FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE MALAY TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS EGALITARIAN EDUCATION IN MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT: *The purpose of this study is to explore potential relationship between Malay teachers' characteristic factors and their attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society. The ethnic Malay school teachers, teaching in government school in peninsular of Malaysia (N=400) participated in this study by completing a questionnaire, which developed by the authors. This questionnaire consists of five items concerning teachers' characteristic (age, gender, teaching experience, school location and number of schools that teachers have being taught) and 20 Likert-based questions assessing teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society, which segmentized into four factors namely Malay Privileges in Education, Meritocracy, Monotype School System and Environmental Support for Underachievement. A multiple regression analysis was performed to explore relationship between Malay teachers' characteristics and their attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society. The findings indicated that there was statistically significant correlation between Malay teachers' attitudes toward egalitarian education and their number of school that they have being taught. In contrast, there were no statistically significant correlation between teachers' attitudes toward egalitarian with gender, age and teaching experience of Malay teachers. The findings concluded that Malay teachers with more number of schools that they have taught are more positive towards egalitarian education.*

KEYWORDS: Teachers' Attitude, Egalitarian education, Multiracial Society.

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a multiracial country. The society has been plagued by diversities and gaps in terms of economic and population distributions, as well as in terms of cultural, linguistic, and religious traditions. In order to narrow these gaps, Malaysia looked to education to not only bolster its status in the world community, but more importantly to strengthen national cohesion among the various ethnic groups, and to close the gaps that had long characterized the society. Equality through education has been in the pursuit of many political masters, educational experts, and practitioners since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948.

Nevertheless, how far this egalitarian movement has effected education in Malaysia and how much attention is given to adopt this declaration in the Malaysian educational policies and planning is debatable. This is so especially when it is interpreted together with the privileges given to the ethnic Malay according to the Malaysian constitution which stipulated in article 153 that grants Yang di Pertuan Agong the responsibility for safeguarding the special position of the ethnic Malays and indigenous of any of the states of Sabah and Sarawak.

Teachers' attitude, in facing the situation in Malaysia namely equality, meritocracy and privileges, are the answer to measure the level of implementation of education, either it will be succeeded to achieve and contribute to the goals of nationhood, socioeconomic development, and the

enhancement of national unity and integration, or come on the contrary. According to Oskamp & Schultz (2005), teachers' attitude is one of the most important factors to ensure great implementation of education, it can help people or hurt them. An attitude is a readiness to act; it involves both thinking and emotion. It is a tendency to respond in a particular way to an object, a person, a group, or even an idea. It is important to understand attitude because certain attitudes are expected to lead to certain behaviours (Baltus, 1988). Attitude determines for each individual what he will see and hear, what he will think and what he will do (Franzoi, 2008). Teachers are not just teaching but creating memory into the minds of students. Each of what is taught will shape the personality of a student, giving the student the experience and shaping way of thinking. They are also role models that will affect their students in determining good and bad things in his life.

Teacher's attitude towards equal rights in education will determine how they treat, teach, and serve their multiracial students. Malay teachers are main character in education in Malaysia, as they are 85% out of total teachers in Malaysia and they will shape the personality of students. The future of our next generation is in their hands.

Research Objective
The purpose of this study is to explore potential relationship between Malay teachers' characteristics and their attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society. The research question of this study is: "Is there any relationship between Malay teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society and the following variables? (1) Teachers' gender (2) Teachers' age (3) Teaching experience (4) School Location (5) Number of schools have being taught

METHODOLOGY

The method of this research is explained below in four sections: participants, instrument, data collection and data treatment.

