison of the resource-based view and the contingency approach. *Management Decision*.*48*(8):1282-1303. https://doi.org/10.1108/00251741011076799

Peteraf, M. A., & Barney, J. B. (2003). Unraveling the resource-based tangle. *Managerial and Decision Economics*, *24*(4): 309-323.

Rahman, S., Laosirihongthong, T. & Sohal, A.S. (2010). Impact of lean strategy on operational performance: A study of Thai manufacturing companies. *Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management*. *21*(7): 839-852. https: //doi.org/10.1108/17410381011077946

Rasi, R. Z. R., Rakiman, U. S., & Ahmad, M. F. B. (2015, May). Relationship between lean production and operational performance in the manufacturing industry. *In IOP conference series: Materials science and engineering*, 83,(1): 012016. IOP Publishing.

Rosenfeld, P. F., & Feng, L. (2011). *Risks of hazardous wastes*. William Andrew, MA, United States.

Schonberger, R. J. (2006). Japanese production management: An evolution-with mixed success. *Journal of Operations Management*, *25*(2): 403-419. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2006.04.003

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & Sons, West Sussex.

Shah, R. & Ward, P.T. (2003). Lean manufacturing: Context, practice bundles, and performance. *Journal of operations management*, 21(2): 129-149.

Taj, S., & Berro, L. (2006). Application of constrained management and lean manufacturing in developing best practices for productivity improvement in an auto-assembly plant. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*. 55(3/4): 332-345. https://doi.org/10.1108/17410400610653264

Tapping, D. (2006). *The Lean Pocket Guide XL-Tools for the Elimination of Waste*. Kindle Edition, Kindle Book.

Teece, D. J., Pisano, G., & Shuen, A. (1997). Dynamic capabilities and strategic management. Strategic Management Journal, *18*(7): 509-533.

Voss, C. A., & Robinson, S. J. (1987). Application of just-in-time manufacturing techniques in the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management. 7*(4): 46-52. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb054799

Wernerfelt, B. (1984). A resource-based view of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, *5*(2): 171-180.

Williams, C. (2013). *Effective Management* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning, United States.

Wu, L. Y. (2010). Applicability of the resource-based and dynamic-capability views under environmental volatility. *Journal of Business Research*, *63*(1): 27-31.

Yasin, M. M., & Wafa, M. A. (1996). An empirical examination of factors influencing JIT success. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*. 16(1): 19-26. https://doi.org/10.1108/01443579610106337

A Comparative Study of Concept of "Waste" and "Thrift" between Islam and Confucianism

Yang Jie*

Abstract: While some segments of the world population go hungry, some other segments are throwing away good food. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2012), 1.3 billion tons or up to one-third of the world food production or half of the world grain production is lost to wastage. Thus, educating the public on the value of cherishing food and avoiding wastage is necessary to reduce continued large scale food wastage in the future. The last century saw significant improvements in material comforts and also a sharp rise in food and material wastage. What change our perception of waste within this period of time and how did we deal with waste during historic times? This paper discusses the opposing concepts of 'waste' and 'thriftiness' in the Quran and the Analects. Key values and principles operative in these two concepts in the Quran and Analects will be examined and compared. Given China is the most populated nation on earth and a quarter of the world's population practices Islam, examining the concepts of 'waste' and 'thriftiness' in Islam and Confucianism can contribute to efforts at re-educating the public to proactively avoid waste and live sustainably.

Keywords: Confucianism, Islam, sustainable development, thrift, waste

---

*Yang Jie: School of Chinese Studies, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: yangjie@hju.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Food Waste Index Report 2021 estimated that around 931 million tons of food waste was generated in 2019, 61 per cent of which came from households, 26 per cent from food service and 13 per cent from retail (United Nations Environment Programme, 2021). This volume can feed huge numbers of hungry people in the world. Food waste is a major problem in much of the world. While millions go hungry, millions of tons of food are wasted at all levels of the food chain. Farmers, manufacturers, retailers, restaurants, and consumers are all complicit in this problem. In the US, roughly 30 to 50 per cent of food produced for consumption ends up in landfill each year. The estimated cost of such waste is more than $1 billion. In Canada, an estimated 40 percent of the food, valued at $27 billion by the Value Chain Management Centre, finds its way into landfill and composting every year. Similarly, in the European Union countries, around 50 per cent of edible and healthy food is wasted each year. In China, about 70 percent of all waste and 61 percent of household waste is food scraps. In the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in France, the speaker from China Agricultural University mentioned that edible food thrown out by restaurants each year is equivalent to nearly 10 percent of the country's annual crop production, or enough to feed 200 million people for one year. In an age of increasing poverty, such waste is absolutely intolerable and urgent measures should be taken to address it at all levels of the food chain.

Almost every country faces the problem of food wastage and attempts to solve it. However, this wastage phenomenon is not simply caused by over producing food. Human behaviour is its major underlying cause. If we accept the current food wastage as an instinctive behaviour of human beings, then this behaviour cannot be changed. The human desire to understand and influence their environment, to explain and manage phenomena, has been the foundation for the development of science, philosophy, mythology, and religion. Therefore, human beings are able to choose what is good for themselves and the environment in which they live. Obviously, good decisions will have a positive impact on social development and bad decisions, a negative impact. For instance, every year, one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption which is approximately 1.3 billion tones gets lost or wasted

(FAO, 2012). The extravagant lifestyle practised by many in the world is a major cause for the present food wastage. The easy access to abundant food makes food wastage appear to be a minor problem to many.

Advanced technology has brought about an unprecedented material prosperity. People are enjoying great benefits from the present material comforts and conveniences. However, inappropriate human behaviours are threatening the environment, society, and also the human mental state which pose dangers to the current and future of humanity.

Every nation and ethnic community has its traditional wisdom. If our modern knowledge is unable to overcome the current problems, it is a worthy effort for us to go back into history and discover how our traditional wisdom can edify us to provide ways to overcome them. The Chinese and Islamic civilizations are two major civilizations which are influential to the lives of a large segment of humanity. It is important to examine whether there are solutions or ways to address the current world’s problem of wastage in the traditional wisdom of these two civilisations.

THE CONFUCIAN UNDERSTANDING OF WASTE AND THRIFTINESS

The obvious reason for the current food wastage is the abundance of food. Having abundant food does not give us license to indulge in waste. The behaviour of waste is caused by a lifestyle of extravagance. Take China as an example, from 1950’s till 1980’s, China went through several turbulent situations. Chinese people were struggling at the edge of survival during those years. Due to the period of privation, it is difficult to be extravagant, and almost impossible to have food waste. After 1980’s, as China opened its economy, and wealth and prosperity increased, the extravagant lifestyle also became popular in China. Luxury is making an appearance in all facets of the Chinese people’s life. It has become the main theme of the current lifestyle. For example, in the automobile market, most of the famous branded companies are trying to squeeze into China’s market. As the demand for branded cars is sharply increasing, in a period of less than 10 years, China is getting closer to becoming a huge outdoor park. Too many spaces are forced to become parking lots. It is also the main reason for the present serious air pollution problem. As China’s GDP is bouncing forward, China’s branded luxury expenditure also expands tremendously. Having extravagant tastes and lifestyle is becoming an obsession among Chinese people today.

One of the main reasons for food wastage in China is the waste in restaurants. Nearly 10 percent of the country's annual crop production (or enough to feed 200 million people) is wasted on the tables of restaurants. Two factors have been identified to explain this kind of waste. The first reason is people no longer worry about food shortage. The second reason is people feel ashamed of taking away leftover food. Before 1980's, no one would leave leftover food in restaurants for they did not have that much food to waste. Therefore, increase in material wealth and prosperity, opened the gate for the attitude of extravagance.

In addition to material prosperity, there is another important element which gives rise to an extravagant lifestyle in China. It is the effect of ideas. Since 1950's, China, a modern nation with a large population of poor people, is focused on developing her economy. During the time of the Chinese Culture revolution, the banning of Confucianism including all different kinds of religious activities blurred the connection between Chinese people and their traditions. When China opened her doors to accept all different external influences in order to develop her economy, the Chinese people without the guidance of her treasury of traditional wisdom, became lost.

Chinese traditions and customs determined people's lives and thought as an unwritten law spanning the entire Chinese ancient history. Although there are ideas in Chinese tradition which are negative for today's social development, there are however, many teachings and values which are important for human ethics and social development and stability. Without traditional wisdom, without the advice of the ancestors, modern people can be likened to a child making social experiments which may be filled with unanticipated risks and dangers.

Confucianism has been accepted as the official state ideology of China for over 2000 years. Confucius himself always kept his life free from extravagance. He insisted on being thrifty throughout his entire life. The attitude of being thrifty and going against extravagance may not be easily accepted today. Si Ma Guang, a Chinese historian and Confucianist scholar of the Song Dynasty, taught his son that:

“由俭入奢易，由奢入俭难”

> “It is easy from being thrifty to become extravagant; but it is difficult to be thrifty from being extravagant.” (Guang, 2015)

Living a life with simple needs will be easily satisfied; even having an extravagant enjoyment once in a while will not be harmful. However, once extravagance becomes a lifestyle, being simple and thrifty will be very difficult, because the living standard is elevated and it is hard to satisfy it with a simple life style. Therefore, from Sima Guang’s advice, we can predict that solving the current food wastage problem will not be easy since people have already adopted an extravagant lifestyle.

Confucius mentioned in the same way, and he said:

“奢则不孙，俭则固；与其不孙也，宁固”

> “Extravagance means ostentation, thriftiness means shabbiness. I would rather be shabby than ostentatious.” (Confucius, 2008b)

Confucius chose being thrifty instead of being extravagant because he knew that being extravagant will easily lead people to becoming arrogant. In Chinese tradition, being arrogant brings about bad consequences. In the Confucian historical biography, Zuo Zhuan, it was said that the prime minister of Qi, Ji Feng, came to visit Lu. His car was luxurious. Meng Sun said to Shu Sun: “What a nice car ji has!” However, Shu Sun answered him: “Why must he have a luxurious car like that. I heard excessive enjoyment can only bring bad consequences.” Confucius chose being shabby in order not to become arrogant because he believed that being arrogant will make a person proud and fearless in doing anything. Once a person becomes arrogant and has no fear in his heart, it does not mean he is brave but he will lose control easily and become dangerous. Having luxury is supposed to be the privilege of the wealthy who owns a large amount of money, property, or valuable possessions. When someone does not own as what is described above, then he has to work hard to earn the money to satisfy his desire of being wealthy. When money becomes the sole aim of someone’s life, then he will only focus on money and lose all other life purposes including ethics. It does not mean working hard in the pursuit of wealth is a mistake. But being lost in the pursuit of money without a moral compass is a grave error. Being shabby may not be great; however, it can keep a person to being modest and not be consumed by material wealth. Therefore, Confucius always asked people to adopt a thrifty lifestyle.

CONFUCIAN DEFINITION OF THRIFTINESS

Confucius said:

> "以约失之者，鲜矣"
>
> "It is rare for a man to miss the mark through keeping to essentials. (He [i.e., the Master] broadens me with culture and brings me back to essentials by means of the rites.)" (Confucius, 2008a)

Confucius states that as long as one keeps to being moderate, mistakes will always stay away from him. From this aspect, we find that thriftiness is a means to being moderate. Everything has its limits. Keeping things within its limits and not being excessive will keep things in balance. Thus, thriftiness is a clear way to help people to be moderate in the face of material desire. Many historical examples from Confucian scholars demonstrate the soundness of this idea. Hong Yingming, a Confucianist author from the Ming dynasty, said in his book that:

> "奢者富而不足，何如俭者贫而有余"
>
> "The one with an extravagant lifestyle, no matter how rich he is, will never feel satisfied. What could be better than the one who is poor but thrifty and have enough to spare." (Hong, 2019)

Chinese people always believe that a contented heart is the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in this world. It also implies that while thriftiness can bring happiness, extravagance in contrast, can only increase a man's desire and can never bring satisfaction and happiness.

THRIFTINESS IS A VIRTUE

Confucius praised his student Yan Hui and said:

> “贤哉，回也！一箪食，一瓢饮，
> 在陋巷，人不堪其忧，回也不改其乐。”
>
> “How admirable Hui is! Living in a mean dwelling on a bowlful of rice and a ladleful of water is a hardship most men would find unbearable, but Hui does not allow this to affect his joy.” (Confucius, 2008f)

Cultivating virtue by practicing thriftiness is a typical Chinese tradition. Generally, in the beginning of a new dynasty, emperors always emphasized thriftiness. Such was the case with Emperor Wen of Han, who sought to avoid wasteful expenditures and practiced thriftiness himself throughout his life to be the nation’s role model. Emperor Wen was considered one of the most benevolent rulers in Chinese history. His reign was marked by thriftiness and efforts to reduce burdens on the people.

Confucius did not only talk about thriftiness in theory, but always practised it in his own life. It was written that:

> 子欲居九夷。或曰：“陋，如之何？”
> 子曰：“君子居之，何陋之有？”
>
> The Master wanted to settle amongst the Nine Barbarian Tribes of the east. Someone said: “But can you put up with their uncouth ways?” (Confucius, 2008c)

The Master said, “Once a gentleman settles amongst them, what uncouthness will there be?”

He also said:

> “麻冕，礼也。今以纯，俭，吾从众”
>
> A ceremonial cap of linen is what is prescribed by the rites. Today black is used instead. This is more frugal and I follow the majority.” (Confucius, 2008d)

"善居室。始有，曰：'苟合矣'；
少有，曰'苟完矣'；富有，曰'苟美矣'。"

When he first had a house, he said, "It is more or less adequate." When he had extended it somewhat, he said, "It has more or less everything." When it had become sumptuous, he said: "It is more or less grand enough." (Confucius, 2008e)

The three different situations mentioned above describe the different levels of material life, and "more or less adequate", "more or less everything", "more or less grand enough" demonstrate that Prince Jing of Wei is always content with his lot. And this is the attitude of being thrifty which Confucius always advocates.

Today in China, when the living standard suddenly soars to a comfortable material level, it is understandable that people may be desperately wanting to have material enjoyment by all means. However, without wise counsel, the way of extravagance may cause unrestrained behaviors which can cause serious social problems for the present condition and future such as the imminent global food wastage problem. Therefore, it is imperative to have the Confucian idea of thriftiness as a moral guide to make people be conscious of the destructive power of extravagance.

THE ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING OF WASTE AND THRIFTINESS

Islam is a complete way of life (al-din). Allah's guidance extends into all areas of human life. Waste and extravagance are strongly discouraged in Islam. Islam forbids all forms of waste and explicitly mentions that food waste is an impious act. In the Islamic worldview, food is considered to be a great blessing. Therefore, numerous sayings of the Prophet of Islam are found warning against all kinds of food wastage. There are explicit instructions related to the value of food for the individuals, traders, businesses, and the states. The most prevalent narrations (hadith) of the Prophet begin at the individual level. This is logical as every major initiative begins with the individual before it permeates throughout society. In a hadith, the Prophet is reported as saying that if a morsel of food falls off one's hand he should pick it up, clean it, and eat it. Just because the food has fallen off one’s hand or plate does not mean we should waste it.

The Holy Qur’an says:

يَٰبَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ خُذُواْ زِينَتَكُمۡ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسۡجِدٖ وَكُلُواْ وَٱشۡرَبُواْ وَلَا
تُسۡرِفُوٓاْۚ إِنَّهُۥ لَا يُحِبُّ ٱلۡمُسۡرِفِينَ ٣١

> “…and eat and drink and be not extravagant; surely He (Allah) does not love the extravagant.” (Ali, 2001c)

The above verse or *ayat* suffices to show the dislike of God for extravagant people. According to some commentaries of the Qur’an, one who is not loved by Allah is doomed to perdition because the love of God implies Divine rewards. In the light of these teachings, it is imperative that Muslims be conscious of the value of food and treat it with the respect that it deserves. Having access to abundant food, does not mean we have license to indulge in waste. We never know when we will be denied of this blessing.

Islam has set the legitimate enjoyment of divine blessings as permissible and it has also set waste and extravagance as prohibitions. These limits have been set for the reason that all Muslims, in light of their social positions and wealth, have a responsibility towards the society in which they live. If people are to be wasteful and extravagant, they would be bringing harm to society and shirking their human responsibilities. In addition, they would develop and cultivate negative personal characteristics which would be destructive to them on an individual level. In order to fully understand the subject of extravagance (al-israaf) and waste (al-tabdheer), it is first necessary to explain these two terms and then delve into the various facets of this issue based on the teachings and precepts of Islam.

EXTRAVAGANCE (أال سراف , AL-ISRAAF)

Extravagance or al-israaf in Arabic, means exceeding the limits of a particular thing or condition and is regarded as contrary to moderation. Raaghib Isfehaani mentioned the following in regards to the meaning of al-israaf: "Any action which an individual performs which exceeds the limits is considered as being al-israaf'" (Isfahani, 2014). It can also be understood that al-israaf is any action which exceeds the natural limits, whether it relates to excess in quantity or in quality. Based upon this, it is clear that al-israaf does not only relate to food and drink or even to financial matters alone; it is much more comprehensive in meaning. It can also be stated that al-israaf can relate to any excess in behavior or emotions, and it can also relate to any excess in ethical, cultural, or social characteristics (Juybari & Valiyullah, 1380). This description makes the individual duty of a Muslim very grave for it relates the issue of waste to every single aspect of human life.

As it is mentioned in the Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ يُوسُفُ مِن قَبْلُ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّمَّا
جَاءَكُم بِهِۦ ۖ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ لَن يَبْعَثَ ٱللَّهُ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ
رَسُولًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ ٱللَّهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُّرْتَابٌ ٣٤

"Thus does Allah cause him to err who is extravagant, a doubter" (Ali, 2001c, 2001b).

From the explanation set forth by the grammarians and commentators in regards to the word *al-israaf,* it appears that there are several factors that can help us to understand the meaning of extravagance in Islam.

The first factor is the religiously prohibited actions. This is because anything religiously forbidden constitutes the 'boundaries' and 'limits' of God, and committing forbidden actions means crossing and trespassing those borders and going beyond those limits.

The Qur’an mentions:

وَءَاتِ ذَا ٱلْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُۥ وَٱلْمِسْكِينَ وَٱبْنَ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ
تَبْذِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنَّ ٱلْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوٓا۟ إِخْوَٰنَ ٱلشَّيَـٰطِينِ ۖ وَكَانَ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ لِرَبِّهِۦ
كَفُورًا ﴿٢٧﴾

> “And do not squander wastefully, surely the squanderers are the followers of Shaytan and the Shaytan is ever ungrateful to his Lord” (Ali, 2001a).

The second factor is related to societal norms. Societal norms are another factor in determining extravagance. For example, in the same way that not spending enough in matters which are obligatory in accordance with one's wealth and position in society is considered miserliness, spending too much in relation to one's wealth and position is considered as being wasteful and extravagant. Not spending enough on obligatory matters such as charity is also considered as a prohibition since it involves the rights of others. The limits of normal expenditure are set by the norms of the society and therefore may vary.

1. EXTRAVAGANCE OR *AL-ISRAAF* HAS THE FOLLOWING SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES:

Firstly, it is the decline of societal morals and ethics. The improper use and waste of resources pull humanity towards corruption and societal destruction. This can even reach the point where an individual stops caring about the needs of others and only cares about himself.

The second is the creation of class strife and struggle. One of the causes behind the creation of class strife is that of al-israaf. This is because some individuals, with their high levels of wealth, believe that they can spend this wealth in any manner in which they please, even if this goes against the rules of Islam and their society. Overtime, this attitude helps to create social classes and then to create strife and conflicts among them.

The third is the decline of governments. One of the social consequences of al-israaf is the decline of governments. Ibn Khaldun, the emminent Muslim sociologist, has mentioned that whenever a government would become afflicted with al-israaf (extravagance), it would soon fall into decline (Toynbee, 1988).

WASTE (ال ت بذی ر, *AL-TABDHEER*)

Abu Ali Fadhl ibn Hasan Tabarsi, a twelfth century Muslim scholar, has mentioned the following in this regard: 'Waste (*al-tabdheer*) is the spread of wealth in the way of extravagance (*al-israaf*). *Al-tabdheer* includes the spoiling and wasting of financial resources. However, if one's resources are spent in a certain way (even if it is not that much) for improving something, this cannot be considered as *al-tabdheer* (waste)"(Khosro, 1372). According to Tabrasi's definition of waste, it is clear that waste (*al-tabdheer*) is the basic element of extravagance (*al-israaf*). Waste (*al-tabdheer*) is used in matters where there is excess and extravagance in matters of food, and when wealth is simply wasted without good reasons. In other words, it can be said that every *al-tabdheer* (waste) is an *al-israaf* (extravagance). Therefore, the meaning of *aI-israaf* (extravagance) is closely tied with that of *al-tabdheer* (waste). To be extravagant is to be wasteful.

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE CONFUCIAN AND ISLAMIC UNDERSTANDING OF WASTE AND THRIFTINESS

After discussing waste and thriftiness in Confucianism and Islam, we discover some similarities between them. First, both consider extravagance would bring serious negative effects to humanity, and both oppose to the extravagant lifestyle. Second, both emphasise on the limits of things and extravagance and waste are viewed as going beyond the limits. Third, both agree that thriftiness is a commendable trait or virtue. They also explain the logical relation between waste and extravagance and conclude that extravagance is an important reason for food wastage.

However, there are certainly many differences between Confucianism and Islam on the question of food wastage. This is because Confucianism emphasised on the power of moral ethics when facing the problem of extravagance, by propagating the personal charisma of Jun Zi, to restrain people's material desire and the behaviors caused by the extravagant lifestyle in order to form a habit of thriftiness.

On the other hand, Muslims believe that God, the Ultimate Being is the final judge of every individual's behavior. Therefore, the Islamic guidance of being thrifty is presented as Allah's command and the teachings of the Prophet of Islam. Islam explicitly mentions that food waste is an impious act and an extravagance, and a wrong act of human behavior. If Muslims are sincere in their belief in God and His rewards and punishments, it will be easier for them to practice thriftiness instead of being extravagant.

While Confucian wisdom inclines towards the relationships between human beings, Islamic teachings emphasise the relationship between God and human beings. In this regard, the Confucian idea of thriftiness may be more amenable, and the Islamic precept of thriftiness may be viewed to be particular to Muslims.

Confucianism teaches people against extravagance in a strict way. In order to avoid extravagance, an austere lifestyle is commended such as Yan Hui's puritanical life was praised by the Master of Confucianism. In this respect, Islam shows more tolerance for the human desire for material comforts compared to the Confucian idea of thriftiness. Islam is a religion which has set forth guidelines for every aspect of human life and has advised balance and moderation for its followers in all affairs. It is mentioned in many Islamic teachings that people should enjoy their material life but not be extravagant. For example, they should wear clean and nice clothes when they go out or go to the mosque. They should even use perfume when they go for Friday congregational prayers. This shows that the Islamic idea of being thrifty accommodates the human desire for material comforts and pleasures. In this regard, it is easier for people to practice it compared to an austere lifestyle, especially, in the time of great expansion of material desire caused by a booming economy. Instead of prohibiting the desire for material comforts and pleasures, Islam encourages people to enjoy life but with moderation.

CONCLUSION

Both Confucianism and Islam explain the causal relationship between extravagance and waste. The behavior of wasting food originates from the attitude of extravagance. Therefore, the ultimate solution for food waste is to emphasise on the negative consequences of having an extravagant attitude. Only a change in the extravagant attitude can effectively help reduce food wastage. Education both in society and in schools are important ways for teaching different groups of people to understand the serious consequences of being extravagant.

As far as the necessities of human beings are concerned, they can be sufficiently managed through the available resources. But as for the desires, they can never be fulfilled in this world. However, when some people who live in the society ignoring the fact and begin to wrongly utilise resources to fulfill their desires, its consequences does not remain confined to their people only but extends to others and put the entire society in a situation of crisis. As a result, there emerges the shortage of resources in society leading to countless problems. As a result, the whole society faces the consequences of the excesses committed by a group of individuals. In our daily lives, we can find many examples which reveal how the extravagant lifestyle of particular individuals can create problems in society. Therefore, it is our obligation to understand clearly our problem. It begins with the individual before it permeates throughout the entire society. If every one of us live a lifestyle marked by thriftiness and the avoiding of waste, we will definitely have a better world for our future.

REFERENCES

Ali, Y. (2001a). An English Interpretation of the Holy Quran 17-26/27. Lushena Books.

Ali, Y. (2001b). An English Interpretation of the Holy Quran 40-34. Lushena Books.

Ali, Y. (2001c). An English Interpretation of the Holy Quran 7-31. Lushena Books.

Confucius. (2008a). Li Ren 4:23. In B. Yang & D. Liu (Eds.), The Analects (p. 377). Zhonghua Book Company.

Confucius. (2008b). Shu Er 7:3. In B. Yang & D. Liu (Eds.), The Analects (p. 377). Zhonghua Book Company.

Confucius. (2008c). The Analects Zi Han 9.14 (B. Yang & D. Liu (eds.)). Zhonghua Book Company.
Confucius. (2008d). The Analects Zi Han 9.3 (B. Yang & D. Liu (eds.)). Zhonghua Book Company.
Confucius. (2008e). The Analects Zi Lu 13.8 (B. Yang & D. Liu (eds.)). Zhonghua Book Company.
Confucius. (2008f). Yong Ye 6:11 in the Analects (B. Yang & D. Liu (eds.)). Zhonghua Book Company.
FAO. (2012). FAO Statistical Yearbook 2012 - Africa Food and Agriculture. http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3137e/i3137e.pdf
Guang, S. (2015). History as a Mirror (资治通鉴). China Textile Press and Apparel Press.
Hong, Y. (2019). The Root of Wisdom (菜根谭) (N. Zhang (ed.)). Henan University Press.
Isfahani, R. (2014). Mufradat al-Faz al-Quran. Dar al-Kalam.
Juybari, R., & Valiyullah. (1380). Israf az Didgahe Islam. Al-Asfiya’ Press.
Khosro, N. (1372). Tabarsi, Majma’ al-Bayan, Vol. 6 (Third Edit).
Toynbee, A. J. (1988). A Study of History Volume I: Abridgement of Volumes I-VI. Oxford University Press.
United Nations Environment Programme. (2021). Food Waste Index Report 2021. In Unep. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/35280/FoodWaste.pdf

Cultivating Social Competence among Preschool Children through Educational Toy Designs

Loy Jia Shin* **& Rizal Rahman****

Abstract: There is a need to embed social skills development attributes in educational toy designs to cultivate preschool children with high social competency. The purpose of this study is to analyse the features of educational toy designs that are able to facilitate social skills development among preschool children. This study reviewed past studies to identify the importance of play for preschool children, social skills and methods to develop social skills. Qualitative study was carried out in determining educational toy design features that are able to develop social skills while a structured analysis was applied. Twenty-one toy categories are undergo systemic analysed on the similarity of toys features, which based on the design necessity in concepts of role play and peer interactions. The findings of this study highlighted the toy features according to concepts of role play and peer interactions. Thus, it can serve as a guideline for designers in designing educational toys that will contribute towards the social competence development among preschool children. This research may bring significant benefits to the toy industry, as well as promote good parental practices.

