POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH LEARNING AS ENABLERS IN YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the relevance of positive youth development in developing youth leadership for the nation. But it also argues that to facilitate positive youth development, youth learning approaches are important. It discusses the concept and process of learning, and how youth learning should be approached such as mentoring, coaching, facilitation, reflection, and experiential learning. At the same time, it also proposes that youth learning requires youth programmes as a platform. It then discusses the types and approaches of youth programming and proposes the requisites for youth programme development. The paper then proposes the use of logic model programming that identifies programme outcomes and impacts and how the process works. However, since any programme needs leadership, the authors propose a new model of youth leadership where the focus of leadership is on the achievements of the youth which is a bottoms-up approach rather than the traditional top-down form of leadership. These new ideas in youth development approaches are meant for policy-makers and youth programmes to consider so that it can contribute to positive youth development.

Keywords: *Positive Youth Development, Youth Assets, Youth Learning, Logic Model Programming, Youth Leadership*

ABSTRAK

Kertas ini akan meneliti kaitan pembangunan belia positif dalam usaha pembangunan modal insan. Walau bagaimanapun, usaha pembangunan belia positif boleh dimudahkan sekiranya pembelajaran belia diberi keutamaan. Kertas ini seterusnya membincangkan konsep dan proses pembelajaran di mana pembelajaran belia harus laksanakan, contohnya, kaedah-kaedah "mentoring", "coaching", pemudah cara, renungan, dan pembelajaran 'experiential'. Pada masa yang sama, kertas ini juga mencadangkan bahawa pembelajaran belia memerlukan program belia sebagai platform. Ini diikuti dengan membincangkan bentuk dan kaedah perencanaan program belia dan mencadangkan satu model baru untuk pembangunan program belia. Kertas ini juga mencadangkan model logik sebagai kaedah perencanaan program belia serta mengenal pasti hasil, impak dan prosesnya. Walau bagaimana pun, oleh sebab semua program memerlukan kepimpinan, penulis memberi cadangan tentang satu model baru

untuk kepimpinan belia berfokuskan pencapaian dari bawah, bukan model tradisi di mana kepimpinan bermula dari atas. Idea-idea baru ini adalah untuk perancang dasar dan program belia untuk memberi pertimbangan supaya ia dapat menyumbangkan kepada pembangunan belia positif.

Kata Kunci: *Pembangunan Belia Positif, Aset Belia, Pembelajaran Belia, Kaedah Program Logik, Kepimpinan Belia*

INTRODUCTION

In a fifty-five years old nation like Malaysia is seeking to achieve a fully developed-nation status in 2020 that it has committed to which is now a mere eight years away. Development efforts have recently been intensified especially through the Prime Minister's roadmap for development, that is, the *1Malaysia Government Transformation Programme or GTP*. This roadmap outlined the framework and programmes to drive the engine of growth that will enable the nation to realize the goals of *VISION 2020*, a goal set by Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed in 1991.

To grow, a nation cannot depend on machines alone because behind every machine, a human being has to man and operate it. Hence, the key component that enables the nation to grow, develop, and progress requires the human touch. It is therefore the people of the country who are going to be the drivers for these engines of growth. This large proportion is the nation's young population who made up nearly forty-five percent (45%) of the country's total population. These young people are going to be the nation's future inhabitants. They are going to be the inheritors and beneficiaries of the nation's future growth and success. But at the moment, they are the nation's strengths and assets. If their resources are not going to be fully utilized as drivers of growth, who else? Having them as partners of development, they will then be appreciated and recognized as stakeholders of their future nation.

The youth of today are, therefore, considered the nation's primary human resource and future leaders who will spur nation building. However, for a nation that are aiming for high income, knowledge intensive and innovative-led economy as outlined in the 10th Malaysia Plan, her youth needs to be instilled with values and strength of character to face the future with confidence (Lee, M.H., 2011). This includes character traits such as initiatives, risk taking, perseverance and strength of character and mind that will enable them to deal with challenges (ibid). The youth must therefore have the capacity to lead and contribute to the nation.

To enable them to lead and contribute to nation building, they need to be equipped with the relevant skills, competencies, and capabilities. These are

what the *positive youth development* model asserts as youth assets where they are no longer considered as liabilities to the nation nor as problems that need to be solved. Instead they are to be considered as human resource assets that are valued and need to be capitalized on. However, such a development requires a long stretch of time. Only then can the youth be enabled to lead and contribute to nation building.

While the government's efforts have been intensified on the formal learning sector through the school and tertiary institutions to develop skilled and knowledgeable professionals for vocational and professional competencies in the job market and industries, young people also need development oriented towards their interactive, communication, soft and living skills. This is where the other non-formal and informal learning takes place through youth programmes to enable the development of their leadership and social capacities. Edginton and Edginton (1994) believe that if the youth are to develop these capacities, they need to develop new behaviors and characters through the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning domains that were developed by Bloom (1956), Krathwohl (1964) and Simpson (1972).

Hence, if Malaysia is to develop their young people with new capacities and skills for their future leadership and nation building contributions, they need to develop youth positive assets. These positive assets are enabled through meeting the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning objectives in the non-formal and informal learning approaches and sectors. These learning sectors should then receive greater emphasis and attention to facilitate learning outcomes, but through the platforms of youth leadership programmes. Despite having well-developed youth policies and varieties of youth leadership development programmes that engages and enables the participation of youth, development of positive youth assets may not take place unless the youth are enabled to learn.

