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ICIMTR 2013International Conference on Innovation, Management and Technology Research,
Malaysia, 22 – 23 September, 2013**Regenerating Youth Development through
Entrepreneurship**Raja Suzana Raja Kasim,^{a*} Azham Zulkharnain,^b Zulazli Hashim,^c Wan
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Abstract

In Malaysia, there are 13.3 million, of youth who are between ages of 15-40, and they represent 46% of the total Malaysian population. Of this, 4.5 millions of youth populations are between these ages of 15-25 categories and regardless either they live in urban and rural communities; there appears to be approximately 25% who are vulnerable and they are potential to be at-risk youth. Build on past empirical studies, these at-risk youths may be those that come from families who are not emotionally supportive, lacking parental supervision on activities that they are involved in, deficient in social skills, low aspiration, emotional control and self esteem, from low-waged family, unsatisfactory living condition, peer influence and devoid of suitable role model. This paper is aimed to review global trends and practices from past research on regenerating youth development through entrepreneurship. The focused is merely to help to resolve Malaysian youth issues that could enhance their quality of life and participate fully in the development of society and the nation on a whole. Youth living in the marginalized communities are also facing a pervasive unemployment. In this paper, intervention empowerment programs were proposed for youth living in the marginalized communities towards positive youth development. It also highlights the importance of strengthening the mechanisms for sustainability and, eventually, to recommend effective mechanism in enhancing youth living in the marginalized communities to be mainstreamed appropriately.

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1. Introduction

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to positive youth development. Various intervention programs such as youth empowerment programs, be in the perspectives of economy and social well-being; such an innovative entrepreneurship programs may provide avenue to create and support towards regenerating youth development. Young people also have specific needs and particular potential; however, their critical contributions to economic and social progress are underestimated. In response to this phenomena; the Prime Minister, in the recent 2013 nation's youth agenda for growth affirmed that the Government will play its part in helping youths to fulfil their aspirations and will enforce a bottom-up approach. This may allow for the youth to act on their own. The bottom-up approach also clearly associated with youth empowerment where the Government has announced its support for such program. However, to what extent do such empowerment program has able to create and support the conditions where youth are allowed to act on their own may remain debatable. In addressing this issue, youth empowerment issues relating to young people living in the marginalized communities will be examined and related intervention program will be proposed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Global Outlook

Youth empowerment, unemployment, social and life skills, substance abuse, violence and crime, HIV/AIDs, sexual issues, education and training and youth participation are a range of youth associated issues being addressed in fighting youth agenda worldwide (Mohid, 2012; Carvalho, 2013; UNESCO, 2004; Raja Suzana, Azham, Zulazli, Wan Nursafiah & Sophie, 2013; Council of the European Union, 2013). In the global perspectives, for example, the United Nation World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, the program for youth has identified ten important priorities; education, employment, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure time activities, girls and young women and full effective participation in society and decision-making (International Council on National Youth Policy, 2001).

In 2003, the United Nation World Youth Report has added five more youth intervention which includes globalization, information and communication technologies, HIV/AIDs, youth and conflict prevention and intergenerational relations (UNESCO, 2004). The recent June European Council held from 27 – 28 June, 2013 resolved issues on youth and set out guidelines for the implementation of youth guarantee schemes. In this scheme the national governments working along with public and private employment services, employers, social partners, and youth representatives for outreach empowerment strategies for youth, support for the integration of young people into the labor market (Council of the European Union, 2013). At least 8 billion euro will be budgeted for 2014 to promote cross-border mobility, including to modernize vocational and education systems, addressing skills mismatches and promote apprenticeships and traineeships in key economic sectors as well as entrepreneurship training and start-ups (Rompuy, 2013).

2.2 Malaysian Youth Perspectives

In Malaysia, the Malaysian Youth Index (2011) addressed self development, social relationship, identity, self potential, leisure time, health, media penetration, deviant behavior and economic well-being as important indicators in improving quality of life and well-being of Malaysian youths. As suggested by the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy, the MYI (2011) appears to provide a strong indication on the overall of youth health and in what areas more programmatic efforts are needed (Samsudin, Iran, Mastura, Sharifah, et al, 2008). Despites the overall quality of life and well-being of Malaysian Youth

remains good, it is evidence that issues on stress, empowerment, economic security, political socialization and competitiveness remain low.