The Participants
The sampling procedure adopted in the study is purposive sampling method, which participating 400 government school teachers across Peninsular of Malaysia. The study will only be conducted in Peninsular Malaysia (13 states, including Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory and Putrajaya Federal Territory) and four types of government school (National Primary School, National Secondary School and Vocational College). The number of Malay Teachers across peninsular Malaysia is around 325,000. According to Morgan and Krejcie (1970), at least 384 participants are needed to represent 325,000 population sizes, with 95% confidence intervals. The detailed demographic profile of Malay Teachers Respondents is as table 4.1 below;-

Table 4.1 Detailed Demographic Profile of Malay Teachers Respondents

Variable			n	%
Gender	•	Male	124	31
	•	Female	276	69
Age	•	20-29 Years Old	51	12.8
	•	30-39 Years Old	166	41.6
	•	40-49 Years Old	114	24.4
	•	50-59 Years Old	69	17.3
Years of Teaching	•	1-9 Years	145	36.3
	•	10- 19 Years	138	34.5
	•	20-29 Years	103	25.8
	•	30-39 Years	14	3.6
School Location	•	Perlis	31	7.8
	•	Kedah	31	7.8
	•	Pulau Pinang	31	7.8
	•	Perak	31	7.8
	•	Selangor	31	7.8
	•	Kuala Lumpur	30	7.5
	•	Putrajaya	30	7.5
	•	Negeri Sembilan	30	7.5
	•	Melaka	32	8.0
	•	Johor	31	7.8
	•	Pahang	31	7.8
	•	Terengganu	31	7.8
	•	Kelantan	30	7.5

Instrument

A self-designed questionnaire was used in this study. Comprising 24 questions, this questionnaire contained two sections: demographic information and Malay Teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society. For the first section, five multiple choice answers questions are included in to record teachers' information, i.e., gender, age, teaching experience, school location and number of schools have being taught. The second section locates 20 questions with Likert-type scale are used to measure Malay Teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in terms of four factors; Malay Privileges in Education, Meritocracy, Monotype School System and Environmental Support for Underachievement.

Data Collection

The researcher assigned enumerators to collect the data. The enumerators were well briefed regarding the procedures, etiquette as well as guidelines of conducting data collection. With the permission from the school principals, the enumerators distribute the questionnaire to the participants and collect the completed questionnaires. A total of 400 completed and valid questionnaires were received.

Data Treatment

The statistical software of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 23 for Apple Macbook was used to analyze data in this study. A multiple regression analysis was performed to examine relationship between teachers' demographic characteristic , i.e., gender, age, teaching experience, school location and number of schools have being taught and teachers attitudes towards egalitarian education in term of Malay Privileges in Education, Meritocracy, Monotype School System and Environmental Support for Underachievement.

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to explore potential relationship between Malay teachers' characteristics (Gender, age, teaching experience, school location and number of schools have being taught) and their attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society.

A self-designed questionnaire was used in this study. Comprising 25 questions, this questionnaire contained two sections: demographic information and Malay teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society. For the first section, five multiple choice answers questions are included in to record teachers' information, i.e., gender, age, teaching experience, school location and number of schools have being taught. The second section locates 20 questions with Likert-type scale are used to measure Malay teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in terms of four factors; Malay Privileges in Education, Meritocracy, Monotype School System and Environmental Support for Underachievement.

First, the data were checked for the assumption of homoscedasticity to ascertain of the variance of errors was the same across all the predictors. The assumption of homoscedasticity was checked by analyzing the scatterplot of studentized residuals (ZRESID) along the Y axis against the predicted values (ZPRED) along the X axis. A visual inspection (Figure 1.0) suggested that the residuals were scattered quite randomly, indicating a non-violation of the homoscedasticity assumption. Next was the assumption of normality, which was examined using the normal probability plot. (Figure 2). The potted output did not indicate a serious deviation from the diagonal rule that represented normal distribution. These inspections showed that both the assumptions of MRA were not violated.
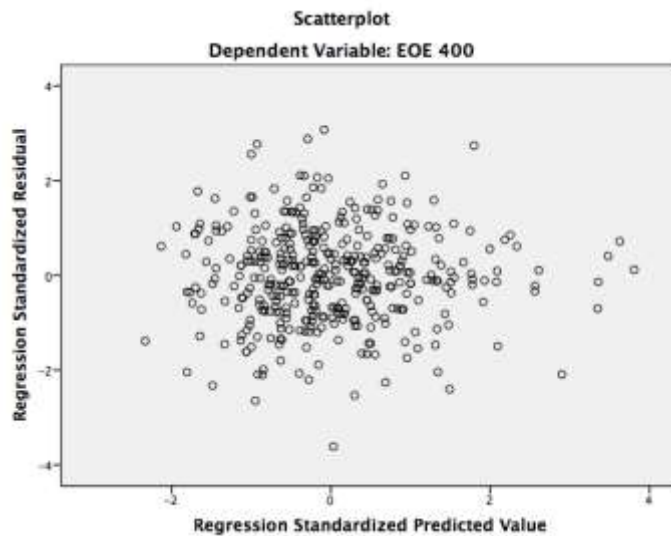
Figure 1: Scatterplot