Keywords: Educational toys, designs, social skills development, preschool children.

---

*Loy Jia Shin, Faculty of Industrial Design, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Email: loy.jshin@gmail.com
**Rizal Rahman, Faculty of Industrial Design, University Putra Malaysia. Email: rizalrahman17@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

There are different stages involved in child development as studied by psychologists and child experts. The growth and development of humans takes place every day and can be observed gradually during childhood (Pem, 2015). According to Bartolotta & Shulman (2010), the developments of children can be categorised into four aspects which are the cognitive development, fine and gross motor development, social–emotional development and language development. Yates et al. (2008) stated early social and emotional development can be defined as the emerging ability of young children (ages 0–5) to "form close and secure adult and peer relationships, which includes experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially and culturally appropriate ways in the context of family, community and culture". Therefore, it is important to focus on social skills development at a young age as children start to show their tendency towards having social relationships.

The value of play is increasingly recognised, by researchers and within the policy arena, for adults as well as children, as the evidence mounts of its relationship with intellectual achievement and emotional well-being (Whitebread, 2012). Lowe (1988) stated that toys and games are synonymous with "Play". Educational toys have become important tools in the development of children. In the current market, there are various types of educational toys that serve different purposes regarding the attributes that must be learned by children.

The designs of toys contribute to the type of the toy itself. The method of categorizing educational toys varies on a different perspective from person to person. However, the Toy Industry Association (2013) classified toys into 21 categories such as action figures, battling toys, building and construction. Each of them serves different purposes in children education. Therefore, playing with educational toys is vital in developing certain skills or knowledge in children.

The scope of this study focuses on the designs of educational toys, which include the aspects of features and criteria contributed to social skills of preschool children. In this study, the designs of toys will be discussed where the designs of existing toys in the market will be analysed according to the categories of toys.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Educational toys are important for children’s mental and physical growth. There are many toys available for them to achieve different purposes in the aspect of education. Different types of toys are targeted for different age groups of children. This shows that limited features of designs are integrated for specific toys since they are only needed to deal with specific age groups. The Lakeside Collection (2018) has highlighted five types of educational toys to benefit children, which are ‘The Basics’, ‘Constructive Play’, ‘Emerging Artistry’, ‘In Touch with Technology’ and ‘Fun with Science’. However, the toy trend for 2018 is spotted as in ’The Big Reveal’, ‘Millennial Focus’, ‘Games Galore’, ‘Inspiring Imaginations’, ‘Pet Play’, ‘Toys That Teach’ (The Toy Association, 2018). Relatively, the existing toy design trends are related with the intentions in developing children’s cognitive skills with an academic approach, thus, not focussing on the social skills development of children.

Social development is one of the developments required by the children during the process of growing up. Thus, social and emotional competencies are increasingly recognised as critical for children's success in school, as well as in other settings, and in later phases of life into adulthood (National Education Goals Panel, 1995; Thompson & Lagattuta, 2006; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016).

In the meantime, play is essential for development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youths (Milteeret al., 2012). Fatai et al. (2014) stated that unstructured play can contribute to the development of preschool children in Malaysia, helping them in developing cognitive, social and motor skills. Ministry of Education (MOE) Malaysia had approved learning through play as one of the eight teaching and learning approaches in National Preschool Curriculum Standard (NPCS) during 2016, to achieve six learning and development components (Lim & Bahauddin, 2015). MOE (2017) stated that the established “learning through play” approach is an effective teaching and learning approach in early learning experiences. Learning through play strategies support children’s overall development and make them a lifelong learner (United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 2018). It is expected that educational toys are used as the tools and materials to aid the teachers or practitioners in the learning process through play approaches. This circumstance contributed to the significance of educational toy designs in enhancing the learning process.

Accordingly, toys are required in children's development from a detailed perspective. Manipulation on toy design attributes for children's play is able to cultivate social skills among preschool children. Hence, there is a need to determine the attributes of educational toys in order to cultivate preschool children with higher level social skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youths and also offers an ideal opportunity for parents to engage fully with their children (Milteer et al., 2012; Goldstein, 2012). Play can be further categorised into six basic elements, which are anticipation, surprise, pleasure, understanding, strength and poise. Findings from past literature studies indicate that there are three concepts to be considered in order to develop an educational toy, which is aimlessness, empathy and play value where these could contribute to the professionalism in terms of the toy quality (Gielen, 2010). When designing for children, it remains important not only to emphasise elements such as ergonomics and usability but also values, that can be translated into pleasurable user experiences for children (Duytschaever & Conradie, 2016). Kudrowitz (2014) highlighted the challenges faced when designing toys and that is why the industry should consider the toy form, function, manufacturability, safety standards, trends, price point and licensing ideas.

Social skills largely contribute towards the development of an individual in their early childhood to encourage their engagement with the real world. Steedlyet al. (2008) stated that social skills are fundamental for smoother relationships and interactions among people. Thus, social skills' interventions are essential to ensure preschool children communicate and make sense of their social world. Some of these skills include showing empathy, participation in group activities, generosity, helpfulness, communicating with others, negotiating, and problem solving. In the previous study on the review on measures of social and emotional development, there are four subdomains of social and emotional development being identified, namely social competence, emotional competence, behaviour problems, and self-regulation (Halle & Darling-churchill, 2016). Social competence of preschool children can be defined with three components in the application of Social Skills Scale (SSS), which are cooperation, self-control and assertion (Anmeet al., 2013; Shahaeianet al., 2017). Parten (1932) has classified play into six stages based on the social behaviours of children (see Table 1).

Table 1: Parten (1932)'s Stages of Play

Play	Definition	Example
Unoccupied	Child is observing, not playing.	Juan stands near the sandbox, counting children and buckets.
Solitary	Children play alone.	Lori completes a puzzle, plays with a doll, or rides a bicycle.
Onlooker	Child watches but does not engage in play.	Mari and Will watch two classmates negotiate the use of a balance scale.
Parallel	Children play independently, but side by side.	Jen and Carlos read books or build blocks next to each other with no interaction.
Associative	Children share materials, make their own projects, and tell stories about them.	Margo and Lynn share crayons at the art table and make their own pictures and talk about them or pretend to run a restaurant in the dramatic play area.
Cooperative	Child is engaged in the activity and with other people involved.	Emily, Austin and Ashlyn invite others to join a game of hide-and-seek after negotiating and sharing the game rules and goals.

Source: Sussman (2012)

As stated by the British Toy and Hobby Association (2018), pretend play or also known as role playing, is one of the children's ways of trying out new skills and growing interests, enabling them to develop their social development skills. Studies show that pretend play shed light on the social competence of preschool children for school success because pretending involves language use and takes place in social contexts (Bergen, 2001). Lillard et al. (2013) stated that the impact of pretend play is claimed to be crucial to children's healthy development.

According to Martinet al. (1991), under social toy conditions, children are engaged in social behaviour more often than during any other condition. Playing with peers is one of the most important contexts for the acquisition of social competencies in early childhood (Coelhoet al., 2017). These and other theories of social interactions have justified that play is a vital element which encourages the social development of a child.

Figure 1 is the theoretical framework showing the components and the subcomponents of the keywords to identify their relationships in terms of considerations of design. The relationships of social skills learning, elements of play and the theories of educational toy designs are shown.

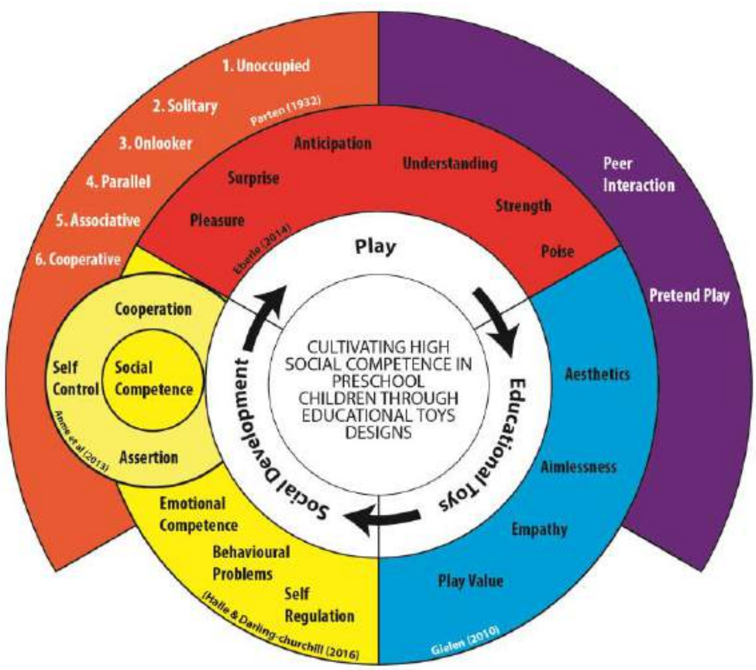

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of Play,
Educational Toys and Social Development (Source: Author's Own)

Through the readings based on literature reviews, a proposition is developed, which includes the applicable design concepts (pretend play, peer interaction) in educational toy designs that can cultivate preschool children in Malaysia to have better social competency (social cooperation, self-control, assertion) through cooperative play. In the context of this study, it is highlighted that cooperative play involving pretend play and peer interaction among pre-children are able to help in developing their social skills. As educational toys play the role as the instruments for learning through play approach, pretend play and peer interactions should be taken into consideration in designing the product criteria.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a qualitative approach is used to analyse the current successful educational toys available in the market. This study examines the designs of educational toys in terms of features and attributes that will contribute to the cultivation of social skills among preschool children by identifying the toys' similarities. A systematic analysis is being carried out on 21 educational toys which were selected from each of the Types of Toys by the Toy Industry Association (2013). The analysis is applied with the essential concepts in designing toys with the aspects of aimlessness, empathy and play value by Gielen (2010). This will be further described in terms of the designs, concepts and features of the toys. The concepts of role play and peer interactions in the types of toys are determined based on the necessity for designing the toys.

Table 2 shows the record of characteristics based on the types of educational toys available in the Malaysian market. Each of the toys from the categories is being assessed based on the basic design necessity on the role play (characters) and peer interactions as the toy's design concepts, which is based on the methods reviewed in developing the social skills of preschool children.

Table 2: Necessity of role play and peer interaction concepts in toy designs

Types of Toys	Role Play	Peer Interaction
Action Figures	Yes	No
Arts and Crafts	No	No
Battling Toys	Yes	Yes
Building and Constructions	Yes	No
Collectible Trading Cards and Toys	No	Yes
Costume and Dress Up	Yes	No
Dolls	Yes	No
Educational	No	Yes
Games & Puzzles	No	Yes
Infant Toys	No	No
Miscellaneous	No	No
Models	Yes	No
Musical Instruments and Toys	No	No
Outdoor Seasonal Toys	No	Yes
Plush	Yes	No
Preschool Toys	Yes	No
Ride Ons	No	No
Sport Toys	No	Yes
Vehicle-Powered	No	No
Vehicle-Non-Powered	No	No
Youth Electronics	No	No

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

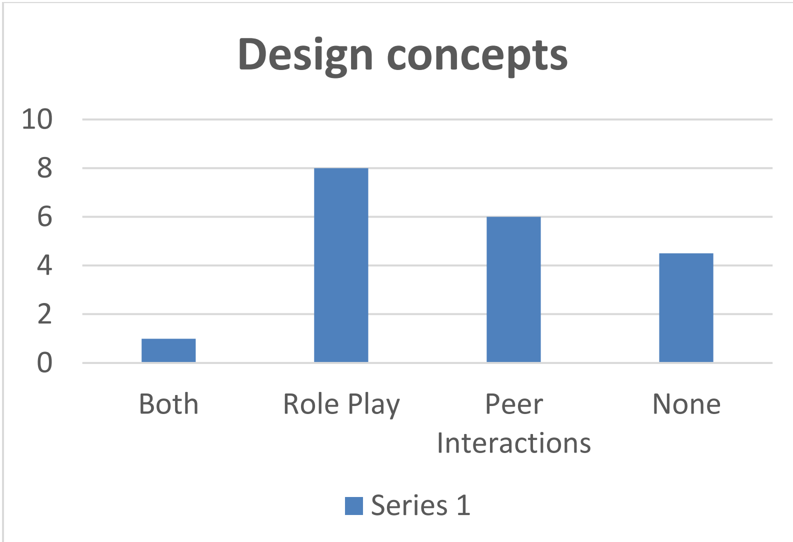

Figure 2: Number of toys with role play and peer interaction concepts

By referring to Figure 2 above, only one out of 21 types of toys has both the concepts in role playing and peer interactions applied as the necessary play method, which is the category of “Battling Toys” from the analysis. However, eight out of 21 types apply role play in the toy designs and six out of 21 types use peer interactions as part of the play. Figure 3 shows the list of toys that apply role play and peer interaction concepts as necessity when designing.

Figure 3: Toys with role play and peer interaction concepts

On the other hand, there are only seven out of 21 types of toys which do not apply role play and peer interactions as their design concepts. This phenomenon shows that not all the toys available in the market can be used to develop the social skills of preschool children. Parents have to be selective when considering the toys for the social skills development of their preschool children.

1. ROLE PLAY

From the analysis, it is safe to say that role play toys come in two design concepts. The first design concept is where the toys apply the whole character appearance as its form. The characteristics of a human figure are directly applied as the features of the toys. For instance, characters in Marvel Superheroes and Disney Princesses from the screen are applied as the design of action figure toys. These toys include licensed and theme figures that have an action-based play pattern.

It also includes clothing, vehicles, tools, weapons or play sets to be used with the toys. Figure 4 shows some of the examples of toys with human characteristics. The toys mimic the physical appearance of how a character should look like, for instance with faces, bodies, limbs and so on. Normally, the designs come in small sizes which enable children to handle and play with the toys easily.

Figure 4: Toys with human resemblance

Some of them come with proper articulations which enable children to have certain postures when playing with them. The products come with the mobilised features resembling a real human character. Figure 5 illustrates the Spiderman and Barbie toys with articulation features.

Figure 5: Toys with articulation features

The second type of concept will be the use of tools or equipment as the medium to perform play. In this case, the toys will have the form and shape of an actual tool such as a medical tool kit enabling children to play pretend as doctors. Some of the role play toys provide simple functions similar to the tools. However, the size of the tools or equipment are smaller to come in handy as compared to the real objects. Various materials are used to build the toys, such as plastic, rubber, EVA foam and so on to make sure children are safe while playing with them. Thus, the aesthetic and visuals of the role play toys are designed into a deformed shape which is more relevant for younger children.

Besides, role play toys come in two ways which include the design mimicry towards realistic life situations or imaginative virtual situations. Figure 6 below shows the examples of toys with the resemblance of tools.

Figure 6: Toys with tool resemblance

2. PEER INTERACTIONS

When it comes to peer interactions, the toys are designated for multiple players. Peer interaction toys usually need at least two players; the designs have to make sure the children are interacting with each other. The peer interaction toys may come in two ways as well, where one of them is designed with an open-ended play method while the other is designed with rules and regulations.

Playing with a multiplayer toy in an open-ended way, children are free to express themselves in either building objects, running around or interacting with other kids. Free play in toys enable children to play in an open-ended way, where children have more options to express themselves either mentally or physically. Furthermore, playing with a multiplayer toy in an open-ended way, children are free to express themselves in either building objects, running around or interacting with other kids. For the second type of play method with rules and regulations, it normally includes board games where the players have to follow certain steps and requirements while playing with it. The toys with rules and regulations requiring taking turns is one of the toy features that can be identified in most of the peer interaction toys, too. Children are obliged to play the toys one by one especially when they are involved in the games.

DISCUSSION

The role-play toys serve as a medium for the children to perform pretend play. Therefore, role play enables children to imagine themselves as the characters in the toys, allowing them to have more empathy. The features of toys must be as realistic as possible for children to play their roles. This will further help the children in developing their social skills in understanding a certain behaviour.

Through playing with the multiplayer toys, children have to play with their peers and friends, putting them into a situation whereby they need to speak their minds and express their emotions. When interactions among children happen more often, they may acquire the skills to express themselves effectively. Figure 7 shows the attributes with the components categorised that should be considered when selecting or designing the educational toys for the social skills development of preschool children. A theme is created for each of the attributes according to the relevant components that can be grouped together. There are six attributes determined in this study for toy designs.

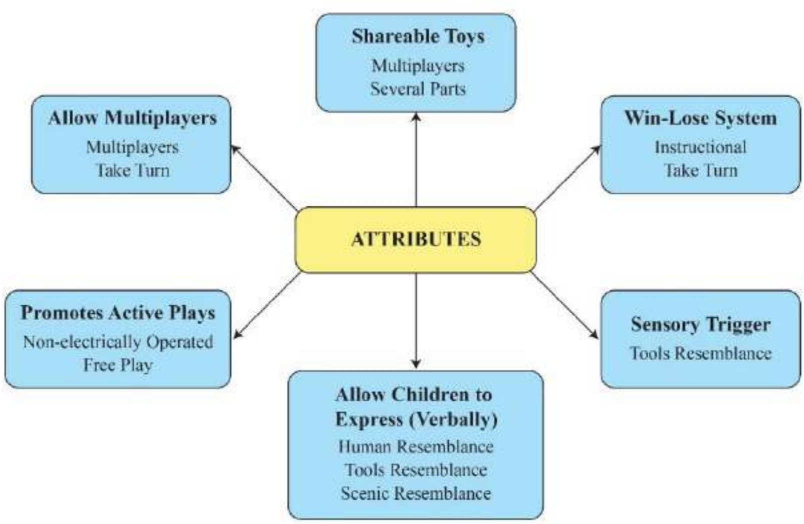

Figure 7: Attributes and components for educational toy designs

To summarise, most of the selected toys do not have the main idea or goal in developing the social skills of players through ~~a~~ straight forward and obvious design concepts. Most of the toys assist in developing the social skills of preschool children indirectly during playtime. This situation happens when the toys enable children to voice out and have interactions with other parties. Hence, the role of the toys is to ensure children are able to develop their social skills while playing.

CONCLUSION

It is safe to say that the social skills of preschool children are crucial and significant which can be developed through the application of play with certain types of educational toys. Although play is not the only way to cultivate the social skills of preschool children, it is indeed a necessary and beneficial activity for children to develop specific skills. From the reviews, the importance of role play can be acknowledged in contributing to the development of social skills. It can be stated that the designs of educational toys which apply the use of pretend play are able to make the children express the roles they are imagining while playing. Thus, this enablement helps children to think and communicate by implementing the thoughts associating to certain imaginary environments and situations. At the same time, social interactions among their peers who are in the same age group will be beneficial for the development of the children’s social skills as well. By having peer interactions via the toy design applications, preschool children are able to communicate freely, and thus, understand each other with a similar level of thought.

REFERENCES

Bartolotta, T., & Shulman, B. 2010. Current problems in pediatrics. *Child development* (Vol. 23, pp. 44–49) (2010). https://doi.org/10.1016/0045-9380(93)90002-T

Bergen, D. 2001. Pretend play and young children’s development. *ERIC DIGEST*, (October 2001).

British Toy and Hobby Association. 2018. The Value of Play.

Coelho, L., Torres, N., Fernandes, C., & Santos, A. J. 2017. Quality of play, social acceptance and reciprocal friendship in preschool children. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 1807* (September 2017), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2017.1380879

Darling-Churchill, K. E., & Lippman, L. 2016. Early childhood social and emotional development: Advancing the field of measurement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *45*, 1–7 (2016). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2016.02.002

Duytschaever, I., & Conradie, P. 2016. Helping young designers design for children : Evaluating toys and possible values. *Children : Evaluating Toys and Possible* (September 2016).

Fatai, I.A., Faqih, A. & Bustan, W.K., 2014, 'Children's active learning through unstructured play in Malaysia', *Childhood Education 90(4)*, 259–264.

Gielen, M. A. 2010. Essential concepts in toy design education: aimlessness, empathy and play value. *International Journal of Arts and Technology*, *3*(1), 4 (2010). https://doi.org/10.1504/IJART.2010.030490

Goldstein, J. (2012). *Play in Children's Development, Health and Well-being*. Toy Industries of Europe.

Halle, T. G., & Darling-churchill, K. E. 2016. Review of measures of social and emotional development. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *45*, 8–18 (2016). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2016.02.003

Kudrowitz, B. 2014. Emerging Technology and Toy Design. *Designing for emerging technologies* (pp. 237–253) (2014).

Lillard, A. S., Lerner, M. D., Hopkins, E. J., Dore, R. A., Smith, E. D., & Palmquist, C. M. 2013. The impact of pretend play on children's development: A review of the evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, *139*(1), 1–34 (2013). https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029321

Lim, P., & Bahauddin, A. (2015). Physical environment and learning through play: Case studies in Malaysian pre-schools. *Social Sciences Postgraduate International Seminar Proceedings*, 400–408.

Lowe, N. K. 1988. Games and Toys in the Teaching of Science and Technology.

Martin, S. S., Brady, M. P., & Williams, R. E. 1991. Preschool Children in Integrated and Nonintegrated Groups : Investigation of a Setting Event. *Council for Exceptional Children Effects*, *15*(2), 153–161 (1991).

Milteer, R. M., Ginsburg, K. R., & Mulligan, D. A. 2012. The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bond: Focus on Children in Poverty. *Pediatrics*, *129*(1), e204–e213 (2012). https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2011-2953

Ministry of Education. (2017). National Preschool Standard Curriculum. Putrajaya: Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

National Education Goals Panel. (1995). Reconsidering Children's Early Development and Learning: Toward Common Views and Vocabulary, 1–65.

Parten, M. B. (1932). Social Participation among Pre-School Children. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *27* (3): 243–269.

Pem, D. 2015. Factors Affecting Early Childhood Growth and Development: Golden 1000 Days. *Advanced Practices in Nursing*, *01*(01), 1–4 (2015). https://doi.org/10.4172/2573-0347.1000101

Shahaeian, A., Razmjoee, M., Wang, C., Elliott, S. N., & Hughes, C. 2017. Understanding relational aggression during early childhood: An examination of the association with language and other social and cognitive skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *40* (September 2017), 204–214. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2017.04.002

Steedly, K. M., Schwartz, A., Levin, M., & Luke, S. D. 2008. Social Skills and Academic Achievement. *The Academy for Educational Development* (2008).

Sussman, K. S. (2012). The importance of play in the preschool classroom, 36(3).

The Toy Association, I. 2018. *Trend Spotting*. Toys Association. Retrieved December 12, 2018, from https://www.toyassociation.org/ta/research/reports/trends/toys/research-and-data/reports/trend-spotting.aspx

Thompson, R. A., & Lagattuta, K. H. (2006). Feeling and understanding: Early emotional development. In K. McCartney, & D. Phillips (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of early childhood development* (pp. 317–337).

Toy Industry Association. 2013. Toy Industry Product Categories. UNICEF. (2018). *Learning through play*. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2018-12/UNICEF-Lego-Foundation-Learning-through-Play.pdf

Whitebread, D. D. 2012. The Importance of Play. *University of Cambridge*. https://doi.org/10.5455/msm.2015.27.438-441

Yates, T., Michaelene, M., & Cheatham, G. A. 2008. Assessing Social-Emotional Competence (2008).

Online Learning Experience during COVID-19 Movement Control Order:

Perspective of Han Chiang University College of Communication Students

Josephine Chan Ie Lyn[*], Goh Jing Yang[**], Saw Weng Onn[**], Alex Beh Kar Heng[**] & Edmund Loke Wen Herng[***]

Abstract: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, April 20, 2020 signalled the start of a massive shift of face-to-face on-campus classes to online classes for students in the higher education sector in Malaysia. As this is an unprecedented situation, the study seeks to understand Han Chiang University College of Communication (HCUC) students' initial online learning experiences during COVID-19 Movement Control Order. Findings and recommendations given are meant for further consideration by HCUC's top management.

Keywords: COVID-19, online learning, online learning experiences of students, higher education in Malaysia.

---

[*]Josephine Chan Ie Lyn, Centre for Languages, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: chanil@hcu.edu.my

[**]Goh Jing Yang, Saw Weng Onn, and Alex Beh Kar Heng, Diploma in Logistics Management final year students, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang.

[***]Edmund Loke Wen Herng, Diploma in Business Management final year student, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang.

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of a new coronavirus (COVID-19) was first discovered in Wuhan, China which then rapidly spread throughout the world causing a pandemic situation (WHO, 2020). The initial case in Malaysia was reported on January 25, 2020 with increasing numbers since March 2020. Consequently, COVID-19 became the game changer for the higher education sector. In April 20, 2020, due to the movement control order (MCO), all higher education institutions (HEIs) had to immediately shift from face-to-face (F2F) classes to online learning (Arumugam, 2020). Those who were familiar with online learning and teaching quickly adapted while others struggled. The sudden implementation of online learning without ample preparation could potentially affect students' online learning experience.

Online learning is best described as a teaching approach where students do not physically need to attend classes on campus (Allam et al., 2020). This means they are able to complete their studies anywhere as long as they have internet connection. Past studies have revealed online challenges faced by students during MCO as not all students have exposure to online learning. Some might have experienced blended learning where both face-to-face (F2F) lectures were conducted coupled with online classes. During the MCO lockdown, no F2F classes were permitted, thus, preventing opportunities for students to physically communicate or contact their lecturers. Undeniably, in tough times such as this, tough measures were needed. Nonetheless, it is more difficult to implement online learning in comparison with organising F2F lectures (Harsasi & Sutawijaya, 2018). More often than not, online learning exposes many challenges such as technological limitations, constraints in peer interaction or student-lecturer interaction, weak pedagogical understanding and skills set, and administrative issues.

As such, the main purpose of the study is to determine Han Chiang University College (HCUC) students' online learning experience during the COVID-19 MCO. Past studies on online learning experiences have examined various factors but this study focuses on student satisfaction, course flexibility, course quality, internet quality, and student interaction. Findings from this study will significantly contribute towards ensuring that HCUC students are continuously given the best possible online learning experience amidst an unprecedented situation caused by COVID-19. Besides, Strong et al. (2012) significantly noted that assessment of student satisfaction is essential towards improving the delivery of online courses. More importantly, the study also enables students' voices to be heard pertaining to their sudden exposure to online learning.

PAST STUDIES ON ONLINE LEARNING

Based on extant studies, students generally enjoy their online learning experience (Al-Asfour, 2012; Roach & Lemasters, 2006) and mostly prefer asynchronous learning with pre-recorded lectures uploaded in Google Classroom or YouTube (Chung et al., 2020). Then again, other students are not satisfied. If given a choice, these students prefer F2F classes (Chung et al., 2020; Radha et al., 2020; Strong et al., 2012). Key online learning issues raised are usually related to internet connectivity and understanding subject content (Chung et al., 2020), and the impersonal online learning curriculum (Strong et al., 2012). Students actually prefer active learning found in F2F classes than just learning or listening to online lectures (Strong et al., 2012). This implies that online learning does not provide much engagement during classes.

Online learning experiences tend to be examined against student satisfaction (Al-Asfour, 2012; Baber, 2020; Barbera et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2020), student perceived learning (Barbera et al., 2013), and intention to continuous use (Chen et al., 2020). For example, in Al-Asfour's (2012) study, out of the five factors examined, assessment ranked the highest in student satisfaction, followed by online instruction, communication, the online course itself, and overall student satisfaction. In Baber's (2020) study on 100 undergraduate students from South Korea and India, he discovered no differences in their online learning satisfaction which was significantly influenced by student interaction and motivation, instructor knowledge and facilitation, course structure, and perceived learning. The finding suggests that locality of the students do not affect students' online learning satisfaction.