Back to the statistic figure of Malaysian youth population between ages 15-40 as of 2012, there are 13.3 million, which represent 46% of the total Malaysian population. Of this, 4.5 millions of youth populations are between these age categories and regardless either they live in urban and rural communities; there appears to be approximately 25% who are vulnerable and they are potential to be at-risk youth. Table 2 depicts statistic of youth populations between the ages of 15-25 years as of 2012. Build on past empirical studies, these at-risk youths may be those that come from families who are not emotionally supportive, lacking parental supervision on activities that they are involved in, deficient in social skills, low aspiration, emotional control and self esteem, from low-waged family, unsatisfactory living condition, peer influence and devoid of suitable role model

2. Statement of Problem

Youth form an integral part of any society and are an essential part of the development process. Malaysia is a 'young' nation. Given the Malaysia's now long history of development in youth which appears to be at risk; it is clear that the way forward depends on a much more ambitious agenda that aims for transformation. This presents both tremendous possibilities and dire threats. An estimated of 73% of Malaysian households are *Bumiputera* and are under the category of low-income backgrounds across multiple dimension; uneducated, unemployed and have suffered a societal breakdown. They are single-income recipients, with the heads of household attaining only Malaysia Certificate of Education (SPM); that is, 11 years of schooling or lower qualifications, and self-employed or employed as general workers. Due to their lower skills level and in certain cases, their remote locations, the bottom 40% households are limited in their economic mobility and ability to secure higher paying jobs as well as income opportunities. This has left them feeling victimized and marginalized.

Due to all associated factors of geographical, economically low-income parents and vulnerable youth ages between 15-25 years, youth in these marginalized communities lack of equal opportunity in accessing to social, economical, technology and educational opportunities. In line with the '1Malaysia: People First, Performance Now,' and in the Tenth Malaysian Plan (2011-2015), a fair and socially just society with national unity is being promoted. Hence, equitable opportunities should be given for all Malaysians inclusive those of the youth; in particular who are at risks and live in the marginalized communities. If the youth transition to adulthood process is blocked by the lack of human development, one result is the intergenerational transmission of poverty and risky behaviors. Youth in the marginalized communities will also suffer widespread feeling of inequality as they are mostly under-development and from low-income family background supported by poor family upbringing, environmentally unsupportive, and deficient in social skills. This paper is aimed to review global trends and practices from past research on regenerating youth development through entrepreneurship. The focused is merely to help to resolve Malaysian youth issues that could enhance their quality of life and participate fully in the development of society and the nation on a whole.

3. Methodology

Regardless of either they live in urban and rural communities; they have the potentials to become at-risk youth. In this paper, youth in the marginalized communities refers to those with three inclusion criteria. Firstly, the geographical areas where they reside. For example, the location may include land settlement, estate, traditional and new villages; and urban poor (including; squatters, flat and *perumahan rakyat*). Secondly, youth with parents whose incomes below RM2,000 for those living in rural areas; and those below RM3,500 for those living in urban. Thirdly, age of youth; who are between ages of 15-25. Current statistics and past empirical evidences have indicated that youth within this range of ages appears

to be more vulnerable and exposed too many important life events and health-damaging behaviors. Thus some of them became 'at risk' and have involved in anti-social and criminal activities and have a high potential of becoming unproductive citizens.

In conducting a research, field study; a survey, interview, observations, document analysis, workshop and focus group and pre and post studies. Multiple regression analysis and statistical modeling will be used to analyze the research findings. Having identified results from the research, a number of 100 youth will be trained. This will be facilitated with a workshop on area of entrepreneurship businesses identified by youth at selected *Rakan Muda* Complex, Ministry of Youth and Sports. Along with this intervention program, appropriate guidance and monitoring of youth performance will be assessed through evaluation, analysis and performance report.