Figure 2 shows the P-P plot that contains the cumulative theoretical distribution (straight line) and the cumulative distribution of the observed data.
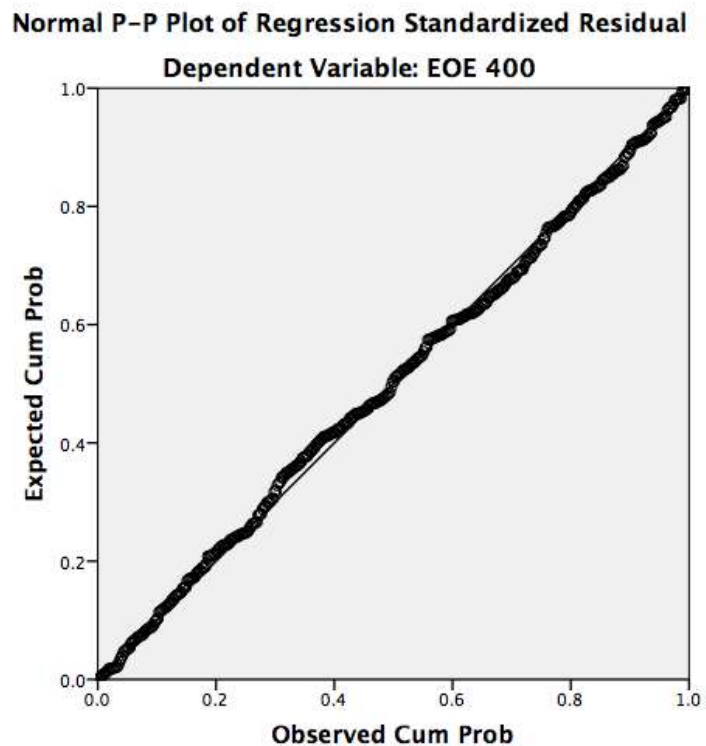

Figure 2: Probability Plot

The plots indicate the degree to which the theoretical distribution fits the observed data. Evidently, the dotted line that represents the cumulative distribution of the empirical data fit the straight line perfectly well. Hence, the researcher decided to proceed with the analysis.

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Table 3: Collinearity Statistics

Demographic Factors	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Gender of Respondents	.992	1.008
Age of Respondents	.182	5.505
Experience of Respondents	.164	6.104
School Taught	.670	1.492
Location of School	.986	1.015

Table 3 shows the collinearity statistic of the demographic factors of respondents. The values of tolerance for age of respondents and experience of respondents are below than 0.5, which are 0.182 and 0.164. Both are approach 0, and these indicate that both are statistically not significant. For gender of respondents and location of school, the values of tolerance are 0.992 and 0.986. Both approach 1 and are statistically not significant. However, number of school that teachers have taught is 0.670 and this is statistically significant.

For Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics showed that range between 1.015 (Location) and 6.104. As the largest VIF did not fall below 1, there was no problem of multicollinearity among the predictors. These statistics provide support for the interpretation of the MRA results.