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Positive youth development or PYD is aimed at promoting the healthy and productive growth of young people and enabling them to become true social change agents according to Silbereisen and Lerner (2007). It focuses on meeting youth developmental needs by building their competencies, knowledge and skills in preparing them to be competent and successful adults (Lee, K.M., 2010). The positive values and strengths are developed and enhanced through relevant developmental programmes where youth are involved in, and empowered in decision-making processes (Silbereisen & Lerner, 2007). This approach, according to Damon (2004) are aimed at youth understanding, education, and engagement in productive activities as opposed to correcting, curing or treating their maladaptive

behaviors (Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 591, January 2004, p.15).

Lerner et al. (2005) conceptualized PYD through the five *C's*–competence, connection, character, confidence, and caring/compassion, but later added in the sixth C, i.e. contribution. While the original five C's are about instilling and developing the young people's assets, the sixth *C* promotes their involvement and contribution to society. However, the Search Institute (2004) expanded Lerner's initial 6 C's to 40 developmental assets as a framework of building blocks for healthy youth development. Of these 40 assets, 20 are internal – commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity – which are for the young people to develop within themselves; and the other 20 external assets – support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time which the community should provide for youth in their environment (eg. home, school, community). These assets are protectors of risky behaviors from among these young people as well as promoting their positive attitudes and actions (Search Institute, 2012). With enough of such assets, the youth will have a greater chance of developing into healthy, caring and successful adult. And these are what the nation needs for her human resource and human capital. The assets that the young people possess can be considered as the youth's human resources, but when these are translated into their contributions to society and the nation, they add economic value to their assets, and hence their human capital.

In a series of evaluative study on positive youth development in the United States for example, Catalano *et al.* (1998) found that the programme strategies have an impact on student outcomes such as greater self-control, assertiveness, and healthy and adaptive coping in peer pressure situations, improvements in school attendance, relations with parents, better academic performance, and peer emotional support. The programmes also reduced or prevented problem behaviors, lowered substance abuse, and reduction in hitting, truancy, and lying as a result of the students' participation. Such PYD programmes have also improved the health of young people such as reduced smoking, lowered body fats, increased carbohydrates and fiber. One programme on Life Skills Training reported significant changes in youth's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (ibid). Another programmes that Catalano *et al.* (1998) effects on emotional understanding and interpersonal problem-solving skills.

In Malaysia, Wasitah's study in 2011 demonstrated that PYD leads to social effectiveness, positive identity, and positive values; as well as commitment to study, support, and constructive use of time. Meanwhile, Lee's study (2011) further demonstrated that PYD has an impact on positive outcomes such as civic engagement, competence skills, and sense of self development.

However, for the young people to thrive and become healthy adults, Dotterweich (in ACT for Youth, 2010), young people need engagement, connectedness, and preparedness and safety and basic needs. In PYD, their focus should be on positive outcomes, not on their problems; be pro-active, not reactive; be inclusive of all youth, not merely on targeted youth; engage the youth as active participants, not as recipients; moving from being mere recipients of programmes to being resources, and partners; from mere participants of programmes to the wider net of learning, opportunities, interactions and activities; and be members of the community.

According to Lerner *et al.* (in Clary and Rhodes, 2006), Search Institute found that positive youth development can be furthered when the strengths of a person, including the commitment learning are enhanced, as well as family and community where there are support, programmes, resources for education, safety and mentorship. Education, however, they argued is not about enhancing knowledge or literacy skills of youth, but for them to become competent and confident in using their knowledge for contributions to their lives and the lives of others, including their society and nation.

Hence PYD is about developing the young people's human resource assets which also contribute to developing their future leadership capacities for nation building. If the nation wants young people to be it is prime assets who leads and contribute to its national development, it is vital that youth-centered programmes enabled the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning outcomes of these young people (Edginton and Edginton, 1994).

YOUTH LEARNING

Young people are in a stage of their lives where they "need to have some sense of where they're going, what they want for themselves, their responsibilities to other people, and their responsibilities to the larger society" (Ben-Avie et al., 2008). James P. Comer (ibid), founder of the Yale School Development Program was also quoted as saying that while learning the formulas and procedures of mathematics and sciences is essential, these will not make sense to them of our rapidly changing world. While education is necessary for them not only to handle technology, the sciences, and the social world, they also need an education that trains them to assess, decide, and act in ways that are good for themselves and society. Therefore, according to Ben-Avie et al (2008), there is a strong relationship between learning and youth development, including social and emotional aspects of development. This learning relationship will then lead to accurate self-awareness and resourcefulness in all situations, in school and in the world outside.

The United Nations in their World Youth Report 2007 defined youth development as entailing actions and investments that enable young people to build and utilize their human capital and become productive adults. They called on Governments and other stakeholders to design and implement policies and programmes that protect young people from negative social and environmental influences that can interfere with their progress towards adulthood. The risks of these influences are great on the youth. Reducing these risks involves changing personal behavior. And one of the policies to address these issues is education - the access to quality education. Besides having platforms for young people where young people can work on influencing decision-making, education represent perhaps the most important of the factors that have positioned Asian economies to take advantage of the demographic dynamic and globalization (World Youth Report 2007). Through education, young people are able to contribute meaningfully to economic and social development.