4. Regenerating Youth Development through Entrepreneurship

Malaysian youth was affected by two major forces of change; the way they expressed their voices and their choices. Demographic and technological advancement have also shaped young Malaysian's aspiration and the way they crave the freedom of opportunity, demand open and accountable government and aspire their choices to be heard and followed (Raja Suzana et al., 2013). In the recent nation's youth agenda for growth, the Prime Minister affirmed that the Government will play its part in helping youths to fulfil their aspirations and will enforce a bottom-up approach (Mohd Najib, 2013; Raja Suzana, 2013). This was evidenced in the 1Malaysia for Youth (IM4U) and the National Service Department signing of memorandum of understanding. The bottom-up approach also clearly associated with youth empowerment where the Government has announced its support for such program. This may allow for the youth to act on their own, rather than at the direction of others.

In addressing this issue, the researchers aim to examine youth empowerment issues relating to young people. In line with Malaysian Youth Development Policy as stated in the Tenth Malaysia Plan (2011-2015), this paper aims to develop youth development programme that is capable in translating youths to be more skilful in entrepreneurship and various other empowerment and development programs. These propositions attempt to develop, formulate and implement empowerment program on youth entrepreneurship gearing towards regenerating positive youth development. In reviewing and assessing existing youth empowerment program and issues, the following objectives are formulated:

1. To examine levels of existing youth empowerment program and its issues among youth living in the marginalized communities;
2. To examine the extent of youth empowerment in creating and supporting the conditions where youth living in the marginalized communities can act on their own;
3. To develop and promote innovation-intensive businesses to grow the young commercial and industrial community for youth living in the marginalized communities;
4. To develop saving directory of initiatives, programs, and instruments of reference on youth empowerment towards positive development of youth living in the marginalized communities;
5. To develop national youth empowerment program and action plan for positive youth development; and
6. To create youth entrepreneurship incubator for entrepreneurship training and development for youth living in the marginalized communities

As such, there is a responsibility of major stakeholders [(1) the public sector: governments at national, regional or local/municipal level; (2) the private sector: entrepreneurs, banks, investors, small and large companies, trade associations and unions; (3) the non-profit sector (NGOs, youth associations, universities, private foundations and think tanks); and (4) other stakeholders: public/private media, donor agencies, etc] to be engaged and mobilized. Accordingly, this study attempts to provide a clearer and

more comprehensive picture in developing and regenerating youth development through integrated capacity building and youth empowerment programs. It also aims to contribute to the youth entrepreneurship governance and sustainable livelihood and contribute to SME policy areas which in turn benefit to practitioners and policymakers that aim to cater issues on youth empowerment program, youth entrepreneurship and SME development. In its attempts to accomplish this objective, the following propositions are developed:

Preposition 1: The more the youth participate in entrepreneurship program the higher they youth level of empowerment

Preposition 2: The more the youth participate in entrepreneurship program the higher the youth can act on their own.

Preposition 3: The more the youth participate in entrepreneurship program the higher the youth can grow young commercial and industrial communities.

Preposition 4: The more the youth participate in entrepreneurship program the higher the initiatives can be promoted in regenerating youth development.

Preposition 5: The more the youth participate in entrepreneurship regenerating program the higher the youth can sustain their entrepreneurship venture.

5. Conclusion

Mainstreaming youth living in the marginalized communities towards regenerating youth development therefore demands concerted collaboration between actors striving for empowerment and for transformation. Towards making the potential of youth central to the development and mainstreaming agendas and policy of the nation, this research presents a five-project for dynamic transformation of the youth living in the marginalized communities. Based on the need for moving from isolated to holistic programs and from disempowered to empower and conflict management in youth to conflict transformation, it draws the lessons learned, theoretical underpinning, strategic youth policy and framework and several priority program areas for joint action.

Underpinning this paper is the transformation agenda and a proposal of putting the young people empowerment and mainstreaming youth living in the marginalized communities' issues at the center of the national development agenda. This initiative however, is not possible without (1) theorizing issues on mainstreaming youth living in the marginalized communities: from transitional to generational pathway; (2) examining the social environment and infrastructure sustainability towards healthy and quality lifestyle of youth living in the marginalized communities; (3) emphasis on media and youth participation with particular interest on those living in the marginalized communities; (4) design, revisit and recommend collaborative formal and non-formal education reengineering towards employability among those youth living in the marginalized communities; and (5) proposing intervention empowerment programs for youth living in the marginalized communities towards positive youth development.

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