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Rebranding and Staff Perception through Change Communication Factors

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate rebranding and staff perception through Change Communication Factors (consisting of Receiving Information, Providing Input, Value of Input and Involvement in Decision Making). A set of self-administered questionnaire was used. The study use a sample size of 87 executives and 276 non-executives in a selected telecommunication company which has rebranded. Data was gathered, recorded, analysed and interpreted on the basis of the research objective and research questions using the Statistical Package for social sciences (SPSS) software. T-test was used to differentiate the results from the staff (Executive and Non-Executives) on the change communication factors during the rebranding exercise. The study found only Receiving Information produced significance difference between the executives and non-executives through the study.

Keywords: Rebranding; Change Communication; Receiving Information; Providing Input; Value of Input and Involvement in Decision Making

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1. Introduction

Past studies tell us that, not all rebranding in the past has been successful (Lowery, 2007; Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006; Olafsson, 2010; Tevi, 2013). Success in change is dependent on the ability of the organization to change the behaviour of its employees. Rebranding requires implementation of an internal communications programme to encourage and inspire employees to support the new vision (Malmelin & Hakala, 2009). Rebranding is about creating an emotional connection between employees and organisation that transcends their personal experience, but to create a brand vision in employees' mind that mobilises support for the brand in every decision they make (Mitchell, 2002). Therefore, organisations need to take time during the rebranding process to ensure employees internalise and commit to the new brand values (Kaikati, 2001).

Thus, communication about the change is important, and information to these employees is vital (Lewis, 2006). This study is about rebranding. The importance of communication has been discussed by many authors. Kotter (1996) argued that one of the common ways to overcome resistance to change is to inform people about it in advance. Employees need to be informed on when the change will take place, how it will be implemented, what is anticipated of them, how they will be affected from the change in their jobs, and how the company will sustain and motivate them to be more dedicated to the change. Communication about the change not only allows employees to

understand the brand, but encourages employees to take ownership of the brand through their organizational responsibilities (Devasagayam, et al, 2010). An effective communication is the sine qua non of the successful change initiative (Lewis, 2000). It is legitimate for managers to employ such a mechanism to clarify the facts to various stakeholders of what is going to change, why, and what benefits they can expect to derive from the change. An ultimate goal of communication in change is to convey meaningful messages in a strategic manner across the organization to achieve employee's corporate acculturation and employees' commitment (Unzicker et al., 2000). Without effective communication, organizations cannot survive and continue their operation (Hickson, Stacks & Greely, 1998). Through communication, organization members exchange information to progress their tasks and to achieve organizational goals. One of the important elements in organizational communication research is the study of superior – subordinates communication, which is also known as supervisory communication (Bakar, Mohammad & Mustafa, 2007). According to Kotter (1996,) the main reason communication is unsuccessful is simply because not enough effort is put in doing it. It is often assumed that the vision and plan that top management or change coalition have worked on for months can be clearly and easily digested by the rest of the employees in the period of time of the planned change (Kotter 1996; Rearta & Mimoza, 2017).

Kitchen and Daly (2002) identified three types of messages or information that affect employees during the unfolding of the organizational change process. First, what employees must know, including job specific information; second, what employees should know, including desirable information about the organization; and finally, what employees could know, including relatively unimportant office gossip. Accordingly to Goodman and Truss (2004) employees would want to know as much information as possible in order to minimize uncertainty. This is supported by Smith (2006) that communication with employees on these matters should occur early in the change process, preferably well before change begins. By doing this, employees' confidence, commitment and willingness to participate can be developed from the planning stages to the implementation phases of change.

Hence, this study tries to differentiate between executives' and non-executives' change communication factors in a selected organization during rebranding.

2. Research Method

The study employs the quantitative research design using the survey method. The sample of the study was confined to executive and non-executive staffs in a selected telecommunication company. A sample of 363 were selected using stratified random sampling. All data obtained were

analysed using the SPSS software. Descriptive analysis was employed to examine the data.

3. Data Analysis and Findings

A total of 363 respondents consists of executive and non-executives returned and completed their questionnaire with mean age 39 years old for executive and 43 years old for non-executive, and the sample had slightly higher proportion of male (62.1%) for executive staff and higher female (58.7%) for non-executive staff. In terms of years of services 71.3% of the executives served the organization less than 20 years compared to non-executives where 43.9% served more than 21 years.

The overall mean of rebranding ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.38$) showed that 59.8% executives ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 0.39$) and 71.0% non-executives ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.38$) responded to the receiving information during rebranding. This indicate that the amount of information received among the executives were sufficient compared to the non-executives. The independent samples t-test showed that there was statistically differences between the executives and non-executives in receiving information with $t = 2.077$, $p = 0.039$ as shown I Table 1. The results indicated that there were differences in the executive's and non-executives perception of receiving information during rebranding.

Table 1. Independent sample t-test results of receiving information for rebranding.

Change Communication Factor	Mean	SD	t	p
Receiving Information				
Executive	3.0575	0.3872	2.077	0.039
Non- Executive	2.9601	0.3792		

In terms of providing inputs during rebranding, medium category was the most dominant to both executives and non-executives staff. The overall mean was 2.82, SD = 0.45. The executives contributed 72.4% (M = 2.78, SD = 0.50) and the non-executives contributed 71.3% (M = 2.83, SD = 0.44). This means that both executives and non-executives felt that raising their concerns, opinions and giving inputs during the rebranding processes was just moderate. It was not sufficient. The independent t-test as shown in Table 2 shows that there were no significantly difference between executives and non-executives. The independent t-test for providing inputs is $t = -0.913$ and $p = 0.362$. This means that the staff were of the view that providing inputs during the process of rebranding was well received.

Table 2. Independent sample t-test results of providing inputs for rebranding.

Change Communication Factor	Mean	SD	t	p
Providing Inputs				
Executive	2.7816	0.4955	-0.913	0.362
Non- Executive	2.8327	0.4416		

The finding for value of inputs among the staff indicated that the executives and non-executives during = rebranding process resulted in an overall mean of $M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.51$. The total number of respondents among the executives were 69.0% ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.51$) and the total number of respondents among the non-executives were 73.5% ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 0.48$). It shows that both executives and non-executives felt that they did not have enough opportunities to express their opinions and their opinion about the rebranding processes were moderately requested by the organization. The t-test result for vale of inputs showed that there were no statistically differences between executive and non-executives ($t = -0.470$, $p = 0.639$) as shown in Table 3. This implies that the value of inputs were well received by the respondents during the process of rebranding.

Table 3. Independent sample t-test results of value of inputs for rebranding.

Change Communication Factor	Mean	SD	t	p
Value of Inputs				
Executive	2.7952	0.5117	-0.470	0.639
Non- Executive	2.8235	0.4818		

Finally, for Involvement in decision making, the overall mean for rebranding was 2.73 and $SD = 0.49$. The executives contributed 70.1% ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 0.55$) and non-executives contributed 76.4% ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.47$). Both executives and non-executives felt that their superior has moderately encourage them to participate in the decision making and implementation and

decision are usually made by the top management with moderate inputs from the staff at different level in the organization. The t-test shown in Table 4 indicates that the executives and non-executives were of the view that involvement in decision making during rebranding was well received ($t = 0.330$, $p = 0.742$). There were no significant differences between the executives and non-executives.

Table 4. Independent sample t-test results of involvement in decision making for rebranding.

Change Communication Factor	Mean	SD	t	p
Value of Inputs				
Executive	2.7471	0.5464	0.330	0.742
Non- Executive	2.7272	0.716		

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study found that ultimately, staff perception on rebranding processes depends on how effectively the strategy and the substance of change were communicated to the staff. The result indicates that there were difference in executives’ and non-executives’ perception of receiving information in the selected organization. The staff felt that there should not be any differences in information sharing between them. Being the staff of the organization, they believed that they have the right to know what was expected from them, and they need to know how to contribute and become involve before, during and after the rebranding processes. Information about when, how and what to

communicate to the staff can reduce fear of unpleasant consequences, lack of trust, uncertainty, surprises and personality conflicts among the staff.

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Communicative Competence of Overseas Chinese Students in an MBA Program in a Private University in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

An increasing number of Chinese university students choose to study abroad and attention should be paid to their communicative competence that may affect their scores, performance in class, social interactions, and knowledge acquisition. Chinese MBA students need good communicative competence as an essential quality so they can play an important role in business and management fields. This study investigates the level of communicative competence of a sample of Chinese MBA students enrolled at a private university in Selangor, Malaysia. Their communicative competence was assessed from the following aspects: affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility. The data were collected in this study by means of a 36-item communicative competence questionnaire. There were a total of 164 questionnaires completed and 157 were used in the study. The findings of this study are as follows: The level of communicative competence of MBA

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students from China in the private university ranged from good to very good with respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility. Chinese MBA students investigated with respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, and behavioural flexibility. However, male students outperformed female students in terms of social relaxation. There were no age differences in the communicative competence of the sample of Chinese MBA students investigated. There were no differences in the communicative competence between students with working experience and students without working experience. Communicative competence of students in the sample who communicated with both Chinese and foreign interactants were better than those who communicated with mostly Chinese interactants.

Keywords: communicative competence; affiliation and support; empathy; social relaxation; behavioural flexibility

1. Introduction

Employers require MBA graduates to have soft-skills or competencies in the following areas; dealing with customers, coordinating work, arranging events, upgrading skills, teamwork, and, problem solving through innovative solutions. Thus, language proficiency and more specifically communicative ability across a broad range of contexts are invaluable for the MBA graduate to remain adaptable and transferable amongst departments within corporations. Wagner (2008) observes that fuzzy thinking and inability to express thoughts were the major complaints of business leaders during recruitment of fresh graduates. From a global perspective, English is still the predominant language of global business compared to Mandarin

despite China's growing economic might. A global survey on English proficiency concludes that nations with high English proficiency levels had relatively high key economic and social indicators. (Education First, English Proficiency Index Rankings, 2017, Executive Report). Therefore, an advanced proficiency in the global language of business, English, is required of all MBA students and especially of international students.

To make its education system fit for globalization, educationists in China have shifted their focus from content or subject matter to specified skills or competencies. In the past decade, the educational processes in China have come under increasing scrutiny for reform. Huang (2004) suggests that the College Entrance Examinations that were reinstated after the Cultural Revolution met the needs of China's growing economy at the time by creating talents across many diverse fields. However, the purely academic focus of the College Entrance Examinations had failed to address the skills-gap in these competencies, particularly, in the area of communicative competence. According to a survey conducted by Bai, Wang, and Liang (2015) of 77 business students at Jiang Yin Vocational and Technical College, it was found that 70% of students assessed their communicative competence as average while 64% could not address problems in communication. Zhang (2012) notes that university students do not take the initiative to communicate with teachers or classmates and they have less empathy with others. Besides, poor communicative competence among students in

Chinese universities can be attributed to various factors such as shortcomings in personality, a lack of social practice and awareness of the importance of social interactions.

It is interesting to compare and contrast the Chinese context of communicative competency with that of other countries to examine if this skill gap is a global phenomenon. A survey of 102 individuals in New Zealand organizations, indicate that men are better than women at keeping the conversation going and women fared better than men in social-group settings. The findings of the same research showed that age, work experience and seniority at work are unrelated to communicative competence (Schischka, 2015). Research conducted at City University, New York concluded that overseas Chinese students who were willing to form friendships with American students outside their circle of country-mates exhibited stronger language skills, better academic performance, lower levels of stress and better overall adjustment to a new culture (Gareis, 2012).