Furthermore, Chen et al. (2020) investigated the degree of satisfaction and the intention of continuous use of online education platforms among users in China. In particular, factors such as quality of interaction (effective interaction and communication for knowledge acquisition), quality of service, platform availability, and personal factors of users were examined. The study found that the two-way interaction in teaching needs further improvement as the higher the interaction, the higher the enthusiasm and concentration of students during online classes. Interestingly, Alqurashi (2018) highlighted that student-teacher interaction, and not student-student interaction, is crucial for student online satisfaction. Moreover, during MCO lockdown, teachers who are unused to online teaching are challenged the most due to their lack of IT knowledge and weak online teaching concepts (Chen et al., 2020).

In another research, Barbera et al. (2013) conducted their study on 499 university students from China, US and Spain who were taking social science courses online. They examined institutional factors of technological support, learning platform, direct instruction, social presence, instructor and students' interaction, learning content, and course design against student satisfaction and perceived learning. Barbera et al. (2020) discovered that all factors were significant, but the most significant factors to student satisfaction and student perceived learning were learning content and course design. More specifically, social presence and direct instruction were revealed as strong influencers of student satisfaction. This indicates that individual factors of the instructors and students are crucial for online learning. Such finding was further reinforced by Sun et al. (2006) who did a survey on 295 students from two public universities in Taiwan. Factors examined were categorised into learner, instructor, course, technology, design, and environment. In particular, learner's anxiety in computer usage, lecturer's attitude towards e-learning, course flexibility and quality, design of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, and diversity in assessment were all great influencers of student online learning satisfaction.

The findings of the above past studies can be categorised into five main dimensions of course, teacher, student, interaction, and technology (see Table 1). The factors under these five dimensions were found to significantly influence student satisfaction.

Table 1: Key Dimensions of Student Online Learning Satisfaction

Dimension	**Factor**	**Source**
Course	Assessment or diverse assessments	Al-Asfour (2012); Sun et al. (2006)
	Structure	Baber (2020)
	Design	Barbera et al. (2013); Sun et al. (2006)
	Flexibility	Sun et al. (2006)
	Quality	Sun et al. (2006)
	Learning content	Barbera et al. (2013)
Teacher	Online instruction or direct instruction	Al-Asfour (2012); Barbera et al. (2013)
	Knowledge and facilitation	Baber (2020)
	Social presence	Barbera et al. (2013); Strong et al. (2012)
	Attitude towards e-learning	Sun et al. (2006)
Student	Motivation	Baber (2020)
	Perceived learning	Baber (2020)
	Computer anxiety	Sun et al. (2006)
	Perceived usefulness	Sun et al. (2006)
	Perceived ease of use Satisfaction	Sun et al. (2006) Sun et al. (2006)
Interaction	Student and instructor interaction or two-way interaction	Alqurashi (2018); Barbera et al. (2013); Chen et al. (2020); Strong et al. (2012)
	Communication	Al-Asfour (2012)
Technology	Learning platform	Barbera et al. (2013)
	Technological support	Barbera et al. (2013)

Due to time constraint, the current study only managed to focus on student satisfaction, course flexibility, course quality, internet quality, and student interaction as the key dimensions of HCUC students’ online learning experience during COVID-19 MCO.

METHOD

An online survey, based on convenient sampling, was carried out from end October to early November 2020 and garnered responses from 65 HCUC students. The survey was entitled *"Students' Online Learning Experience in HCUC during COVID-19 MCO"* where the several factors examined included student satisfaction, course flexibility, course quality, internet quality, and student interaction. Quantitative data was collected from the survey with analysis of the descriptive statistics. The open-ended question at the end of the survey provided students the opportunity to offer some useful recommendations on how to improve the online learning experiences during COVID-19 MCO.

The survey was divided into three sections (see Table 1). The first section covered Demographics Profile of the respondents which included students' current year and semester, course, gender, and prior experience in online learning. Next, the second section was based on the five factors influencing students' satisfaction on online classes where between 2 to 4 questions were asked per factor. A 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from 5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=undecided, 2=disagree, to 1=strongly disagree. The last section contained one open-ended question which was related to recommendations for improvement on the quality of online classes in HCUC.

Table 1: Research Survey Items

Section	Description	No of items	Adapted Source
1	Demographics Profile	5	-
2	Factor 1: Student Satisfaction	4	Sun et al. (2008)
	Factor 2: Course Flexibility	3	
	Factor 3: Course Quality	2	
	Factor 4: Internet Quality	4	
	Factor 5: Student Interaction	2	
3	Recommendation	1	-
	Total Measurement Items:	21	

FINDINGS

Table 2 shows the overall demographic profile of 65 HCUC students who responded. Majority of them are females, second year seniors and above, and from diploma programmes. Almost all indicated very limited or zero prior online learning experience.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents (n = 65)

Profile of Respondents	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	19	29.2
Female	46	70.8
Year		
Y1	12	18.4
Y2	23	35.4
Y3	30	46.2
Programme		
Diploma in Mass Communication	33	50.8
Diploma in Broadcast Journalism	2	3.0
Diploma in Multimedia Communication	4	6.2
Diploma in Logistics Management	10	15.5
Diploma in Business Management	6	9.2
Degree in Logistics & Supply Chain Management	8	12.3
Degree in Advertising	1	1.5
Degree in Chinese Studies	1	1.5
Prior experience in online learning		
None	22	33.9
1 year	42	64.6
2 years	0	0.0
3 years	1	1.5
More than 3 years	0	0.0

Among the five factors examined in the study, HCUC students were generally satisfied with their online learning experience in relation to course flexibility which had a mean value of 3.79 (see Table 3). Majority agreed that online learning made it easy to attend classes during lockdown (83%), saved them commuting time to class (60%) and enabled them to graduate on time (54%).

However, HCUC students were undecided on their online learning experience in relation to internet quality (M=3.13) and student interaction (M=3.05). For instance, only 45% had good internet connection for their online classes, while 38% had good internet communication quality. Nonetheless, 52% of the students felt that their lecturers had good internet connection. Nearly half of the students (46%) found internet fees to be expensive. As for student interaction, 59% of the students had difficulties participating in online class discussion but lecturers frequently tried very hard to encourage more student interaction during online classes (65%).

The two factors contributing to HCUC students' low mean values for their online learning experience were related to course quality (M=2.92) and student satisfaction (M=2.88). Despite nearly half of the students indicating they were satisfied with their online learning experience (52%) and online learning served their needs well (48%), given a choice, a large number of them would not do online learning (75%). They also did not deem their online learning experience to be comparatively better than attending classes on campus (69%). This was further supported by only 20% of HCUC students found online learning improved the quality of courses and 34% deemed quality of learning experience largely unaffected by online learning.

Table 3: Summary of Students' Online Learning Experience

Statement		Distribution of responses (%)					Mean	Std Dev
		SD	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**		
LS1	I am satisfied with my online learning experience during Covid-19 MCO.	3.08	10.77	33.85	46.15	6.15	3.42	0.88
LS2	I feel that online learning during Covid-19 MCO served my needs well	4.62	10.77	36.92	41.54	6.15	3.34	0.92

LS3	If not for Covid-19, I would not do online learning.	1.54	10.77	12.31	21.54	53.85	1.85 (R)	1.11 (R)
LS4	Online learning during Covid-19 MCO made my learning experience better compared to attending classes on campus.	9.23	24.62	35.38	26.15	4.62	2.92	1.04
Overall Student Satisfaction mean and standard deviation values respectively							2.88	1.17
CF1	Online learning during Covid-19 MCO made it easy for me to attend classes.	0.00	3.08	13.85	43.08	40.00	4.20	0.79
CF2	Online learning during Covid-19 MCO saved me a lot of time commuting to class.	3.08	4.62	32.31	41.54	18.46	3.68	0.94
CF3	Online learning during Covid-19 MCO should allow me to finish my higher education on time.	4.62	13.85	27.69	35.38	18.46	3.49	1.09

	Overall Course Flexibility mean and standard deviation values respectively						3.79	0.99
CQ1	Conducting online learning during Covid-19 MCO improved the quality of the courses.	9.23	23.08	47.69	15.38	4.62	2.83	0.96
CQ2	I feel the quality of my learning experience during Covid-19 MCO was largely unaffected by online learning.	6.15	23.08	36.92	32.31	1.54	3.00	0.94
	Overall Course Quality mean and standard deviation values respectively						2.92	0.95
IQ1	I have good internet connection when studying online.	6.15	20.0	29.23	27.69	16.92	3.29	1.16
IQ2	Our lecturer has good internet connection when teaching online.	0.00	4.62	43.08	44.62	7.69	3.55	0.71
IQ3	The communication quality of the Internet is good.	6.15	16.92	38.46	30.77	7.69	3.17	1.01
IQ4	The fee for internet connection is very expensive.	6.15	9.23	38.46	21.54	24.62	2.51 (R)	1.15 (R)

	Overall Internet Quality mean and standard deviation values respectively						3.13	1.09
SI1	Class discussions were more difficult to participate during online classes.	1.54	16.92	23.08	29.32	29.23	2.32 (R)	1.12 (R)
SI2	Our lecturer frequently attempted to encourage student interaction.	0.00	3.08	32.31	49.23	15.38	3.77	0.75
	Overall Student Interaction mean and standard deviation values respectively						3.05	1.19

Note: SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; U = undecided; A = agree; SA = strongly agree; Std Dev = standard deviation; (R) = reverse coded.

HCUC students were also asked in an open-ended question in the survey to provide recommendations to improve their online learning experienced during the MCO period (see Table 4). The recommendations given were analysed and categorised into five categories of Administration, Technology, Student's Point-of-View (POV), Interaction and Teaching Method. A total of 67 recommendations were given whereby most of these recommendations were focused on interaction and teaching methods.

Table 4: Summary of Respondents' Online Learning Experience Improvement Recommendations

Category	**Recommendation**	**Frequency**
Administration (8)	Improve class schedule/timing	3
	Allocate consultation hours for students	2
	Continued support from Government for free daily data plan	1
	Reduce tuition & facilities fees	2
Technology (4)	Improve WIFI quality and connectivity	2
	Use apps that will not affect internet connection during classes	1
	Do not assume students are all IT savvy	1

Student's POV (20)	Need self-discipline Need rest/toilet breaks during online lessons Do not give so many assignments/HW Prefer F2F classes Have positive online learning experience No comments given	2 2 1 3 3 9
Interaction (17)	Do more virtual activities Use visual cues or visualization Use Zoom Have more interesting and fun activities Do not only use slides to teach Communicate more with students Use demonstrations or show physical objects during practical classes	2 2 2 4 3 2 2
Teaching Method (18)	Use asynchronous teaching - Can review lessons - Useful if have bad internet connection - Make recordings available Use synchronous teaching Make lecture and tutorials interesting or fun Make learning goals clearer Open web cameras – both lecturers and students Explain contents well by lecturers Reduce group tutorial	4 1 4 2 4 2 1
	Total recommendations given by students	67

Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study was aimed at examining HCUC students' online learning experiences during COVID-19 MCO. Findings of the study provided significant insight to HCUC. In general, the students took a neutral stance on their overall satisfaction of online learning (which included course quality, internet quality, and student interaction) during the lockdown. This finding was not unexpected as majority of the students indicated that if not for COVID-19, they preferred attending F2F classes on campus. This finding is consistent with past studies which also found that their respondents prefer F2F classes (Chung et al., 2020; Radha et al., 2020; Strong et al., 2012). This could also be attributed to many of the students have limited or zero prior experience of online learning. Due to this, the unfamiliarity to online learning might mean that students need more time before embracing online learning. The only aspect of online learning experience that the students appreciated was the course flexibility which allowed them to attend classes during lockdown, with no commuting time wasted and the ability to graduate on time.

Based on the current situation, COVID-19 is here to stay. Conducting online classes is the new normal for the higher education sector. Improvements are needed for the betterment of HCUC students' online learning experience. As such, here are some potential recommendations for the consideration of HCUC management.

First, online classes have to be conducted effectively so as to increase students' satisfaction with their online learning experience. Additionally, students also need to have a better understanding of online classes e.g., why online classes, what and how to optimize online learning experiences, what online applications or platforms to use, where to get IT support, etc. This recommendation is supported by Respondents 5 and 15 where they suggested:

> "The **style of educating students** might need to have a change. The students also **need to have a strong concept** about online learning." [Respondent 5]

> "I think for improvement of online learning can be making the **learning goals clearer**." [Respondent 15]

One way of achieving this is for HCUC to further develop their academics' online teaching skills with training or coaching sessions. This could further increase knowledge on new pedagogical approaches for online learning. Chung (2020) mentioned that academics need to be supported by more training so as to efficiently delivery online lessons. Based on the study's findings, HCUC students provided several simple yet effective recommendations that could improve teaching online classes.

> "Lecturers can **provide more interesting learning materials** during the online class, because if they follow the teaching method like during the physical class, it is a bit boring and students would like to do their own things without listening to the online class. Lecturers can also provide **more teamwork activities** to improve the

communication and relationship between the students." [Respondent 21]

"For practical courses, lecturers could provide online teaching by **showing the students especially on the facilities and equipment needed** in order to complete something. So, students will understand more as they see them with their own eyes, not only through watching videos." [Respondent 14]

"I think the lecturers can **focus more on visualization instead of the slides with wordings** only as the students sometimes don't really understand the topic. Moreover, if we are having F2F classes, lecturers will be explaining more on the whiteboard so students will be able to easily understand the topic." [Respondent 25]

"**Use more examples** and some things that can attract students (example: **video, share experiences**, do some activities through online)." [Respondent 34]

HCUC could also adopt a more structured approach to develop instructional units for students' online learning preparation (Roach & Lemasters, 2006). HCUC should not assume that students are aware of the online resources or facilities such as e-library, online databases or even the Turnitin plagiarism checker that can assist students in their assignments or research work. Instead, this information should be translated into user-friendly online units or frequently asked questions (FAQs) that students can access to become self-autonomous learners.

Second, the findings of the study indicated that more interaction is needed during online classes. For instance, simple things like turning on web cameras and asking more questions during online classes could potentially increase student interaction as suggested by Respondent 45:

"Lecturers could ask **students to turn on their web cam** during class so that they can make sure students are focusing in class. It can also help on students' self-discipline so that they will not sleep or play with their phone during class. Lecturers could **ask more questions** in class and **encourage students to respond** by **turning**

> **on the mic instead of typing in the chat box**. **Good interaction** in class is very important, and **not boring** for students and it actually is **a sign of respect to lecturers**." [Respondent 45]

Respondent 7, on the other hand, suggested the use of turning on the web cams so as to show students more visual cues:

> "Maybe can have more visual cues? Like the lecturer can **open the cam to conduct the classes and show us something through the web cam**. Because sometimes it will be very boring only listening and looking at the slides during class." [Respondent 7]

Consequently, it is recommended for those involved in online teaching to design courses with assignments that encourage student collaboration and authentic learning experience (Strong et al., 2012). Academics could also share experiences and exchange ideas on best or most effective pedagogical approaches to online teaching practices.

Finally, online classes should be kept small so that interaction of teachers, clarity and timeliness of feedback on assignments can be effectively carried out, hence, increasing students' online learning satisfaction (Roach & Lemasters, 2006). For example, suggestions such as "can have consultation hour with the lecturer" [Respondent 24] and "the lecturer can reply message to help us solve problems when he/she is free" [Respondent 8] are a reflection of the need for teachers to allocate time to provide feedback and after-class support. While academics are conducting online classes, it is inevitable that the academics' workload would increase as there is a need for them to have frequent interactions with the students. Students might also find it difficult to be autonomous learners when following online classes and will initially require more attention and support from the teachers in comparison with the F2F classes on campus. Students also experience more assignments given during online courses. In the current study, students also shared the same online learning experience where "online classes have more homework compared to physical classes. It'll be great if can reduce the homework given" [Respondent 36].

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The study was not without any limitations. The first limitation would be the small sample size of 65 respondents. However, the current study was only meant to get a quick snapshot of the students' online learning experiences during COVID-19 MCO so that HCUC's management will be able to take prompt actions for further online learning improvements. Moreover, at the time of the study, students were still not allowed to return to the campus. As such, access to the overall student population of HCUC was challenging. Future research could extend the study to examine the online learning experiences during MCO of all students from the higher education sector in Malaysia. Additionally, the second limitation would be related to the factors examined in the current study. Due to time constraint, the study only focused on five main factors of student satisfaction, namely course quality, course flexibility, internet quality and student interaction. There are other factors (see Table 1) which could be further examined. Future research could be based on a comparative analysis of students' online learning experiences to determine the effect of MCO on students' online learning satisfaction and perceived learning.

REFERENCES

Al-Asfour, A. (2012). Examining student satisfaction of online statistics courses. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, *9*(1), 33-38.

Allam, S. N. S., Hassan, M. S., Sultan, R., Mohideen, A. F. R., & Kamal, R. M. (2020). Online distance learning readiness during Covid-19 outbreak among undergraduate students. *Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *10*(5), 642-657.

Alquarashi, E. (2018). Predicting student satisfaction and perceived learning within online learning environments. *Distance Education*, *40*(1), 1- 16. https://doi.org/10.10080/01587919.2018.1553562

Arumugam, T. (April 20, 2020). Covid19: MCO force education sector to grapple with technology, virtual classrooms. *The New Straits Times*. Retrieved from https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/04/586033/covid19-mco-force-educationsector-grapple-technology-virtual-classrooms

Baber, H. (2020). Determinants of Students' Perceived Learning Outcome and Satisfaction in Online Learning during the Pandemic of COVID-19. *Journal of Education and E-Learning Research*, *7*(3), 285-292.

Barbera, E., Clara, M., Linder-Vanberschot, J. (2013). Factors influencing student satisfaction and perceived learning in online courses. *E-Learning and Digital Media, 10*(3), 226-235. http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/elea.2013.10.3.226

Chen, T., Peng, L., Yin, X., Rong, J., Yang, J., & Cong, G. (2020). Analysis of user satisfaction with online education platforms in China during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Healthcare, 8*(3), 1-26.

Chung, E., Subramaniam, G., & Dass, l. C. (2020). Online Learning Readiness among University Students in Malaysia amidst COVID-19. *Asian Journal of University Education, 16*(2), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v16i2.10294

Harsasi, M. & Sutawijaya, A. (2018). Determinants of student satisfaction in online tutorial: A study of a distance education institution. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 19*(1/7), 89- 99.

Strong, R., Irby, T. L., Wynn, J. T., & McClure, M. M. (2012). Investigating students' satisfaction with e-learning courses: The effect of learning environment and social presence. *Journal of Agricultural Education, 53*(3), 98-110. https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2012.03098

Sun, P. C., Tsai, R. J., Finger, G., Chen, Y. Y., & Yeh, D. (2006). What drives a successful e-Learning? An empirical investigation of the critical factors influencing learner satisfaction. *Computers & Education, 50,* 1183–1202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2006.11.007

WHO. (2020). *Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Situation Report-94*. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200423-sitrep-94-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=b8304bf0_

Perception of New Experience Virtual Zoo Tour among Parents in Malaysia:

A Case Study of Taiping Zoo and Night Safari

Mohd Hanafi Jumrah[*],
Muhamad Qamar Rahman Md Isa[**] & Nur Adillah Maaz[***]

Abstract: In June 2021, Malaysian Prime Minister (PM), Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yasin announced the National Recovery Plan (NCR) divided into four phases of MCO (Movement Control Order) restricting citizens from having mobility and movement regularly. One of the activities that has been restricted is visiting the zoo. Citizens need to stay at home from doing their activities such as visiting zoos in a way to prevent and control coronavirus to spread to others. As initiatives, on July 4th 2021, Taiping Zoo and Night Safari (ZTNS) introduced a virtual zoo tour streamed live on their Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG). The purpose of the study is to identify the perceptions of the new experience Virtual Zoo Tour among parents in Malaysia and to describe how the Virtual Zoo Tour educates the public/parents. This study was conducted using a qualitative method that reviewed 26,000 comments on ZTNS FB. The data was analysed using narrative analysis to answer the research objectives. This study has found that six themes have formed perceptions of new experiences in virtual zoo tours namely Education and Exposure, Leisure, Language Barrier, Fund and Donation, Visual and Informative. Parents have found the virtual zoo tour as a new experience. The Reception Theory (encoding-decoding) by Hall has been applied in this study. Hall outlines three elements in this theory, namely the Dominant Code, Negotiated Position and Oppositional View. Parents have varying views in

---

[*]Mohd Hanafi Jumrah, School of Communication and Media, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: hanafi@hju.edu.my
[**]Muhamad Qamar Rahman Md Isa, School of Communication and Media, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: qamar@hju.edu.my
[***]Nur Adillah Maaz, School of Communication and Media, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: adillah@hju.edu.my

interpreting new experiences in virtual zoo tours based on their own personal understanding and experience.

Keywords: virtual zoo, perception, parents, zoo taiping, Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the world was affected by the virus called CoronaVirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19). The pandemic affected our daily life and affected all sectors including the tourism industry. Due to travel restrictions caused by Covid-19 pandemic, society cannot go out and do outdoor activities with families. In June 2021, Malaysian Prime Minister (PM), Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yasin announced National Recovery Plan (NCR) divided it into four phase including Phase 1 (the implementation of the full movement control order (FMCO) and only necessary sector will open), Phase 2 (only certain sectors will be allowed to operate), Phase 3 (all economic activities except for those with high risk of Covid-19 transmissions) and Phase 4 (All economic sectors may reopen and daily activities may resume, with more social activities allowed, interstate travel allowed and domestic tourism permitted, subject to strict SOP compliance) (The Edge Markets, 2021). When NCR started, citizens couldn't go out to visit the zoo. Visitors need to stay at home to prevent coronavirus from spreading to other people. Because Covid-19 outbreak, the Zoo has been experimenting with new ways to engage with the public. Zoo Taiping and Night Safari (ZTNS) has come out with the idea of a virtual zoo tour. It's a new adventure and experience for the citizens of Malaysia.

On July 4th 2021, ZTNS launched a virtual zoo tour streamed live on their Facebook (FB) and Instagram (IG). During the virtual tour, it showed the animals in the zoo such as Malayan Elephant, Chimpanzee and Bornean Orangutan, Malayan Gaur and White Rhinoceros, The animals in the East Loop Estuarine Crocodile and more. ZTNS became a pioneer zoos in Malaysia to start virtual zoo tours on Facebook, then followed by Melaka Zoo, Bird Parks and National Zoo.

Zoo is a place where various types of animals are kept for public viewing and also called animal parks. Zoo is a place where animals live in captivity and are put on show for public viewing (National Geographic, 2021). The term “zoo” is also known as zoological garden or zoological park and has been one of the top attractions for the public to come and spend their time with family. According to Nekolny & Fialova (2018), zoos are an important segment of the tourism industry being one of the most frequented tourist attractions today. While Association Zoos of Aquariums (2013), mention zoos and aquaria build on this positive foundation with missions that focus on public education as well as conservation and animal welfare. According to Carr and Coh (2011) zoos have a legacy of being a form of entertainment and are primarily a destination for visitors to attend in their leisure time. Zoos are one of the most visited tourist attractions worldwide. We should perceive them, therefore, not only as places where animals are kept, but also as places frequented by large numbers of people (Nekolny & Fialova, 2018).

Malaysia is one of the South East Asian countries and has most animals that are from tropical countries. The main zoos in Malaysia are, *Zoo Negara, Zoo Melaka dan Taman Burung, Zoo Negeri Johor and Zoo Taiping dan Night Safari*. In this research, we are focusing on Zoo Taiping. This zoo located at the Taiping Lake Gardens, covers an area of 36 acres and is one of the popular attractions to visit for families and people from northern part of Malaysia (Zoo Taiping, 2021). Zoo Taiping also has Taiping Night Safari, where this is one of the first Night safari attractions in Malaysia. According to the TNS (2021) website, this attraction displays nocturnal animals and provides the opportunity for visitors to experience nature at night time. ZTNS is the first zoo in the country that houses over 2000 animals representing 160 local and exotic species. These include Tigers, Lions, Elephants, Hippopotamus, Giraffes, Hornbills, OrangUtans and others (Tourism Perak, 2021).

Virtual tour can be defined as a simulation of an existing location composed of a sequence of video images and the simulated location, with all of its associated effects, is set up with the intention of authentically re-creating the real site experience (Osman, Wahab and Ismail, 2009; Spielmann and Mantonakis, 2018). The virtual tour brings the virtual location through computer, tablet, laptop and telephone. Most parts of virtual tours are experienced through the worldwide web using a computer, through which a visitor can see and interact with a simulated environment using a monitor and a mouse, respectively (Koutsoudis, Arnaoutoglou, and Chamzas, 2007). Therefore, a virtual tour is a simulated location that provides experience through the web. So, Virtual Zoo Tour means a simulated location for experiencing a place where animals live and put on show for public viewing through a web. There are several zoos outside Malaysia that handle virtual zoo tours for free like Smithsonian's National Zoo (United State), Cincinnati Zoo Virtual Tour (Ohio), San Diego Zoo (California) and more. In Malaysia we have ZTNS, Malacca Zoo and Birds Park and National Zoo.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In line with the purpose of the study, the research questions to be submitted are as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of the new experience Virtual Zoo Tour among parents in Malaysia? And
2. How the Virtual Zoo Tour educates the public/parents.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This research to identify the perceptions of Virtual Zoo Tour among parents in Malaysia and also to describe how Virtual Zoo Tour educate the public/parents.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

On June 15, 2021 Malaysia PM announced the NRP, a phased exit strategy from the COVID-19 crisis and the Movement Control Order (MCO), which will be enacted from June to December 2021 (Kenanga, 2021). Starting in June Malaysia implemented FMCO only essential services are allowed. These closures indirectly involve the tourism industry which is not allowed to operate. No visiting activities such as visits to the zoo were allowed at that time. This caused the management of the zoo to come up with other alternatives to bear all the operating costs of the zoo due to the absence of visitors. In addition, this is a hard time for zoos and they are also working very hard to survive during this pandemic for the welfare of animals. This statement is also agreed by Rathika Sheila (2021) as frequent iterations of the MCO keep occurring throughout the year, without people regularly visiting the zoo, they're unable to generate income. As unfortunate as this may be, you can play a role in helping to maintain the welfare and upkeep of Malaysia's zoo animals by loving them from afar. According to Mohd Shazwan (2020), the zoo, which is fully managed by the Malaysian Zoological Society, had to find other funds to ensure the welfare of animals and workers continues to be protected. So, the initiative by making a virtual zoo tour can indirectly help in finding additional funds in covering the cost of operating the zoo.

Literature Review

The studies on virtual zoo visits are very few, research by Godinez and Fernandez (2019) in the title What Is the Zoo Experience? How Zoos Impact a Visitor's Behaviors, Perceptions, and Conservation Efforts found the visitors have more positive perceptions and behaviors about zoos, their animals, and conservation initiatives the more they interact with animals, naturalistic exhibits, and zoo programming or staff. In addition, zoo visitors are receptive to conservation messaging and initiatives at zoos and are more likely to participate in on-site conservation opportunities as opposed to after their visits.

