

## Self-Identity among Youth in Malaysia

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**Abstract:** This study aims to discuss the issue of identity among the youth in Malaysia which involves the tendency is to blame the other when faced with problems. Through the current changes of the modern economy and the impact of globalization, crisis of human identity is becoming more common. Especially, youth who are ordinarily and naturally seek identity for themselves. Most youth cannot understand the meaning of identity and self-esteem. In addition, youth can be seen today are less sensitive to the management of themselves and their finances. The lack of money has caused many youth at the university had to resist eating until their health is impaired. This should not happen if the youths have high self-esteem. Throughout this study, it will uncover the reason why all this is happening, so that, all parties can find a solution accordingly.

**Key words:** Youth, self-identity, self-esteem, financial behaviours, happening, solution accordingly

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### INTRODUCTION

The future of the country will be shaped by its youth. In Malaysia, the youth generation is about 13.88 million, representing variety of age group between 15-35 years and its makes up almost 45.8% of total 30.26 million population in Malaysia. This age range is divided into four category 16-20 years old, 21-25, 26-30 and 31-35 years. Self-identity among youth has been an issued discuss by a lot of researcher in Malaysia during past few years. Mainly self-identity of youth is seen through their patriotism level, however, there is no research on self-identity of youth through their self-management in individual economic. Youth need to be able to manage their financial wisely to improve country societally and economically.

Academician Professor Ungku Aziz said, most of the teenagers in this country is facing an identity crisis that caused these people do not know to make a decision. Therefore, several studies have been conducted to identify problem teenagers they are now considering the future of future generations. Additionally, teens also need to educate the youth to think primarily in universities to build their personality.

Identity is a trait that is unique and special in many ways such as customs, language, culture and religion that is integral in shaping the character and personality of an individual symbol or a nation. Identity is also referred to as a reference to the identity or personality of the true self of a person, not only outwardly visible but also the values that he stood for (Wan, 2010).

**Problem statement:** Youth at the age of 19-25 years old in Malaysia mainly consist of student either in college, local university or private university. At this age, youth strive hard to achieve their dream using their own finance or other resources. There are three major financial resource used by student in Malaysia to further their studies is government scholarship, PTPTN and private scholarship.

Government scholarship is provided by government to well performed student especially from low income student with contract between the student and government. One of the contract is the student must work for government at amount of time. The second major financial resource is education loan by Perbadanan Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional (PTPTN). PTPTN is the institution establish by government objectively to provide loan to all student to pursue their tertiary education. Third financial resource is private scholarship mainly provided by private company to complete their corporate social responsibility. The competition for private scholarship is extremely high as one company will sponsor one or two students in a year.

Issues that occurred in Malaysia in recent years are student in higher education institutions claim they do not have money to eat due to the lack of spending money. Due to this, students begin to blame other parties, especially, the government. The issue of blaming the other shows lack of self-esteem and self-identity in youth Malaysia today. This issue happens as proclaim by university student is because of the government no longer provided scholarship and the loan given by the

trusted financial institution is reduce during the past few years. Furthermore, the economic issue that effect Malaysia this recent years has also unintendedly effect student's purchase power because of increasing price of all product in the market.

Nevertheless, there are several factors that affect youth financial management. One of important factors is lack on financial education and financial knowledge among youth. Study has shown that youth with financial knowledge can manage their finance wisely. Attitude toward money is the other factor effecting youth financial management. Youth with positive attitude towards money likely to have budget in place and future saving. This attitude come from youth childhood, it is very important for parents to show favourable attitudes about money (Akber-Selcuk, 2015).

However, the issue of not having a scholarship lead to lack of money should not be arise as many other western country does not provide any scholarship but still the student can survive without starving and blaming other parties. If youth in Malaysia have high self-identity and self-esteem as they can find their own way to solve their own problem without accusing others.