China now regards communicative proficiency in the English language as well as Mandarin as foundational to equipping a labour force in a globalized era, leading to a shift in emphasis in language learning. The Government of China has responded by placing emphasis on English proficiency in the national school curricula. Approximately 523,700 students chose overseas education in 2015 (Government of China, Xinhua News Agency dated 17th March 2016). The Government of China recognizes that studying abroad strengthens bilateral cooperation in the area

of culture, economy, and science on an international basis and has implemented a series of policies to support overseas students, giving them more options and scope to realize their aspirations. Overseas Chinese students pursuing the MBA program at a private University in Selangor, Malaysia need to have good communicative competency particularly for the sake of academic performance, interpersonal interaction and employment. However, the researcher has observed that MBA students from China, enrolled at this University are more inclined to communicate exclusively with their country mates in their first language, Mandarin. They are reluctant to join social gatherings and communicate with the students from other countries or other ethnicities. The researcher seeks to assess if his observations indicate a lack of communicative competence and to evaluate the extent of this deficiency by the specific research methodology. The study also aims to identify if various factors such as gender, age, working experience, and the characteristics of the interactants of communication had any correlation to communicative competency.

The notion of communicative competence has evolved from Chomsky's purely linguistic concept, encompassing knowledge of language and its performance, to one which incorporates a sociolinguistic dimension where language is used in a variety of communicative situations. Communicative competence is seen as a dynamic exchange where the communicator has to adapt to the linguistic and non-verbal input of the participants (Savignon,

1972). Wiemann's definitional model (1977) is adopted where communicative competency is expressed as a behavioural aspect in the ability to interact effectively with other people, i.e. interaction management. Wiemann (1977) states that communicative competency may be assessed by evaluating the subject in the following five aspects: affiliation/support, social relaxation, empathy, behavioural flexibility and interaction management. The subject that shows high levels of 'affiliation and support' demonstrates openness and availability to receive input from others. 'Social relaxation' is equated with being relaxed in any given social situation without provoking anxiety in others by exhibiting it oneself. 'Empathy' is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Subjects with high 'behavioural flexibility' have a large enough behavioural repertoire to adjust to different situations. Finally 'interaction management' is the ability to follow the 'faces and lines' of fellow interactants.

Students from China, enrolled in the MBA program overseas in countries like Malaysia, have a relatively unique communicative environment where they have to deal with people from different cultures, languages, customs, and backgrounds and it would be interesting to see if these students can adapt and form cross-cultural friendships that may give them a balance and holistic worldview. While a great number of studies have been conducted on university students' communicative competence within China, there has been a dearth of research on the communicative

competence of Chinese students who study abroad in different cultural and language contexts. Furthermore, researchers may conduct related studies based on this survey and use the results to bridge the gap in existing literature.

This study is conducted at a private university in Malaysia and surveys the communicative competence of students from China enrolled in its MBA program. However, the findings cannot represent and reflect the communicative competence of other Chinese students in Malaysia, or even, all overseas Chinese students. There are limitations to self-reported data through the questionnaire and interviews because they show the respondents' perceptions of investigated factors instead of observable factors.

2. Literature Review

Chomsky (1965) proposed the idea of linguistic competence and linguistic performance together in language study. Linguistic competence means syntactic competence and the knowledge of a language system. In Chomsky's view (1965), competence is the interlocutors' inherent language knowledge. Linguistic competence is a certain state of knowledge more abstract than language itself. It is a system of principles, a knowledge system rather than the ability to organize and understand sentences. According to Chomsky (1965), a native speaker's competence may include the ability to recognize ambiguities in sentences, to detect relationships between sentences, to tell the difference between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences and to

paraphrase relations between sentences. Chomsky's theory (1972) does not show what a speaker has to know in real communication, which is known as the socio-cultural dimension. In 1972, Hymes proposed the term "communicative competence" to perfect Chomsky's linguistic competence. Hymes (1972) claimed Chomsky's competence does not include the use of language and the systematic consideration of the particular use of language in situations. To use the language properly in communication, people have to understand what meets the rules of language, what accords to the cultural conventions and what can be acknowledged by culture. Hymes's communicative competence (1972) further proposes that language learning or acquisition should not only include grammar and phonology, but also the interpersonal, cross-cultural and social aspects.

A series of scholars (such as Argyle & Kendon, 1967; Dance & Larson, 1972; Duncan, 1968; Ruesch, 1957) proposed that a strong correlation exists between a person's ability of using the communication process and the ability to function in society. "Communicative competence" includes language and non-language components so it is not merely restricted to using language. As Allen and Brown (1976) observe, "communicative competence", distinct from "linguistic competence", contains the awareness of transactions existing between people. In social settings, communicative competence is highly relevant to actual language performance.

Wiemann (1977) came up with a comprehensive notion that

communicative competence is a communicator's ability to select from available communicative behaviours in order to successfully achieve interpersonal goals and maintain the others' "face and line" within the constraints of the circumstances during communication. Larson, Backlund, Redmond, and Barbour (1978) also associated behaviour with communicative competence, that it is the ability of an individual to apply knowledge of the proper communicative behaviours in certain situations. Wiemann (1977), based on literature dealing with face-to-face conversational encounters, proposed a definitional model of communicative competence composed of the following five dimensions; affiliation/support, social relaxation, empathy, behavioural flexibility, and interaction management skills. Wiemann's Communicative Competence Scale accords with the researcher's aim of investigating communicative competence from a wider behavioural aspect. Linguistic competence, is just the basic competence of communication and knowing how to communicate to accomplish one's goals while maintaining the interactants' face in situations, is a higher level of communication. Research on college students in China found that their communicative competence was generally poor, which mainly had the following outcomes. According to a survey conducted by Li (2010) through the Shanghai Education Television Station of 500 undergraduates from Tongji University, China Textile University, East China University of Science and Technology and Shanghai Normal University, it was found that,

the speaking time of 45.8% participants each day was no more than 30 minutes. In addition, up to 10.7% of college students were men of few words who spoke less than 10 minutes per day. According to Liu's (2011) pragmatic perspective, some students communicate improperly. There is a general lack of consideration for the moral orientation and decency of others when communicating, resulting in rudeness and uncouth behaviour. Liu, (2011) observes that while many college students desire to communicate with others, poor interaction management skills impair this goal. For example, they often speak without taking into account social contexts and audiences. Communication serves their self-interests and they seek to entertain themselves at the expense of others. This creates misunderstanding and conflicts that results in fractured relationships.

According to Li and Xu (2014), as both schools and parents are primarily concerned about grades and high scores, the cultivation of the students' communication and interpersonal skills are very likely to be overlooked. As a result, when these students enter university, it is inevitable that they have trouble communicating. Yue (2014), observes that college students do not have exposure to 'communication training' in high school and they lack the social environment to be truly adept at communication. As far as Li and Xu, (2014), are concerned, courses that specifically improve communicative competence are uncommon at Chinese universities. Even though a communication course is made available, it is only optional and not compulsory. According to

Zhou and Wang (2013), Chinese families prioritize academic scores and other capabilities are of secondary importance. Young people do not realize the importance of communication and there is little awareness about developing such skills from childhood. Qi (2007) observes that the Hunan child prodigy Wei Kangyong, studied at the Chinese Academy of Sciences and then dropped out of school, going back home in 2003. This is a typical case of someone who could not function independently and effectively in society due to the lack of communication skills.

The importance of communicative competence in business has been recognized for years. Curtis, Stephens, and Winsor (1989) mentioned that communication was one of the most useful skills in helping graduating college students obtain employment. O'Donovan (1997) mentioned that experts discuss and compare the importance of an MBA or MA to communicators' success. Bill Kokontis, Vice President of marketing programs for the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, notes that his company prizes those who have business expertise as well as first-rate communication skills. When Chinese students communicate with international students, there are other factors that largely influence their communicative competence; intercultural competence. According to Gao's research on 257 students from the following Faculties: Business, Laws, Mathematics, Science, Chemistry, and Information Technology in Suzhou University in 2006, it was found that most students' intercultural communicative competence was not satisfactory. More than 60%

of the respondents did not read books related to intercultural communication. Almost half (48.9%) had limited non-language communicative knowledge. Around 37.5% of the respondents were stressed and afraid of communicating with foreigners via telephone calls and 42% of respondents chose “poor competence of intercultural communication” as the main reason that deterred their attempts at intercultural communication.

3. Methodology

The research aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of communicative competence of students from China enrolled in the MBA program at the private university?
2. Are there gender differences in communicative competence?
3. Are there differences in communicative competence between students of different age groups?
4. Are there differences in communicative competence of the MBA students with working experience and those without working experience?
5. Are there differences in communicative competence of the MBA students depending on the interactants?

The data collected in this study is based on students’ responses to an online questionnaire that uses a modified version of a 36-item Communicative Competence Scale developed by Wiemann (1977). This questionnaire comprises two parts. Part 1 includes

six questions with respect to students' background; gender, age, hometown, working experience, communicative interactants, and, communicative situations. Part 2 is the Communicative Competence Questionnaire that includes 36 items concerning affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, behavioural flexibility, and social relaxation. The respondents had to state their preference and/or experience and answer by circling a number on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The higher the score respondents choose, the better their communicative competence.

There are 845 Chinese students from various disciplines studying in this private university for the 2016 academic year and they come from 20 different provinces of China. There are 203 students enrolled in the MBA program with ages ranging from 21 to 30. Invitation to participate in the study was sent to all MBA students and 164 students responded by completing the questionnaire. After data cleaning, 157 students' responses were found to be suitable to be used in the study.

In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of Communicative Competence Scale was found to be 0.94, which is above the preferable level (Cronbach $\alpha=0.8$). The Cronbach' alpha coefficient for the subscales in terms of affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, behavioural flexibility and social relaxation were found to be acceptable as well.

4. Discussion

4.1. Overall Communicative Competence

Table 1. Survey Score Descriptive (negatively expressed items were reverse coded before summation).

	Overall Communicative Competence	Social Relaxation	Affiliation/Support	Empathy	Interaction Management	Behavioural Flexibility
Highest Score*	5 x 29 items = 145	5 x 9 items = 45	5 x 8 items = 40	5 x 5 items=25	5 x 5 items = 25	5 x 2 items =10
Middle Score*	3 x 29 items = 87	3 x 9 items = 27	3 x 8 items = 24	3 x 5 items=15	3 x 5 items = 15	3 x 2 items =6
Lowest Score*	1 x 29 items = 29	1 x 9 items = 9	1 x 8 items = 8	1 x 5 items = 5	1 x 5 items = 5	1 x 2 items =2
Mean	113.43	37.74	30.48	18.35	18.8	8.06
SD	13.68	4.10	4.92	3.2	2.98	1.22

*Highest/ middle/ lowest score: the possible highest/ middle/ lowest score for each sub-score.

Table 1 shows the highest, middle and lowest scores possible for each of the 5 constructs of the communicative competence and mean and standard deviation of communicative competence with respect to social relaxation, affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management and behavioural flexibility, which is the sum of all the items in the questionnaire.

The overall communicative competence of students was assessed to be good to very good because their mean score was 113.43, greater than the middle score of 87. More particularly with respect to social relaxation, affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management and behavioural flexibility, students’

communicative competence was classified as good to very good because their mean scores were 37.74, 30.48, 18.35, 18.8, and 8.06 respectively. These values are greater than the theoretical mean scores 27, 24, 15, 15 and 6 respectively. According to the results, it can be seen that all the means are greater than the middle score for each component. It can be concluded that Chinese MBA students' communicative competence is good to very good for overall communicative competence as well as in the five components.