According to Yilmaz, Duzenli, & Cigdem (2017) in their research test from 450 zoo visitors in Turkish three zoos, found that the visitor explored the zoos mostly for "education" without considering the design approach. However, it has been found out that the design of exhibit areas affects visitors' level of appreciation and their zoo descriptions. This research also looks into the design of exhibit areas that are effective for this change to be positive or negative because while natural exhibit areas positively affect the attitudes of individuals towards animals and their learning, unnatural exhibit areas affect them negatively.

The research from Fahlquist (2014) found from interviews data analysis highlighted the fact that all of the zoos in Sweden use a mobile app, but they were not clear on how to use such an app most effectively. The primary social media used by all the zoos to get connected with their visitors is Facebook and the visitors use media technology as a way of receiving information. With these technologies, social media has become a medium in creating new experiences in visiting the zoos.

In addition, study from El-said and Aziz, H. (2021) from 401 respondents had experienced at least one of the VTs simulating Egyptian heritage sites in general, characteristics like how easy virtual tour to use, how enjoyable the experience is, and, particularly, how useful the tour is, bears the most influence on whether a person will adopt virtual tours. Though it's still an effective determinant, it has been found that, in general, characteristics related to the tourist, such as their perception of risk and their belief that virtual tours are safer alternatives to actual site visits, are less influential. This research also found that those using the virtual tour gain more knowledge about the site, the virtual tour should make the most of its "informative" aspect and incorporate attributes of the site that would not necessarily be included in a physical tour, such as music samples, video clips, pictures, or local stories.

The study by Rastati (2020) about Virtual Tour: Tourism in the Time of Corona conducted using online interviews via voice/video call and participatory observation found that the loss of actual travel sensation, no photo experience, and unstable internet connection were some weaknesses. Although virtual tours can never replace traditional travel, it still provides an interesting advantage. Through virtual tours, people are still able to enjoy a piece of relaxation during the quarantine period. As an alternative to tourism during COVID-19, virtual tours also help those with physical limitations to traveling and reduce carbon footprint.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using a qualitative method that reviewed 26,000 comments on ZTNS FB. The data was analysed using narrative analysis to answer the research objectives. Narrative research is a term that subsumes a group of approaches that in turn rely on the written or spoken words or visual representation of individuals. These approaches typically focus on the lives of individuals as told through their own stories (Atlasti, 2021). According to Wolgemuth and Agosto (2019) the knowledge gained through narrative inquiry about individuals and society is narrative constructed and understood through the study of the content and structure of stories (i.e., scripts, texts, visual images). According to Butina (2021), narrative analysis is one form of qualitative data analysis that is often used in narrative inquiry. There are no set procedures for narrative analysis but several narrative researchers have published guidelines and processes for analyzing narratives.

The research will only focus on ZTNS FB, the reason why ZTNS was chosen is because this zoo is the first to have the virtual tour in Malaysia. This research only focuses on the first live stream by the zoo on July 4, 2021. Therefore this study uses Reception Theory introduced by Stuart Hall (1980) namely the theory of encoding and decoding.

Reception Theory (Encoding - Decoding)

Hall (1980) in Brennen S. B (2013: 200), explains that decoding encoding theory is when a text is created, the author/publisher constructs or elaborate on the intended meaning in each text. Hall also outlined three elements in encoding-decoding theory, namely: 1) Dominant/Agreed Meaning (Dominant Code): What is expected by creators of the text, all understand and take from the text. 2) Negotiated Position: Understand the meaning of intended but consider their own experience and text extension while taking insights from both. And 3) Oppositional View: Rejects the meaning intended and constructed a completely different interpretation of the message.

This research uses the reception theory by Stuart Hall by looking at the text content of FB commentary at ZTNS page. This study examines the three elements by Hall such as, Dominant Code, Negotiating Position and Opponent View to examine the new experience of Virtual Zoo Tour among parents in Malaysia.

Data Analysis

This research uses narrative analysis to get the data from comments by parents in ZTNS FB over their new experience on virtual zoo tours. These comments only refer to the first streamed live in their FB. ZTNS streamed live on FB on July 4, 2021 and has 26,000 comments and 11,000 likes. The content of the live streamed briefing session with a veterinarian from ZTNS and explained the information about Estuarine Crocodile, after that feeding sessions with the zoo keeper and the last part in these virtual zoo tours was a questions and answer session with the audiences. Based on the comments from FB a few themes were identified related to perception of parents regarding new experiences on Virtual Zoo Tour and the data was analysed using narrative analysis. First theme is Education and Exposure. This theme relates to what the zoo wants the audience to know and this is the part of the zoo objective while conducting the virtual tour. According to Association Zoos of Aquariums (2013), most zoos and aquaria build on this positive foundation with missions that focus on public education as well as conservation and animal welfare. Below are the comments from parents about education and exposure.

Table 1: Education and Exposure during virtual tour

Comments
• *Good Morning, We have PDPR from Tabika Perpaduan JB. Can selfie and listen to animals sound enough already. These kids are very happy. Thank you Zoo Taiping & Night Safari.* • *Alhamdulillah. Thank you for your explanation in Bahasa. Students from Pasti Al-Huda- Lembah Palas are watching.* • *Glad the explanation in English. I am doing online class with my form 4 students now - Smk Selama with luvvv* • *"Please Forward Teacher" be patient kids, another moment, the crocodile came out, we heard first, they wanted to tell a story about the crocodile.*
• *I encouraged local scouts students to watch this video and make assignments about animals. Hopefully on the next video they can use conversation in malay. This scouts assignment is more difficult compared to PDPR assignments.* • *Assalamualaikum from Tabika Perpaduan Imigresen, Johor Bahru.* • *My kid Muhamad Farhan Nur Ameen bin Mohd Fauzi watching from Gurun Kedah, Tadika Perkim Jalan Hospital.* • *Listening to the explanation is good. Parents should explain back to their kids, not just watching.* • *We shouldn't buy croc skin handbags! Let's save the crocs!* • *Stop hunting and using animal exotic products.* • *That's right! Please stop buying products from animal skin.*

Visiting a zoo is not only for fun, but it also gives some exposure to students and parents about knowledge of animals. Most of the zoo virtual tour visitors comment that they encourage their students to attend and watch the session because it's a part of the education and learning process. We can see from these comments that the virtual tour is not just for pleasure only but they are an education program for the kids and parents. Some teachers give assignments to their students based on the virtual tour. According to Bernama (2018), education on animals is important among the younger generation visitors, especially children and this can be implemented by giving them an unforgettable experience when they are at the zoo. Zoos are designed as an informal learning environment; unless visiting as part of a formal programmatic experience like a school tour, visitors are coming to zoos during their free time and choose which aspects of the zoo they engage with (Godinez and Fernandez, 2019).

Other than that, from the explanation in this virtual tour session, organizers also shared some good information to educate the audience to stop hunting and using animal products and animal conservation. This virtual zoo visit is not just for entertainment only but at the same time they also educate the audience not to use or buy animal products, especially the products from extinct animals and animal conservation. According to Godinez and Fernandez (2019) modern zoos strive to educate visitors about zoo animals and their wild counterparts' conservation needs while fostering appreciation for wildlife in general. Zoos offer opportunities to educate visitors about habitat conservation through programs and activities, and the way individual habitats and zoos are being designed (McElroy, 2015). From these tours its initial step in educating children to appreciate animals and prevent extinction.

Second theme formed a new experience in this research is Leisure. This theme includes a feeling of excitement from both parents and their kids. These virtual zoo tours also give time to parents to spend their bonding times with their kids. From this theme we can see the feeling of excitement is influenced by environmental factors during the pandemic, in which parents and children are just confined at home and cannot spend their leisure time. Table 2 shows the comments from parents about leisure.

Table 2: Leisure

Comments
• *Thank you for this brilliant effort. My kid is excited and enjoying the tour.* • *Good morning everyone. From Sarawak, it is a good idea to do this, the kids are very excited.* • *My kids keep asking where the crocodile is. They can't wait.. they are so excited.* • *Good effort Zoo Taiping! Thank you for this live, my kids are very excited* • *Waiting patiently. Good job Zoo Taiping! My son is so excited when he sees the crocodiles!* • *I haven't been to the zoo for a long time. At least I can feel the atmosphere of the zoo. Thank you.* • *Good job and good effort zoo taiping. Adam and Aafiyah really appreciate this effort. Thank you, they are enjoying it. Please spread more positivity.* • *The children haven't been out of the house for a long time, they can watch this live, the children are happy..tq taiping zoo.*

Both parents and kids are very excited to join this virtual zoo tour because they haven't been out of the house for a long time and also haven't spent time visiting the zoo. Parents also enjoy spending their leisure time watching and observing animals with their kids through virtual zoo tours. Visitors to zoos come in with particular motivations like entertainment, bonding time with their families and friends, and also educational experiences (Roe and McConney, 2015).

The third theme is Language Barrier that created new experiences during a virtual zoo tour. ZTNS conducted their live shows on FB using the English language. Most of the parents watching these virtual zoo tours find that one of the problems in these programs is language barriers during the delivery of program content. According to Buarqoub (2019) language barriers are semantic problems that arise during the process of encoding and decoding the message into words and ideas, respectively. Table 3 shows a sample of words that are referred to as a language barrier.

Table 3: Language Barrier

Comments
• *Kids have difficulties in understanding English. It's better to use Bahasa Malaysia for better understanding.* • *Can be improved. In the future emcees can use Bahasa Malaysia.* • *It will be better if the virtual tour uses Bahasa Malaysia. Kids will get more knowledge when delivered in Bahasa Malaysia. Undeniably, the English language is important as a second language, but it will be better to use Bahasa Malaysia.* • *Bahasa Malaysia please. We're in Malaysia and I believe most of the viewers are Malaysian.* • *Thank you for the show. I feel it's more suitable to use Bahasa Malaysia. Kids are keen to watch, but maybe some of them can't understand English.* • *The audience are kids, they have a language barrier when the medium is English, because most of them are Malaysian.* • *My kids don't understand what she is trying to explain. Poor my kids, they speak Bahasa Malaysia instead of English.* • *I feel that the majority here are Malaysian. Why not use our mother tongue, we should be proud of it. Do not always speak (using English language) all the time. If you do not agree with me, it's ok.* • *I can see a language barrier here because the host is asking questions in English, but the Dr speaks in Bahasa Malaysia. It makes my kids confused and hard to understand.*

Most of the comments from parents argue why the organizer is using the English language instead of using the Malay language. This is because most of the audience watching these virtual zoo tours are kids and they were Malaysian, not foreigners. Parents think that the best way to deliver knowledge to Malaysian kids is using Malay language. It will be helpful for kids to understand the explanation clearly. So, the language in these virtual zoo tours can be considered as language barriers problems between zoo presenters and kids. Language barriers are significant because they are often an impediment to building relationships with others. Also it can cause misunderstandings that lead to conflict, frustration, offense, violence, hurt feelings, and wasting time, effort, money, and lives of the people (Buarqoub, 2019).

The fourth theme of the new experience is Funds and Donation. Funds are very important to streamline the operation of the organization, as well as zoos which require operating costs, work costs of upgrading exhibitions and cages, costs of food, medicine and sanitation, and payment of employee salaries. In relation to that, during the virtual zoo tours, many parents suggested that the zoo show the zoo bank account number for donation purposes. Table 4 shows the comments from parents about funds and donation.

Table 4: Funds and Donation

Comments
● *Can provide bank details at the end of the session to those who would like to contribute some funds to the zoo.* ● *If possible make it like every weekend and everyone who joins the virtual tour can cip in some money for the zoo funds.* ● *Maybe Zoo Taiping can share account no for us to donate as appreciation to Zoo Taiping* ● *Nearly 40k views and if every viewer donated RM1 per person it could help to maintain the zoo's welfare.* ● *What if each person donated RM1, we can help the management to feed the animals.* ● *It will be proper for Zoo Taiping to pin the account no, and it helps everyone who's viewing the virtual tour can donate and the management can buy food for the animals.* ● *Open for donation, there's a lot of viewers who are willing to donate. Pin the account no and everyone here can donate. If each person donated RM1, it would be quite a large number of donations.*

The parents agreed that the zoo can attach the bank account number for donation and it will help the management to buy food for the animals, it also can help the management in maintaining the zoo's welfare and operation. ZTNS spends almost RM150, 000 to RM160, 000 a month to cover all the cost for animal feeding (Liza and Nurul Riduan, 2021). So, the idea of attaching the bank account number, people not only watching the virtual tour but at the same time they also can make some donations and the zoo will get funds to run the zoo.

The fifth theme is visual. A visual is something such as a picture, diagram, or piece of film that is used to show or explain something (Collins Dictionary). Most of the parents want the zoo to provide the visuals aids during briefing and explanation. During the presentation that day, the zoo only explained the information without visuals. Below are the comments from parents about visuals.

Table 5: Visual

Comments
● *My children are eager to watch the animals. I appreciate the explanation because I learn a lot, but would it be possible to explain while showing the animals?* ● *My kids keep asking me, where is the crocodile, and maybe while explaining and at same time can show the crocodile. By the way, good info and explanation. TQ* ● *Too much talking, just showing the animal, kids are excited to see, but the emcees are busy explaining.* ● *To educate the children, the right way is while explaining the info's at the same time need to show them the animals. If not, the children will easily get bored.* ● *Too much facts, should have explained with the animals* ● *Have a tour while explaining. More meaningful instead of this* ● *Just an opinion, there's room for a better live session. While explaining at the same time please show the animals. Anyway, good effort! Would like to suggest having a live show when feeding the animals..... I believe many would like to watch that too* ● *Good explanation. But I feel it would be better if the camera focused on the crocodile. My kids are looking for the crocodile.. Where's the crocodile?* ● *The use of pictures while explaining will be better. Children will easily understand the information.* ● *Thank you Zoo Taiping for the initiatives and hope the management will come out with other programmes and activities like this, but during explanation please show the crocodile. My children want to see the crocodile.* ● *Kids want to see the animal, not only hearing the explanation lol. Please give us a tour. More meaningful instead of this.*

The parents agreed that while explaining the information and at same time they can show the animals to make kids easily understand the information. Showing the animal here refers to the visual of the animal during the briefing session. When the veterinarian gives an explanation at the same time the best way to make people understand is by showing the visuals of animals to avoid kids being bored and give more understanding about the topic. According to Beqiri (2018) visual aids can enhance the presentations, they can increase the audience's understanding of your topic, explain points, make an impact and create enthusiasm.

The sixth theme formed by a new experience is Informative. Informative can be defined as providing useful ideas, details, knowledge, and interesting information. The perception of parents in the comment to the information delivered by ZTNS is informative. The detailed information about ZTNS, Estuarine Crocodile, ecosystem, crocodile extinction and crocodile explained by the veterinarian during these virtual zoo tours. The parents learn a lot by sharing information, knowledge and details about Estuarine Crocodiles. Table 6 shows a sample of words that are referred to informative.

Table 6: Informative

Comments
• *Maybe when you explain, you can show the crocodile. By the way, good info and explanation.* • *I appreciate the explanation because I learn a lot, but would it be possible to explain while showing the animals.* • *This is good, at least we know about crocodiles, if we go to the zoo just watch only without explanation.* • *Fantastic effort! Please have more sessions after this. Interview with zookeepers of different animals. Very informative & interesting! Congrats!* • *Thank you Taiping Zoo for this initiative. Interesting information.* • *This live with explanations is very good for us, not many have chances to know this kind of knowledge.* • *Very informative! My 5 years old loved the info given!* • *Informative and fun session for the kids* • *Continue such informative programs despite the grief of this covid19 pandemic.*

Most parents said from these virtual zoo tours they have gained good info and this informative program gives them knowledge because they can learn more about Estuarine Crocodiles. If the parents visit the zoo physically they only watch the animals without explanation, but on the virtual zoo tour they provide good explanations in an interesting way.

Overall, from reviewing comments in ZTNS FB found that six themes have been formed new experience in virtual zoo tours that are

Education and Exposure, Leisure, Language Barrier, Fund and Donation, Visual and Informative. Parents see these as a new experience, in a way to visit the zoo. The theme Education and Exposure also Leisure show the parents and kids can spend time together to enjoy virtual zoo tours through FB live and also the main purpose of the tours is to give education and exposure to parents and kids about the animal. However the themes like Language Barrier, Fund and Donation, Visual and Informative are the different themes that bring a new experience to parents during a virtual zoo visit. Appropriate use of language and visual aids were seen as lacking during this tour that could affect the process of interpreting the information provided by the zoo. While for themes fund and donation as well as informative it is seen that different perceptions of new experiences are only available in virtual tours only.

THEORY ANALYSIS

For the Reception Theory (encoding-decoding), Hall outlines three elements in this theory, namely the Dominant Code, Negotiated Position and Oppositional View. This study examines the comments by parents in the ZTNS FB by looking at their new experience in virtual zoo tours. This study shows that the three elements of Reception Theory have been accepted to look at parents ' new experience in virtual zoo tours. First element is Dominant Code has formed two themes namely Education and Exposure, theme two Leisure. From these two elements the parents agreed with the dominant code during the virtual zoo tour when focusing on the main purpose of providing education and also exposure to parents and students. Education on animals is important among the younger generation because it helps them to get inspired on their learning process and discovery journeys. Other than that from these virtual tours the organizer has been educating parents and kids to protect the animals and stop using or buying the products from animals. This is an initial step in educating children and giving them awareness to appreciate the animals and prevent extinction. In addition, the parents also agreed that these virtual zoo tours are the best way they can spend leisure time with their kids and as a bonding time with their families. Although this visit is done virtually they still can spend their time the same as visiting the zoo physically.

Moreover, this study also found that the negotiated position formed two themes namely Language Barrier also Fund and Donation for the perception of new experience on virtual zoo tours. Based on the Language Barrier theme it can be seen that parents have their own views in interpreting the zoo message in terms of language use. The use of different languages makes parents understand the meaning but consider their own experience that the use of Malay language is more appropriate in the delivery of these virtual zoo tours. This is because the audience who saw this FB live consisted of children. The use of Malay language can also help to increase children's understanding of the information presented by the zoo. From this discrepancy the parents agreed that the use of English can be replaced with Malay as the medium of instruction in the next virtual zoo tour. In addition, parents also hope that the zoo can provide a bank account number because, while they watch a virtual tour at same time they can also donate to the operation of the zoo. Parents have a different view of the zoo because the zoo only focuses on visits to the virtual zoo, but parents have their own view that they can help the management of the zoo by donating funds to allow the zoo to sustain their finances during this pandemic.

Other than that, the third element in reception theory is Oppositional View, which formed two perceptions of new experiences during virtual zoo tours namely Visual and Informative. This element looks at the use of visuals during the virtual zoo tour. Parents think that the description done by the zoo should be supported by visual aids because through visual display can further improve the understanding of the information discussed. Kids get a better understanding of the information provided because Malay language is often used in their daily lives. Resistance to zoo information explanation without visual aids make parents an active audience, for which they provide thoughtful insights to the zoo to be re-evaluated for future virtual tours. Although parents criticized the language barrier in this virtual tour, they also thought that the information presented was very informative. This clearly shows that parents are very meticulous in evaluating something for children’s viewing. Through the information presented by the zoo, parents have different views, although the information is presented in English and also without visuals, but parents can deepen the description of the information presented.

In conclusion, applying reception theory in this study shows that the three elements namely the Dominant Code, Negotiated Position and Oppositional View are accepted. Parents have varying views in interpreting new experiences in virtual zoo visits. The new experience of a virtual zoo tour is not much different from a physical zoo tour, but there are some things that are contradictory in these virtual tours, namely language barriers, visuals, fund and donation and informative information. In addition, we can see that parents are an active audience who can evaluate and read the message from live broadcasts of virtual zoo tours with different views of new experiences based on the three elements of Reception Theory by Hall.

DISCUSSION

Overall, this study has answered the objectives of the study in which the parents have varying perception of new experience on virtual zoo tours. Six themes have formed related to the new experiences in virtual zoo tours that are Education and Exposure, Leisure, Language Barrier, Fund and Donation, Visual and Informative. The three elements from Reception Theory, namely the Dominant Code, Negotiated Position and Oppositional View has been interpreted by parents with various perceptions based on their own personal understanding and experience. The first theme concerns education and exposure which can be seen by teachers making this virtual tour as a platform for educating and exposure to animals. This can indirectly educate children about animal life and ecosystems. At the same time, these virtual zoo tours also educate parents on animal conservation and refraining from using animal based products. The second new experience theme is Leisure. This theme explains the excitement of parents and children during a virtual zoo visit. The excitement of sitting at home for so long due to the covid-19 pandemic this virtual tour can entertain and give them a chance to see the outside world again. At the same time, these virtual tours give them the opportunity to spend time together. These two themes from the Dominant Code in reception theory, in which the audience is seen receiving views from the zoo in these virtual zoo tours. Parents can relate what the zoo is displaying during their lives, such as visiting the zoo for educational and exposure purposes as well as leisure time.

Language Barrier created new experiences during a virtual zoo visit. The use of English in the delivery of this tour was seen as inappropriate for the target audience. This is because the majority of the audience consists of children aged 1 to 12 years old and they are all Malaysian citizens and Malay native speaker. So the usage of the Malay language is more appropriate because the children are easy to understand. In addition, the parents have suggested during the virtual zoo tours the zoo can attach a bank account number for donation purposes. They argue that this virtual tour is not only for entertainment but at the same time parents can also contribute for the purpose of operating the zoo. These two themes are Negotiated Position in the theory of acceptance, in which parents receive views from the zoo; however parents have their own interpretation on the usage of language in the presentation during virtual zoo tours and also the provision of bank account numbers during the live.

The fifth theme concerns providing visuals aids during briefing and explanations conducted in live streaming. The usage of visuals aids can shape the audience, especially children in understanding the information presented. Parents think that the information provided by the zoo is very informative. Although the use of English as the medium of delivery and without visual aids during this virtual zoo tour, parents still felt that the information presented was very informative and useful. Through the Oppositional View in reception theory can be seen through these two themes, parents have different views with the zoo, the use of visual aids is very important in this virtual tour because it can further increase children's understanding of the topics discussed. If we look at most of the teaching and learning medium for children made from visuals because it is easier for them to remember and to understand. Parents also think that despite the lack of language and visual barriers, the information provided by the zoo is very informative.

All themes lead to the perception of parents ’new experiences in virtual zoo visits. Parents also have similar and different views from the zoo. These similarities and discrepancies are also influenced by the parents ’own experiences.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, through this virtual zoo tour, it can be seen that parents have almost the same and different views from the zoo. This is because the virtual zoo tour experience is a new method applied in the Malaysian community. Although there are shortcomings during this virtual zoo tour, it still entertains, educates and gives exposure to the audience, especially children. The use of these virtual tours will release the longing of parents and children for the animals found in the zoo. The idea of having this virtual tour is another level of achievement to ZTSN and tourism Malaysia. This kind of programme can be implemented in the future with some adjustments and enhancement in making it better.

REFERENCES

Association zoos of Aquariums. (2013). The Accreditation Standards and Related Policies. Silver Spring: Association of Zoos & Aquariums.

Atlasti. (2021, June 21). Narrative Research. https://atlasti.com/narrative-research/.

Bernama. (2018). Zoo Bukan Sekadar Pusat Pameran Tapi Pemeliharaan Haiwan. https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/leisure/2018/02/09/zoo-bukan-sekadar-pusat-pameran-tapi-pemeliharaan-haiwan/.

Beqiri, G. (2018). Using Visual Aids during A Presentation or Training Session. https://virtualspeech.com/blog/visual-aids-presentation.

Brennen, S Bonnie. (2013). Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies. New York: Routledge.

Buarqoub, I. A. S. (2019). Language barriers to effective communication. Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana, 24(6), 64-77.

Butina, Michelle. (2015). A Narrative Approach to Qualitative Inquiry. Clinical Laboratory Science. 28 (3), 190-196.

Boticki, I., Baksa, J., Seow, P. S. K., & Looi, C. K. (2014). Cultivating knowledge creation capacity for social studies among primary school students: A case narrative. In Liu, C.-C. et al. (Eds.), Proceedings of the 22nd International Conference on Computers in Education, 710-715. Japan: Asia-Pacific Society for Computers in Education.

Carr, N., and Cohen, S. (2011). The Public Face of Zoos: Images of Entertainment, Education and Conservation. Anthrozoös 24, 175–189. Doi: 10.2752/175303711X12998632257620.

Collins Dictionary. (2021, June 22). Visual. https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/visual.

El-Said, O & Aziz, H. (2021). Virtual Tours a Means to an End: An Analysis of Virtual Tours' Role in Tourism Recovery Post COVID-19. Journal of Travel Research. 1-21. DOI: 10.1177/0047287521997567

Godinez, A. and Fernandez, E. (2019). What Is the Zoo Experience? How Zoos Impact a Visitor's Behaviors, Perceptions, and Conservation Efforts. Frontiers in Psychology. 10(1746), 1-8. DOI: doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01746.

Huang, YC; Backman, J. S.; and Backman, F. K. (2010). The Impacts of Virtual Experiences on People's Travel Intentions. Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2010, 555-566. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-211-99407-8_46.

Kenanga. (2021, June 23). COVID-19: National Recovery Plan. https://www.kenanga.com.my/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EV_COVID-19_National-Recovery-Plan_210616-Kenanga.pdf.

Koutsoudis, A., F. Arnaoutoglou, and C. Chamzas. (2007). On 3D Reconstruction of the Old City of Xanthi. A Minimum Budget Approach to Virtual Touring Based on Photogrammetry. Journal of Cultural Heritage, 8 (1), 26–31.

Kuebke, F. J. & Matiasek, J. (2013). An Exploratory Study of Zoo Visitors' Exhibit Experiences and Reactions. Zoo Biology, 32(4), 407-416. Doi: 10.1002/zoo.21071.

Livingstone, S., and Das, R. (2013) Interpretation/Reception. In P. Moy (Ed.), Oxford Bibliographies Online: Communication. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1-27. Doi: 10.1093/obo/9780199756841-0134.

Liza Mokhtar & Nurrul Riduan Nor Ashaha. (2021). Zoo Taiping Hilang 45 Peratus Pengunjung. https://premium.sinarharian.com.my/article/153457/fokus/laporan-khas-/zoo-taiping-hilang-45-peratus-pengunjung.

McElroy, M. L. (2015). The Role of Zoos In Educating Visitors About Conservation Of Wildlife And Habitats: A Design For Sunset Zoo In Manhattan, Kansas. K-State Electronic Theses, Dissertations, and Reports. https://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/handle/2097/19110.

Mohd Syazwan Yusuf. (2020, December 25). Cabaran Getir Urus Zoo Negara Ketika Covid-19. https://www.kosmo.com.my/2020/08/30/cabaran-getir-urus-zoo-negara-ketika-covid-19/.

National Geographic. (2021, September 21). Zoo. https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/zoo/.

Nekolny, L and Fialova, D. (2018). Zoo Tourism: What actually is a Zoo? Czech Journal of Tourism, 7(2), 153-166. DOI: 10.1515/cjot-2018-0008.