How then is education related to learning? The distinction Knowles et al. (2005) gave on education is that it is "an activity undertaken or initiated by one or more agents that is designed to effect changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals, groups, or communities", whereas learning, according to Boyd, Alps et al (in Knowles et al, 2005), emphasizes the person in whom change occurs or is expected to occur. Learning is the act or process by which behavioral change, knowledge, skills, and attitudes are acquired. Smith (1982) refers it to (1) the acquisition and mastery of what is already known about something, (2) the extension and clarification of meaning of one's experience, or (3) an organized, intentional process of testing ideas relevant to problems. In other words, it is used to describe a product, a process, or a function (Knowles et al., 2005). Bruner (1977) however describes it as involving three processes:
1. Acquisition of new information
2. Transformation
3. Evaluation

Through the acquisition of information, young people learns what is happening in the world around them, they acquire the tools that enable them to navigate through the web of life, enable them to determine what are and what are not that are beneficial to them, and how they can use the tools. This will then lead to their transformation, that is, by understanding what works and not work for them they change for the better, instead of lingering in their previous world of ignorance. At the same time, they must also be able to manipulate the information acquired to ensure that it can be used to accomplish the task that they have undertaken for themselves (ibid.).

Knowles et al. (2005) summarized the three main definitions of learning by different authors as:

"Learning involves change. It is concerned with the acquisition of habits, knowledge, and attitudes. It enables the individual to make both personal and social adjustments .... Learning that occurs during the process of change is referred to as the learning process. Learning is a change in the individual, due to the interaction of that individual, and his environment which fills a need and makes him more capable of dealing adequately with his environment. The definition of learning is therefore 'reflected in a change of behaviour as the result of experience."

These definitions are supported by Cronbach (1963) who stated that, "Learning is shown by a change in behaviour as a result of experience". Essentially, learning is therefore about effecting change as the outcome of an individual's experience regardless of whether change occurs unconsciously, consciously, or through volition.

In learning, there are two main forms: *pedagogy* – children's learning that are teacher-directed; and, *andragogy* – adult learning that are student-directed. Interestingly, the youth phase being a transitional period of being a child towards adulthood requires both pedagogical and andragogical learning systems. These two terms may seem to be rather academic, but if we want to understand how youth learning and their development takes place, it is necessary to at least have a fundamental understand of both these two concepts.

The United Nations believes that a holistic approach to education should always consider the formal, non-formal and informal learning as complementary and mutually reinforcing elements (World Youth Report, 2003, pp. 45 - 46). Many people have the notion that learning only takes place in the formal, school system. Activities during after-school hours have nothing to learning. That is a misconception. A lot of learning actually takes place during these after-school hours. This is where non-formal and informal learning takes place.

Non-formal education has been defined by Philip Coombs (in World Youth Report, 2003) as "any organized educational activity outside the established formal system ... that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives", ... "but that is not necessarily 'educational' in the classic of the word". This form of education is both complementary and supplementary to formal education as it provides an alternative learning opportunities to those who are unable to pursue formal education or what is said to be 'catch-up' learning. However, it is by no means supposed to replace the formal learning system.

Non-formal learning facilitates the learning of lifelong knowledge and skills that is important to provide culturally, socially and economically appropriate

education. This form of learning comes about in a variety of ways. Although it is structured, its duration tend to be shorter, varying from a few days to a few weeks, or over a series of sessions. It can be in the form of short courses that is more skill-based, or it can be about enhancing one's knowledge and skills through conferences, seminars, workshops or whatever organized event where learning can take place. It can also be through an extension education programme where an extension agent disseminates information and transfer new technologies to the user to either induce voluntary behavior change, or help clients fulfill their needs and solve their problems, or links clients to evolving research-based and tested knowledge, technologies, procedures and perspectives that may be of interest and useful purpose to the client (Rahim Md. Sail, 1995).

The extension mission is therefore to help people to develop their capacity and potential to manage and cope with changes in their environment (Rahim Md. Sail, 1995). This is a form of learning system that is focused on imparting new knowledge and skills that can be applied, but is an education that does not lead to earning any qualification or accreditation of the new knowledge and skills learned. In youth development, extension education enables the youth work professionals or their leaders to impart new approaches in managing and developing the youths.

Learning for young people should not merely be to pass examinations and ends when they get a well paying job. It is also about inculcating the appreciation and habit of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning leads to increase participation in continuing education and vocational training. Socially, lifelong learning has the benefits of personal development and active citizenship, as well as nurturing the joy of learning. Young people should learn how to learn as life is a never-ending learning experience of discovery, curiosity, wonder, and surprises (Cohen-Gewerc & Stebbins, 2007). They must not only learn technical skills, but also learn to develop the human abilities that make them more adaptable human beings that allow them to attain a full and meaningful purpose in their lives. That is important for them to develop themselves and for giving to others: to constantly enlighten and awaken them (ibid).

Yes, the joy of learning. That is very important when learning. Learning must be enjoyable. If it is not, then the learner must find a way to make it enjoyable for him or herself. Learning can become enjoyable when it is undertaken as an adventurous journey of self-discovery and enlightening experiences.