4.2. Differences in Communicative Competence between the Sample of Male and Female Students

Table 2. Distribution of Means, Standard Deviations, t-values and p-values of Communicative Competence of Male and Female Students.

	Students (N=157)	Mean	Std. Dev.	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>df</i>
Affiliation and Support	Male (N=62)	37.73	3.91	-0.03	0.97	137.87
	Female (N=95)	37.75	4.24			
Empathy	Male (N=62)	30.58	5.39	0.21	0.84	116.27
	Female (N=95)	30.41	4.62			
Interaction Management	Male (N=62)	18.85	3.08	1.62	0.11	135.75
	Female (N=95)	18.02	3.26			
Social Relaxation	Male (N=62)	19.59	3.42	2.58	0.011*	104.35
	Female (N=95)	18.28	2.55			
Behavioural Flexibility	Male (N=62)	8.05	1.19	-0.08	0.94	133.78
	Female (N=95)	8.06	1.24			
Communicative Competence	Male (N=62)	114.8	14.23	1.01	0.32	124.22
	Female (N=95)	112.53	13.3			

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ (2-tailed) *** $p \leq 0.001$ (2-tailed)

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, *t*-values and *p*-values of communicative competence of male and female students concerning affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility. The results show that there was no statistically significant difference in the means of the overall communicative competence between male ($M=114.8$, $SD=14.23$) and female ($M=112.53$, $SD=13.3$) students, $t(124.22)=1.01$, $p=0.32$. This means that the communicative competence of male and female students was about the same. Differences in the mean scores can be attributed to chance.

In the affiliation and support component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between male ($M=37.73$, $SD=3.91$) and female ($M=37.75$, $SD=4.24$) students, $t(137.87)=-0.03$, $p=0.97$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between male and female students with respect to affiliation and support.

In the empathy component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between male ($M=30.58$, $SD=5.39$) and female ($M=30.41$, $SD=4.62$) students, $t(116.27)=0.21$, $p=0.84$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between male and female students with respect to empathy.

In the interaction management component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between male ($M=18.85$, $SD=3.08$) and female ($M=18.02$,

$SD=3.26$) students, $t(135.75)=1.62, p=0.11$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between male and female students with respect to interaction management.

In the social relaxation component of communicative competence, there were statistically significant differences between male ($M=19.59, SD=3.42$) and female ($M=18.28, SD=2.55$) students, $t(104.35)=2.58, p=0.011$. It can be concluded that there are differences between male and female students with respect to social relaxation. Male students are better than female students at social relaxation.

In the behavioural flexibility component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between male ($M=8.05, SD=1.19$) and female ($M=8.06, SD=1.24$) students, $t(133.78)=-0.08, p=0.94$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between male and female students with respect to behavioural flexibility.

4.3. Differences in Communicative Competence between the Different Age Groups

Table 3. Distribution of Means, Standard Deviations, t-values and p-values of Communicative Competence of Students (21 to 25 years old) and Students (above 26).

	Students (N=157)	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p	df
Affiliation Support	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	37.57	4.15	-0.80	0.43	93.43
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	38.13	3.98			
Empathy	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	30.21	4.89	-1.01	0.31	87.97
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	31.08	5.01			
Interaction Management	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	18.22	3.2	-0.76	0.45	89.54
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	18.65	3.22			
Social Relaxation	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	18.76	3.12	-0.27	0.79	104.47
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	18.89	2.66			
Behavioural Flexibility	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	8.03	1.24	-0.47	0.64	95.89
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	8.13	1.16			
Communicative Competence	Age (21-25 years old) (N=109)	112.79	13.9	-0.90	0.37	94.52
	Age (above 25) (N=48)	114.87	13.17			

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ (2-tailed) *** $p \leq 0.001$ (2-tailed)

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, *t*-values and *p*-values of communicative competence of younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility.

The results show that there was no statistically significant difference in the means of overall communicative competence of younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=112.79$, $SD=13.9$) and

older students (above 25) ($M=114.87$, $SD=13.17$), $t(94.52)=-0.90$, $p=0.37$. This result shows that there was no difference in the communicative competence between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25).

In the affiliation and support component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=37.57$, $SD=4.15$) and older students (above 25) ($M=38.13$, $SD=3.98$), $t(93.43)=-0.80$, $p=0.43$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to affiliation and support.

In the empathy component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=30.21$, $SD=4.89$) and older students (above 25) ($M=31.08$, $SD=5.01$), $t(87.97)=-1.01$, $p=0.31$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to empathy.

In the interaction management component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=18.22$, $SD=3.2$) and older students (above 25) ($M=18.65$, $SD=3.22$), $t(89.54)=-0.76$, $p=0.45$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to interaction management.

In the social relaxation, component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=18.76$, $SD=3.12$) and older students (above 25) ($M=18.89$, $SD=2.66$), $t(104.47)=-0.27$, $p=0.79$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to social relaxation.

In the behavioural flexibility component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between younger students (21 to 25 years old) ($M=8.03$, $SD=1.24$) and older students (above 25) ($M=8.13$, $SD=1.61$), $t(95.89)=-0.47$, $p=0.64$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between younger students (21 to 25 years old) and older students (above 25) with respect to behavioural flexibility.

4.4. Differences in Communicative Competence between Students with Working Experience and without Working Experience

Table 4. Distribution of Means, Standard Deviations, t-values and p-values of Communicative Competence of Students with Working Experience and Students without Working Experience.

	Students (N=157)	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p	df
Affiliation and Support	With Working Experience (N=54)	37.63	3.94	-0.25	0.81	113.60
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	37.80	4.19			
Empathy	With Working Experience (N=54)	30.93	4.63	-0.85	0.40	116.79
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	30.24	5.08			
Interaction Management	With Working Experience (N=54)	18.37	2.80	-0.06	0.95	127.26
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	18.34	3.41			
Social Relaxation	With Working Experience (N=54)	19.01	2.58	-0.65	0.52	155
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	18.69	3.18			
Behavioural Flexibility	With Working Experience (N=54)	8.20	1.23	-1.09	0.28	105.46
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	7.98	1.20			
Communicative Competence	With Working Experience (N=54)	114.14	12.08	0.50	0.62	125.81
	Without Working Experience (N=103)	113.05	14.48			

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ (2-tailed) *** $p \leq 0.001$ (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations, t-values and p-values of the communicative competence of students with and without working experience with respect to affiliation and

support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility. The results show that there was no statistically significant difference in the means of the overall communicative competence of students with working experience ($M=114.14$, $SD=12.08$) and students without working experience ($M=113.05$, $SD=14.48$) $t(125.81)=0.50$, $p=0.62$. This result shows that there was no difference in the communicative competence between students with working experience and students without working experience.

In the affiliation and support component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between students with working experience ($M=37.63$, $SD=3.94$) and students without working experience ($M=37.80$, $SD=4.19$); $t(113.60)=-0.25$, $p=0.81$. It can be seen that there were no differences between students with and without working experience with respect to affiliation and support.

In the empathy component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between students with working experience ($M=30.93$, $SD=4.63$) and students without working experience ($M=30.24$, $SD=5.08$); $t(116.79)=-0.85$, $p=0.40$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between students with and without working experience with respect to empathy.

In the interaction management component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between students with working experience ($M=18.37$, $SD=2.80$)

and students without working experience ($M=18.34$, $SD=3.41$); $t(127.26)=-0.06$, $p=0.95$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between students with and without working experience with respect to interaction management.

In the social relaxation component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between students with working experience ($M=19.01$, $SD=2.58$) and students without working experience ($M=18.69$, $SD=3.18$); $t(155)=-0.65$, $p=0.52$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between students with and without working experience with respect to social relaxation.

In the behavioural flexibility component of communicative competence, there was no statistically significant difference between students with working experience ($M=8.20$, $SD=1.23$) and students without working experience ($M=7.98$, $SD=1.20$); $t(105.46)=-1.09$, $p=0.28$. It can be concluded that there were no differences between students with and without working experience with respect to behavioural flexibility.

4.5 Differences in Communicative Competence Depending on Interactants

Table 5. Distribution of Means, Standard Deviations, F-values and p-values of Communicative Competence Depending on Interactants.

	Students (N=157)	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	p
Affiliation and Support	Chinese (N=103)	37.33	3.85	3.76	0.03*
	Foreigners (N=10)	36.10	5.51		
	Both (N=44)	39.07	4.07		
Empathy	Chinese (N=103)	29.93	4.88	2.25	0.11
	Foreigners (N=10)	30.30	6.12		
	Both (N=44)	31.80	4.59		
Interaction Management	Chinese (N=103)	18.21	3.20	0.57	0.57
	Foreigners (N=10)	17.90	3.63		
	Both (N=44)	18.77	3.15		
Social Relaxation	Chinese (N=103)	18.45	3.11	2.48	0.09
	Foreigners (N=10)	18.80	3.43		
	Both (N=44)	19.63	2.40		
Behavioural Flexibility	Chinese (N=103)	7.87	1.19	3.72	0.03*
	Foreigners (N=10)	8.20	1.32		
	Both (N=44)	8.45	1.17		
Communicative Competence	Chinese (N=103)	111.80	13.56	3.10	0.048*
	Foreigners (N=10)	111.30	18.08		
	Both (N=44)	117.72	12.14		

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ (2-tailed) *** $p \leq 0.001$ (2-tailed)

Table 5 shows the means, standard deviations, F-values and p-values of communicative competence depending on the communicative interactants with respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility.

The results show that there were statistically significant differences in the means of communicative competence of the students, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=111.80$, $SD=13.56$); when

interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=111.30$, $SD=18.08$); and, when interactants comprised either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=117.72$, $SD=12.14$), $F=3.10$, $p=0.048$. These results show that there were differences in the communicative competence of students depending on different groups of interactants. According to post-hoc results, students who communicated with either Chinese or foreign interactants were more competent than students who communicated with mostly Chinese interactants. There was no difference in competence, when the interactants comprised either Chinese or foreigners, and when interactants were mostly foreigners. There was also no difference in competence when interactants were mostly foreigners, and, when interactants were mostly Chinese.

In the affiliation and support component of communicative competence, there were statistically significant differences, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=37.33$, $SD=3.85$); when interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=36.10$, $SD=5.51$); and, when interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=39.07$, $SD=4.07$), $F=3.76$, $p=0.03$. According to post-hoc results, students who communicated with either Chinese or foreign interactants were more competent at affiliation and support than students who communicated with mostly Chinese interactants. There was no difference in competence at affiliation and support, when the interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, and, when interactants were mostly foreigners. There was also no difference

in competence at affiliation and support, when interactants were mostly foreigners and when interactants were mostly Chinese.

In the empathy component of communicative competence, there were no statistically significant differences, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=29.93$, $SD=4.88$); when interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=30.30$, $SD=6.12$); and, when interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=31.80$, $SD=4.59$), $F=2.25$, $p=0.11$. It can be concluded that there were no differences in the competence of students at empathy when communicating with different groups of interactants.

In the interaction management component of communicative competence, there were no statistically significant differences, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=18.21$, $SD=3.20$); when interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=17.90$, $SD=3.63$); and, when interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=18.77$, $SD=3.15$), $F=0.57$, $p=0.57$. It can be concluded that there were no differences in the competence of students at interaction management when communicating with different groups of interactants.