Osman, A., N. A. Wahab, and M. H. Ismail. (2009). Development and Evaluation of an Interactive 360 Virtual Tour for Tourist Destinations. Journal of Information Technology Impact, 9 (3), 173–82.

Rastati, Ranny. (2020). Virtual Tour: Tourism in the Time of Corona. Conference: 6th International Conference on Social and Political Sciences (ICOSAPS 2020). DOI: 10.2991/assehr.k.201219.074.

Rathika Sheila. (2021, September 21). Help Malaysia's Zoos: Virtual Tours worth Taking. https://malaysia.news.yahoo.com/help-malaysia-zoos-virtual-tours-030009293.html

Roe, K., and McConney, A. (2015). Do Zoo Visitors Come To Learn? An Internationally Comparative, Mixed-Methods Study. Environmental Education Research, 21 (6), 865–888. Doi: 10.1080/13504622.2014.940 282.

Spielmann, N., and A. Mantonakis. (2018). In Virtuo: How User-Driven Interactivity in Virtual Tours Leads to Attitude Change. Journal of Business Research, 88,255–64.

The Edge Markets. (2021, November 2). *Highlights of the National Recovery Plan*. https://www.theedgemarkets.com/article/highlights-national-recovery-p lan.

Thompson, M. (1993). Reception Theory and the Interpretation of Historical Meaning. History and Theory, 32(3), 248. DOI: 10.2307/2505525.

Tourism Perak. (2021, November 2). Taiping Zoo and Night Safari. https://www.tourismperakmalaysia.com/place/Nxz/taiping-zoo-and-night-safari.

Yilmaz, Serap; Duzenli, Tugba & Cigdem, Abdullah. (2017). Visitors Experiences in Different Zoo Exhibits. Current World Environment, 12(1), 17-27. Doi: 10.12944/CWE.12.1.03.

Zoo Taiping. (2021, November 2). Zoo Taiping. https://zootaiping.gov.my/bm/ frame-aboutus.html.

Contribution of Higher Education Institutions in Enhancing the Communication Skills of Homestay Operators in Malaysia

Prakash Velloo* **& Mahiswaran Selvanathan****

Abstract: The tourism industry in Malaysia generates jobs, leads to development of infrastructure, education and related industries (Jaafar et al., 2011). The sustainable tourism activities have also been incorporated into the tourism industry in Malaysia in line with the awareness towards the need to conserve the natural resources. The Malaysian Rural Tourism Master Plan 2001 was formulated in line with the above interest and the homestay activity was one of the initiatives. The homestay industry focuses on lifestyle and experience, which include culture and economic activities (Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia, 2011). Homestay operators offer tourists a chance to experience daily life outside the bustling capital cities and put the visitors closer to nature, rural culture, and friendly Malaysians. Tourists or visitors experience living together with a selected host family while participating in their cultural lifestyle (Kayat & Mohd Nor, 2005; Hamzah, 2006). However, the readiness of the homestay operators from the aspect of knowledge, attitude and skills requires serious attention. According to Kayat (2009), homestay operators lack local participation, local leadership, knowledge and skills, planning, and community structure. Bavani et al. (2015) also mentioned the need for homestay operators to have good communication skills with tourists in Malaysia. Thus, this paper investigates the contribution of higher education institutions in Malaysia in addressing the issue of communication skills among homestay operators to enable them to serve their guests effectively. It attempts to assess the adequacy and relevancy

---

*Prakash Velloo, Centre for Languages, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: prakash@hju.edu.my
**Mahiswaran Selvanathan, National Higher Education Research Institute, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Email: mahiswaran@usm.my

of the present courses for homestay operators in terms of communication skills in the English language.

Keywords: Higher Education Institutions, homestay, rural tourism

INTRODUCTION

The conventional tourism has been perceived as the most widespread and popular for many tourists globally, since it offers them with needed convenience and comfort. However, the alternative tourism i.e. responsible tourism, green tourism, intelligent tourism, eco-tourism, participative tourism has been suggested instead, with the hope that less negative impacts can be efficiently addressed.

One the other hand, rural tourism's core characteristic is that the environment must be preserved and well taken care of by the tourism stakeholders i.e. community people, visitors, governmental and private sectors; more importantly, this type of tourism focuses on a small number of visitors who are travelling to rural areas rather than urban settings (Butler, 1991).

Among the rural tourism products in Malaysia, the homestay programme, which was introduced in 1988, has become an icon whereby a tourist stays together with the host family and interacts with the local community for a reasonable charge (Arif & Honggen, 2013).

The homestay programme can be traced back to the early 1970's at the then 'drifter enclave' of Kampong Cherating Lama in Pahang. Then, a local lady took in drifters/hippies for long stays and provided food and accommodation (Hamzah, 1997). This was followed by other villages which entertained local and international tourists who preferred a different travel experience, embedding lifestyle and culture through homestay.

The first homestay programme which began in 1988 took place in villages near Temerloh, Pahang and was a boost to the local economy with financial benefits (Kayat, 2007). The success mooted the Malaysian government to include the rural communities under the National Plan for Rural Development in 1995 where funds were reserved to boost the homestay programme. Since then, the Malaysian government's interest in the development of homestay has been significant because it is regarded as a potentially good product in promoting the country as well as getting the community involved by utilising natural resources, cultural and heritage assets within the community through rural tourism (Arif & Honggen, 2013).

The homestay programme helps in generating income for the community and fulfils the aspiration of the government to eradicate poverty and create job opportunities for the community. The importance of homestay as a tourism product has attracted the Malaysian government to assist the rural communities by enhancing their economic welfares and incomes. This is because a market survey undertaken to formulate the master plan indicated that foreign tourists who came to Malaysia spent 15% of their stay in rural areas. Based on the report by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (2019), a total income of RM 30,124,466.06 was generated in 2017 as compared to RM 4,923,433.30 in 2007 through the homestay industry. The booming of homestay industry in Malaysia can be easily witnessed as the total income has become six folds in a span of ten years.

A homestay programme gives tourists the opportunity to stay with a chosen family, interact and experience the daily life of their homestay family and learn the culture and lifestyle of the rural community in Malaysia (Kayat & Mohd Nor 2006; Hamzah, 2006). It cannot be merely classified as a lodging facility. In contrast, it focuses more on lifestyle and experience, including cultural and economic activities. Each homestay programme offers different types of activities, depending on the culture, food, economic activity as well as location. The traditional villages involved in the homestay programme are also committed to ensure that visitors experience village-style living firsthand and come under the purview of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) in Malaysia.

Past research show that females in local communities are more highly motivated to be involved in the Homestay Programme than men. In addition, most community members who participated in the programme were above the age of 40. They were either housewives or food business operators. Youth participation in the Homestay Programme was low, comprising only 4.8% of the participants (Jaafar et al., 2011).

To regulate the Homestay Programme, MOTAC in Malaysia issues a license if the house owner is able to provide a list of criteria, as follows:

1. Easy access from the main road
2. Adequate facilities
3. No history of criminal record
4. Not suffering from communicable disease
5. High standard of hygiene

After obtaining the license, the homeowners must participate in a basic training course that is organised by the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA). The homestay industry has lately been given importance in the 11th Malaysia Plan and received more allocation for upgrading infrastructure and facilities. Previously, the 9th Malaysia Plan allocated RM40 million. Furthermore, a boost of another RM10 million was given under the Second Stimulus Package (Amin et al., 2013).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The growth of the homestay industry in Malaysia as a successful tourism product has attracted many scholars to conduct research within the scope mentioned. However, past studies have only focused on aspects such as the management of the industry, the concept of homestay, implementation issues, socio and economic development of the industry and its impact (Kayat, 2010; Sulaiman & Awang, 2009; Hamzah, 2009; Lo et al., 2012; Ibrahim & Abdul Razzaq, 2009).

It is safe to mention that little attention has been given to understand issues related to the soft skills especially communication skills in the English language of the homestay operators in Malaysia. However, the importance of communication skills in the English language among the homestay operators is undeniable. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia (2011), homestay is not classified as accommodation facilities, however, it focuses more on lifestyle and experience, which include culture and economic activities. Homestay operators are shouldering the task of offering tourists a chance to experience the daily life outside the bustling capital cities and put the visitors closer to nature, rural culture, and friendly Malaysians. In short, homestay operators are burdened to host cultural shows, play the role of emcees, organise traditional games, practise public speaking skills, describe places of interest, show direction of places and so on. Thus, competency in communication skills in the English language is deemed necessary for the homestay operators and there is a need to address the issues concerning soft skills related to English language communication skills among them.

In support to the above statement, Shuib et al. (2010) reported that there is a clear need to address the issues and problems of communication skills among homestay operators. As most of the tourists are international tourists, English language acquisition would help the operators to communicate better and act as 'mini ambassadors' to ensure the sustainability of the programme in the long term. This is probably important because homestay tourism industry is booming and there is a need to offer a suitable English programme for homestay operators.

'Culture of a community' and 'language skills' are the determining factors in providing a good service to the guests at the homestay (Jamal et al., 2011; Carman, 1990). Further research in the above areas is recommended to ensure that the service offered by homestay operators is up to the standards. Yusof and Awang (2014) also recommended that scheduled checks and monitoring in the above areas to be carried out to ensure that the level of service provided to the guests at the homestay is satisfactory.

The lack of research in the areas of communication skills among homestay operators has also contributed to the little knowledge on how homestay operators interact and the difficulties they faced during interaction with their international guests. Therefore, there is possibly a need to explore the communication skills of homestay operators in Malaysia especially in the use of English language. This aspect is undeniable as the homestay operators deal with international tourists and now, there is no institution that has done research on English Language or the language item(s) in the English language of homestay operators. Thus, it is time that the Higher Learning Institutions in Malaysia address this issue so that a more effective curriculum can be developed to improve the English language skills of homestay operators in Malaysia.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

This paper investigates the contribution of higher education institutions in enhancing the communication skills of homestay operators in Malaysia. It reviews the related literature to identify the contribution of higher education institutions in empowering the homestay operators in the above skills to enable them to serve their guests more effectively.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the needs in communication skills among homestay operators in Malaysia
2. To identify the contribution of higher education institutions in enhancing the communication skills of homestay operators in Malaysia

There is a need to explore the communication skills of the homestay operators in Malaysia especially in the use of English language. This is undeniable as homestay operators deal with international tourists and therefore communication in the English Language is vital. Thus, it is time that the Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia address this issue so that homestay operators in Malaysia could further develop their communication skills in the English language.

COMMUNICATION NEEDS AMONG HOMESTAY OPERATORS IN MALAYSIA

To ensure the success of the homestay, the stakeholders and the local communities must work very closely to ensure community participation in the tourism site (Nepal, 2000). There are many challenges affecting the effectiveness of the homestay programme and each one could be different from one community to another. As the homestay programme involves community participation as one of the criteria set by the MOTAC, therefore, its success includes operators themselves, leadership of the community and holistic involvement of the community etc (Arif & Honggen, 2013).

Communication skills are deemed to be in a critical area that needs immediate attention as this factor creates the obvious gap between the visitor and host. They further reported that sometimes a passive community is seen to be an internal challenge because the community members have become too dependent on the Government agency. In addition, a homestay programme most probably has its host lacking communication skills which becomes a hindrance to the experience of the guests in interacting with the hosts. The drawback by the host is the lack of communication skills or mastering an internationally accepted language especially English as the medium of conversation with the tourists. The inability of the host to master basic English is usually a hindrance to the experience of the guests in interacting with the hosts (Arif & Honggen, 2013).

Mapjabil et al. (2011) mentioned that most homestay operators possessed some skills in the English language but at a very basic level and use of limited vocabulary. They switched to Bahasa Malaysia and used the support of sign language to communicate. When they wish to use the English language, they tend to get the help of their family members. They added that to date, there was no training in English for homestay operators. The operators were interested and motivated to learn English, but the training should be relevant and specific to their jobs. The above study further found that from the four communication skills in English, listening and speaking are the more important for homestay operators. Managers and operators of homestay felt that they require English communication skills related to welcoming visitors, introducing family members, ushering, and explaining briefly about a topic, process, and location.

The need for English language training for homestay operators was also voiced by Liu (2006); Kayat (2009); Ibrahim and Hasbullah (2008). They argued that the issue related to the needs and ability to communicate in the English language among the homestay operators received little attention in Malaysia and very few studies have been carried out. They added that homestay operators had difficulties to communicate in the English language with the tourists especially during verbal communication. Past researchers preferred to focus on promotions, cultural and management aspects.

The respondents in Mapjabil et al. (2011)'s research also expressed their grievances as they said that they needed to improve their English language communication skills especially in situations as welcoming guests, introducing family members, to usher and explain briefly about a specific topic, process and location.

Shuib et al. (2011) further mentioned that little is known about the problems faced by homestay operators in English language communication and their needs in learning English. Most of the studies involving homestay operators tend to focus on their social and economic aspects as in Mapjabil et al. (2011); Ibrahim and Abdul Razzaq (2009). There are very few studies that include discussion on homestay operators' English language communication skills, yet the treatment given is rather brief because their focus is on other aspects.

The discussion above suggests that homestay operators in Malaysia possess only basic skills of the English language and face difficulties to communicate with the foreign tourists in the English language and may create a gap or miscommunication with them. There is a clear need to address the issues and problems of communication skills in the English language among the homestay operators. Based on the statistics recorded in 2017, a total of 61,846 (16%) were international tourists (MOTAC, 2019). Thus, English language acquisition would help the operators to communicate better and act as 'mini ambassadors' to ensure the sustainability of the program in the long term.

The discussion above supports the motive of this study to justify that the English language communication skills pose challenges to the homestay operators and further investigate the aspects in the English language communication skills which they lack.

The results of the study by Jaafar et al. (2011) showed that the overall score of required knowledge was at a moderate level. Government and community committees needed to plan suitable community capacity building program to strengthen the attitudes of local communities, especially in terms of providing a sense of belonging, a sense of community, a sense of tourist needs, etc. The operators' skills were at a moderate level, earning an overall mean score of 2.042.

Overall, most skills need to be improved in the future, but English communication skills, safety and first aid knowledge are crucial and need immediate action from stakeholders (Jaafar et al., 2011). Tourists are very particular about communication, especially because they want to get as much experience as possible from the host community. Communication between hosts and tourists enhance the interaction. Safety and first aid are also top priorities for tourists. Therefore, homestay operators must gain adequate skills in those areas (Jaafar et al., 2011). The stakeholders, especially the government agencies that are involved in the training programme, should emphasise training planning and management, and also make informational resources more easily available to the participants.

Bavani et al. (2015) who sought to understand how adult learning took place in a homestay programme at Kanchong Darat, Banting, Selangor discovered that the adult learners were satisfied with their social skills and networking ability compared to their neighbours from their village. They claimed to have accumulated a unique experience in dealing with the tourists. However, they found that there had been differences in culture and languages used among the homestay operators. Many of them encountered problems of mastering the language because of language barrier. This issue was prominent in operators who were above 50 years old and those who had health issues. This finding is parallel with what Bee and Bjorklund (2004) mentioned where older learners were claimed to be slower in mastering the language than the younger learners.

The above literature probably indicates that adult learners who are involved in homestay programme pick up their communication skills better through social networking and self-directed learning (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004). It was also proposed that MOTAC should provide assistance by providing technical expertise when conducting a training programme and younger participants could be encouraged to join the training.

Jamaludin et al. (2012) also mentioned that communication is definitely a problem between a host that only speaks Malay and guests who mostly speak English and their native tongue in Laklok Village (one of the two villages where study was done). However, the Malaysian guests could communicate fairly well although there were quite a number of times when sign language had to be used to emphasise a question or a point. For international guests, the hosts and these guests communicated through facial expression and with the help of the Malaysian guests to translate for them. Otherwise, some of the hosts and the guests kept to themselves and did their daily activities except when there were group activities.

Hashemi et al. (2014) discovered in their study that most of the tourists were of the view that the English language is an essential medium of communication for tourists and the local people. However, not all foreign tourists themselves were fully fluent in the English language. As such, the respondents felt that the tourists should be facilitated at a greater extent when interacting and communicating in the English language. In addition, the findings also proved that the local people and the tourists realised that the importance of the English language is indispensable to promote the tourism activities.

COURSES OFFERED BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS RELATED TO COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR HOMESTAY OPERATORS IN MALAYSIA

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) refer to public and private tertiary education providers in Malaysia. They include universities, academics, colleges, and institutes that award academic degrees or professional certifications. The Ministry of Education is responsible for the operation of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Malaysia. The education sector in Malaysia has also enjoyed the highest national development budget which symbolises the commitment of the Malaysian government towards education.

HEIs in Malaysia collectively have a similar mission which is to build and create a higher education environment that is conducive for the development of academic and institutional excellence and to generate individuals who are competent, innovative and of noble character (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2015) to serve the needs of the community-based tourism industry.

The key functions of HEIs include determining policies and the direction of the higher education sector to build an excellent and outstanding nation that is rich in knowledge, culture, and civilization. They also act as a catalyst to develop the sector that enables the nation to compete in the era of globalization. They also confront the challenges of the present global economic scene, in line with the government's aspiration to produce adequate human resource with knowledge and high moral values to achieve its strategic plan and vision for 2020 (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2015).

The universities and colleges aspire to generate individuals who are competent, innovative and of noble character to serve the needs of the nation and the world while the polytechnics provide an alternative route that sufficiently produces highly skilled and qualified human capital which will ensure the success of a new economy based on innovation and creativity.

According to Alter (2005), community engagement is a two-way process where universities work together with communities to build and sustain relationships that influence, shape and promote success of both parties. The community can benefit from the knowledge transfer process of the university to address its problems or needs while its research agenda can be tailor-made to provide a platform for student learning, contribute to economic growth and enhance the quality of life of a community.

University-Community engagement activities can be divided into four types as listed below:

1. Service
2. Outreach
3. Partnership
4. Curricular

Involvement in university-community engagement activities started from informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and lastly, empowering the community. This is based on the model of engagement developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) (Strom, 2011).

In the Malaysian context, Howard, and Sharma (2006) mentioned universities can enhance the quality of life of the community and the effectiveness of the civil service apart from the economic growth. For instance, in the last 40 years, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), as one of the leading HEIs in Penang, has aided to reshape the socio-economic, demographic, and cultural fabric of the state. USM has collaborated with government and non-governmental organisations to develop specific communities in Penang. USM has also collaborated with various industries in Penang in research projects and student internships in the development of Penang (Shuib & Lie, 2017).

Community engagement is regarded as the third role after research and teaching among higher education institutions in Malaysia. It is also regarded as a pillar in the Malaysian higher education system: serving the economic, social, and cultural needs of the community, locally and globally (Rahman et al., 2019). In line with this agenda, HEIs in Malaysia have executed several mechanisms including the establishment of the industry and community network division at research universities and the establishment of the University Community Transformation Centre (UCTC).

The Knowledge Transfer Programme (KTP) is another example where the Ministry of Education offers grants to universities to carry out community engagement projects and has attracted many academics in various universities. The academics can also seek funding from their universities to carry out community engagement projects (Rahman et al., 2019).

Rahman et al. (2019) also proposed high impact university-community engagement activities as below:

1. Enhancing the community’s income
2. Conserving culture and tradition
3. Enhancing the quality of the environment
4. Enhancing the quality of education
5. Enhancing health and awareness

In their research, it was found that the frequency for “enhancing networks” was far higher than any of the other benefits stated by the respondents. They also added that respondents did not regard community engagement to gain awards or promotions. They also concluded that the university-community engagement projects must be strategically aligned to the university teaching and research agenda. In summary, research must focus on the betterment of the society and the nation at large. To realise this mission, part of the requirements in approving research proposals must be based on the services and engagement which will be the outcomes of the research.

Shuib and Azizan (2015) added that the current literature on university-community engagement has revealed that regardless of the forms of engagement, the activities carried out typically involve face-to-face consultations, either individual interactions or group interactions between the university and the community. However, the use of mobile devices (m-learning) is a relatively new form of learning through information technology. Various studies also have shown that m-learning has a great potential to facilitate a university’s efforts in engaging with the community in need. They added that the utilisation of mobile devices is seen as a feasible solution in bridging the relationship between the university and the community.

Koshy and Mariano (2011) stressed that the people must be empowered for engagement to work, and empowerment is cardinal to a community engagement strategy. Rahman et al. (2019), however, found that empowerment in Malaysian community engagement is rare.

University-community projects through cross-border engagements may highlight the possibilities of regional programmes in terms of building and sustaining peace. However, in their effort to enhance citizenship in complex societies, they are increasingly at risk of divides and violence (Shuib & Lie, 2017).

In-line with their objective to provide an infrastructure for rural communities to gain skills training through short courses as well as providing access to post-secondary education in Malaysia, the community may be engaged by universities, polytechnics, and community colleges as well as many other government and private agencies. All these institutions play their roles to contribute to community-based tourism especially to homestay operators.

Now, The Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (MRRD) has appointed Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA) to conduct training for the community who are directly involved in the homestay industry. It provides capacity building for the homestay co-ordinators and homestay operators through Village Security & Development Committee (JKKK).

The basic training course covers modules on Malaysian Tourism Policy and Homestay Guidelines, environment cleanliness, food preparation, receiving guests and housekeeping, promotion, marketing and offering a homestay package.

MOTAC is the direct owner of the homestay program as it falls under rural tourism. It works closely with related agencies in developing tourism projects to reduce poverty. MRRD closely supports the homestay program to promote rural development and modernization. MRRD is responsible for providing the infrastructure for rural tourism developments such as roads, public toilets, community multi-purpose halls, improved landscape, public walkways, jetty, etc.

On the other hand, INFRA acts as the training institute under MRRD that provides training and capacity building for the rural community. It trains homestay operators, communities, and the Village Security & Development Committee (JKKK). JKKK is appointed by the State Government at the community level and has the responsibility for the security and development of the village.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) also contributes by giving financial and technical assistance to improve agricultural products or agro products to improve value added activities in tourism.

However, the readiness of the homestay operators from the aspect of knowledge, attitude and skills requires serious attention. According to Kayat (2009), homestay operators lack local participation, local leadership, knowledge and skills, planning, and community structure. The past studies discussed above also show that there is also no module on communication skills offered in the present programmes for the homestay operators in Malaysia.

The Adequacy and Relevancy of the Programmes Offered by Higher Education Institutions in Addressing the Needs in Communication among Homestay Operators

Communication skills are a catalyst to ease the tourists' stay at the homestay while a conversation between the two parties could also be a mutual exchange of ideas and experience. Thus, the key elements in communication would be the use of a common language and the dissemination of local culture to the tourists during the stay. English language is seen to be mandatory in this aspect as it is the internationally spoken language in the world and its certification as the second language in Malaysia. As mentioned by Shuib et al. (2011), the existing modules are incapable of catering to the needs of the operators as there is more focus on ways to create positive impression among tourists rather than on how to communicate effectively.

The role of HEIs in Malaysia is deemed important to equip homestay operators with effective English language communication skills. Communication between hosts and tourists enhance the interaction process and the higher education institutions play an important role to incorporate this course content into the syllabus so that potential homestay operators can gain adequate skills in this area. The skills required to operate the homestay business are more practical based and demand more hands-on training on the job than a solid theoretical expertise. Thus, the necessary skills which are related to the homestay industry can be sought at the lower bracket of the tertiary education hierarchy. Short courses and daily courses are also suitable for the current or potential homestay operators to enhance their skills in managing and operating the homestay business.

From the discussion in the previous section, there is a need to address the issues and problems of communication skills in the English language among the homestay operators in Malaysia. There is probably a need to find out more about the needs of the homestay operators in communication skills in the English language. This process will enhance the awareness of their needs and help in designing a more effective and focused language course (Mehdi, 2008).

RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, this study recommends that the training programme for homestay coordinators and operators include English language modules and templates specifically designed for them. It would serve as a point of reference when communicating with international guests. This will also help the homestay operators to improve their service and boost the homestay industry.

As Community Colleges are tasked with providing vocational-based training programmes leading to a certificate qualification either at Certificate/Diploma level, Special Skills Certificate for the underprivileged and the life-long learning modules as short courses (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2018), it is therefore proposed that the community colleges offer the course specialised for homestay operators. This is also in-line with the notion of community colleges in providing workforce education and college transfer academic programs. One of the four missions of community colleges in Malaysia is to strengthen the community through lifelong learning. It aspires to produce this mission by 2025 through its educational and training programmes required by the industry and community. The merging of polytechnics and community colleges further promises a significant innovation in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) landscape to produce a skilful human capital that can contribute to the growth of the country's economy. Till 2017, the 94 community colleges in total have supplied 64% of the TVET workforce in the country (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 2018).

In an interview conducted by the researcher with the Director of Sungai Petani Community College, Pn Najmiah Abdullah, it was gathered that community colleges do offer short courses to the public. However, there has been no courses so far that caters to either the communication skills or management skills of homestay operators. She added that such courses can be useful to homestay operators, and it is worthwhile to offer such courses. She further commented that if a comprehensive module could be drawn up that incorporates user-friendly templates for daily use, the participants will benefit from the course which could boost their business and the homestay industry in general.

Director of Jerai Community College, Mr Saifuddin Hasan also mentioned that the researcher that communication skills especially the ability to use the English language will certainly aid homestay operators because English language is lingua franca at international level. Thus, introduction of English language in the training for homestay programme is significant to the operators and the industry. He added that community colleges can play the role of training providers too.

Suggestions for Future Research

The present study analyses only the related secondary sources. In future, a primary research could further investigate how HEIs can contribute to the homestay operators to identify the objectives, as well as, perceived and product-oriented needs (West, 1994). This can help to determine the specific needs of homestay operators to improve their communication skills in the English language. Subsequently, a suitable module can be devised and validated.

REFERENCES

Alter, T. (2005) Achieving the Promise of Public Scholarship. In S. Peters, N. Jordan, M. Adamek and T. Alter (Eds.), *Engaging Campus and Community: The Practice of Public Scholarship in the State and Land-Grant University System*. Kettering Foundation, 461–487.

Amin, A., Saleh, M., Shaladdin, M., Ibrahim, Y. (2013). A Predictive Determinant of Quality

of Life Among Homestay Program Participants in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science. 9*(3). 33-41. Canadian Center of Science and Education.

Arif Kamisan, P., & Xiao, H. (2013). Challenges and Community Development: A Case Study of Homestay in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science Journal, 9*(5) 1-17.

Bavani, S., Lehsius, N.F., Sangka, J., Ahmad, A., Kassim, A., & Ibrahim, R. (2015). Visitor Satisfaction of Kanchong Darat Homestay, Selangor - A Case Study. *5th International Symposium 2015*, IntSym 2015, SEUSL.

Bee, H. & Bjurklund, B.R. (2004). *Journey of Adulthood Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches (5th ed*.) Pearson.

Butler, R.W. (1991). Tourism, Environment and Sustainable Development. *Environmental*

Conservation. 18(3). 201-209. Cambridge University Press. https://www.jstor.org/stable/44521393

Carman, J.M. (1990). Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality: An Assessment of T. *Journal of Retailing.* 66(1). 33. Elsevier Ltd.

Hamzah, A. (1997). *The evolution of small-scale tourism in Malaysia: Problems, opportunities and implications for sustainability in Tourism and Sustainability: Principles to Practice.* 199-217. CAB International.