As a matter of fact, a lot of learning also takes place informally, and it happens most of the time in our lives. It is just that we may not be conscious about it. A lot of things in life are learned through informal learning, many of

which cannot be taught through the formal school curriculum. The late Peter Henschel, then director of the Institute for Research on Learning (IRL) believes that, "… the workhorse of the knowledge economy that has been, and continues to be, informal learning" (cited in Cross, 2007). Dick Sethi states that, "Informal learning is effective because it is personal, just-in-time, customized and the learner is motivated and open to receiving it. It also has greater credibility and relevance" (ibid.). Informal learning is the unofficial, unscheduled, impromptu way people learn, wrote Cross (2007).

This form of learning is particularly relevant to youth because youth is a phase in life of experimentation and exploration, searching for an identity and place in society, determining the right career path, exploring values, establishing social networks and developing family life. All the experiences and twists and turns in their lives are opportunities in informal learning. It is only a question of whether they are able to learn positively from those experiences or not. If they do, their future in adulthood will be progressive. If otherwise, their whole lives will be in tatters and ruined. It is thus very important for them that every moment of their lives is a classroom, provided they see it that way. Every challenge they encounter, every joy and pain, every mistake they made, these are all lessons for them to be learned, and to be wiser when they reached their adulthood. However, through non-formal learning approaches, informal learning could be enhanced where the youth are guided and facilitated in their learning process.

The distinctions among these three forms of learning are that formal learning takes place in schools and training institutions, but more for the purpose of developing vocational and professional capacities. Non-formal learning however, takes place with community groups and other organizations and this includes youth leadership programmes. In informal learning, there is no classroom or organization, but in interactions with friends, family and work colleagues, and even oneself. Nonetheless, in incorporating all these three forms of learning, learning becomes more holistic for the youth.

Studies on youth learning by Choy and Delahaye (2003, 2005) suggest a four-stage learning process for youths from being more teacher than student-centred, that is, high pedagogy/low andragogy (Stage 1); to a combination of both high pedagogy/high andragogy (Stage 2); then to being more student-centred or low pedagogy/high andragogy (Stage 3) where they require less teacher-directedness, yet at the same time still require some guidance. However, they suggest that most youth will be at Stage 2 in their learning orientation where learning is facilitated through a directive, but supportive approach in which the facilitator plays the role of a motivator and guide. Nonetheless, Stage 3 is also an important stage in

youth learning since the youths still need to be guided, but yet not being directed (as in high pedagogy) in their learning. This is similarly expressed by Tapscott (2009) whose findings from his worldwide research suggests that in the current new era of the *Net generation,* the trend in youth education is changing from a teacher-focused approach to a student-focused model based on collaboration. Their learning is now bred on *interactive experiences*. This suggests that youth learning should also be centred on experiences, that is, experiential learning. At the same time, they need to collaborate with others such as adults and their peers to support and guide them.

Finally, by the time youths reach adulthood and maturity, learning becomes self-directed, habitual and lifelong, that is, low pedagogy/low andragogy (Stage 4). In adulthood, they no longer need to be directed in their learning. They are able to learn on their own. Their learning becomes self-motivated. Their learning occurs constantly from experiences in their daily life activities. By the time they attain adulthood, their learning should have become a natural, habitual process without anymore self-motivation nor self-directedness. It just flows along automatically and effortlessly.

From the study by Choy and Delahaye (2003, 2005), some key elements of youth learning can be deduced: (1) there should be preferably a combination of child (pedagogy) and adult (andragogy) learning approaches where they have to be guided in their learning, but their learning should not be directed, that is, they decide what and how they want to learn; (2) youths prefer to learn through their peers, family, friends and adults, suggesting that their learning be guided through mentoring, coaching, counseling, role modeling, and empowerment, (3) experiential form of learning through informal and non-formal means (where a semi-formal structure exists) that are relevant for them and relates to the real world; (4) their learning process should progress in stages from being dependent on their teachers to being guided, facilitated, and eventually being self-directed and self-motivated, that is, being slowly weaned towards independence and empowerment in their learning; (5) their learning should result in developing critical thinking and reflective skills; and (6) learning through self-awareness, understanding and appreciating that leads to inculcating lifelong learning culture.

Learning and development is a continuous, unending, incremental and lifelong process in an individual's life. So for youths to develop themselves, they must continuously be able to learn, unlearn, and relearn. What they learned today, may no longer be applicable tomorrow, and they have to unlearn what they have learnt, and relearn new things that come with the new environment.

Learning is therefore, very critical and vital during the transitional phase of being youth. In doing so, this can either lead them to a positive and successful future in their lives or lead them otherwise. Learning and development goes hand-in-hand. They complement each other, but are not mutually inclusive.

Since there are two main approaches to educating and learning – *pedagogy*, or child learning, and andragogy that is concerned with adult learning, they are two ends in the continuum of learning. However, as the development phase of a youth is the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, how then should the approach of youth learning be?

Yale University (2000) has therefore suggested a new term – *"pandragogy"* for the transitional phase of teaching to learning approaches that meets the didactic approach for how youths learn in their transitional phase of developing towards adulthood from childhood. This concept can then correlate with Stage 2 and 3 of Choy and Delahaye's (2003, 2005) learning phases. However, they acknowledged that there is a total lack of theories or principles on youth learning and believes that youth learners are the authentic neglected species even though a clear understanding of how youth learn is critical to the design of changes in teaching and facilitation practices that will enhance learning.