In the social relaxation component of communicative competence, there were no statistically significant differences, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=18.45$, $SD=3.11$); when interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=18.80$, $SD=3.43$); and, when interactants

comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=19.63$, $SD=2.40$), $F=2.48$, $p=0.09$. It can be concluded that there were no differences in the competence of students at social relaxation when communicating with different groups of interactants.

In the behavioural flexibility component of communicative competence, there were statistically significant differences, depending on the group of interactants: when interactants were mostly Chinese, ($M=7.87$, $SD=1.19$); when interactants were mostly foreigners, ($M=8.20$, $SD=1.32$); and, when interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, ($M=8.45$, $SD=1.17$), $F=3.72$, $p=0.03$. According to post-hoc results, students who communicated with either Chinese or foreign interactants were more competent at behavioural flexibility than students who communicated with mostly Chinese interactants. There was no difference in competence at behavioural flexibility, when the interactants comprised of either Chinese or foreigners, and, when interactants were mostly foreigners. There was also no difference in competence at behavioural flexibility, when interactants were mostly foreigners, and, when interactants were mostly Chinese.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study investigated the level of communicative competence of overseas Chinese students enrolled in the MBA program at a private university in Malaysia. The results showed that the overall communicative competence of Chinese MBA students at the private university in Malaysia was good to very good. Their

competence with respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility were also good to very good.

In other words, in communication, these MBA students could perform well and were competent. With respect to affiliation and support, they liked to be close and personal with people, typically did not make unusual demands of their friends, could easily put themselves in another person's shoes, generally knew what type of behaviour was appropriate in any given situation, listened to what people said to them, were supportive of others, were good listeners and were easy to talk to. With respect to empathy, they found it easy to get along with others, did not have cold and distant personal relationships, adapted to changing situations well, were rewarding to talk to, were relaxed and comfortable while speaking, had smooth conversational behaviour and were likeable to people. As for interaction management, they were generally relaxed when conversing with new acquaintances, enjoyed social gatherings where they could meet new people, did not mind meeting strangers, were interested in what others have to say, and followed the conversation very well. With respect to social relaxation, they used their voice and body expressively, were sensible to others' needs of the moment, were flexible, generally said the right things at the right time and would not argue with someone just to prove they were right. In terms of behavioural flexibility, they understood other people and let other people know that they understood them.

Yao (2000) found that the communicative competence of the majority of students in his research sample was satisfactory; they were considerate of others, got on well with others, had close relationships, listened to what others talked about and were relaxed during communication.

Conversely, a survey conducted by Zhou and Wang (2013) found that the majority of university students participating in the survey had problems with communication.

In regard to gender differences in communicative competence of the sample of Chinese MBA students investigated, the communicative competence of both gender was equal in all the components surveyed except for one. Male students outperformed female students in the social relaxation component of communicative competence; male students liked to use their voice and body more expressively than female students, were more sensitive to the interactants immediate needs, were more flexible, said the right things at the right time, and were less likely to argue with the interactant just to prove they were right. With respect to the other components of communicative competence such as affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility, it can be concluded that there were no gender differences in the students surveyed.

The findings of the present study differed from the findings of a study by Ma (2009). In her study, she found that female students were better than male students in using body language and voice

in communication. Female students were also better at observing details during communication and catching subtle information via voice, intonation and gestures.

Age of the students seemed to have no discernible influence on their communicative competence. The sample of Chinese MBA students was split into two age groups for the purposes of this study; younger students (21-25 years old), and older students (above 25). There were no differences in communicative competence between the younger and older students in respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility.

The students' work experience or lack of work experience seemed to have no discernible influence on their communicative competence. The results showed that there were no differences in communicative competence between students with working experience and students without working experience in respect to affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility.

The type of people the students interacted with seemed to influence their communicative competence. Students who interacted with both Chinese and foreigners outperformed those who interacted with mostly Chinese in respect to affiliation and support, and behavioural flexibility. There was no difference in communicative competence between students who communicated with both Chinese and foreigners and students who communicated mostly with foreigners. There was also no

difference in communicative competence between students who communicated mostly with foreigners and those who communicated mostly with Chinese with respect to empathy, interaction management and social relaxation.

The findings of this study showed that the communicative competence of Chinese MBA students was satisfactory in terms of affiliation and support, empathy, interaction management, social relaxation and behavioural flexibility. However, there was still room for improvement in certain behavioural aspects of communication such as the usage of body language and vocal expressions. The willingness to engage with others in social settings must be overcome before overall communicative competence can be enhanced through practise.

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Proposing Values for Encouraging People to Share Knowledge: A Case of Active Learning

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ABSTRACT

The present study is designed to propose values for encouraging people to share knowledge in the workplace. The implementation of active learning in the higher education institutions (HEI) was selected as the case study. Its aim is to develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom, which can improve the development of students' soft and technical skills. The proposed values are grouped under three constructs, namely, affective commitment (faith and sincerity), continuance commitment (contemplation and goal obsession) and normative commitment (means and attitude towards university). The researchers have applied cross-sectional survey research to validate the framework. It is found that faith, means, contemplation and sincerity influenced the development of lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom significantly. The practical implications are the discovery of

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theoretical, personal, and workplace practical best practices for the establishment of active learning in the HEI.

Keywords: Faith; Means; Contemplation; Sincerity; Goal Obsession; Attitude towards University; Active Learning; Universities

1. Introduction

The conventional methods of instruction, which is based on retention of facts rather than student engagement, have not maximized student learning (Stage, Muller, Kinzie, & Simmons, 1998). Barr and Tagg (1995) proposed a paradigm shift in college instruction that allows students to reap complete benefits of the undergraduate experience and name this new perspective of college instruction as active learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Hallinger & Lu, 2013).

This new method focuses on student learning (outputs) through active engaging learning rather than delivery of knowledge (input) that emphasizes passive learning only. Other different labels of active learning are constructivist, experiential learning, and problem based learning (von Glasersfeld, 1987; Vygotsky, 1987; Fogarty, 1999). In short, active learning involves the engagement and empowerment of the students in the learning process. However, the most important condition that needs to be fulfilled before active learning could take place, is that the lecturers must have a commitment to motivate students to express ideas and participate in the group discussion. Thus, there is a need to understand values that could develop lecturers' commitment

to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. Knowledge sharing amongst students in turn establishes active learning in the classroom.

To assist in the process of developing lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom, this research proposes three constructs of individual commitment, namely, affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment consist the elements of faith and sincerity. Continuance commitment consist the elements of contemplation and goal obsession. Normative commitment consist the elements of means and attitude towards university. All these are included in the conceptual framework.

The paper is organized as follows. Next section presents a theoretical justification for every element in the conceptual framework. Section 3 offers a diagram of the proposed conceptual framework. Finally, a conclusion is presented in the concluding section.

2. Theoretical Overview

For the theoretical understanding of the establishment of the commitment of the lecturers to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom we posit that lecturers' commitment to instigate knowledge sharing amongst students is based on the concepts of individual commitment (Selamat, Selladurai &

Abdul Halim, 2015). In the following sections a discussion of individual commitment is offered.

2.1 Lecturer-Centred and Student Centred Teaching Approach

There are two types of teaching approach that are being practiced by the higher education institutions which are lecturer-centred teaching approach and student-centred teaching approach (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Gardiner, 1994). Lecturer-centred teaching approach is commonly known as passive teaching whereas student-centred teaching approach is commonly known as active learning. Within lecturer-centred teaching approach, the lecturers hold centre stage for the purposes of the transfer of course content to the students, who are passive recipients for this information. Lecturer-centred teaching approach uses demonstration, discussion, and lectures with learning content, structured mainly around the textbook. The students in these classrooms are rarely allowed to engage in reflection about their learning (Gardiner, 1994), and hold attitudes that are competitive and individualistic. Their learning progress becomes dependent on the actions of the lecturers, who control the manner and type of information dispensed, the development of learning objectives, the design of learning activities, and the choice of learning evaluation tools (Weimar & Associates, 1996).

On the other hand student-centred teaching approach is more inclined towards active learning, where the focus moves from the lecturers to the students, and the goal of teaching is to improve

the quality of learning for the students (Gardiner, 1994; Stage et al., 1998; Hallinger & Lu, 2013). Instead of being concerned with transferring information, the lecturer is concerned with how students learn and whether they are making sense of the information they have received. The role of the lecturer in this aspect is therefore to facilitate understanding and promote the development of higher order thinking skills, rather than the memorization of facts, and with more importance given to student-generated solutions and problems (Gardiner, 1994; Prawat, 1992; Stage et al., 1998; Weimer & Associates, 1996; Hallinger & Lu, 2013). The focus on the lecture is minimized to give more emphasis to varied teaching methods like problem solving and problem-based learning, experiential, field-based learning, role- playing, case studies, service learning, simulations, cooperative learning and collaborative learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Gardiner, 1994; Guskey, 1994; Meyers & Jones, 1993; Stage et al., 1998; Travis, 1995). The selection choices among these methods depends on students' needs, abilities, and skills (Stage et al., 1998; Travis, 1995; Weimer, 1996; Hallinger & Lu, 2013).

The focus of this research is active learning or student-centred learning. This is because it is argued that the dependency on the lecturer undermines the development of higher order thinking, and instead only encourages superficial learning of low-level, factual material (Hallinger & Lu, 2013). As contemporary society becomes increasingly diverse and complex, developing

students' critical thinking through active learning becomes a necessity for every higher education institutions.

2.2 Active Learning and the Role of Lecturers

From the above definition it can be seen that active learning moves beyond isolated set of activities, discussions or seminars that encourage social interaction and support among students and their lecturers. It also involves repetition and integration of meaningful experiences that allow students to generalize their knowledge to different situations and problems (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Loucks-Horsely, Hewson, Love, & Style, 1998; Mintz, 1999). The learning activities used are concrete, involving input from several sensory systems, to stimulate multiple regions of the brain to perform. The interactions with other individuals and materials that occur in this type of classroom increase effectiveness and efficiency in the learning process (Davis, 1993; 1995). The transition to active learning requires the lecturers to change their views of teaching from "covering the content" to "helping students to learn" (Svinicki, 1990), and to alter their teaching methods to incorporate activities that challenge students to become actively engaged in learning. Within this approach, lecturers take on the role of coaches, facilitators, negotiators, and guides who mediate between the students' current knowledge base and the demands of the learning objectives expected from them. This requires the need for lecturers to be sensitive to

students' goals and motivation in order to identify and utilize activities that facilitate the development of solutions and insights. In short, it could be said that within active learning the success of a course is determined by the level to which students are involved in the learning process and the quality of the learning that takes place in the classroom (Fox, 1997; Fox-Cardamone & Rue, 2003). The move toward more student-centred learning has been growing since the 1990s (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Davis, 1993; Gardiner, 1994; Grasha, 1996; Grubb et al., 1999; Weimer, 1990; Weimer & Associates, 1996). In view of the limitations of traditional lecturer-centred methods which cannot meet the needs of the students in as these methods do not provide the necessary critical thinking, problem-solving, and interpersonal and intercultural skills needed in the knowledge age and the rapidly changing business environment (Drucker 1992; Grubb et al., 1999). This transition from a focus on teaching to student learning requires a shift in the role of the lecturer in order to accommodate this change successfully.