Hamzah, A. (2006). Rural homestay to enhance tourists experience. *The World Tourism Conference*, Kuala Lumpur, 4-6 June 2007. *11*, 157-178.World Tourism Organisation.

Hamzah, A. (2009), The growing Importance of Community Based Tourism in National Economies: A global perspective. In *International Seminar on Community based Tourism: Learning From the homestay Programme in Malaysia, Towards Developing a sustainable Community Based Tourism: Issues, Impacts & Opportunities*. 4-16 August 2009, Hotel UiTM.

Hashemi, M., Raftari, S., & Javed, M. (2014). The Role of the English Language in Facilitating Tourists in Malaysia: Tourists' Perceptions. *International Journal of Academic Research*. *6*(4): 204-210. Penerbit UTM Press.

Howard, J., and Sharma, A. (2006). *Universities' Third Mission: Communities Engagement, B-Hert Position Paper, 11.* parlinfo.aph.gov.au.

Ibrahim, Y., & Abdul Razzaq, A.R. (2009). *Homestay Program and Rural Community Development in Malaysia*. Retrieved from http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/re/k-rsc/hss/book/Vol0203.p4v

Ibrahim, Y., & Hasbullah, F. (2008). *Pemasaran Produk Pelancongan di Tanah Rancangan 185 FELDA in Pelancongan Malaysia: Isu pembangunan, budaya, komuniti dan persetempatan* (Bab 14). Universiti Utara Malaysia Press.

Jaafar, M., Abdul Aziz, A.R., Maideen, S.A., & Mohd Sukarno, S.Z. (2011). Entrepreneurship in the tourism industry: Issues in Developing, *International Journal of Hospitality Management. 30*(4). 827-835. Elsevier Publications.

Jamal, S.A., Othman, Nor'Ain, Nik Muhammad, N.M. (2011). Tourist Perceived Value in A Community Based Homestay Visit: An Investigation Into The Functional and Experiential Aspect of Value, *Journal of Vacation Marketing. 17*(1). 5-15. SAGE Publications.

Jamaludin, M, Othman, N., Awang, A.R. (2012). Community based homestay programme: A personal experience. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. *42*. 451-459. Elsevier.

Kayat, K., & Mohd Nor, N.A. (2006). Penglibatan Ahli Komuniti Dalam Program Pembangunan Komuniti: Satu Kajian ke atas Program Homestay di Kedah. *Akademika, 67,* 77-102.

Kayat, K. (2007). Customer orientation among rural home stay operators. *Asian Journal on Hospitality and Tourism. 6*(2). 65-78.

Kayat, K. (2009). Community based tourism in developing countries. *International Seminar on Community Based Tourism*, Shah Alam, Malaysia, 4-5 August, 2009.

Kayat, K. (2010). *The homestay program in Malaysia and its implications for the future*. In Din, K. & Mapjabil, J. Tourism Research: What Which Way.

Koshy, S. I., & Mariano, J. M. (2011). Promoting youth purpose: A review of the literature. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *132*, 13-29. DOI: 10.1002/yd

Liu, A. (2006). Tourism in Rural Areas. *Tourism Management. 27*(5), 878-889, Elsevier.

Lo, M.C., Mohamad, A.A., & Songan, P. (2012). Positioning Rural Tourism: Perspectives from the Local Communities. *International Journal of Trade, Economics and Finance, 3*(1), 59-65.

Mapjabil, J., Mohd Rosdi, S.A., Shuib, M., & Abdullah, S. (2011). Homestay programme development in the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia: Profile, products and prospects, *Malaysia Journal of Society and Space, 7(*2), 45-54.

Mehdi, H. S. (2008). Introduction to Needs Analysis. *English for Specific Purposes World. 4*(1). Azad University of Baft.

Ministry of Education, Malaysia. (2015). *Executive Summary: Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education).* Ministry of Education Malaysia. http://www.moe.gov.my

Ministry of Education, Malaysia. (2018). *Strategic Plan: Polytechnic and Community Colleges.* http://www.moe.gov.my/menumedia/media-cetak/penerbitan/pppm-2015-2025

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia (2011, April 22).http://www.motac.gov.my.

Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia. (2019). *Statistik Program Pengalaman Homestay Malaysia, Bahagian Pembangunan Industri.* http://www.motac.gov.my/en/download

Nepal, S. K. (2000). Tourism, national parks and local community. In Butler, R.W. and Boyd, S.W. (Eds.) *Tourism and National Parks: Issues and Implications.* 73-94. John Wiley and Sons.

Rahman, S.A., Md Yunus A.S., Azman, N., Shuib, M., Abdul Rahim, A., & Masron, T. (2019). Adopting Strategic Interventions in Substantiating University Functions: Identifying the Components of University-Community Engagement. *The Journal of Behavioral Science*, *14*(2), 1-14. Retrieved from https://so06.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/IJBS/article/view/143414.

Shuib, M., Kamil, S. R. A., Abdullah, S., Mapjabil, J. (2010). A Study of Homestay Operators and International Guests' English Language Oral Interaction. In Mohamed, B. (Eds.) *Proceedings of Regional Conference on Tourism Research: The state of the art and its sustainability, Penang, Malaysia*. Retrieved from eprints.usm.my/26626/1/PROCEEDINGS_RCTR_2010.pdf

Shuib, M. et al. (2011). *Major Issues in English Language Communication Ability Among Malaysian Homestay Operators in the Northern Region.* Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Shuib, M., & Azizan, S.N. (2015). *Emerging practices in university-community engagement in Malaysia.* In Collins C.S. & Neubauer D.E. (Eds.) Redefining Asia Pacific Higher Education in Contexts of Globalization: Private Markets and the Public Good. International and Development Education. Palgrave Pivot.

Shuib, M., & Lie, Koo Yew. (2017). *The Role of the University with a Focus on University-Community Engagement*. Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Strom, A. (2011). *Enabling Engagement: A Study of University – Community Engagement at a Non-Metropolitan Australian University,* Southern Cross University.

Sulaiman, M., & Awang, A.R. (2009). Criteria and standards in the Malaysian homestay. *International seminar on community-based tourism: Learning from the Homestay Programme in Malaysia.* INTEKMA Shah Alam, Malaysia, 4-5 August, 2009.

West. (1994). Needs analysis in language teaching: *Language Teaching, 27*(1), 1-19.

Yusof, Y. & Awang, Z. (2014). Preliminary Study: Green Practices, Awareness and Knowledge About the Environment Among Homestay Operators in Selangor, Malaysia. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research.292.* 286-293. Atlantis Press.

Studying and Understanding Film

Ronnie Danial Rozario[*]

Abstract: The study of film is a way of understanding more strongly about a movie or even its directors or producers. We will look at montage theories at the start of the modern century, or at the era of motion pictures. The technical quality of the film may seem confusing, Film studies exist to help clear the confusion as—it helps us understand the art of the film. At the end of the nineteenth century the modernization of the film gave birth to a whole array of film producers and directors with their own styles and methods followed after that.

Earlier films concentrated on the production and theoretical evaluation of the cinema instead of skillful quality, systematic narrative of past events and the principles of explanation and prediction used in schools of higher learning (Tan, 2018). Ever since film was created, the innovation of studying film as a subject grew to determine the evolution of elements and film appearance, in 1919 the Film schools in Russia were the first schools in the world to focus on the progress of film as a type of study. Several motion film schools too, were founded in 1929, which began with an arrangement together with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. A major in film studies was offered in 1932 but without noting the differences that were adopted in film studies (Silver, 2007) Other schools and universities started their curriculum of cinema and film, however, with no division between the theory and practical approaches.
In 1938, during the German occupation, many schools opened and were teaching this subject. To complete studying film studies, you will have to finish a short film.

Keywords: Film theory, Movies, Directors, Heinrich George

[**]Ronnie Danial Rozario, Lecturer at Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: ronnie@hju.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

I will always remember the times when I was learning Film, one of the first things I needed to know were these three names, Sergei Eisentein, Vsevolod Pudovkin, and Alexander Dovchenko (Schwarz, 2018). I refer to them as grandfathers of film theories. They had wonderful ideas which had something to do with their experiences. Coincidently, they came out with similar montage theories.

I have always wondered what are the concepts of cinema, and the theories of these three grandfathers that have opened the door for many filmmakers today. When I first got into editing, movement and editing was mind-boggling. Editing to make sense, the fundamentals that every filmmaker should know before getting into video editing or just holding a camera. This prepared me for a life in film production and editing motion pictures and documentaries, two different editing concepts. The visual components of my films are usually overlooked, but are just as important as my script. It is the way of communicating moods and emotions, variety and style

I discovered that a film is difficult to understand. There are several theories that you will need to be familiar with. To study film, scholars need to analyse it. We write what we see (indicate the expression) from film. We look at Jurassic Park (1993), we can indicate when Alan Grant (Sam Neil) walks beside a brachiosaur, and looks up in shock, or we can indicate the film's defined areas (how the film is constructed) in the same way, we can indicate how the camera turns left and right and follows to the right as Grant and the brachiosaur move. Expressing is a must but not a rule for film writing. You will repeat what you see in the film.

So I needed to reinforce a statement with studying the nature of it which involves scrutinizing a films overall appearance or elements, that is, the film's plan and structure. I searched for patterns that gave importance to films, or significant action. The film's elements added up to form a new existence that does not appear in each part, to make it simple, important appearance is the corresponding of a person's interpretation of the visuals.

But how do we identify aesthetic emotions? You need to discipline yourself to value the particular attributes of a film, or each event in a film. You need to achieve an extensive study of the interior process of a film, and be perceptive to the unparalleled meaning of every camera position or framing in each event of a film. Not all camera positions are the same. A follow shot in Spielberg's film Jurassic Park is not the same as a follow shot in Max Ophuls film "Letter from an Unknown Woman" (Brownrigg, 2003)

FILM AESTHETICS

It's not a ridiculous idea to study the cinema, the question we ask ourselves: How do we learn film? Film has been studied from many styles and ways. We can recognise ten styles to film (the list is not long);

1. A historical outlook about film which may emphasise leaders, such as the Lumiere brothers or Edison, and/or technological methods such as the age of sound, the growth of colour.
2. Knowledge of procedures: either historically, which inquires knowledge such as: when was the first close-up used? or judgement and skills
3. Knowledge of famous people (studio, Moghuls, stars……)
4. Knowledge of the connection of film and other performances, usually theatre or a novel.
5. A succession of past occurrence of old films
6. Film in association to the community. Film can be read in connection to important friendly events, or, war
7. Systematic narrative of studios in Hollywood
8. Knowledge of directors
9. Knowledge of film categories – either formally or as a social rite
10. Rules of the film industry by means of censorship and antitrust.

MISE -EN-SCĒNE

One of the most commonly used term in film analysis is mise-en-scēne, which means 'placing on stage' or 'presenting a play'. The term comes from the theatre, which indicates that everything is placed on stage-set design, lights and actor movement. Mise-en-scēne frequently has an uncertain meaning: At times it is used in-depth to explain the filmed occurrence associated with the shooting of events, while other times it is used in a simpler sense (almost to its true theatrical meaning), to indicate the filmed shots. Mise-en-scēne means in front of the camera or set, lighting and acting. The filmed events are also known as mise-en-shot, which literally means 'placing the shots' or simply called 'shoot'.

MISE-EN-SHOT

The difference between mise-en-scēne (staging) and mise-en-shot (shooting, or filming), has been confirmed. mise-en-scēne points out the shooting angles-set design, lighting and the acting. In this sense, mise-en-scēne points to a theatre or movie production that leaves before shooting. We can visually understand from the way it's shot. The system of shooting, of converting mise-en-scēne into film, mise-en-shot, a term, created by the Russian film maker Sergei Eisenstein.

An important portion of filmmaking includes the mix between the filmed shots mise-en-scēne and how they are shot (mise-en-shot). To achieve success, filmmakers need to position a positive insight between mise-en-scēne and mise-en-shot.

The principal boundaries of mise-en-shot include:

1. Camera placing
2. Appearance of movement
3. Development of shots
4. One shot
5. Development of editing

Let us look at the choices directors have in depicting a scene on film. The three choices are employing:

1. The long take
2. Deep focus photography
3. Continuity editing

THE LONG TAKE

A long duration of a shot is called a long take as in take one. By itself, this distinction is not very instructive, due to the fact we have no formal knowledge with which to explain the 'long continuance in time'. Fortunately, analyst Barry Salt managed to calculate the approximate length of film shots in Hollywood across the years. The work he did is broad and informative revealed the most common shot for each decade. For example: the most simplest shot length in 1940s, a shot approximately changes every 9 seconds.

DEEP FOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY

During deep focus photography the foreground, middle-ground and background are always in focus providing space at the same time for a few action shots. These shots are edited to create action.

The combination of the long take and deep focus photography helps in creating absolute great shots. The long take with deep focus photography had always been used by the most famous director, Orson Welles back in the 1940's. Some scenes in 'The Magnificent Ambersons' (1942), were used by Welles and filmed using the extended take with great depth of field. Welles made those obvious choices.

Why did he make those choices? We can only answer this question by taking into account, The Magnificent Ambersons, parlour scene, the two combinations of long take and deep focus photography were used. George sits in the front while his aunty feeds him strawberry shortcakes, while discussing about Eugene. Uncle Jack meanwhile gets into the frame and makes fun of Aunty Fanny who is in love with Eugene. She runs out of the shot sobbing. This whole time the camera stays in the same location.

Welles decided not to interrupt this shot and scene as they developed, therefore the mise-en-scene was translated into mise-en-shot.

Because the camera did not move all through especially at the emotional crisis that Agnes Moorehead was going through as she rushes away, the camera still focused on the strawberry shortcake. This shows to us that the position of the man cannot move because he was strapped to a chair.

Bazin (1999) says by showing the extended sequence and the unmoving camera, it takes the audience away from the shot and actors.

CONTINUITY EDITING

A series or sequence of shots is broken down by using a technique called editing. Extended takes and great depth of field photography are time consuming; so usage of editing could be advantageous. Continuity editing is a lot about taking shots and angles and creating a smooth story. It would be a good idea for filmmakers to use editing instead of long takes. Let us first find out the techniques of continuity editing. Shots are controlled by a series of shots and techniques. This helps the audiences visualise the story and to understand it better, and not just randomly sticking together pieces of scenes and shots together. Imagine a jigsaw puzzle, All the shots are everywhere, you have to find the right shot and place it, then you can see the whole picture in place. We can realise a movie better if proper editing is used, our minds are fitting the story together. The 180-degree action line is used to bring the audience to the story. Here are some styles that creates understanding and direction-

- **The eye-line match**
  An eye-line match example would be this – a woman turns and looks to the left, in the following shot, a subject or object will be shown.

- **The match on action**
  An action match, is a straight cut from one shot to the following shot, the action is continued from one shot to the other. This same shot continuity creates consistency and direction.

- **Continuity direction**
  In direction of continuity shot, is when a character goes out of a shot from the right, then he goes in from the left in the following shot. Point-Of-View (POV) continuity, is basically moving the

camera how an actor would. For example, if the actor is dizzy than it will make sense if the camera sways from left to right, just as a person would and eventually go black, which represents fainting or blacking out.

- **Cutting at the point of action**

  The shots must be edited together to feature editing versus the long take scenes, would you move the main pivotal points on the shots and actors just to risk confusing the audience?

The director who demanded on complete control over shots and actors was Alfred Hitchcock. To shoot a continuous long may make you lose control, cinematically of course. The screen speaks its own language and by treating each scene as a piece of raw material, it manages to maintain its show visual aesthetic patterns. The advantage of editing over the long take and deep focus is that the director can fully involve the spectator in the action.

In Hitchcock's famous movie Notorious (1946), the spy Alicia is rescued by Dalin from Alex Sebastian the Nazi. The action is simple, Alicia is guided down the stairs and straight to the front door, while the others and Alex's mother watches. There are15 shots on Alicia and Dalin, Alex 17 shots, Alex's mother 5 shots, the Nazis 9 shots. By cutting all of these 4 points together, the spectators get to know all the sequence, and access the actors reaction as the story unfolds. The wonderful thing about this is that the fast cuts do not make the action faster, but actually slows it down especially going down the staircase. The suspense gets longer.

EDITING IN JURASSIC PARK (1993)

In the Jurassic Park opening scene, where the wardens are letting the dinosaur go, one of the wardens is snatched and pulled in by the dinosaur, this scene has 43 shots and each shot is 2 minutes 30 seconds. This fast editing is essential to get the audience into the action by placing two points - outside the box and inside it. During the filmmaking process, Spielberg, the director uses fast editing for the audience to focus on the peak of action; rather than the actors' performances. Spielberg seldom uses storyboards, instead, he breaks down the scenes to bring out the action with camera angles, camera movement and the placement of characters.

MONTAGE

Continuity editing attempts to create a coherent scenic space whereas montage editing attempts to create symbolic meanings. It achieves this by juxtaposing shots together. Continuity on the other hand is sequential editing.

The symbolic meanings created by montage is also called Associations. It simply means creating a chain of associations that has no connection to one another. For an example an Egyptian hieroglyph or, two hieroglyphs may not make any sense as it is in the simplest form, and represents a product. The value of another degree, each taken separately corresponds to an object and concept. For example:-The representation of water of an eye signifies weeping – that's a montage for you.

So basically hieroglyphs and montages create abstract and symbolic meanings by juxtaposing concrete objects. An example, the famous Odessa steps sequence, where the battleship Potemkin fires on the headquarters. There are three shots of the stone lions- the first depicts a lion lying down, the second depicts a lion seated and the third a lion standing up. What does it mean? When these three shots are put together, it depicts that the stone lion has moved from a sleeping position and has stood up. It gives the impression or the illusion of a lion being woken up. They may be abstract and symbolic, but there may be three possible answers as to why Sergei Eisenstein (Soviet film director and film theorist), inserted these three shots, and they are:

1. To show that the statue of the lion is disturbed by the plunder
2. The Russian people are represented by the lion statue to arise
3. Maybe it Is just a big drama to create cinematic movement

In the movie Psycho (1960) by Alfred Hitchcock, in the scene where Marion Crane takes a shower, where it just cuts back and forth from Marion to the knife held by Norman's mother. It does not show Norman's mother getting stabbed, but the cutting in and out creates the effect of a dramatic murder scene.

THE FIVE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DOCUMENTARIES

What does it take to make a Documentary? Let's take a look at the basic importance of documentaries:

1. The story is not fabricated, it is shown as real, as natural as possible. No cinematic magic is needed. It is absolutely real
2. They deal with facts and reality; the reality of the world is constructed.
3. A documentary filmmaker just perceives and makes notes of the value of its reality

In actual fact the camera should not be there, just having a camera present influences the filmed events. The camera is not just put there and rolled. The documentary filmmaker cannot objectively record because of technical choices are made, such as camera angles, camera lens and editing decisions.

I guess the issue is, how do the selections made by the documentary filmmaker manipulates the events? A better word would be is to shape events, to sound more positive.

Here below are the five types of documentaries:

1. EXPOSITORY DOCUMENTARY

The typical characteristics includes a voice-over documentary combined with images that are descriptive and informative, offers a series of facts that are illustrated by images with a voice-over that addresses the spectators. The voice- over provides abstract information that the image cannot carry. The expository documentary has to be descriptive and informative, it is the classic mode of documentary, which we see almost all the time on television

An example would be the documentary Coalface (1935), It generally informs the public about the everyday working of the industries and corporations that shape people's lives, which puts it in the category of a public relations film. However, there is an extraordinary sequence of shots depicting the machinery of the pit particularly the winding gear that brings the miners to the surface. They are close-ups of the machinery abstracted from their surroundings, which isolates the rhythmic movement of the machinery rather than illustrating its function. The fast pace editing - 32 shots in 39 seconds, where the emphasize is movement and rhythm. The use of close-ups and rapid cutting creates an abstract effect that takes the sequence far beyond the merely descriptive and illustrative.

2. OBSERVATIONAL DOCUMENTARY

The observational documentary is more known for what it does not contain, and that is no voice of god commentary, no interviews and no intertitles, it is a direct representation of the filmed events. The filmmaker is an uninvolved bystander, to observe events as they unfold in real time. It is also called direct cinema.

Technically, on occasions it tends to use long takes. The sound is recorded directly while the camera is rolling. In the documentary High School (1968), the typical, day to day events that takes place in this school was captured. Not dramatic or unusual, just everyday events, of different classes in progress.

The observational mode establishes a sense of place by refusing to manipulate or distort the events. What was filmed is actual, transparent and non-judgemental.

High School only depicted an aspect of school life - which is the interaction and conflict between the teachers and students. In one part of the scenes a shot of a teacher waving her arms, drilling the students, then there is the cut to a music teacher conducting percussion musicians. The repetition of the action tells us that the students are simply being drilled, rather than taught.

3. INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

The filmmaker's presence is prominent, which means that interactive documentaries draw people and events to the filmmaker. It is mainly on interviews, which specifically draws out comments and responses from those who are filmed. The filmed persons can express their opinions and views, and the filmmaker may juxtapose one opinion with a contrary opinion, which gives us a balanced undisturbed view.

The filmmaker may sometimes appear on screen, just to hold the documentary together, unlike the expository documentary, where the narrator holds the film together, and the observational documentary, where the events themselves hold the film together only if editing is done.

There are many ways in which the filmmaker can interact with the people. The filmmaker could appear on screen formally or informally, sharing the same space and the spectators can see them interacting with one another. An example of this kind of documentary is Crocodile Hunter (1998). The filmmaker, however may decide to remain off-screen, where the interviewees answers to someone off-screen.

Interactive documentaries gather information through interviews, including the negotiation of the terms and conditions under which the interview is to take place.

Remember that in all documentaries there is a power relation involved, it is masked in the expository and observational documentaries, but it is apparent in interactive documentaries.

The ethical question about filming someone is made apparent in the interactive documentary, using all the tools and interviews to his or her advantage. In the content of Roger and Me (1989), the irony, humour and anger had been aroused in the spectator. The story is about a town called flint which is losing its population after General Motors moved to Mexico. As a result Flint became one of the poorest towns in America. The excitement of this documentary is the repeated attempts to interview Roger Smith to explain. The attempts adds humour.

A strong social message is justified through editing, showing the rich and their lifestyle and the poor evicted from their homes. Through editing strategy Moore manages to interact with shots of a family being evicted from their homes on Christmas eve, Unemployment affect the poor, unfortunately the rich do not understand that.

4. Reflexive Documentary

In this type of documentary let's go one step further by attempting to expose the conventions of documentary representation, with the effect of challenging the documentary's apparent ability to reveal the truth. It focuses on how they are filmed and how they are edited.

The reflexive documentary is just direct, it does not try to show reality. It challenges the documentary's status as objective. An honest documentary presents its limitations and shows its version is better than pretending to be objective or on the fence. A perfect example is the documentary Man with a Movie Camera (1928).

It is one of the most radical documentaries, attempting to change the audience's perception of everyday reality through unconventional techniques to raise the spectators' consciousness.

Man with a Movie Camera, shows the camera recording events, the editor rearranging shots on the editing table, a film being projected and an audience in a cinema watching a film. It reminds us that what we see is a reconstructed reality mediated through the film.

5. Performative Documentary

This type of documentary has a paradoxical status because it deflects attention away from the world and towards the expressive dimension of film. The performative documentary shows the surroundings and the world differently. It represents the world indirectly and guides us to understand the facts.

It aims to present its subject in a subjective, expressive, stylized, evocative and visceral manner. The events are rendered in a vivid way that encourages the spectator to experience and feel them, and at the same time, we have to ask ourselves whether the shots are changed or as a representation.

The dominant performative elements in the opening minutes of Thin Blue Line (1988), The enactment itself; close-ups of guns, maps, newspaper headlines and pulsating police lights; rapid editing; exaggerated camera positions; and the sound track. Through these techniques we are encouraged to experience and feel the events, rather than simply watching them from a distance.

CONCLUSION

We have been watching movies for as long as I know. By now you know what cinema and film are. If you have been around long enough, you may experienced that formats come and go. The knowledge of the art of filmmaking makes us understand that film comes from a strategic world of toys and machines that provides the impression of the reality of movement.

The film has been around for more than a hundred years, it seems to have taken a life cycle, an inevitable birth, the firm accumulation of glories and the start of the last ten years of humiliating, irreversible decline. The profitable cinema has agreed to a rule taken from film-making, a bold relation or non-relation art, in the hope of duplicating, past successes.

The film is incomparable because it is an art but it is also a technically productive enterprise. Audiences are attracted to the magic of the silver screen. They need to evolve a deeper understanding than what is mainly seen. Audiences understand and analyse a full-length movie through practice and depict how they define meaning in a film. Also, they can expand their own personal evaluation of film. It may be initially difficult to understand the techniques used by filmmakers, but once known, they will add significant value to the film.

REFERENCES

Brownrigg, M (2003). Film Music and Film Genre. http://hdl.handle.net/1893/439

Schwarz, A (2018). Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema. https://doi.org/10.1080/17503132.2018.1455801

Silver, JD (2007). Dominance of the Movie Industry. *How did it arise and how has it been maintained?*

Tan, S.Ed (2018). A psychology of the film. *Humanities and social sciences*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Birkin, J. (Director). (1995). The Thin Blue Line [Sitcom]. BBC

Cavalcanti, A.(Director). (1935). *Coalface* [Documentary]. GPO Film Unit

Hitchcock, A. (Director). (1946). *Notorious* [Film]. RKO Radio Pictures.

Hitchcock, A. (Director). (1960). *Psycho* [Film]. Shamely Productions.
Irwin, S. (Director). (1998). Crocodile Hunter [Documentary]. Animal Planet
Ophuls, M. (Director). (1948). *Letter from an Unknown Woman* [Film]. Rampart Productions.
Spielberg, S. (Director). (1993). *Jurassic Park* [Film]. Amblin Entertainment.
Vertov, D. (Director). (1929). Man with a Movie Camera [Documentary]. VUFKU
Wells, O. (Director). (1948). *The Magnificent Ambersons* [Film]. RKO Pictures
Wiseman, F. (Director). (1968). High School [Documentary]. Zippora Films

A Study on the Effect of Supplier Quality Management (SQM) on the Operational Performance of Manufacturing Firms in Malaysia

Teh Yi Xin*,
Teoh Siau Teng & Lim Wooi Chin*****

Abstract: With the rapid development of globalisation, the business world is facing a higher degree of competition among the firms. There is growing literature in supply chain management identifying Supplier Quality Management (SQM) as the key element to increasing a firm's operational performance. The main objective of this research is to identify the relationship between SQM and operational performance among manufacturing firms in Malaysia. This study employed non-probability convenience sampling by distributing the electronic self-administered questionnaires to those who were working in the purchasing, supply chain and operation, or production departments in manufacturing firms. A total of n=40 samples was obtained and used in the analysis. The research findings supported all the SMQ dimensions (Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices; Competitive Supplier Selection Practices; Supplier Development Practices; Supplier Integration Practices) and have a positive relationship to operational performance. The results suggest the firm should put more focus on the Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices and Supplier Integration Practices in order to improve the firm's operational performance.