MENTORING AND YOUTH LEARNING

In this context, the mentoring practice through an adult-youth relationship that has been found to be an effective approach in youth development programme strategies could be the strategic approach in enabling youth learning, but the learning aspect should be through non-formal and informal experiential learning approaches. Nonetheless, Rhodes and Spencer (2010) has cautioned the use of mentoring where other skills are more relevant compared to mentoring relationships, and that there are limits to mentoring programmes where it may not be appropriate in engaging with youths who have moderately high levels of psychological, behavioral, or social difficulties (Rhodes, 2002).

Generally though, mentoring has been found to be an effective tool in facilitating youth development, particularly through adult-youth partnership or through peers, and as a means to strengthen adult support and guidance in the lives of youth (Rhodes, 2002, cited in Clary & Rhodes, 2006). Clary and Rhodes (2006) also cited Rhodes and Roffman (2003) that young people are most likely to experience improvements in academic, psychological, social and behavioural characteristics through adult volunteer mentoring that last a year or longer.

The fundamental process and the primary purpose of mentoring according to Zachary (2000) is learning, and this includes the transmission of knowledge as its element (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007, p. 724). Bozeman and Feeney (2007) further defined it as entailing "... an informal communication, usually face-to-face during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé)" (p. 731). It was pointed out by Hezlett (2005) that the mentoring relationship enables the increase in the learning outcomes of cognitive learning, affective learning, and skill-based learning.

Megginson and Garvey (2004, cited in Brockbank & McGill, 2006) defined it in the context of a relationship between two people with learning and development as its purpose. Brockbank and McGill (2006) also cited the report by Caruso (1992) that the functions of mentoring has been identified as: 1) learning technical skills and knowledge; 2) learning the current job; 3) learning organizational culture; 4) learning organizational policies; and 5) preparation for a future job. But that is not enough. It includes being a teacher and coach, providing encouragement and support, shaping behavior using reinforcement, stimulate growth with challenging assignments, narrate growth and development, nurture creativity, and being an intentional model among others (Johnson & Ridley, 2008).

The mentoring process employs techniques such as coaching which include advise, guidance, counseling and support (Cranwell-Ward et al., 2004), and reflective dialogue on the experiences to facilitate effective learning outcomes (Zachary, 2000). Cranwell-Ward et al. (2004) cites one definition of mentoring by Bennetts (1994) as: *"A mentor is that person who achieves a one-to-one developmental relationship with a learner; and one whom the learner identifies as having enabled personal growth to take place"* (p. 26). Another definition by Kay and Hinds (2005) is that of "... a relationship between two parties, who are not connected within a line management structure, in which one party (the mentor) guides the other (the mentee) through a period of change and towards an agreed objective" (p. 16). To Stebbins (2006) "... a mentor is someone who, with regard to a particular area of life, is both trusted and respected by a protégé, where trust and respect are based on a significant level of experience and knowledge that the latter believes the former to have" (p.5).

Coaching is employed during the mentoring relationship when the mentor is helping the mentee to increase the mentee's performance and capability and in developing the mentee's skills and knowledge (Somers, 2008). The mentor also coaches the mentee on how to learn by themselves by giving guidance and help in reflecting on their experiences so that the mentee understands what has been learned through the experience (ibid.). The focus of mentoring is more towards

long-term development, whereas, in coaching, the focus is on immediate learning and development needs (ibid.).

The mentoring approach to learning is, therefore, of a partnership and relationship between two people one of whom, the mentor, provides the trust and support to guide, advise, help the other party who is the mentee and learner, towards the mentee's personal growth and development. The mentor's role is that of a coach, counselor, facilitator, as well as evaluator (since the mentor needs to evaluate the mentee's progress in order to provide the necessary guidance and support) (Cranwell-Ward et al., 2004). This relationship requires both the mentor and mentee to be comfortable with each other and have a mutual understanding with some ground rules set before the relationship starts (Kay & Hinds, 2005). In this relationship, the decision maker is the mentee, not the mentor. The mentee has to take responsibility for his/her decisions since the role of the mentor is just to guide, help, advise, and facilitate. In facilitating learning, the mentor connects knowledge, skills, or competencies to action in the present and possible by enabling the mentee to reflect on their experiences.

Rhodes and DuBois (2008) in citing a study by DuBois and Silverthorn in 2005, reported that mentoring relationships during adolescence exhibited significantly better youth outcomes in the domains of education, work, mental health, problem behavior and physical health. Research on mentoring relationships has indicated a promotion of positive youth development. But that the positive effects such as improvements in school work, social relationships, and behavioural outcomes will be more significant through mentoring relationships of a longer period such as those that last at least 1 year (Rhodes & DuBois, 2008 in citing Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Dallos & Comley-Ross, 2005). In addition, Rhodes and DuBois (2008) also noted that mentoring relationships may also facilitate identity development in youth. And they concluded that optimal and sustained benefit to young people of mentoring relationships should be supported by caring relationships between adults and youth.

Hezlett's (2005) literature research on protégés learning in mentoring relationships suggested that in mentoring relationships, protégé learning has a pivotal role on the benefits of mentoring such as in speeding up the development of talented staff and developing a wider pool of managers. She also found meaningful relationships between experiences in mentoring relationships and learning, as well as negative relationships in negative mentoring experiences. There are correlations between learning and career, and psychosocial mentoring. An interesting case is that of the collapse of mentoring relationships when there is the lack of opportunity to learn. Her findings therefore suggest that the opportunity to learn is very important in a mentoring relationship for without it the mentoring

relationship will either collapse or become meaningless. In addition, she also proposed integration with the taxonomy of learning outcomes as they found that mentoring received and distal career outcomes can be mediated by cognitive, skill-based, and affective learning.