However, it was seen that many lecturers resist involving students in the learning process (Guskey, 1994). This is due to barriers such as discomfort and anxiety associated with change, a possible increase in preparation time, and a lack of needed materials, equipment, and resources. Implicit in these barriers is that the use of active learning requires a different skill set that goes beyond teaching by lecturer, and is accompanied by a different mental model (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Chickering &

Gamson, 1987). Senge (1990) defined a mental model as "deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images that influence how we change the world and how we take action" (p. 8). Thus there is a need to understand values that could develop lecturers' positive mental model so that they are ready to involve students in the classroom discussion. This research coins this scenario as the commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.3 Tacit Knowledge and Commitment to Encourage Students to Share Knowledge

The above highlights that the success of active learning relies on the commitment of the lecturers to encourage students to share tacit knowledge in the classroom. Tacit knowledge can be defined as something that is being understood but is not being openly expressed (Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1971). It is knowledge that people do not have words. It is representing people's intuition, beliefs, assumptions and values that are developed through a series of experiences (Saint-Onge, 1996). Thus it could be said that tacit knowledge is highly personal, subjective form of knowledge is usually informal and can be inferred from the statements of others (Sternberg, 1997). Tacit knowledge is critical in the process of decision making and influencing others in the workplace (Liebowitz & Beckman, 1998). In short tacit knowledge is so embedded in an individual's mind. Thus it is highly personal, hard to externalize and hard to

share (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Tsoukas, 2002; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007; Amayah, 2013). In turn, there is a need for the lecturers to encourage students to externalize and share their tacit knowledge in the classroom. By practising this, every student in the classroom can be trained to analyze others' ideas critically and examine the feasibility of their ideas in the practical setting. Eventually, the students will make a consensus. The consensus represents a synergy that is created through knowledge sharing activity in the classroom. Ignoring the critical role of externalizing and sharing tacit knowledge amongst students in the classroom, as argued by Saint-Onge (1996) and Selamat et al. (2015), could lead to the creation of passive students and the inefficiencies in developing holistic human capital.

2.4 Developing Lecturers' Commitment to Encourage Students to Share Knowledge

To develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom this paper proposes the following constructs: (1) affective commitment; (2) continuance commitment; and (3) normative commitment. These constructs are developed based on Meyer and Allen's (1991) organizational commitment model. The focus of this research is on what values that can develop lecturers' self-commitment (individual commitment) and not what the faculty should do to increase lecturers' commitment in active learning (organizational

commitment). In other words, this research extends the use of Meyer and Allen's (1991) model.

2.4.1 Affective Commitment

Affective commitment refers to the emotional or psychological connection of an individual to identify and participate in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This research proposes two affective commitment values that could develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge, namely, faith and sincerity.

2.4.1.1 Faith

Faith is a great trust or confidence in something or someone (Cambridge International Dictionary of English, 1995). Its position is much higher than trust or confidence. Having faith in active learning enables lecturers to appreciate students' communication skill and critical thinking development (Gardiner, 1994; Prawat, 1992; Stage et al., 1998; Weimer & Associates, 1996; Hallinger & Lu, 2013; Selamat et al., 2015). In turn, forces them to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. This enables the students to experience soft skills development more effectively and efficiently.

Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (1994), Butcher, Harvey and Atkinson (1997) and Harvey and Butcher (1998) found that there is a significant relationship between faith in organization and

organizational performance. On the other hand, Selamat and Choudrie (2007) and Abdul Wahab, Selamat and Saad (2013) found a significant relationship between faith in organization and the willingness to externalize and share knowledge and skills within the organization. Haldin-Herrgard (2000) further supported this axiom by saying that lack of faith prevents staff members from externalizing and sharing their tacit knowledge. In short, there is a potential relationship between the value of faith and the commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. Thus the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: There is a relationship between faith and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.4.1.2 Sincerity

Sincerity is the most important value that should be instilled in the workplace including lecturers. Every lecturer must have a feeling that he or she works for the sake of the university and for fulfilling his or her responsibility to the university. The important role of sincerity in developing effective individuals has been stressed by Schroder (1989). This is further supported by Selamat and Choudrie (2007), Abdullah and Selamat (2007) and Abdul Wahab, Selamat and Saad (2012) whereby they obtained an effective role of sincerity in motivating staff members to participate in learning environment. The main reason why an organization recruits people is to assist management in the

maximizing of its profits. Thus every recruited staff has to bear in his or her mind in the workplace that “we must perform organizational tasks sincerely.” The value of sincerity also gives staff members a strength to ignore any negative sentiment to the management, that is created through gossip and slander (Schroder, 1989; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007).

Based on the above discussion it could be argued that sincere lecturers will encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom without hesitation. This is to assist the university to produce quality graduates for the industry. Thus the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: There is a relationship between sincerity and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.4.2 Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment means that when employees enter into an organization they are bound to maintain a bond with the organization or remain with the organization due to the awareness of costs associated with leaving the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This research proposes two continuance commitment values that could develop lecturers’ commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom, namely, contemplation and goal obsession.

2.4.2.1 Contemplation

People are always contemplating the reward or profit that they will obtain before doing something. In the workplace, rewards can be categorized into monetary rewards (salary, bonus, allowance, promotion) and non-monetary rewards (complimentary words such as thank you and congratulation) (Lohman, 2000; Ashton, 2004; Bryson, Pajo, Ward & Mallon, 2006). The employees in the manufacturing companies (Sambrook & Stewart, 2000; Bryson et al., 2006) and multinational corporations consider reward system as a basis before participating actively in the organizational activities. Similarly, Lohman (2000) found that teachers contemplate rewards first before get involve in additional school activities such as sponsoring student clubs, reviewing curriculum, mentoring colleagues, leading teams and departments and supervising student teachers. However, professionals such as accountants (Hicks, Bagg, Doyle & Young, 2007) and system analyst (Lohman, 2009) did not consider rewards as a main evaluation basis before participating in any organizational activities.

One of the reasons why the lecturers are reluctant to change their teaching style is due to the absence of incentives (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Haas & Keley, 1998; Halpern & Associates, 1994; Seldin & Associates, 1995; Travis, 1995; Weimer, 1990, 1996, 2002; Weimer & Associates, 1996). Based on the social

exchange theory and norm of reciprocity, when employers acknowledge their employees' efforts by offering opportunities and benefits, employees may feel obligated to reciprocate and become more committed to the organization (Shore, Thornton, & Newton, 1990; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). Thus it is logical to relate reward contemplation to lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: There is a relationship between contemplation and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.4.2.2 Goal Obsession

The second element of continuance commitment construct is goal obsession. In this research goal obsession is defined as a continuous visualization of university's goals and commitment to achieve them (adapted from Selamat & Choudrie, 2007). Every lecturer must be obsessed with the university's goal, especially the aim to produce high quality graduates. Being obsessed with this aim enables them to become more receptive to knowledge sharing amongst students because it is considered as the best approach to develop students' analytical and communication skills (Gardiner, 1994; Prawat, 1992; Stage et al., 1998; Weimer & Associates, 1996; Hallinger & Lu, 2013).

Previous studies have found a significant relationship between aims or targets understanding with organizational performance

(Butcher et al., 1997; Manogran & Liang, 1998; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007; Abdul Wahab et al., 2013). Being equipped with right understanding on organizational aims and targets enables staff members to undertake tasks diligently and monitor performance prudently. In addition, it assists staff members to effectively navigate the difficult and dynamic organizational reality. As this understanding enables adept use of knowledge and skills, it is beneficial when considering knowledge sharing and active learning activities and is therefore adopted in this research. In short, the inspiration to build up university's image through quality graduates makes goal obsession applicable for developing lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. Thus the following hypothesis is developed:

H4: There is a relationship between goal obsession and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.4.3 Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is related to employees' sense of responsibility or obligation to remain at the current organization due to employees' various pre-entry and socialization experiences (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees with normative commitment feel that they have a moral obligation in paying back the organization through remain with the employing organization. This research proposes two normative commitment

values that could develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom, namely, means and attitude towards university.

2.4.3.1 Means

In the organizations, means is normally coined as standard operating procedure or organizational best practice (Barham & Rassam, 1989; Burgoyne, 1988; Schroder, 1989; Morgan, 1989; Drucker, 1992; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007). By adopting standard operating procedure, staff members can undertake tasks based upon "the right approach for the right situation." This in turn enables cost, time and energy savings (Barham & Rassam, 1989; Burgoyne, 1988; Schroder, 1989; Morgan, 1989; Drucker, 1992; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007; Abdul Wahab et al., 2013).

The use of active learning requires a different skill set that goes beyond teaching by lecturer, and is accompanied by a different mental model (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Chickering & Gamson, 1987). Armstrong-Stassen (2008), McEvoy and Blahna (2001), Kooij, de Lange, Jansen and Dijkers (2008) and Maurer and Rafuse (2001) stated that the opportunity to develop skills and competencies may facilitate workers' commitment because the availability of training is a strong signal that the organization is willing to 'invest' in its workforce. Thus it could be said that extensive training on active learning methods can improve lecturers' skill and mentality on active learning and in turn their commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the

classroom. In short, every lecturer must know how to encourage students to externalize and share knowledge in the classroom.

Thus the following hypothesis is developed:

H5: There is a relationship between means and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

2.4.3.2 Attitude towards University

Under theory of reasoned action, Fishbein and Ajben (1975) stated that attitudes are learned disposition to respond to an object or behavior. It is representing a hierarchy of effect from feeling or judgments toward person, object or issue and linked to user behavior (McMillan, Hwang, & Lee, 2003). Attitude is one of the essential factors in influencing user behaviour and become as one of the most investigated concepts (Fishbein & Ajben, 1975; Jahng Jain & Ramamurthy, 2007; McMillan et al., 2003; Simon & Peppas, 2004). It has been the focus of marketing researches, especially to investigate the impact of advertisement on sales (McMillan et al., 2003; Simon & Peppas, 2004). It continues from research in the offline world into a concept of attitude towards the website that measures online user predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to a website, especially with the enormous growth of e-commerce (Chen, Clifford, & Wells, 2002). Derived from this scenario this research argues that positive attitude towards university make lecturers more receptive to active learning activity and vice versa. This axiom leads to the pre-supposition that attitude towards university

influences lecturers' intention to encourage knowledge sharing amongst students in the classroom and in turn gives impact on the process of establishing active learning activities. Thus the following hypothesis is developed:

H6: There is a relationship between attitude towards university and commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

3. Research Methodology

Data of this study were gathered through a survey approach. Survey is one of the most common data collection methods for examining the participation in active learning and learning activities (Barr & Tagg, 1995; O'Banion, 1999; Baxter, Terenzini, & Hutchings, 2002). Survey research suits the unit of analysis of this study, which are lecturers in the Malaysian higher education institutions (Dwivedi, 2005). This study utilized stratified random sampling as a sampling technique. Stratified random sampling, as its name implies, involves a process of stratification or segregation, followed by random selection of subjects from each stratum (universities) (Sekaran, 2003; Fowler, 2009; Babin & Griffin, 2010). A total of 370 lecturers in public and private universities across Malaysia were randomly selected. The questionnaires (as per attached below) were distributed by liaison lecturers (most of them are deans of the faculty or school) of the universities. Multiple regression analysis was used to test

the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable.

4. Research Findings

Out of 370 distributed questionnaires, 253 were returned. This resulted in a response rate of 68.38%. As suggested by Sekaran (2003), a response rate of 30% is considered adequate for mail survey research. Based on this suggestion, the response rate of this study (68.38%) was above the recommended rate. In turn, the findings of this research can be generalized to the population.

4.1 Profile of Respondents

The frequency and percentage of each demographic profile are illustrated in Table 1. The reported demographic profiles include gender, age and number of years working in the current university.