Keywords: Supplier Quality Management (SQM), operational performance, resource-based view, manufacturing firms, Malaysia

*Teh Yi Xin, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: yixinn98@gmail.com (Corresponding author)
**Teoh Siau Teng, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: teohst@hju.edu.my
***Lim Wooi Chin, Han Chiang University College of Communication. Email: wooichinlim@hju.edu.my

INTRODUCTION

Many manufacturing companies strive to achieve operational excellence in supply chain through improving the product and service quality, productivity and reducing cost to maintain their competitive advantages (Li, 2014). Based on the recent data from Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association (2021), the sales value of the manufacturing sector reported a drop of 2.1% (RM 1,346.6 billion) as compared to the same period of 2019. In fact, the manufacturing sector is one of the key industries in Malaysia that closely relates to the economic growth (Keranja, 2015). In spite of this, it cannot be discounted that the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak has contributed to the drop of sales value. Nevertheless, previous literature also revealed that quality management is the key pointer that leads to manufacturer performance decrease (Kauppi et. al., 2016).

Supplier quality plays a crucial role in the manufacturing industry as it will greatly affect the cost and quality of the firm. Not to mention with the increasing competitiveness in global businesses, more and more firms choose to outsource their part of production to external suppliers. Thus, it is not surprising that Sharma and Modgil (2019) identified quality management as one of the core dimensions that contributed to operational performance in manufacturing firms. Numerous empirical research supported the positive linkage between supplier quality management and operational performance (Al-Shboul, Garza-Reyes & Kumar, 2018; Hong et al. 2019; Kaynak & Hartley, 2008; Yeung & Lo, 2012).

For years, the manufacturing firms have dedicated many resources in managing their products and service quality. Many firms are unable to picture that the quality of the finished goods are mainly derived from the suppliers (Trent & Monczka, 1999). Hence, the purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between Supplier Quality Management (SQM) and operational performance among the manufacturing firms in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. RESOURCE-BASED VIEW THEORY (RBVT)

Resource Based View theory (RBV) provides a core understanding to the theory of economic rent and the firm as a component of a collection of various capabilities. From the perspective of RBV, the firm capabilities refers to how the firm's supply chain is operating better than its competitors. The implementation of these capabilities as their strategies can help the firm to attain their desired outcomes (Barney, 1991; Chang, Lin & Shen, 2002). The current research findings adopt Resource-based view theory (RBV) to explain how the firm can utilise SQM as the resource to gain sustainable competitive advantage. According to Barney (1991), both RBV and SQM concepts are focused on the use of scarce resources to help the firm to achieve sustainable operational distinction and overall performance enhancement.

2. OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE (OP)

Operational Performance (OP) refers to the measurable aspects of a firm's processes, such as reliability, output time and stock rotation. Performance metrics can be categorised into two broad categories, financial and non-financial metrics. Performance measurements play a critical role in the management decision making process as it is often used to measure the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and also to forecast future business performance (Dixon, Nanni & Vollmann, 1990; Otley, 1999).

3. SUPPLIER QUALITY MANAGEMENT (SQM)

Supplier Quality Management (SQM) refers to a series of practices undertaken by management to increase operational efficiency. Such practices include calculating and monitoring supplier quality costs, using value-based scorecards to assess supplier performance, performing supplier audits and developing efficient communication networks with suppliers, and ensuring customer satisfaction (Carr & Pearson, 1999). In 1999, Forker pointed out that the relationship between the supplier quality and firm performance is undoubtedly important. A good firm performance can only be achieved when the firm has quality suppliers. Although the SQM concept is seen as an aggregation of inter-organisational strategic activities to increase the firm's performance, however, this performance is highly affected by the capabilities of its supplier in terms of the cost control and deliveries (Krause, Scannell & Calantone, 2000).

4. SUPPLIER PERFORMANCE MONITORING PRACTICES (SPMP)

Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices (SPMP) is a set of business activities to evaluate and enhance the performance of a supplier in an effort to reduce risks and costs to promote business sustainability development (Parkash & Kaushik, 2011). This set of activities should be consistently controlled and monitored before, during and after the supply agreements are formed. The SPMP is specifically vital to the firm when it involves a relatively expensive and hard to secure supplies. Previous literature has identified an appropriate performance appraisal structure for suppliers as the main contributor for "perfect order" which includes complete order, deliver on time and error free invoice (Chris & Adam, 2007; Kim-Soon, 2012). Hence, it is hypothesised,

> H1: Supplier performance monitoring practices (SPMP) have a positive relationship to operational performance.

5. COMPETITIVE SUPPLIER SELECTION PRACTICES (CSSP)

According to Kochhar and Saeed (2012), supplier selection is one of the most important decision-making links. This is because selecting the right suppliers can significantly reduce the procurement cost, and thus increase the organisation's competitive advantages. Rainer and Christian (2005) explained that the ideal supplier is mainly defined by the sourcing firm which sets the ideal measurement scores (e.g. the top performing suppliers on the market). The best suppliers should be chosen on the basis of the key elements of price, quantity, cost, logistics and service. This notion is further elaborated by Monczka et. al. (2010) in that the ultimate goal for supplier selection is to choose the supplier who can provide the customers with the best value, and high reliability with reasonable terms. Thus,

H2: Competitive supplier selection practices (CSSP) have a positive relationship to operational performance.

6. SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES (SDP)

According to Krause et al. (2000), there are three main antecedents (commitment, continuity of relationship and communication) that contribute to supplier development. The firm and suppliers must work hand-in-hand to ensure that knowledge sharing between the organisations is well communicated. Previous research has shown that the joint efforts between the firm and suppliers would simplify the business processes which will reduce the cost significantly in return.

Sako (2004) also emphasised that the manufacturing firms must have a "distinctive organisational and governance structure" that is able to facilitate a cumulative long-term learning relationship. The development of suppliers should therefore focus on collaboration, where both the client and the supplier are obligated to work together in the long-term to gain mutual benefits (Quayle, 2000). As such,

H3: Supplier development practices (SDP) have a positive relationship to operational performance.

7. SUPPLIER INTEGRATION PRACTICES (SIP)

Supplier integration happens when a manufacturing firm constructs inter-organisational approaches by synchronising the procedures through information and knowledge sharing to its supplier. Empirical research indicated that the internal information integration, process and strategic alignment, and interaction effects on a firm's operating performance will enhance the overall firm's performance for both organisations (Adler & Kwon 2002; Flynn, Huo & Zhao, 2010; Morgan & Hunt 1994). Thereupon,

H4: Supplier integration practices (SIP) have a positive relationship to operational performance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

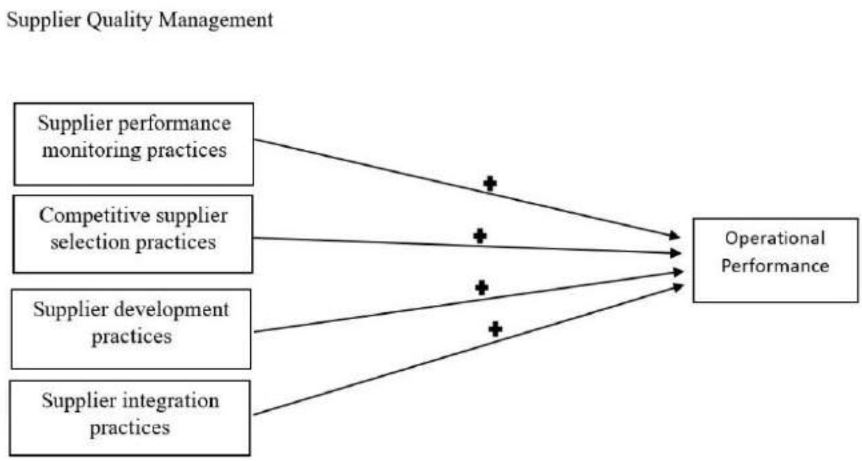

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. SAMPLING FRAME

The sample frame for this study focuses on those who are at an executive level working in the purchasing, supply chain and operation or production departments. The respondent must have a minimum one year working experience in any manufacturing firm in Malaysia that is listed under the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM). The respondent selection criteria were set based on the consideration of their job scope, which required them to deal with various suppliers on a routine basis. In addition, a minimum of one year working experience will allow them to have a better understanding of the questions.

2. MEASUREMENT OF CONSTRUCT

The measurement of constructs for the independent variables are adopted from Sang Chin et al. (n.d.) for Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices (SPMP), Competitive Supplier Selection Practice (CSSP) from

Koufteros, Vickery & Dröge (2012), Supplier Development Practice (SDP) from Krause, Handfield & Tyler (2007) and Supplier Integration Practice (SIP) from Lai et al. (2013). The dependent variable, operational performance, is adopted from Zhang et al. (2018). A few items were amended due to the double-barreled issue to eliminate response error. All of the constructs reported good reliability (α= 0.75 and above). A 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In addition, an open-ended question was added in the last section to probe the respondents' perceptions about the challenges that they faced during the execution of SQM.

3. Data Collection Method

This research adopted non-probability convenience sampling due to time and cost limitations (Ackoff, 1953) where self-administered questionnaires were sent through the electronic platform. A Google form was created and sent through email. Firstly, the researchers obtained the contact list from the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers' (FMM) directory. Secondly, the researchers called the manufacturers by asking to be directed to the respective departments to participate in this survey. Thirdly, an email blast was sent out based on the contact list to those companies that were not reachable by phone. Lastly, the researchers also utilised the social connection of friends and family to reach out to the targeted respondents.

Data Analysis

A total of 118 questionnaires were sent out with 45 returned responses which yielded a 38.14% survey response rate. However, there were five samples that could not be used, and hence, there were only *n*=40 usable samples.

1. Frequency Analysis

Based on the frequency analysis, most of the respondents (55%) are working in a manufacturing firm with more than 250 employees. In terms of their qualification, more than half of the respondents (55%) are degree holders. In terms of the department that the respondents are working in, a majority (60%) of them are working in the purchasing department.

Table 1: Frequency Analysis

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
No. of Employee (n=40)			
Between 11 - 49 employees	6	15.0	15.0
Between 50 - 249 employees	12	30.0	45.0
More than 250 employees	22	55.0	100.0
Total	**40**	**100.0**	
Education (n=40)			
SPM	1	2.5	2.5
Diploma, A-level, O-level, Foundation	7	17.5	20.0
Bachelor Degree	22	55.0	75.0
Master Degree	9	22.5	97.5
PhD	1	2.5	100.0
Total	**40**	**100.0**	
Department (n=40)			
Purchasing Department	24	60.0	60.0
Supply Chain Department	11	27.5	87.5
Production Department	2	5.0	92.5
Sales and Marketing Department	2	5.0	97.5
Others	1	2.5	100.0
Total	**40**	**100.0**	

2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Based on the descriptive analysis output, most of the variable have mean values of more than 3 which indicates that most of the respondents are prone to agree to the questionnaire's statements. Among all, CSSP 5 scored the highest mean value with 4.5 whereas two of the variable questions (SDP 2 and SDP 3) have a mean value of below 3.0. All of the variables show a standard deviation value of below 1 which indicates that the data were centered and clustered, except for SDP4.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis

	N	**Mini-mum**	**Maxi-mum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Skew-ness**	
	Stati-stic	**Stati-stic**	**Stati-stic**	**Stati-stic**	**Stati-stic**	**Stati-stic**	**Std. Error**
SPMP1	40	3.00	5.00	4.2000	.72324	-.325	.374
SPMP2	40	2.00	5.00	4.1500	.86380	-.805	.374
SPMP3	40	2.00	5.00	3.8500	.76962	-.087	.374
SPMP4	40	3.00	5.00	4.1750	.74722	-.301	.374
CSSP1	40	2.00	5.00	4.1500	.73554	-.653	.374
CSSP2	40	3.00	5.00	3.9250	.76418	.130	.374
CSSP3	40	2.00	5.00	3.8000	.88289	-.056	.374
CSSP4	40	3.00	5.00	4.4750	.64001	-.829	.374
CSSP5	40	3.00	5.00	4.5000	.67937	-1.033	.374
SDP1	40	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.67937	-.516	.374
SDP2	40	1.00	5.00	2.9750	.94699	.052	.374
SDP3	40	1.00	5.00	2.8750	.99195	.262	.374
SDP4	40	1.00	5.00	3.0500	1.03651	.332	.374
SDP5	40	2.00	5.00	3.1750	.74722	.476	.374
SIP1	40	1.00	5.00	3.5250	.90547	-.405	.374
SIP2	40	1.00	5.00	3.4750	.78406	-.753	.374
SIP3	40	2.00	5.00	3.8000	.75786	-.387	.374
SIP4	40	2.00	5.00	4.0500	.67748	-.581	.374
SIP5	40	1.00	5.00	3.4250	.90263	-.315	.374
SIP6	40	1.00	5.00	3.4750	.87669	-.160	.374
SIP7	40	2.00	5.00	3.4250	.87376	-.001	.374
OP1	40	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.51578	.203	.374
OP2	40	3.00	5.00	3.8000	.64847	.214	.374
OP3	40	2.00	5.00	3.6750	.82858	.402	.374
OP4	40	2.00	5.00	3.8750	.79057	-.097	.374

Notes. SPMP,Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices; CSSP, Competitive Supplier Selection Practices; SDP, Supplier Development Practices; SIP, Supplier Integration Practices; OP, Operational Performance.

3. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Prior to the hypothesis testing, a reliability analysis was conducted. Based on the output, all the variables meet the minimum threshold of α=0.50 (moderate reliability) according to Hinton et al., (2004).

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
SPMP	.727	.737	4
CSSP	.570	.576	5
SDP	.774	.778	5
SIP	.835	.835	7
OP	.824	.832	4

Notes. SPMP,Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices; CSSP, Competitive Supplier Selection Practices; SDP, Supplier Development Practices; SIP, Supplier Integration Practices; OP, Operational Performance.

4. HYPOTHESIS TESTING- REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Based on the regression analysis, all the hypothesis are accepted. H1 shows that SPMP have a strong positive relationship to OP (ß = .486, p<0.001) with an adjusted R^2 of 21.6%. The same strong positive relationship is also found in H4 with ß = .128, p<0.001, with the highest adjusted R^2 of 32.2% in explaining the dependent variable of OP. Similarly, H2 (ß = .481, p<0.001) and H3 (ß = .346, p<0.001) also show a positive relationship to OP with adjusted R^2 of 21.1% and 9.6% respectively.

Table 4: Summary of regression analysis with hypothesis decision

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standardized Beta	Std. Error	*t*-value	*p*-value	Decision
H1	SPMP → OP	.486	.141	3.424	.001***	Accepted
H2	CSSP→OP	.481	.180	3.378	.002**	Accepted
H3	SDP→OP	.346	.135	2.271	.029*	Accepted
H4	SIP→OP	.582	.128	4.417	.000***	Accepted

Notes. SPMP,Supplier Performance Monitoring Practices; CSSP, Competitive Supplier Selection Practices; SDP, Supplier Development Practices; SIP, Supplier Integration Practices; OP, Operational Performance.
*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001.

5. Qualitative Analysis

The last section of the questionnaire provided an open-ended question asking 'What are the challenges in the implementation of SQM?". Most of the respondents did not answer this question. Only seven respondents explicitly stated the challenges in implementing SQM in their firm.

In terms of SPMP, Respondent 7 mentioned that the lack of involvement from management and the reluctance to evaluate a supplier's performance are the main challenges in implementing SPMP in their firm.

For CSSP, Respondent 6 mentioned "*quality of the products and competitive price*" are the main challenges in implementing CSSP in their firm. This is in line with previous literature that was discoursed by Rainer and Christian (2005) that the best supplier should be chosen based on the key elements of price, quantity, cost, logistics and service. Most of the manufacturing firms did not gain from these elements from the suppliers.

In spite of numerous literatures emphasising the importance of supplier training (Monczka, Trent & Callahan, 1993), quality control (Sako, 2004; Quayle, 2000) and communication to the supplier (Krause, Ragatz & Hughley, 1999), some respondents (Respondents 5 and 21) still faced these issues in implementing SDP in their organisation.

According to Flynn et. al. (2010), supplier integration has to synchronize the procedure to share the information and knowledge between the manufacturing firms and suppliers to enhance synergy efficiency. Respondents 14, 21 and 40 mentioned supplier integration as their biggest challenge in implementing SIP while Respondent 9 pointed out that the supplier's attitude was also one of the challenges.

Findings & Discussion

Based on the analysis output, all the hypotheses are supported. The current empirical research findings are consistent as previous literature discoursed (Samson et. al., 2013; Wambani, 2017). Notably, H1 (SPMP) and H4 (SIP) showed a strong positive relationship to a firm's operational performance among the SQM practices. This is partly due to the fact that when the firm evaluates their suppliers frequently, the firm would be able to reduce the cost and risk incurred (Parkash & Kaushik, 2011). Likewise, the implementation of SIP to synchronise the procedures through knowledge and information sharing will lead to smoother operation processes (Flynn et.al. 2010). This notion is further supported by Lee-Mortimer (1994) that those firms that implemented SIP were the most successful firms in Japan. The role of suppliers is critical especially during the product development stage which carries more than 60% of the product cost.

1. Research Implications

The research findings may provide an insight into the manufacturing industry in Malaysia about the importance of SQM to a company's operational performance, especially SPMP and SIP practices. Current research findings have identified the critical components of SQM (SPMP, CSSP, SDP and SIP) for the firm to maintain its competitive advantages. From the manager's point of view, this study can serve as a reference to assist management decision making to improve the firm's operational efficiency. The manager must recognise that the relationship quality between the manufacturer and its suppliers is very crucial in the supply chain processes. The communication between expectation and delivery must be well managed in order to increase the efficiency and performance for both parties.

2. Research Limitations & Recommendations

There are two major limitations for this research. First, the data collection period was conducted during the Movement Control Order (MCO) period in Malaysia due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this period, most of the employees were working from home and thus led to a slow and low response rate. Second, in the case of the generalisability issue, the present research only focuses on the manufacturing firms in Malaysia. The differences among industries may lead to varying results as different industries may have different sets of considerations and practices.

For future research recommendations, it is suggested that more SQM dimensions be included to provide a holistic and comprehensive framework to the manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the sample size of the study needs to be increased to have a better sample size effect. Future research can consider expanding the geographical reach from Malaysia to other regional countries to have better representational findings.

REFERENCES

Adler, P.S., & S. Kwon. (2002). Social capital: Prospects for a new concept. *Academy of Management Review*, *27* (1):17-40.

Ackoff, R. L. (1953). *The design of social research*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Al-Shboul M., Garza-Reyes J., & Kumar V. (2018). Best supply chain management practices and high-performance firms. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, *67*(9): 1482-1509.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management, 17*(1): 99-120.

Carr, A.S. & Pearson, J.N. (1999). Strategically managed buyer-supplier relationships and performance outcomes. *Journal of Operations Management*, *17*(4): 497-519.

Chang, S. C., Lin, N., & Shen, C. (2002). Aligning manufacturing flexibility with environmental uncertainty: Evidence from high technology component manufactures in Taiwan. *International Journal of Productions Research, 40* (18): 4765-4780.

Chris M., &Adam D. (2007). Using SPC to measure a national supermarket chain's suppliers' performance. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, *27*(8): 874–900.

Dixon J. R., Nanni A. J. & Vollmann T. E. (1990). *The new performance challenge: Measuring operations for world-class competition*. Homewood, Ill: Dow Jones-Irwin.

Flynn, B.B., B. Huo, & X. Zhao. (2010). The impact of supply chain integration on performance: A contingency and configuration approach. *Journal of Operations Management, 28*(1):58-71.

Forker, L. (1999).Factors affecting supplier quality performance. *Journal of Operations Management*, *15*: 243-69.

Hinton, P., Brownlow, C., McMurray, I., & Cozens, B. (2004). *SPSS explained.* Routledge. Inc, East Sussex, England.

Hong J., Liao Y., Zhang Y. & Yu Z. (2019). The effect of supply chain quality management practices and capabilities on operational and innovation performance: Evidence from Chinese manufacturers. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *212*: 227-235. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2019.01.036

Karanja, J. (2015). Analysis of factors affecting the operational efficiency of Jua Kali sector: *A case of apparel industry in Nairobi, Kenya. European Journal of Business and Management*, *7*(30).

Kauppi, K., Longoni, A., Caniato, F. &Kuula, M. (2016). Managing country disruption risks and improving operational performance: Risk management along integrated supply chains. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *182*: 484-495.

Kaynak, H. & Hartley, J.L. (2008). A replication and extension of quality management into the supply chain. *Journal of Operations Management*. *26* (4): 468-489.

Kim-Soon, N. (2012). Quality management system and practices. *Quality management and practices*, *11*(6), 1002-2001.

Kochhar, A. K., & Saeed, M. K. (2012). A quality function deployment model of best practices in customer-suplier relationships. *Global Production Management*, *7*(1): 235-242.

Koufteros, X., Vickery, S. K., &Dröge, C. (2012). The effects of strategic supplier selection on buyer competitive performance in matched domains: Does supplier integration mediate the relationships?.*Journal of Supply Chain Management*. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-493X.2012.03263.x

Krause, D. R., Handfield, R. B., & Tyler, B. B. (2007). The relationships between supplier development, commitment, social capital accumulation and per formance improvement. *Journal of Operations Management*, *25*(2): 528 –545. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jom.2006.05.007

Krause, D. R., Ragatz, G. L., & Hughley, S. (1999). Supplier development from the minority supplier's perspective. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, *35*(3): 33-41.

Krause, D.R., T.V. Scannell& R.J. Calantone. (2000). A structural analysis of the effectiveness of buying firm’s strategies to improve supplier performance. *Decision Sciences*, *31*(1): 33-55.

Lee-Mortimer, A. (1994). Supplier integration. World Class Design to Manufacture, *1*(6): 39–43.

Lai, K. K., Sun, H., Chen, Y., & He, Y. (2013). The impact of supplier integration on customer integration and new product performance: The mediating role of manufacturing flexibility under trust theory. *International Journal of Production Economics*, *147*(B): 260-270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2013.04.044

Li, L. (2014). *Managing supply chain and logistics, competitive strategy for a sustainable future*. World Scientific Publishing Company, Singapore.

Malaysian Plastics Manufacturers Association, (2021). Industry outlook and the new norm for 2021”. Retrieved from https://mpma.org.my/v4/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Industry- Performance-and-New-Norm FINAL.pdf

Monczka, R. M., Handfield, R. B., Guinipero, L. C., & Patterson, J. L. (2010). *Purchasing and Supply Chain Management*. Cengage Learning EMEA.

Monczka, R. M., Trent, R. J., & Callahan, T. J. (1993). Supply base strategies to maximize supplier performance. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*. 23(4): 42-54. https://doi.org/10.1108/09600039310041509

Morgan, R. M., & S.D. Hunt.(1994). Thecommitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, *58*(3):20-38.

Otley, D. T., (1999). Performance management: A framework for management control systems research. *Manage. Acc. Res*, *10*(4): 363-382

Parkash, S., & Kaushik, V. K. (2011). Supplier performance monitoring & improvement (SPMI) through SIPOC analysis & PDCA model to the ISO 9001 QMS in sports goods manufacturing industry. *LogForum*, *7*(4).

Quayle, M. (2000), Supplier development for UK small and medium size enterprises. *Journal of Applied Management Studies*, *9*(1): 117-13.

Rainer L., & Christian G. (2005). Supplier selection and controlling using multivariate analysis. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, *35*(6): 409–425

Sako, M. (2004). Supplier development at Honda, Nissan and Toyota: Comparative casestudies of organization capability enhancement. *Industrial and Corporate Change*, *13* (2): 281-308.

Samson, K., Jonathan, M., Muli, W., Ruth, N., & Tabby, G. (2013). The effect of supplier quality management on organizational performance: a survey of supermarkets in Kakamega town. *International Journal of Business and Commerce*, *4*(1): 71-82.

Sang Chin, K., Yeung, I.-K., Fai Pun, K., Indies, W., & Augustine, S. (n.d.). Development of an assessment system for supplier quality management. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, *23*(7):743-765. https://doi.org/10.1108/02656710610679806

Sharma S. &Modgil S., (2019). TQM. SCM and operational performance: An empirical study of Indian pharmaceutical industry. *Business Process Management Journal*, 1463-7154.

Trent, R. &Monczka (1999).Achieving world class supplier quality.*Total Quality Management Journal*, *10*(6): 927-38. https://doi.org/10.1080/09544129 97334

Wambani, W.A. (2017). *Supplier relationship management and operational performance of sugar manufacturing firms in Kakamega County in Kenya*. Unpublished MBAProject, University of Nairobi

Yeung, A.H.W. & Lo, V.H.Y. (2012). Impact of supply quality management practices on quality performance: A study in Hong Kong, *Proceeding of the 4th Asian Control Conference (ASCC 2002)*: 1804-09.

Zhang, M., Lettice, F., Chan, H. K., & Nguyen, H. T. (2018). Supplier integration and firm performance: the moderating effects of internal integration and trust. *Production Planning and Control*, *29*(10), 802–813. https://doi.org/10.1080/09537287.2018.147439

Kertas Penyelidikan

Menyingkap Identiti dan *'Signatures'* Mamat Khalid dalam Telemovie 16 *Puasa*

Muhammad Su'ud Zhariff Zaharin[*] & Mohd Hanafi Bin Jumrah [**]

Abstrak: Sesebuah karya itu bukan sahaja memperolehi pemberat nilai estetik kesan dari nilai yang diberikan kepada pengarahnya sahaja. Malahan turut digunakan sebagai tujuan analisis dan kritikan terhadap karya filem itu kerana hasil karya tersebut merupakan cetusan fikrah pengarahya. Dengan erti kata lain, hasil karya filem merupakan refleksi ideologi dan isme pengarahnya secara langsung atau tidak langsung. Beberapa pendekatan dalam teori auteur untuk mengkaji seseorang pengarah iaitu seperti '*Authorship as origin*', '*personality*', '*socialogy production*', '*signatures*', '*reading strategy*', '*site of discourse*', dan terakhir adalah '*technique of the self*'. Oleh itu, kaedah atau pendekatan yang digunakan untuk kajian ini adalah pendekatan '*signatures*' iaitu suatu ciri-ciri yang diletakkan oleh seseorang pengarah ke dalam filemnya sendiri berdasarkan perspektif Andrew Sarris. Sentuhan atau identiti Mamat Khalid dalam karya-karya arahan beliau sebelum dilihat menggunakan genre parodi diadunkan bersama elemen satira yang dipersembahkan secara subtle dengan nilai-nilai estetika dan kreativiti beliau yang tersendiri.

Kata Kunci: *Auteur, Signature, dan 16 Puasa.*

---

[*]Muhammad Su'ud Zhariff Zaharin, School of Communication and Media, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: zhariff@hju.edu.my

[**]Mohd Hanafi Jumrah, School of Communication and Media, Han Chiang University College of Communication, Penang. Email: hanafi@hju.edu.my

PENGENALAN

Pada tahun 1950'an, pengkritik filem mula menulis pandangan mereka berkaitan filem-filem Hollywood. Andre Bazin memperkenalkan sebuah majalah yang mana menjadi medan pertembungan dan perbincangan idea-idea serta kritikan terhadap filem-filem di Hollywood iaitu 'Cahier Du Cinema' di perancis dan dikembangkan dengan kehadiran 'Frech New Wave'pada lewat 1950'an- 1960'an (McMerrin, 2005). Antara yang dibincangkan *mise-enscene*, dan auteur. Konsep auteur dikembangkan pula oleh Sarris sekitar tahun 1963 lalu diubah menjadi teori filem.