Harrison, Lawson and Wortley (2005) proposed a model of mentoring that takes into account critical reflective practice where experiential learning takes place since in the Kolb cycle reflective observation is part of the process. They suggested that this practice should take place during mentor meetings. According to them, this practice requires a degree of nurturing and professional example accompanied with principles of vision, support and challenge. Success comes "....where people act, rather than reacting, are empowered, involved in decision-making through transparent, facilitative and supportive structure and are trusted, respected, encouraged and valued" (Mulford, 2003, p. 50, cited by Harrison et al., 2005). What is suggested here then is what should be practiced in the Award programme by the mentors.

It was John Dewey in the early 1900s who argued that "all genuine education comes about through experience". Experience is considered the best teacher. Many psychologists today have come to realize that changes in behavior works best by experience, with trial and error the primary mechanism at work (Garvin, 2000). This process, as argued by Garvin (2000) is most effective when it is situated and grounded on concrete activities and past experience.

But it was only in the 1970s and 1980s through the work of David A. Kolb and Roger Fry that the famous model of experiential learning was created. Their model comprise of four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, formation of abstract concepts, and testing in new situations. It is a learning cycle in a continuous spiral where the cycle can begin at any one of the four points (Smith, 2001).

A common denomination derived from the literature reviews of experiential learning and mentoring relationships is found to be *reflection*, from where reflective learning takes place. This is an active and intentional learning on what could be and has been learned through the experiences that the learner has gone through (Edginton et al., 2005). It is a form of response of the learner to experience (Boud et al., 1985). Experience alone according to Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) is not the key to learning. They cited Duley (1981) who points out that 'the skill of experiential learning in which people tend to be most deficient is reflection'. This view is shared by Brockbank and McGill (2006) that reflection is also the basis for successful mentoring and coaching where it promotes learning – the acquisition and construction of knowledge (Knapp, 2001) - that then leads to development and contributes to transformation of one kind or another.

In Kolb's experiential learning model, one of the stages is on observation and reflection where the learner observes from the experience, then reflects and conceptualises on the experience. Reflection of the observation enables the conceptualization of concepts. In experiential learning, the learner intentionally reflects and learns by him or herself. While this is similarly practiced in mentoring, reflection is instead facilitated by the mentor during their active interactive session together (Brockbank & McGill, 2006; Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). It need not be an individual activity. It can also take place during debriefings in a simulation or a workshop session, or a field trip, or a lecture (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). They explained that the importance of reflection is that the learners recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over, and evaluate it. The human consciousness will then make choices about what we will or will not do. In the context of learning, reflection is considered an intellectual and affective activity in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985).

In Boud's, Keogh's and Walker's (1985) model, reflection goes through a three-stage process: Stage 1 – Returning to Experience; Stage 2 – Attending to Feelings; and Stage 3 – Re-evaluating the Experience. And as a result of that is the association of connecting ideas and feelings to the original experience and those that occurred during reflection with existing knowledge and attitudes. The association then needs to be processed to examine its meaning and usefulness to the learner. Validation then takes place to test the new realities. The new information will then need to be integrated to be appropriated in a personal way to become the learner's own. This will now become the new outcomes for the learner to take action by deciding on a new way of doing something, clarifying an issue, developing a new skill or resolving a problem.

In this context, learning is internalized and becomes the person's independent developmental achievement, but a guided learning experience towards developmental change as suggested by Vygotsky's social learning theory of zone of proximal development (Knapp, 2001, p.33). Bandura's Social learning theory (1977 cited in Bandura, 1989) is where youth mentor learning can be based on because the theory suggests that youth would learn through role modeling in which by observing and modeling themselves on adult role models such as their mentors, they reinforce and regulate their own self-control in learning and development in self-efficacy. The humanist theories suggest that mentors provide the youth mentees with guidance to realise their potentials, while the constructivists believe in the young people's ability to actively construct their own development, and the behaviorists propose that the young people will be able to pursue their own growth when the environment enabled them to do so such as the facilitation and opportunities provided by their mentors.

Nevertheless, while mentors try to educate, they can only facilitate learning. But how can learning be facilitated? Race (2010) has suggested that successful learning comes about when the learner: (1) wants to learn, that is, the intrinsic motivation; (2) need to learn, or the extrinsic motivation to learn ; (3) learn by doing, that is, experiential learning; (4) learn through feedback (such as feedbacks from their mentors); (5) make sense of learning, that is, digesting and understanding; (6) learning through coaching, explaining, teaching by reflecting on what has been taught or explained; and, (7) making informed judgments by assessing what has been learned, and then applying them in future actions. This then implies that there has to be an environment that could facilitate learning. And what is that environment for learning, especially in the unique youth environment?