Table 1. Background of the Respondents (N=253)

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	108	42.7
Female	145	57.3
Age (years)		
21-30	12	4.7
31-40	119	47.0
41-50	81	32.0
51-60	37	14.6
>60	4	1.6
Length of Service		
<5	26	10.3
<10	100	39.5
<15	65	25.7
<20	62	24.5
>21	0	0.0

In this research, gender distribution was slightly higher for female. Out of 253 respondents, 108 (42.7%) respondents are male and 145 (57.3%) respondents are female. The largest group of respondents (N=119, 47.0%) reported that they were in the “31-40” age group. The second largest group consisted of respondents with age “41-50” (N=81, 32.0%), third largest group consisted of respondents with age “51-60” (N=37, 14.6%) and fourth largest group consisted of respondents with age “21-30” (N=12, 4.7%). The smallest group of respondents (N=4, 1.6%) reported that they were in “Over 60” age group.

The largest group of respondents (N=126, 49.8%) indicated that they have worked at the current university “10 years or less”. The second largest group of respondents (N=62, 24.5%) reported that

they have worked at the current university “20 years or less). This is followed by “15 years or less” category (N=65, 25.7%).

4.2 Reliability Analysis

To test the reliability of the research instrument, as suggested by Sekaran (2003), this study utilized internal consistency method which is measured by Cronbach’s alpha. The coefficient for the Cronbach’s alpha is expressed between 0 and 1.00. The results of the Cronbach’s alpha values of the variables are as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Coefficients for Variables (N=253).

Variable	N of Item	Cronbach Alpha
Faith	8	0.890
Means	5	0.931
Contemplation	6	0.924
Sincerity	3	0.790
Goal obsession	6	0.932
Attitude towards university	5	0.901
Commitment to encourage students to share knowledge	6	0.767

As shown in Table 2, the Cronbach’s alpha values for variables varied between 0.767 (commitment to encourage students to share knowledge) and 0.932 (goal obsession). Four variables possessed Cronbach’s alpha values above 0.90 (means, contemplation, goal obsession and attitude towards university), one between 0.80 and 0.90 (faith) and only two below than 0.80 (sincerity and commitment to encourage students to share

knowledge). In other words, none of the study variables demonstrated below the minimum reliability level of 0.60 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Thus the internal consistency of the measures used in this study was considered acceptable (Churchill, 1979; Sekaran, 2003).

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Data refinement was undertaken prior to multiple regression analysis. It was divided into data screening and data testing, which aim to fulfill the multivariate assumptions (Hair et al., 2006). Data screening consists of three tests which are missing data, response bias and outliers identification. On the other hand, data testing consists of linearity, normality, homoscedasticity and multicollinearity tests. The criteria for all these tests were met in this study.

To test this research hypotheses multiple regression analysis was utilized and its findings are illustrated in Tables 3, 4 and 5. As illustrated in Table 3, the value of adjusted R square is 0.597. This shows that all independent variables (faith, means, contemplation, sincerity, goal obsession and attitude towards university) explain 59.7% variance in the commitment to encourage students to share knowledge.

Table 3. Model Summary ^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.773a	.597	.587	.25687

Note: a. Predictor: (Constant): Faith, Means, Contemplation, Sincerity, Goal Obsession and Attitude towards University.

b. Dependent Variable: Commitment to Encourage Students to Share Knowledge

Table 4. ANOVA ^b for Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significant Level
1	Regression	24.064	6	4.011	60.781	.000a
	Residual	16.232	246	.066		
	Total	40.296	252			

Note: a. Predictor: (Constant): Faith, Means, Contemplation, Sincerity, Goal Obsession and Attitude towards University.

b. Dependent Variable: Commitment to Encourage Students to Share Knowledge

Table 5. Coefficient^a for Multiple Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	*Significant Level
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.340	.248		9.418	.000
	1. Faith	.345	.049	.443	7.028	.000*
	2. Means	.153	.047	.235	3.266	.001*
	3. Contemplation	.241	.048	.290	4.978	.000*
	4. Sincerity	.126	.039	.185	3.215	.001*
	5. Goal Obsession	.059	.053	.080	1.110	.268
	6. Attitude towards University	-.045	.065	-.050	-.696	.487

Note: a. Dependent Variable = IS Outsourcing Success, *p is significant at level ≤ 0.05

Only four variables were found to have significant effect on the commitment to encourage students to share knowledge. They were faith ($B=0.345$, $t=7.028$, $p<0.01$), means ($B=0.153$, $t=3.266$, $p<0.01$), contemplation ($B=0.241$, $t=4.978$, $p<0.01$) and sincerity ($B=0.126$, $t=3.215$, $p<0.05$). Thus H1, H2, H3 and H5 were accepted.

4.4 Discussion

This study found that faith was positively and significantly influenced lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. This finding is consistent with the previous studies such as Gardiner (1994), Prawat (1992), Stage et al. (1998), Weimer and Associates (1996), Hallinger and Lu (2013) and Selamat et al. (2015). The result implies that the lecturers that have low faith or do not believe in active learning will not encourage students to participate in the classroom discussion actively. This is because active learning requires more time and resources for preparation and two-way communication between lecturer and students and also amongst students themselves. Thus the lecturers must believe that only through active learning the students are able to improve their soft skills effectively and in turn able to face challenges in the business real life situation confidently. This belief in turn will motivate them to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom.

This study also found that means was positively and significantly influenced lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share

knowledge in the classroom. This finding is consistent with the previous studies whereby the understanding on best practices develops staff members' internal strength to bring success to their organizations (Barham & Rassam, 1989; Burgoyne, 1988; Schroder, 1989; Morgan, 1989; Drucker, 1992; Selamat & Choudrie, 2007; Abdul Wahab et al., 2013). The result implies that the lecturers that do not know how to establish active learning will not implement it in the classroom. The probable reason behind this scenario is that active learning requires a different skill set that goes beyond teaching by lecturer, and is accompanied by a different mental model. Thus adequate training on active learning must be provided to the lecturers so that it could be practiced extensively in the university.

This study also found that contemplation was positively and significantly influenced lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. This finding is consistent with the previous studies where lecturers are reluctant to change their teaching style is due to the absence of incentives (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Haas & Keley, 1998; Halpern & Associates, 1994; Seldin & Associates, 1995; Travis, 1995; Weimer, 1990, 1996, 2002; Weimer & Associates, 1996). In other words, lecturers contemplate rewards first before include students in the teaching and learning activities. The probable explanation could be extra workload that they have to bear due to tedious preparation of active learning. Thus the universities

must consider financial and non-financial incentives to encourage the use of active learning amongst lecturers.

This study also found that sincerity was positively and significantly influenced lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. This finding is consistent with the previous studies such as Selamat and Choudrie (2007), Abdullah and Selamat (2007) and Abdul Wahab et al. (2012). The result indicates that this factor was perceived by the lecturers as the motivational factor in the implementation of active learning activities in the classroom. The probable explanation could be the norm that sincerity is the most important value in every human endeavour and active learning is not exceptional. This is because, based on the norm of reciprocity, when the universities offer job and salary to sincere lecturers, they may feel obligated to reciprocate and become more committed to the success of teaching and learning activities in the universities.

Surprisingly, this study found that goal obsession was not positively and significantly influenced participation in active learning. The result indicates that this factor was not perceived by the lecturers as the motivational factor in the process of establishing active learning in the classroom. In other words, the lecturers are not really obsessed with the inspiration to build up university's image through quality graduates. Last but not least, this study also found that attitude towards university was not positively and significantly influenced participation in active

learning. The result indicates that this factor was not perceived by the lecturers as the motivational factor in the process of establishing active learning activity in the classroom. This result complements goal obsession result whereby lecturers are not so bothered with what is happening in the university. The probable reason for this scenario might be because of the nature of academic world whereby the lecturers are busy with their own work at the workplace. Thus to develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom and in turn establish active learning the elements of faith, means, contemplation and sincerity need to be given more attention by the HEI.

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to determine whether individual affective commitment (faith and sincerity), continuance commitment (contemplation and goal obsession) and normative commitment (means and attitude toward university) develop lecturers' commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom. From the findings, the proposed conceptual framework was substantially validated. The findings showed that the effect of faith, means, contemplation and sincerity on the commitment to encourage students to share knowledge in the classroom was significant.

Although this study have contributed to active learning area, but several limitations have to be considered. First, the context of this

study is limited to the lecturers. For future research it is suggested that a comparison is made between lecturers and students. Second, this research conceptual framework was tested and examined from the Malaysian perspective. Thus obtaining feedback from the HEI in other countries is necessary. Third, this research adopted cross-sectional survey for data collection. To gain broad view on the issues related to active learning and knowledge sharing, a longitudinal study is advised. Last but not least, unit of analysis of this study was an individual whereby the lecturers were selected as the respondents. To gain more variance in the analysis, obtaining feedback from all individuals working in the HEI is strongly recommended.

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Job Motivation among Employees in Construction Companies in Selangor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Job motivation is one of the substantial challenges faced by employees. Past studies have proved alarming impact on companies' growth due to lower levels of motivation among the workers. Since the levels of motivation affect productivity, they sway the performance of business organizations. Thus, the objective of this study is to determine the critical factors influencing job motivation among employees in selected constructions companies in Selangor, Malaysia. The result showed work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are

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significantly related to job motivation. This article aims to deliver a medium among employers and employees to find common ground for the motivation levels to ensure a pleasant working environment.

Keywords: Motivation; construction; work-life balance; flexibility; job security; pay satisfaction

1. Introduction

Motivation is a process that starts with psychological deficiency or the need that drives employees to strive to do better with a promise of return in extrinsic form, which relates to rewards in form of salary, benefits or security or intrinsic form relates to the sense of challenge or achievement (Mullins, 1996). According to Susanna Kultalahti and Riita Liisa Viitala (2014) Job motivation defines as “a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration”. From personal understanding, job motivation is what drives employees strive to be better, and work better in terms of task or team play (Kultalahti & Viitala, 2014).

Work motivation can bring alarming negative effects such as increased rate of absenteeism among employees. Hence, the organizations must ensure to motivate their employees towards achieving their mission and vision. (Abdullah, 2013). Less motivation among employees in construction industry in Malaysia, will lead to an abandonment of construction projects (ACP). Yap Eng Hoe (2013) state that ACP is considered as one

of the most common and serious problems affecting the Malaysian construction industry where it influences not only the immediate purchasers but also the project players and the public. This article focuses on selected workers in construction companies and their job satisfaction. Main objective for this research is to investigate the factors influencing job satisfaction among the employees in selected construction companies in Selangor, Malaysia. This research is important to the construction companies whereby it will help the management to realize the effects on lack of job motivation towards the company. The remainder of this paper is organised as follows: we start by looking at literature on selected variables in Section 2, while the method is described in Section 3. The results are described in Section 4 and Section 5 concludes.

2. Review on Selected Variables

2.1 Work-life balance

Kultalahti and Riita Liisa Viitala (2014) define work life balance as where work that should apparently not take over one's life. This shows how work-life balance influences the job motivation and work performance. The lack of work-life balance influence employees' health and wellbeing which is affected by factors such as work stress, degree of job control and conflict between work and life (Zheng et al.,2015). Work-life balance means the harmonious interface between different life domains. It

emphasizes on concept of a person resources such as time, energy and money, to have both satisfaction in personal life as well as performing well upon delivering excellent result (Koubova & Buchko, 2013). In addition, work-life balance is a relationship between employee and employer where it strikes the right balance between the two of them. Achieving the balance requires factors such as employees should be open about their needs and be transparent about it and to have an open dialogue with their employer or manager. Adding to being open with each other, balance can never be achieved without the respect on boundaries (Cincotta, 2016).