#### **Literature review**

**Malaysian youth:** Currently in Malaysia, youth is defined as a demographic category from 15-40 years of age. While an amendment has been proposed in the Youth Act to confine the age group to below 30 years, nevertheless, the 31-40 years category is regarded as a transitional stage to complete the adulthood where the youthfulness of characteristic and activities are still visible. Within this age category, the Malaysian demographic structure of 2016 indicates a higher percentage of about 40% whereas the active category of 15-64 years old constitutes 68.46% and the would be new youth category of 15-30 is about 26.24%. With new categorization, the Malaysian youth would be compromised just over quarter of the total population which indicates a stable demographic.

**Identity:** Generally, identity is a trait that is unique and special in many ways such as customs, language, culture and religion that is integral in shaping the character and personality of an individual symbol or a nation. Identity also referred to as identity refers to identity or character that is owned by someone, not only outwardly visible but also the values that he stood for (Wan, 2010).

The identity can refer to two things, namely the quality and features that is shared within the community and how individuals define them (Mendelson, 2002). Berne noted the behaviour, thoughts and feelings of

people basically cannot be separated from environmental influences, especially by the expectations and demands made by people close to them as peers, family and community adult. The environmental influences affect a person's decision-making.

Based on the age of university students involved in the issue, Erik Erikson's identity development theory is consistent. He has divided the youth into two main groups. The first group of teens at age 18-20 years. At this point the teenager will likely face situations of identity versus identity confusion. This occurs due to the preparations towards maturity and efficiency is increased by the ability they have in forming and reflect his identity without being influenced by other factors. These youths are the ego and feel what they do is right and must not be influenced by other factors. But this egotism is important if they do not know who they are and can demonstrate good attitudes.

For both groups of adolescents between the ages of 21-24 teens will experience a level of intimacy versus isolation. At this stage, per Erikson, teenagers want to hang out and communicate with other people and tried to escape from aloofness (Hurlock, 1973). Inclination between intimacy and isolation should be balanced and get a positive value that is love. In the context of his theory, love means the ability to infuse all forms of differences and the arrogance of its mutual need. The concept of love is meant here is not only focused on the relationship a lover but also the relationship with parents, neighbours, friends and others.

**Youth financial:** Youth at age of 19-25 most likely a university or college student. This is the distinct period where youth start to manage their own money independently without parental supervision. They start to face monetary challenges such as paying bill and keeping educational budget. Youth financial behaviours during these periods majorly contributed to decision they will make in the future. Research has proven that positive financial behaviour are reciprocal to improved financial well-being (Joo and Grable, 2004), decreased financial stress (Hayhoe *et al.*, 2000) and higher self-esteem (Lange and Byrd, 1998).

Youth also affected by unique regional and cultural factors that shape their financial behaviors. that parents, work experience and high school financial education were significantly related to young adult's financial attitudes and behaviours. Subjective and objective finance knowledge reduced the likelihood of displaying negative financial behaviours. Male students were found to display riskier financial behaviors in general (Xiao *et al.*, 2014).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Research design:** Based on previous research that have been conducted, researcher will be using the descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis method is used to analyse the tendency and percentage of respondents that includes studies on demography factors.

**Location, population and research sample:** This study will be carry out in Malaysia mainly focus on youth community at Northern Peninsular. There will be around 500 questionnaires distribute evenly at three Northern state in Malaysia. The research sample includes gender, age, race, religion, residential area, elementary school, secondary school and occupation, level of education, income and districts represented by respondents. Sample was chosen through random stratification sampling of the organization.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Data analysis:** Researchers will use the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 computer application to analyse data. The descriptive analysis will be use to analyse the data obtained.

Descriptive statistic method is used to characterise a situation. It is implemented due to its ability to describe the whole data in simplistic manner. Analysis on demographic characteristics was represented by gender, age, race, religion, residential area, elementary school, secondary school and occupation, level of education, income and districts represented by respondents. Data obtained was demonstrated in form of frequency description or tendency. It is later inserted into the SPSS Software according to the number code assigned.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study is expected to help the parties related performance efforts to tackle the problem of

self-identity crisis among teenagers in Malaysia, so that, the next generation has a superior self-identity. This is because the identity of the youth is closely related to the type of leadership and those who will inherit the country's leadership. It determines whether the teenager was a supporter of the ideals of nation building or a prolonged burden to society (Baba, 2006).

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