A recent study was conducted on a group of secondary school students from a private residential college in Malacca where the respondents are participants of a leisure-based youth award programme, that is, Anugerah Remaja Perdana Rakan Muda. This study on mentoring practice where it includes coaching, reflecting, facilitating, mentoring relationship, mentor bonding, and guiding found that facilitation ($r = .680$, $t = 3.896$, $p < .05$) and coaching ($r = .640$, $t = 2.405$, $p < .05$) were the main predictors of learning outcomes, and respectively), whereas, reflection ($r = .495$, $t = -.382$, $p < .05$) guiding ($r = .501$, $t = -.219$, $p < .05$) and mentoring relationship ($r = .450$, $t = .634$, $p < .05$) were not. Reflecting is considered as being part of the process in facilitation and coaching, while guiding is related to problem-solving with mentees. Bonding was not significant at all nor correlated ($r = .009$, $t = -.941$, $p = .466$) with learning or in the mentoring practice suggesting that bonding was not established in the mentor-mentee relationship which the study suggested was only moderately correlated or has only a substantial relationship on learning outcomes. Nonetheless, this study indicated that mentoring has a relationship to and a predictor of learning as other literature suggested ($F(1,88) = 56.41$, $r = .625$, $t = 7.511$, $p < .05$) but not so much on the mentor-mentee relationship. It is more of the process and practice of the other elements of mentoring that contributes to learning outcomes and behavioral change. The study then suggested that 39% of the variance in overall learning is explained by mentoring.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

The environment in which youth have the opportunities for learning leading to their leadership development is through programmes and activities. When youth participates in high-quality, creative and meaningful programmes, it will promote and foster social interaction, personal growth, leisure skills and educational opportunities (Edginton & Edginton, 1994). Programmes that are community recreation-based can contribute to the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive

development of youth to provide a holistic strength-based approach when the potential assets are capitalized in each community (Outley *et al.*, 2011). According to Garst *et al.* (2011), the camping experience, for instance, can develop values on connection with nature, group living experiences, fun, meaningful engagement, personal growth, and skill development because it encompasses the affective, cognitive, behavioural, physical, social, and spiritual benefits that offers supports and opportunities for positive youth development.

Play, according to Mainella *et al.* (2011) provides youth with the opportunities to encounter challenge and develop skills in everyday life, as well as to benefit them in their physical, mental, cognitive, and socio emotional health and development. Adventure-based programming is also a model for positive youth development due to their structure, purpose, the range of experiences that it offers, and the diversity of population that it serves, including developing competence, moral character, strong relationships, self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, identity development, and resilience (Sibthorp & Morgan, 2011).

Sports, in the form of leisure (Danish *et al.*, 2004; DeGraaf *et al.*, 1999; Edginton *et al.*, 2002; Torkildsen, 2005; Russell & Jamieson, 2005) have been found to promote positive youth development when the children and young people learn values and skills, but the positive or negative effects depend on the structure and context of the activity such as physical and psychological safety, clear and consistent structure and appropriate adult supervision, supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, opportunities for skill building, and integration of family, school and community efforts. But according to Danish *et al.* (2004), it must not overlook the reasons that will attract youths to participate, to meet their individual personal goals, and satisfaction. Among these attractions are for them to improve their skills, to have fun, and to be with friends or make new friends through their peer relationships, and that whatever skills they develop, must have learning of life lessons as the outcomes.

Danish *et al.* (2006) further pointed out that sports in various forms can teach responsibility; promote education and recreation, promoted local cultures and language, in addition to the promotion of fitness and health through an active lifestyle. In the social context, sports contribute to social outcomes such as promoting social integration, social inclusion, a platform for social democracy, develops democratic citizenship, and has also been found to establish social capital (Bailey, 2008). Sports participation is also a significant factor in developing the youths' identity, self-esteem, and competence; learning the skills of responsibility, conformity, persistence, risk taking, courage, and self-control; and including life skills that include goal setting, effective communication, problem solving, dealing

with conflict, managing emotions, providing and receiving feedback, accepting independence, appreciating differences, and managing time and stress; as well as interactive skills and leadership (Danish *et al.*, 2006).

In examining all these programmes, they are actually contexts for youth leadership development where in developing positive youth assets, they are also developing the attributes and qualities of youth for future leadership roles. Meanwhile, in the process, learning takes place at the same time. However, in relation to youth learning, the youth needs to be guided and facilitated through mentoring while engaging in these youth leadership programmes.

Through this process of youth leadership development, the role of current leaders is not directed from the top down, but instead from the bottom up as illustrated in Figure 1. In developing youth leaders, programmes should recognize the achievements of the youth and giving them the respect that they have earned. It is through their learning process in mentoring and empowerment that they develop the attributes of leadership and enables them to achieve their goals. In this model, the leadership is aimed at promoting and championing the achievements of the young people, and then giving them the recognition and respect.

Empowerment of youth is only for the youth to decide for him/herself what he/she wants and to make their own decision, but also to provide them with a sense of ownership as suggested by Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah (2010). As owners of their own decision, they will then sustain their efforts to achieve the goals they have set and outlined for themselves. The recognition and respect accorded to them when their goals are met will further reinforce their efforts to grow and progress further in life and to ensure that they continue to contribute meaningfully back to the society that have supported them.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME MODEL

A programme however, will not materialise by itself. It has to start from somewhere and then end somewhere. Witt and Caldwell (2005) argued that it is not a simple matter of offering a programme and claiming that it is of benefit to the young people, nor lead to their leadership development. They reiterate that programmes must be able to demonstrate their intended outcomes that are relevant and effective which in this case, would be their leadership development.