2.2 Flexibility at work

Flexibility at work or flexi-time improves employees' attendance and performance as it provides control over the employees' working environment. In addition, flexible working contributes to employees' happiness and positivism (Atkinson & Hall, 2011). According to Dirk Hofacker and Stefanie Konig (2013) flexibility at work place is beneficial for both employee and employers as they have the option to care of their family. Furthermore, flexibility in terms of working hours including shift work, non-Monday to Friday schedules, work on call, and location of work influence the individuals' motivation in working environment. Sussanna Shagvaliyeva and Rashad Yazdanifard (2013) echoed this by saying flexibility at work place benefits women more, as work flexibility does not only implies on

variation in time and place of the job, but also career breaks in terms of maternity leaves. Flexi-time offers convenience in planning, not in reducing the working time. Thus, flexibility in work might be summarized as the ability of employees to control their working time duration as well as location of work which many prefer to conduct their work at home or outside of the office (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Adding to flexi-time as define by Lou Lu (2011) reveals that flexibility is the most important factor to influence job motivation that leads to job satisfaction which also brings large effects on family and social commitment. Therefore, taking into careful consideration on employee individual needs and desires effects on the arrangement of flexible working time (Lu, 2011). Flexible working time appears to be the most valued management privilege as according to Vathsala Wickramasinghe (2012) flexible work as a form of contributory support received formally through organisational advantages to lessen job stress that can create more positive working environment (Wickramasinghe, 2012).

2.3 Job security

Job security is an assurance for the employee where it is about the continuity of employment. Job security usually arises from the terms of the contract of employment, collective bargaining agreement, or labour legislation that prevents random termination and layoffs. (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). According

to Ali Bassam Mahmoud and William D. reisel (2014) security is a need which relates to the second level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. It describes that the employees' job position in the company is secure. Hence, employees are not facing termination any time soon and this contributes to job motivation (Mahmoud & Reisel, 2014).

Furthermore, Fazil Senol (2011) state that it is a part of external motivators among employees as job security plays an important role in both social and working life, as it helps people not to concern about their future, provides sustaining labour peace, increasing organizations' productivity and keeping social balance and values. Therefore, job security is one of the most substantial variables of employee satisfaction which states the overall attitudes of the employees towards their job and it also contributes to the way of achieving organizational aims. The concept of job security has arisen with the goal of guaranteeing steadiness of employment and avoiding arbitrary/random terminations (Senol, 2011).

2.4 Pay satisfaction/reward

Pay satisfaction comes in many forms and one of it is by giving bonuses to the employee. Bonuses are given to the workers based on their performance and how much efforts they have contributed to the company. According to Ayuninnisa Rizqi N. and Saptoto Ridwan (2015), since the beginning of the concept of pay satisfaction, there have been some arguments and studies

improving this concept until a concept of its dimensions developed. The researchers believe that pay level is a dimension of pay satisfaction. Later, it was found that besides pay level, there are other causes contribute to pay satisfaction, namely benefits and pay raise. The two dimensions together affect pay satisfaction level (Rizqi N & Ridwan, 2015).

However Jonathan C. Shrader and Luke Singer (2014) determine pay satisfaction as a question on how companies consent about incentivizing talents of their employees where one of the key aspects is by compensation. Even more of a driving factor of pay satisfaction, it starts off with the assumption that pay satisfaction is multidimensional with four dimensions consisting of benefits, level, raises and structure/administration (Shrader & Singer, 2014). Jai Prakash Sharma and Naval Bajpai (2011) describe salary as a form of periodic payment from an employer to an employee. It is weighed in with piece wages, while each job, hour or other component is paid separately, rather than on a periodic basis. From the point of view of running a business, pay satisfaction can also be observed as an important reward to motivate the performance of employees. All other behavioural factors are important for enhancing job satisfaction of employees but satisfaction from pay is a must (Sharma & Bajpai, 2011).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In this study, a sample of 60 workers consisting of 30 male and 30 female from Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd, Perunding Eagles Engineers and Pure Projects Management Sdn Bhd are selected. This proportion is selected in a balance gender to reduce bias in the analysis. Employees come from various position.

3.2 Method of Data Selection

Stratified sampling has been used in this study. An efficient sample can be collected with this sampling method. The sample replicates the population exactly on the basis of the criterion used for stratification. Each stratum has an equal size which is 30 samples for male and 30 samples for female. A simple random sampling is used to collect the data for each stratum means that in each stratum will have an identical chance of being included in the sample.

3.3 Technique Used

Data is gathered by distributing the questionnaire. Closed ended question is used whereby the respondents have specific limited alternative response and they are asked to choose the closest response to their own opinion. Self-administered questionnaire is used where the respondents take the responsibility for reading

and answering the questions. This exercise encourages more objective compare to other methods. In addition, it is also fast and easy to gather information from respondent.

4. Results

4.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression assumes all variables have a normal distribution. Distribution of variables that are not normal (highly skewed or kurtosis variables or variables with substantial outliers) can affect relationships and significant test.

Table 1. Model summary for multiple regression analysis.

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.691 ^a	.478	.467	.35545	2.014

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pay Satisfaction, Work life balance, Flexibility Work, Job Security

b. Dependent Variable: Job Motivation

The model summary in table 1 is an analysis between the dependent variable (Job Motivation) and the independent variables (Job Security, Work-life Balance, Flexibility at Work and Pay Satisfaction). The key factor in this summary that can give further interpretation is the R square and the Durbin-Watson value. R-square explains the total variation in the dependent variable with usage of the independent variable (Hamilton, 2015). The data is a perfectly linear model when the R squared is equals to 1.0, moreover, when R squared is less than 1.0 shows

that some variability in the data failed to be describe by the model. R-square value for this research is 0.478 which can also be understood as 47.8% of the overall variation of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. On the other hand, the Durbin-Watson values in between 1 to 3 indicate that there is no autocorrelation. Hence, autocorrelation is absent in this study as the Durbin-Watson value is 2.014.

Table 2. Regression Coefficient of Multi Linear Regression Analysis of a Dependent Variable and Independent Variables.

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.388	.283		4.902	.000		
Work life balance	.097	.034	.156	2.841	.005	.893	1.120
Flexibility Work	.461	.059	.517	7.774	.000	.606	1.651
Job Security	.142	.058	.192	2.456	.015	.439	2.276
Pay Satisfaction	-.047	.076	-.042	-.614	.540	.576	1.736

The significant value was used to determine whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected. When the significance value is less than or equal to 0.05, the value is significant therefore rejects the null hypothesis. There are three independent variables with significance value less than or equal to 3 which is work-life balance (0.005), flexibility at work (0.000) and job security (0.015). However, pay satisfaction with value 0.540 is more than

0.05 therefore fail to reject null hypothesis. Based on the table above, the equation of the research can be derived with the results achieved by the multiple regression analysis.

Job Motivation = 1.388 + 0.097 (Work-life balance) + 0.461 (Flexibility at work) + 0.142 (Job security) – 0.047 (Pay Satisfaction).

According to the equation, work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are positively related with job motivation. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to analyse the severity of multicollinearity in the model. Based on theory, the accumulated VIF should be less than 10 in order to conclude that there is no multicollinearity. Based from the table above, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for this model is 6.783 and can be concluded that multicollinearity is absent.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study can perform as medium for the employers and employees to determine the level of motivation in order to enhance company's growth. Based on the findings, company can plan for the effective strategy to become more competitive. This information may influence employee absenteeism, productivity and staff turnover. Work-life balance, flexibility at work and job security are the most significance to job motivation among employee. In addition, the result showed that there is no significance difference between the job motivation and pay satisfaction. This finding is the same with

Claude Ferneta et al. (2012) research, which state that job motivation may differ reliant on the working environment. In an autonomy-supportive environment, which raises motivation, individuals assume that they have the rights to choose and to make decisions and that they are supported in their work by their superior. Employees who assume that their supervisor adopts autonomy-supportive behaviours demonstrate greater job satisfaction and higher psychological well-being than those who feel controlled by their supervisor. This shows that to some of the employees, pay satisfaction (reward, monetary, salary, bonuses) does not bring a huge impact towards motivation rather than the rights to choose and to make decisions. Furthermore, due to the time and resources, the researcher decided to conduct a small scale of 60 respondents from employees on various construction firms in Malaysia. This mean that the number of respondents may not be strong enough to fully represent the majority of employees in the construction industry in Malaysia. Thus, for future studies, researchers can conduct a comparative analysis among each of the construction firms to achieve more appropriate results. Also a longer span of time can be conducted to eliminate the time constraint that can result in more reliable findings.

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Factors Influencing Home Purchase Decision: A Case Study in Selangor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to study the factors influencing the home buyers' purchase decision in Selangor, Malaysia. A total of 180 respondents were participated in this survey. Results showed positive correlation between dependent variable (purchase decision) and independent variables (property attributes, location, property environment and financials). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 was used to analyze the data collected through the survey. Recommendations are presented offering beneficial suggestions for further studies.

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Key words: Purchase decision; property attributes; location; property environment and financial.

1. Introduction

Property industry in Malaysia is progressing as there are many undeveloped local lands with great potentials especially in Selangor state. In the recent years, the rapid economic development has created an increasing demand for properties among the urban areas in Malaysia (Ong, 2013). There are some well-known developer companies building many constructions such as Eco World Corporation, IJM Land Berhad, Gamuda Land and Ekovest. Selangor has the highest demand for property in Malaysia in which the top areas of preference are Damansara, Puchong, Cheras, Shah Alam and Kuala Lumpur (Rehda, 2017). However, the average housing price range in Selangor is RM 500,000 to RM 1,000,000 which is considered expensive compare to other states.

In addition, the available housing stocks are increasing. In other words, there are many unsold units in the property market. In the recent years, unsold properties have dampened the property market in Selangor. In the 1st quarter of 2016, the residential and commercial properties were both increasing by 16% (Bill, 2017). According to the National Property Information Centre (2016) 18,908 units of the residential properties and 81,894 units of commercial properties launched in the first quarter of 2016 had yet to be sold. The price of unsold properties was approximately

RM 9.4 billion and the market slowed down 16% compared to the previous year (The malay mail online, 2016). This issue may result in momentous imbalances in the property market. There has been approximately 35% growth in housing stock over 10 years between 2005 to 2015, which means the available housing stock increased from 3.7million in 2005 to 4.9 million in 2015 (REHDA, 2016). The major concerns in choosing a new house are the quality of the area, the easier access to facilities and sense of community. Geographical location could be an important consideration before purchasing a property. Moreover, facilities such as convenience stores, eateries, education centres and other amenities can enhance the chance of attracting Selangor homebuyers. Especially, the majority of people living in metropolises, place particular value on convenient access to a range of facilities. Besides, some buyers may prefer areas with secure gates and guard houses to ensure their safety. Meanwhile, the housing price increases 20% in the market whereas the household income only increases 5% annually (Ong, 2013). When property price growth rate exceeds the household income level, it causes an issue with affordability of purchasing houses. As a result, more people intend to purchase a small size property such as an apartment or condominium as their preferred property type within 800 to 1,500 square feet (REHDA, 2016). However, there are even condominiums and apartments with these characteristics that are still unsold. Thus, this study aims to investigate the home purchase decision in Selangor. It contributes

the knowledge to the first-time home buyers to avoid the common home-buying mistakes and help them to make a better choice. Furthermore, the property developers can gain information on the customers' preferences on properties. Therefore, it endeavours to support the business to become sustainable in the competitive market. This paper is organized as follows: Section 1 generally reviews the housing issues in Malaysia followed by literature review discussed in Section 2. In Section 3, the methodology employed in this study is presented. Section 4 discusses the findings of the study while the conclusions and recommendations are presented in Section 5.