Table 4: Correlation

	EE	G	A	TE	ST	SL
EE	1					
G	-0.072	1				
A	-0.014	-0.035	1			
TE	-0.009	-0.014	0.903	1		
ST	0.13	-0.043	0.501	0.571	1	
SL	0.03	-0.064	0.06	0.02	0.035	1
M	3.45	1.69	4.50	3.45	2.45	6.99
SD	0.45	.463	1.790	1.698	1.351	3.749

Table 4 shows that the correlations between the criterion variable, as well as among the five predictor variables. The results indicated that the criterion variable, i.e. egalitarian education, positively correlated with two predictor variables, which were number of school that teacher have taught and school location, however it is weak strength of relationship, with r = 0.03 (School Location) and r= 0.13 (School Taught). None exceeded the threshold of .60 for strong correlation (Taylor, 1990).

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.495	0.114		30.732	0
Gender	-0.062	0.048	-0.064	-1.295	0.196
Age	-0.008	0.029	-0.031	-0.268	0.789
Teaching Experience	-0.024	0.032	-0.092	-0.747	0.455
School Taught	0.063	0.02	0.192	3.168	0.002
School Location	0.003	0.006	0.024	0.471	0.638

As shown in Table 5, the criterion variable (egalitarian education) was significantly predicted by one of tbe five demographic factors, namely number of school that teacher have taught (Beta = 1.93, t= 3.197, p = 0.02). The remaining four factors, i.e. gender, age, teaching experience and school location, were not found to be statistically significant predictors. Thus, based on the results, the predicted equation can be stated as follows:

$$Y = 3.495 + 0.192 - 0.024 \text{ (School Location)} + 0.092 \text{ (Teaching Experience)} + 0.031 \text{ (Age)} + 0.064 \text{ (Gender)}$$

DISCUSSION

The result of the multiple regression analysis in this study shows that there was statistically significant correlation between Malay teachers' attitudes toward egalitarian education and their number of school that they have taught. In contrast, there were no statistically significant correlation between teachers' attitudes toward egalitarian with gender, age and years of teaching experiences of Malay teachers.

Malay teachers with more number of schools that they have taught are more positive towards egalitarian education. According to Noor, F., Ishaque, M., Lodhi, F., & Memon, A. (2012), teacher mobility from one school to another affected their attitudes, paradigm and action. The researcher found that teachers' mobility also affected teaching effectiveness and refreshing teaching paradigm

Teaching Effectiveness
Using data of students in North Carolina, Jackson (2010) shows that teacher effectiveness is higher after a transfer to a different school, while Barbieri, G., Rossetti, C., & Sestito, P. (2013) find that the share of teachers applying for a transfer to another school is negatively related to students' achievements, while the share of teachers arrived in a school after their re- quest for a transfer was satisfied is positively related to students' achievements

Refreshing Teaching Paradigm
With new school setting, teachers face changes in their life. They meet new environment, new people, new students, new culture, new rules and regulations, and new society. According to Allport (1935), new social circle affects someone attitudes.

Although teacher mobility is significant to increase positivity towards egalitarian education, it is not the only output. Teacher mobility issues must read together with the type of mobility, either it is voluntary or involuntary, within or inter district, motivation of teacher and other factors.

However it is statistically prooved that the number of school taught is relevant and significant to increase positivity towards egalitarian education in multiracial society.

RECOMMENDATION

The researchers have two recommendations for future researchers in this area. First, a larger scale research which expands the number of participants could be done to continue this work. Due to the time limitation and financial constraint, this research was conducted in Peninsular of Malaysia, the research could be expands to Sabah and Sarawak.

Second, a thorough study could be done by looking at relationship between teacher mobility and teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society, as it is a new phenomenon found, that would give impact to education system and policy.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to explore potential relationship between Malay teachers' demographic characteristics (Gender, Age, Teaching Experience, School Location and Number of schools have being taught) and their attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society.

The study has answered the research question of this study, "Is there any relationship between Malay teachers' attitudes towards egalitarian education in multiracial society and the following variables? (1) Teachers' gender (2) Teachers' age (3) Teaching Experience (4) School location (5) Number of schools have being taught

The results shows that there was statistically significant correlation between teachers' attitudes towards and number of schools that the teachers have taught. There were no significant correlation between gender, age, school location, teaching experience and teachers' attitudes.

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