Petikan dari Sarris (1962), "Goethe? Shakespeare? Semua yang ditandatangani dengan nama dianggap baik dan seseorang yang merosakkan minda untuk mencari keindahan dalam kebodohan dan kegagalan, sehingga memutarbelitkan selera umum. Semua bakat hebat seperti Goethes, Shakespeares, Beethovens, Michaelangelos yang mencipta pada sisi karya mereka yang berfungi bukan biasa-biasa sahaja tetapi cukup menakutkan". Petikan ini menerangkan peranan dan pengaruh seorang artis terhadap hasil karyanya. Secara semulajadinya, sesuatu penciptaan itu ada penciptanya. Begitu juga, setiap hasil seni ada pengkaryanya, sama ada baik atau buruk sesuatu hasil seni dan penciptaan itu tidak dapat dilihat dari penciptanya. Ini adalah asas kepada teori auteur atau author, yang mana ianya melihat sesebuah karya melalui penghasilan pengkaryanya dan *vise versa*, dalam menilai hasil karyanya. Konsep ini digunakan secara meluas di dalam cabang seni seperti sastera, teater, lukisan, muzik dan ukiran.

Menurut Sarris (1962), seseorang pengarah yang hebat itu dianggap akan menghasilkan karya filem yang berkualiti dan *vise versa* (dengan melihat) pengarah yang tidak hebat itu akan menghasilkan hasil karya yang tidak berkualiti. Ini kerana seorang pengarah yang bagus itu dilihat mempunyai kriteria-kriteria nilai yang tertentu. Sarris mengatakan di dalam artikelnya *Notes On The Auteur Theory* bahawa teori auteur adalah kecekapan tenikal pengarah dari segi kriteria nilai. Filem yang diarahkan dengan teruk atau tidak diarahkan, tidak mempunyai kepentingan dalam skala nilai yang krrtikal. Oleh itu teori auteur melihat jika seorang pengarah itu tidak mempunyai kecekapan teknikal, tidak ada bakat asas untuk pawagam, pengarah tersebut secara automatik dikeluarkan dari barisan pengarah.

Bagi McMerrin (2005), teori auteur adalah pengertian bahawa pengarah filem yang hebat memiliki prestasi artistik dan gaya tematik yang terbukti dalam semua karya mereka, dan ia mempunyai kesan yang signifikan dan berkekalan terhadap kajian filem. Menurut Pramaggiore dan Wallis (2011), teori auteur adalah idea dan konsep seorang pengarah yang diketahui dan mempromosikan kemahiran gaya individu pengarah itu sendiri dalam menghasilkan filem. Selain mengangkat pengarah sebagai sumber kreativiti, teori auteur ini juga cuba memberikan satu perspektif terhadap kaedah analisis dan kritikan filem iaitu dengan melihat pengarah sebagai faktor yang signifikan dalam kritikan sesebuah karya filem.

Melalui konsep auteur dari perspektif Sarris, sesebuah karya itu bukan sahaja memperolehi pemberat nilai estetik kesan dari nilai yang diberikan kepada pengarahnya. Malahan turut digunakan sebagai tujuan analisis dan kritikan terhadap karya filem itu kerana hasil karya tersebut merupakan cetusan fikrah pengarahya. Dengan erti kata lain, hasil karya filem merupakan refleksi ideologi dan isme pengarahnya secara langsung atau tidak langsung.

Menurut Gerstner and Staiger (2003), beberapa pendekatan dalam teori auteur untuk mengkaji seseorang pengarah iaitu seperti *Authorship as origin, personality, socialogy production, signatures, reading strategy, site of discourse,* dan terakhir adalah *technique of the self.* Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan 'signatures' iaitu suatu ciri-ciri yang diletakkan oleh seseorang pengarah ke dalam filemnya sendiri berdasarkan perspektif Andrew Sarris.

Pendekatan '*signatures*' menjelaskan bahawa seseorang pengarah atau *author* dikenali melalui pengulangan teks atau isi kandungan dalam sebuah filem terdiri daripada pelbagai bentuk yang dipamerkan ke dalam bentuk visual oleh pengarah yang sama. Oleh itu, seorang pengarah mesti mempamerkan suatu pengulangan ciri yang unik dan telah ditentukan oleh pengarah itu sendiri. Sehubungan dengan itu juga, pengulangan ciri akan dipamerkan di dalam beberapa filem yang telah diarah olehnya. Pengulangan ciri inilah yang akan menjadi stail atau identiti seseorang pengarah (Sarris 1962). Melalui pengulangan suatu ciri di dalam beberapa buah filem, pengulangan tersebut akan menjadi stail atau suatu ciri-ciri yang unik dari seseorang pengarah di dalam filem dibawah arahannya.

WACANA AUTEUR - *'SIGNATURES'*

Menurut Truffaut Francois (2004), beliau menjelaskan dengan melihat para pengarah sebagai seniman yang dihormati dan berjaya mempamerkan stail yang tersendiri melalui penekanan terhadap aspek teknikal, formalis dan juga tema filem adalah merupakan elemen kreativiti tersendiri yang terkandung dalam pendekatan auteurism. Sehubungan dengan itu, elemen subjektiviti, signifikasi diantara seorang pengarah dengan pengarah yang lain turut dibincangkan sebagai pendekatan auterism.

Pengarah merupakan individu yang amat penting di dalam mana-mana produksi filem atau telemovie. Menurut Amer (1990), tugas utama seorang pengarah adalah untuk memahami skrip lalu membawa idea tersebut ke dalam bentuk visual. Seorang pengarah juga bertanggungjawab terhadap para pelakon dalam membentukkan sesebuah filem melalui aksi dan dialog yang telah ditentukan di dalam skrip.

Oleh itu, seorang pengarah bertindak sebagai seorang pencerita utama dalam sesebuah filem. Menurut Tomaric (2010) pula, seseorang pengarah memperolehi pengalaman hasil daripada usaha pengarah itu sendiri untuk mengkaji filem dan hasil seni yang lain. Seorang pengarah akan menghasilkan stail, rentak, dan juga warna di dalam filem yang diarah olehnya.

Tugas seorang pengarah amatlah besar dan penting dalam penghasilan sesebuah filem kerana individu ini yang akan menentukan suasana dan perasaan di dalam sesebuah filem. Sehubungan dengan itu juga, apabila sesebuah filem dihasilkan berkait rapat dengan pengalaman peribadi seseorang pengarah, yang mana secara tidak langsung mempengaruhi filem yang dihasilkan olehnya melalui personality pengarah itu sendiri.

Selain itu, pemilihan dan penguasaan sesuatu genre juga adalah ciri-ciri seorang auteur di mana pengarah-pengarah yang dianggap sebagai auteur di Amerika dan Eropah dilihat mempunyai satu genre yang menjadi *trade mark* mereka seperti Hitchcock dilihat sebagai *maestro* filem *thriller* dan *suspense* manakala Woody Allen di lihat menerusi filem yang bergenre komedi. Teori auteur lebih cenderung dalam memperlihatkan pengarah dan hasil karyanya terhadap genre yang lebih spesifik seperti *western*, seram dan komedi. Dengan melihat kepada genre, elemen klise yang terdapat di dalam sesebuah genre dapat diatasi dengan kualiti tertentu yang ada pada seseorang pengarah.

Pengarah yang mengarah filem dalam konteks arus perdana atau komersil dilihat mempunyai nilai auteur kerana mereka harus menghasilkan sesebuah karya dalam suasana dan limitasi yang dipengaruhi oleh faktor luar seperti produser, penonton dan sosio-politik serta budaya. Dalam suasana sebegini, pengarah-pengarah ini bukan sahaja mampu menghasilkan karya yang mempunyai nilai estetika dan gaya sinematik yang tersendiri, malahan mampu menonjolkan ideologi pemikiran dan kritikan sosial mereka ke dalam karya yang bersifat popular.

TELEMOVIE 16 PUASA

Telemovie *16 Puasa* telah diterbitkan pada tahun 2017 dan merupakan arahan sutradara Mamat Khalid, ianya mengisahkan tentang sekumpulan enam pemuda kampung yang mempunyai masalah dalam kehidupan akibat diberhentikan kerja. Pelbagai masalah yang mereka hadapi di dalam hidup sehingga menyebabkan mereka tidak berpuasa pada bulan Ramadan. Pihak berwajib sering menangkap orang-orang kampung dan peniaga yang menjalankkan aktiviti peniagaan awal sebelum masuknya waktu berbuka. Keenam-enam orang pemuda ini berselindung di sebalik imej yang baik iaitu menunaikan solat tarawikh pada malam hari. Namun begitu pada suatu hari sedang mereka asyik menikmati makanan dan akhirnya mereka tertangkap oleh pihak penguatkuasa agama apabila didapati makan di tepi sungai. Mereka turut di bawa dengan menaiki van jenazah, walaupun begitu kejadian kemalangan menyebabkan mereka semua lari menyelamatkan diri. Pelakon yang membintangi telemovie ini antaranya adalah Sabri Yunus, Aziz M. Osman, Bell Ngasri, Rab Khalid dan ramai lagi (Ahmad Faizal, 2019).

Telemovie *16 Puasa* arahan Mamat Khalid ini dapat dilihat dengan konsisten dalam beberapa aspek formalis yang kukuh bagi membincangkan isu '*signatures*'. Aspek formalis pertama dilihat dari segi stailistik atau gaya visualnya. *16 Puasa* telah menunjukkan satu gaya visualistik tersendiri dari pengarah terhadap filemnya. Stailistik dan gaya visual Mamat Khalid dalam *16 Puasa* dapat dilihat dengan beberapa keadaan dan situasi. Penguasaan sepenuhnya terhadap elemen *mise-en-scene* diadunkan dengan idea dan seni visualistik tersendiri seperti kerja-kerja operasi kamera, susun atur 'setting' serta pengarahan seni lakon layar 'art director' yang menjelmakan identiti karya tersendiri. Situasi ini dijelaskan oleh Wollen (2019) yang berpendapat bahawa elemen stailistik atau gaya visual juga memainkan peranan penting dalam memperlihatkan hasil kerja dan identiti seorang auteur itu. Selain itu, Konsistensi dalam gaya sinematiknya merupakan satu *trade mark*, atau gaya 'signature' diantara seorang pengarah dengan pengarah yang lain.

Di samping itu, aspek formalis kedua dapat dilihat dari karekter dan dialog yang terdapat di dalam filem-filemnya. Dengan menulis sendiri filem-filemnya, terdapat satu kecenderungan Mamat Khalid untuk meletakkan satu identiti yang menjadi *trade mark* bagi telemovie *16 puasa* ini iaitu identiti budaya masyarakat, persahabatan dan loghat bahasa. Pemaparan identiti budaya serta sosial masyarakat amat kuat yang telah dipertontonkan. Ia dipaparkan dengan kesempurnaan elemen *mise-en-scene* yang jitu dan menyeluruh. Ianya merangkumi komposisi, *setting*, *props*, pelakon *costume*, dan pengcahayaan. Antara element yang diketengahkan adalah persekitaran kampung yang tenang dan tidak membangun, pemilihan unsur flora dan fauna, pelakon berbangsa Melayu, Cina dan India, pemakian baju Melayu dan kain pelikat, dan penggunaan loghat negeri Perak (deme dan mentekedaghoh) serta loghat negeri Kelantan (abe, toksah). Antara lain, loghat dan dialek negeri Perak turut ditekankan melalui karekter yag terdapat di dalam filem dan telemovienya yang popular seperti *Rombongan Cik Kiah ke Sukan Komanwel (1998), Man Laksa (2006), Zombi Kampung Pisang (2007), Kala Malam Bulan Mengambang (2008), Hantu Kak Limah Balik Rumah (2010), 15 Puasa (2004)* dan *Rombongan Cik Kiah ke Kelana Jaya (2014).*

Selain itu, aspek formalis ketiga merupakan aspek pemilihan pelakon. Kecenderungan Mamat Khalid untuk menggunakan pelakon yang sama serta berstail dapat dilihat dalam filem-filemnya. Ketelitian Mamat dalam pemilihan pelakon yang mampu membawa genre 'deadpan' atau 'dry human' lawak kering yang *natural* adalah merupakan satu identifikasi sebagai pelakon dalam filem-filem arahan beliau. Watak dan perwatakan yang dipersembahkan seakan bersahaja serta santai. Pemaparan unsur-unsur parodi, satira dan realisme dalam lakon layar dilihat berjaya dipersembahkan dengan kreativiti dan stail beliau tersendiri. Bagi telemovie *16 Puasa* beliau kembali mengandingkan pelakon-pelakon pelawak senior dengan mengekalkan karektor dan identiti seni lakonan mereka yang bersahaja. Antaranya adalah seperti Aziz M. Osman, Sabri Yunus, dan Bel Ngasri.

Formalis yang terakhir dapat dilihat dari struktur pembinaan narrratif dan aspek latar. Dalam *16 Puasa*, Mamat cuba berkreativiti bersama latar masa dengan menghadirkan satu persekitaran (*setting*) yang berlainan dari pengarah lain. Jika dilihat pada masa kini pengarah-pengarah filem atau drama lebih gemar akan persekitaran yang lebih moden dan kontemporari dengan memfokuskan generasi muda sebagai penonton. Ini berbeza dengan naskah Mamat Khalid yang sering memaparkan masyarakat Melayu dan kehidupan berlatar belakangkan kampung seperti kehijau flora dan fauna, sungai yang cantik dan gunung-ganang menjadi pilihan Mamat Khalid dalam menzahirkan perasaan dan pemikiran beliau. Penggunaan kebudayaan dikir barat dan muzik latar ghazal memperlihatkan seni budaya masyarakat Malaysia. Penggunaan musik sosialisme blok komunis timur cuba diadunkan dengan narratif penceritaan. Ia cuba mengekperimentasi dengan menggambarkan soal latar zaman, hubungan budaya dan kritikan sosial terhadap masyarakat. Struktur ini digabungkan dan dibina dengan kreativiti pengarah berdasarkan falsafah dan ideologi beliau sendiri.

Oleh itu, melalui wacana auteur yang melihat kepada 'Signatures' sebagai element dalam naskah telemovie *16 Puasa* oleh Mamat Khalid membawa kepada empat element Formalis iaitu stailistik atau gaya visualnya, karekter dan dialog, pemilihan pelakon, dan yang terakhir adalah struktur pembinaan narrratif dan aspek latar. Jelaslah bahawa Mamat Khalid telah menzahirkan perasaannya dan cara berfikir melalui naskah telemovie ini. Dengan menyingkap perbincangan konsep auteur yang dibincangkan dapat dilihat Mamat Khalid kedudukan seorang pengarah sebagai sumber kreativiti dan mempunyai ciri-ciri atau gaya yang berulang sebagai fungsi identitinya.

Selain itu, Mamat Khalid juga dilihat mempunyai keperibadian yang dapat dibezakan sebagai kriteria nilai seperti yang dijelaskan oleh Sarris. Telemovie *16 Puasa* dilihat sesebuah karya bukan sahaja memperolehi kesan nilai estetik dari nilai yang telah diberikan kepada pengarahnya, malahan turut digunakan sebagai tujuan analisis dan kritikan terhadap hasil karya filem itu sebagai cetusan fikrah pengarahya. Dengan erti kata lain, hasil karya filem merupakan refleksi ideologi dan isme pengarahnya secara langsung atau tidak langsung. Ini turut dipersetujui oleh Sarris (1962), yang mana teori auteur ini bukah sahaja mengangkat pengarah, tetapi ini juga cuba memberikan satu perspektif terhadap kaedah analisis dan kritikan filem iaitu dengan melihat pengarah sebagai faktor yang signifikan dalam kritikan sesebuah karya filem. Seorang pengarah menunjukkan cara keperibadiannya dalam penyampaian filem yang mana ianya dilihat mempunyai hubungan dengan cara seseorang pengarah menzahirkan perasaannya dan cara berfikir.

RUMUSAN

Filem secara umum diterima sebagai sebuah karya seni yang bersifat kolaboratif, dan pengarah tidak semestinya mendapat kredit sepenuhnya dalam sesebuah penghasilan karya filem. Dari kontek subjek perbincangan iaitu Mamat Khalid, melalui pandangan dan teori auteur ini, karekter dan gaya pengarahan beliau dapat dilihat dari segi analisa yang dilakukan terhadap ‘teks’ filemnya yang melihat kepada nilai estetik fomalis dan stailistik. Tidak dapat dinafikan, Mamat Khalid mempunyai kualiti pengarahannnya yang tersendiri. Merujuk kembali padangan Sarris (1962), teori auteur ini dapat melihat kualiti seseorang pengarah selain memberi nilai kepada keseluruhan aspek sinema baik dari segi sejarah, cerminan sosio-politik-ekonomi dan ideologi masyarakat pada waktu itu.

Jelaslah di sini Mamat Khalid dapat menzahirkan idea-idea yang berbeza dalam naskah *16 Puasa* yang mana dapat dilihat melalui empat element Formalis iaitu stailistik atau gaya visualnya, karekter dan dialog, pemilihan pelakon, dan yang terakhir adalah struktur pembinaan narrratif dan aspek latar. Walaupun pujian terhadap pengarah sebagai satu-satunya pencipta teks filem namun teori auteur perlu dibangkitkan, ditangani, dan dikembangkan bukan sahaja untuk menggantikan pengarah, atau idea kolaborasi, dengan penulis skrip sebagai pengarang tunggal, tetapi dalam masa yang sama merangkumi penulis skrip dan mengiktiraf kepentingan dan keperluan penulisan naratif, watak dan tema yang kekal bersama penonton.

Hasil penelitian terhadap identifikasi karya-karya Mamat Khalid, yang menyingkap '*signatures*' pengarahan ini sedikit sebanyak dapat memberi idea-idea berkaitan filem serta membantu penonton dalam membuat penilaian awal dan menghargai hasil sesebuah karya filem. Dengan adanya artikel ini, satu persepsi pemikiran atau penghayatan penonton akan terbentuk melalui penghasilan sesebuah karya seni.

BIBLIOGRAFI

Ahmad Faizal. (2019). Kritikan Sosial Mamat Khalid dalam Drama 16 Puasa. https://www.thepatriots.asia/kritikan-sosial-mamat-khalid-dalam-drama-16-puasa/.

Armer, A. Alan. (1990). *Directing Television and Film Hardcover*. California: Wadsworth Publishing.

Belton, J. (2005). *Review: Authorship and Film: An AFI Film Reader*. Film Quarterly. 58(3), 60-62. Doi: https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2005.58.3.60.

Bordwell. D.; Thompson, K.; & Smith, J. (2019). *Film Art, An Introduction*, 12th Edition. United State:McGraw Hill.

Caughie, John. (2013). *Theories of Authorship*. New York: Routledge.

Deleuze, Gilles. (2013). *Cinema II: The Time-Image*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Gerstner, A.D & Staiger, J. (2003). *Autorship and Film*. New York: Routledge.

Hockley, Luke. (2019). *The Routledge International Handbook of Jungian Film Studies*. New York: Routledge.

Liang, K. D. (2015). *Self-Improvement Books: A Genre Analysis.* PhD thesis. New Zealand: Victoria University of Wellington.

Lodge, David. (2012). *Author, Author*. New Zealand: Random House.

McMerrin, Michelle. (2005). *Recognising the Screenwriter: Agency and Authorship in Adaptation*. Bachelor Thesis. Edith Cowan University

Nurul Ezzati Aisyah Mohd Zaki & Wan Hartini Wan Zainodin. (2020). *P. Ramlee's Cinematographic Auteurship of Cultural Values Representation in Antara Dua Darjat and Ibu Mertua-Ku*. Jurnal Komunikasi. 36(2), 390-407.

Osteen, Mark. (2014). *Hitchcock and Adaptation: On the Page and Screen*. United Kingdom: Rowman & Littlefield.

Pramaggiore, M., & Wallis, T. (2011). *Film: A critical introduction (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Pearson.

Sarris, Andrew. (1962). *Notes On the Auteur Theory in 1962*. Film Culture. 27, 1-8.

Sarris, Andrew. (1963). *The Auteur Theory and the Perils of Pauline*. Film Quarterly. 16(4), 26-33.

Smith-Laing, Tim. (2018). *An Analysis of Michel Foucault's What is an Author?* London: Taylor & Francis.

Tomaric, J. Jason. (2010). *Direct Your Movie from Script to Screen Using Proven Hollywood Techniques*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Truffaut, F. (2004). A certain tendency of the French cinema. In P. Simpson, A. Utterson & K.J. Shepherdson (Eds.), Film theory: Critical concepts in media and cultural studies (Vol. II). London: Routledge.

Wollen, Peter. (2019). *Sign and Meaning in the Cinema*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing

GUIDELINES

1. Han Chiang e-Journal of Media and Social Sciences is an open academic publication to promote academic research and communication in the academia.
2. Han Chiang e-Journal of Media and Social Sciences appreciates simple and plain writing style, promotes moderation in academic exchange and criticism; adhere to the vision for innovation and problem orientation; respects open and practicality; and focuses on comprehensive disciplines.
3. The journal publishes research papers on cultural, social, literature, history, philosophy, politics, economics, media, research essays and book reviews.
4. The journal is open to the public and welcomes domestic and foreign scholars and people from various sectors to submit their works; author is limited to one article.
5. This journal accepts English and Malay manuscripts. English and Malay manuscripts preferably 5,000-10,000 words. English and Malay research essays and book reviews should not exceed 4,000 words.
6. Chinese language manuscript must be written in Simplified Chinese.
7. All submitted manuscripts must be original and unpublished and implies that the work described has not been published previously in the internet.
8. Once the manuscript been published or used, the author will be granted 2 printed copies of journals.
9. Submission of manuscript should be in the format of Ms. Word and Portable Document Format (PDF) file.
10. Manuscripts submitted to the journal should include the title, abstract (250 words), keywords (less than 5); and attached author's name, institutions, position, corresponding address, phone number, and e-mail address of author in the first page.
11. It is important to cite references when you quote from other sources, the citation in the way of author’s name, followed by the year of publication and number of page (please refer to the “Format of Citation and Notation”). For full details, please list as References. References are listed fully in alphabetical order according to the first letter of last name of the author. Chinese references should be listed first followed by the English (only in Chinese manuscript; please refer to the “Format of References”). Author should place any remarks or notes as footnotes on the same page. Make sure the chart meets the publisher’s requirements where the title should be placed above the chart and after the diagram.
12. The journal welcomes contribution and comments from the research academia either locally or oversea. Please submit the manuscript to prakash@hju.edu.my/ hanafi@hju.edu.my; or submit a hard copy of the manuscript with CD to “Han Chiang e-Journal of Media And Social Sciences Editor”:
    Han Chiang University College of Communication
    Lim Lean Teng Road,
    11600 Penang, Malaysia.
    Tel：+604-2831088 ext 135

Format of Citations and Notes

1. Use double quotation marks (“”) and list down sources if you use a direct quote in thesis.

2. Parenthetical Citations: placing sources in bracket and place in appropriate position in manuscript as follows:

   (1) Single Author: e.g. (A, Year) / A (Year)
   (2) Two authors: use “and” or “&” to link 2 authors together.
   e.g. (A & B, 2006)
   (3) If there are 3 or more authors, uses the last name of first author, followed by et al.
   e.g. (A et al., 1937) have described...
   (4) For several documents by the same author, use comma to separate years of publication in chronological order. If the citations are within the same year, add alphabet a, b, c after the year of publication (listed alphabetically by title).
   e.g. In recent three years, history text books from various countries consisted of revised content. (A, 2013, 2014A, 2014B). / A (2013, 2014A, 2014B) in recent three years, history text books from various countries consisted of revised content.
   (5) For several documents by several authors, multiple citations should be separated by semi-colon. Authors' names are listed in alphabetical order followed by year of publication.
   e.g. In recent three years, history text books from various countries consisted of revised content (A，2012；B，2013；C，2013，2014A，2014B).

3. Quotations of 40 or more words begin on a new line and are indented about a half inch from the left margin. Quotation marks are omitted. The first line of additional paragraphs within the quotation is indented an additional half inch. Cite the source and the page or paragraph number in parentheses after the final punctuation mark.

4. Use the common translations when citing foreign names, publications and terms. Original name should be cited in bracket after the translation.

5. Author's name could be omitted in bracket if it has been mentioned in the article.
   e.g. According to Croce (1932)

6. Use footnote to define or provide additional information (applicable to cite sources which are not appropriate using bracket) in accordance with the following rules:

   (1) Place footnotes at the end of the sentence after the full stop if you use full citation.
   (2) Place footnotes after the specific words or terms if you use partial citation.

7. Words such as “see” should be stated when placing relevant source information in parentheses for details or further readings. e.g. (see Vital Statistics, Malaysia, 2014, for complete data)

Format of References

1. References with the same authors are arranged by the year of publication in chronological order. If there is more than one references to the same authors and published in the same year, insert alphabet a, b and c after the publication year.

2. Each entry in the reference list should be special indented one-half inch hanging indentation.

3. Chinese and English references should be arranged in chronological order. Chinese references should be arranged using the surname (pinyin) of the author; English references should use the last name of the author.

   Bibliographic classification according to books, journal papers, dissertation and newspapers is not required.

   (1) Single Author / Editor

   Author, A. A. (Year). *Book Title*. Location: Publisher.
   Editor, A. A. (Ed.) (Year). *Book Title*. Location: Publisher.

   (2) Two or More Authors / Editors

   Editor, A. A. & Editor, B. B. (Eds.). (1991). *Book Title*. Location: Publisher.
   Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (1997). *Book Title*. Location: Publisher.

   (3) Translation Works

   Author, A. A. (1951). *Book Title* (B. Translator, Trans.). Location: Publisher. (Original work published 1940)

   (4) An Article in a Collection of Essays by Several Authors

   Author, A. A. (1992). Article Title. In B. B. Editor & C. C. Editor (Eds.), *Book Title* (pp. xx-xx). Location: Publisher.

   (5) Journal Articles

   Author, A. A. (2009). Article Title. *Periodical Title*, *xx*(x), xx-xx.

   (6) Conference Papers

   Author, A. A. (1995). *Title*. Name of Conference, Venue.

   (7) Dissertations

   Author, A. A. (1999). *Dissertation Title*. Doctoral dissertation, University Name, Place.

   (8) Encyclopedia

   Author, A. A. (Ed.). (1980). *Title* (6th. ed., Vols. 1-20). Location: Publisher.

   (9) Newspaper Article (With or Without Author)

   Author, A. A. (1983, September 20). Article Title. *Name of the Newspaper*, pp. xx-xx.

   Article title. (2013, June 9). *Name of the Newspaper*, p. xx.

   (10) Website (With or Without Author and Published Date)

   Author, A. A. (2011, August 3). Article Title. *Website Title*. Retrieved from http://www.xxx.xxx

   Article Title. (n.d.). Retrieved March 9, 2009, from XXX website, http://www.xxx.xxx

(11) Blog Articles

Author, A. A. (2011, January 12). Article Title. [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.xxx.xxx