2. Literature Review

Purchase decision is defined as a process of thoughts of consumer to identify products, generate alternatives, and choose the best product for the customer (Upennedu, 2017). The purchase decision indicates an individual's willingness to perform the buying behaviour towards a property (Han & Kim, 2010). Purchase decision determines the property buyers following their past experience, personal preferences, and external environment and gathers the information to assess the alternatives before purchase house (Han & Kim, 2010). According to Kunshan and Yiman (2011) and Sidi & Sharipah (2011), homebuyers are more likely to purchase what they intended to get initially. On the other hand, any purchase decision which begins with an analysis of the

market, will affect the purchase decision (Natasha, & Hassan, 2015). Moreover, if a homebuyer is willing to pay more for a house, he/she is likely to have a more positive decision attitude to deal with the seller (AL-Nahdi1, Habib, & Albdour, 2015).

Homebuyers are usually concerned about the size of living room and kitchen, as well as the number of bedrooms and bathrooms (Thaker, 2016). They consider the physical condition depending on the family size (Popoola, Jinadu, Liman, & Abd Razack, 2015). In addition, the studies found that there is a relationship between living space and homebuyers' purchase decision as the dimension of a space is the initial factor that purchaser thinks over, in order to fit the requirement of family size (Al-Nahdi, Ghazzawi, & Abu Bakar, 2015). On the other hand, Liew and Haron (2013) believe that the size of bathroom and dining room plays a dominant role on the purchase decision. Furthermore, 44.5% of respondents of a study by Lonappan (2013), have opted the size of house space as a major factor for purchase intention. Njo & Aileen's (2015) claim that property attribute is the first priority for homebuyers due to the size of house and the number of bathrooms or bedrooms. According to Hurtubia (2010), the feature of houses such as the number of bathrooms and bedrooms, size of living hall and kitchen are the issues before making home-ownership decision. Moreover, some of the working individuals that move alone from other states prefer to purchase smaller units such as apartments and condominiums which is sufficient for them (Kohler, 2013).

In another study, Razak (2013) found that 46.7% of the respondents strongly agree that the distance between house and amenities is their main concern. Residents prefer to live in an area which is close to amenities to perform their daily activities (Maoludyo & Aprianingsih, 2015). Another study done by Manivannan and Somasundaram (2014) shows that the respondents regard distance as the secondary factor of property purchase. Besides, availability of schools, groceries and shopping malls plays a vital role towards homebuyers' purchase decision (Ong, 2013). Since many parents emphasize on their children's education, they tend to select a location close to high quality educational centres (Kohler, 2013). According to Azmia, Sallehb, & Nawawia, (2013) study, about 48.4% of the residents show interests toward the property distance to the amenities.

In a different study, Zrobek, Trojanek, & Sokolnik (2015) found that the level of environment satisfaction directly depends on the issues of traffic noise, green environment, cleanliness, safety and scenic view of the property. According to the Agnieszka (2014) living in a certificated green environment building is significant to the home buyer purchase decision. At the same time, a good scenic view can enhance the social class of inhabitants (Si, 2012). However, the current inhabitants' living condition is declining due to the environment pollutions from developments in the urban areas such as construction noises, dusts and littering. Therefore, developers are urged to incorporate with ecologically friendly design and revolution into their real estate such as the

construction of noise barriers (Ong, 2013). In fact, green buildings can increase the property price while eliminate the pollution to provide healthy living residential space. Developers believe investing on a green business would help a property firm to become more sustainable and marketable (Jayantha & Man, 2013). According to Popoola, Jinadu, Liman, & Abd Razack (2015), a green environmental property increases the property value up to 20%. Meanwhile, it also improves the commercial value of the property.

The requirement of a quality neighbourhood is to meet the needs of the inhabitants' daily activities as well as to allowing the inhabitants to conserve energy, safety and securities and control pollution (Hong, 2016). Neighbourhood security is a major concern of property purchasers as well, since it ensures an individual's safeness and well-being. In Malaysia, the frequent crimes are burglary and snatch thefts are leading buyers in paying more money to invest in gated communities and guarded neighbourhoods to obtain a peaceful life (Almatarneh, 2013). In order to eliminate the house break-ins issue, developers need to take actions to upgrade the security systems such as closed-circuit cameras, intercoms, alarms, gated-guarded communities to protect the residents (Fung, Jeng & Liu, 2010). Additionally, installing the surveillance system in the housing estate enables the management to monitor and record the people entering and exiting the neighbourhood. Management team can also provide

patrol services by auxiliary policemen around the residential area to plummet the criminal rate (Agnieszka, 2014).

In a different study, Razak et al (2013) argue that house price is the first priority and has a strong influence on the house buyers' purchase decision. As a homebuyer, the financials must be the major concern. According to Tan & Saw (2014), it is hard for homebuyers to get mortgage loan approval from banks since January 2010 due to the stricter rules. Therefore, many homebuyers who apply for loans are rejected. Thus, the ease and convenience in getting approval from banks is the main factor in homebuyers' purchase decision. Uchenna & Lim (2013) claim that the access to finance for homebuyers is positively related to the housing purchase decision in China. Also in a research by Nasar & Manoj (2015), the respondents highly agreed that easy accessibility of mortgage loans from local banks was the main factor to the purchase decision in India.

Chin (2013) asserts that the majority of homebuyers in Malaysia prefer to get high amount of mortgage loan from banks with small amount of down payments. Yet, Faishal and Atik (2015) study shows that the majority of respondents prefer large amount of down payments and less amount in bank instalments. However, both studies indicate that house price has been a significant factor to homebuyers' purchase decision. Furthermore, Njo and Aileen (2015) suggest that financial factors are very significant in the homebuyers' purchase decision. Interest rate can affect house buyers' purchase decision while lower interest rates encourage

house buyers to purchase properties (Chia et al, 2016). If the bank increases the lending rate, house buyers tend to be cautious during purchase decision as the higher interest rate will increase the total final payment (Eze & Lim, 2013). According to Ong (2013) when financial institutions tend to enhance the availability of credits, banks will implement lower interest rate in order to attract more investors. In another word, the more availability of credits, the higher demand for house loans.

3. Methodology

To determine the sample size for this study, a general rule by Hair, Black, Bablin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006) was used. Questionnaires were distributed to 180 residents who are living in Selangor and are above 18 years old.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 1. Correlation Analysis between Dependent Variable and Independent Variables.

		Correlations				
		Purchase Decision	Property Attribute	Location	Property Environment	Financial
Purchase Decision	Pearson Correlation	1	.380**	.231**	.293**	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.002	.000	.002
	N	180	180	180	180	180
Property Attribute	Pearson Correlation	.380**	1	.586**	.489**	-.109
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.146
	N	180	180	180	180	180
Location	Pearson Correlation	.231**	.586**	1	.474**	.056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000		.000	.454

Table 1 illustrates the results of the correlation analysis between the dependent variable and the four independent variables. Under correlation analysis, any value that is closest to one can be considered to have a very high correlation. The table depicts that the correlation value for the purchase decision (DV) is 1. Based on this value, the values of other four independent variables are compared to observe the correlation. The first independent variable is property attribute with the value of 0.380 which shows a low correlation with the purchase decision. The value for the next (IV) which is location is 0.231 and demonstrates a low correlation with the purchase decision. Property environment has

a value of 0.293 and displays a low correlation with the purchase decision and lastly, finance with 0.084 that reflects a low correlation.

4.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple Regression Analysis was conducted to evaluate both dependent and independent variables for this study. It was done in order to test the hypothesis result. Below are the results for Multiple Regression Analysis.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.427 ^a	.183	.164	.67948	1.168
a. Predictors: (Constant), Financial, Location, Property Environment, Property Attribute					
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision					

Table 2 shows the results of R² and Durbin-Watson. Under the R², the value is 0.183 or 18.3% that can be depicted as the purchase decision (DV) and explained by the property attribute, location, property environment and finance (IV). In addition to that, the Durbin-Watson value for this research is 1.168 which falls between 1-3 values, which further reflects that there are no autocorrelation issues.

Table 3. ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.060	4	4.515	9.779	.000 ^b
	Residual	80.796	175	.462		
	Total	98.856	179			
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Financial, Location, Property Environment, Property Attribute						

In Table 3 the analysis of the sig. value is 0.000, and it falls below the suggested value of under 0.05. Again, it shows that this model is fit to be used for this research.

Table 4: Coefficient

Coefficients ^a								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.356	.330		4.112	.000		
	Property Attribute	.308	.079	.348	3.913	.000	.591	1.693
	Location	-.053	.071	-.067	-.756	.450	.588	1.702
	Property Environment	.127	.058	.181	2.192	.030	.684	1.463
	Financial	.112	.051	.156	2.210	.028	.933	1.071
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Decision								

In Table 4, the main focused area is the unstandardized coefficient B values. The highest B value within the four dependents variables is the strongest contributor to the dependent variables. Based on the table above, property attribute shows the highest value (B=0.308). Hence, making it the strongest predictor that contributed to this research. Property environment comes in

second ($B=0.127$), financial ($B=0.112$) is third, and the last but not least perceived location ($B=0.053$).

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

As mentioned, one of the research objectives was to recognize the relationship between property attribute and the purchase decision. According to the results, a positive relationship was noted to be accepted for this research. The past research conducted by Thaker (2016) achieved the same result that property attribute plays a very significant role in motivating customers into purchase decision. Also, Saw and Tan (2014) came out with the same result in their study, as property attribute was related strongly with image and that it played as the key factor. Based on the research objectives, it was also mentioned to recognize the relationship between property environment and the purchase decision. The hypothesis for this relationship was rejected between location and purchase decision. Thus, People are concerned more about the size of house and numbers of the bedrooms than the location of property. Home buyers willing to purchase a bigger house rather than a smaller house in a good location. In addition, there is positive relationship between property environment and purchase decision. Ong (2013) states that property environment is essential to the purchase decision and has significant impact on customers. Si (2012) found that neighbourhoods were essential in supporting purchase decisions. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between financials

and purchase decision. Eze and Lim (2013) believe finance has significant influence on the purchase decision. Ong (2013) asserts that financials have a direct link on the purchase decision.

5.1 Implication of Study

The main reason for conducting this research was to analyse the factors that added to the purchase decision. The four major contributions are property attributes, location, and property environment, financials. This study can help customers be aware of the presence of other varieties of purchase decisions. Many Malaysian homebuyers are still unaware of purchase decisions that have been around the industry. The results of this research endeavours to assist the government in determining the policies needed in requiring residential housing companies to provide details about housing attribute alternatives modelled to measures of housing and service attributes developed in this research. The information provided in this study, seeks to support both potential home buyers and house owners to understand housing selection criteria in general.

5.2 Limitation and Recommendation of the Study

There are still some limitations to this study. A clear drawback of this research is the independent variables. It is because the variables in this study were only property attributes, location, property environment and financials. However, there are still

various variables such as land, household income, house price, etc. that can be applied to this research and might be more suitable for the targeted respondents and areas that were not included in this survey. Moreover, the focused area in this research was solely the state of Selangor, Malaysia. The area was too limited since there could be fewer respondents willing to participate in this research.

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