Witt's and Caldwell's (2010) *evidence-based* approach suggests that there must also be theoretical explanations and evaluations to explain how programmes can achieve their targeted goals. It is important to anchor on theory in order to explain and link the process in the programme with specific outcomes. In their theory-based programming, theory, programme components, and outcomes are

all linked in successive steps with theory supporting the links between each of the steps. There should be logical flow in the development of a youth leadership programme. The Figure 2 *Logic Model* demonstrates that programme components lead to *proximal* or short-term or immediate outcome as the first step. The second step is the *distal* or broader/intermediate/medium outcome further out in time. Last are the ultimate or long-term outcomes.

However, based on that initial model, Witt and Caldwell (2010) has further strengthened and expanded the model where programme development starts with *thinking* and *determining* how the outcomes will be achieved, that is, what the programme should ultimately be achieving. The next step then is to identify the *resources* and *inputs* needed (e.g., staff, facility, supplies). This is followed by the *activities* where the resources are used to conduct the activities (e.g., events held during the course of the activities). The third step is the *outputs* (e.g., participation, recommendations, products produced, decisions made). It is the type, amount, services that was delivered if the programme was successful. However, the process of the model does not end here. If the products and services were *delivered*, what short or long-term benefits are derived from them – the *outcomes*? For instance, Witt and Caldwell (2010) suggests that short-term outcomes could be the development of attitudes, knowledge, or skill of the youths; while in the long term it could be the changes in youth behavior and skill competence. These outcomes are basically intrinsic, that is, what happens to the youth individually as a result of the programme. And this can include the positive assets that were developed through the programme. However, outcomes are not enough. Ultimately, what is wanted and expected is what *impact* these changes in the youths will have an effect on their lives as well as that of their community, and the nation. This could be translated into, e.g., their performance in schools, their volunteer contributions to society, their leadership role, and their contributions to nation building. In relation to Learner's (2005) six *C's* concept of positive youth development, the final impact step of the logic model could be the sixth *C*, that is, contribution through leadership.

While, in implementation, the flow in programme development follow the steps as outlined in Figure 2. But in the initial process of planning, the process starts in reverse, that is, the impact of a programme should be considered first, followed by what the outcomes are to be and finally the resources and inputs required. Figure 3 is an illustration of the model adapted from Witt and Caldwell (2010).

Finally, there has to be leadership to ensure that programmes will generate the impact that it aims to achieve as demonstrated by the logic model. Edginton and Edginton (1994) have stressed that programmes for youth must be *youth-centred* in order to meet the needs of youth. And that programme objectives should lead to youth behavioural change outcomes.

Therefore in this context, youth leadership is no longer about directing or telling the youth what he/she should be and should do. It is now about facilitating, coaching, and guiding them towards the right direction for their future lives that they are going to inherit. Leading youth means engaging and empowering them. Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, the Deputy Minister for Higher Education (2012) suggests that empowering is about "....channeling idealism, activism, intellectualism, experience, motivation and energy" that the youth possess. This is about giving them trust and ownership to generate their self-esteem and unleash their talent in the decision-making process and providing them with a sense of ownership. Only then can it ensure sustainability. Empowerment is defined by Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah as, *"...enabling youth to think, decide and act upon all issues that concern themselves and everything around them which they are part of...".*

CONCLUSION

The development of youth as the nation's human resource asset and leadership is not merely about creating and generating programmes for their participation or to engage with them. It has to include developing their positive assets through their learning process and outcomes. Youth leadership programmes are then the platforms where these positive youth development and youth learning are enablers in their development as human resource assets and leadership who could contribute to community and national development goals and objectives (Figure 4).

The significant contribution of youth is to generate an impact on their community, their nation, and the world they live in. It is about them being leaders and agents of change in the world they live in. The true or ultimate success of a youth development programme is measured on the impact that takes place in the long-term, and should not be merely on the outputs. The impact can be those generated by the contributions of the youth and include the changes that occur in the future after the programme is over through their leadership roles.

This development of the young people with positive assets to ensure that they are human resource assets and leaders is not a simple process. It is a lengthy and complicated process. In any youth programme planning, the long term impact has to be seriously considered because it is about creating a new generation where the impacts would only be tangible and realized at least 20 years in the future. There is no room for short term vision if the quality of youth as future leaders during their adulthood is to be ensured. The impact would also not be felt or realized through a one-off programme, but a series of activities over each phase of the proximal, distal, and ultimate outcomes. This *logic* model of programme development emphasizes on a systematic and well-planned process

At the same time, it is necessary to inculcate the habit and practice of lifelong learning. In a rapidly evolving and changing world, it is not possible to prepare them for what could happen in their lives in the coming years. A lot of events happening in this world cannot be predicted and beyond human control, among them natural disasters and economical collapse. It is also not possible to influence the actions of the next person.

What the youth can be prepared for is to equip them with the assets and leadership attributes that would enable them to be able to take charge of and be responsible for their own lives whatever the consequences that would happen. With the relevant assets, they will then be able to unlearn an old situation, and relearn the new situation, then adapt, and engage with the situation to deal with it. The assets will be enablers for them to handle and deal with all challenges that they encounter.

Learning of the youth is therefore very important in order for them to develop the necessary assets and resources for their future survival. At the same time, supports have to be given them to determine their own destiny. Opportunities to engage with their community through participation and engagement in programmes and activities will facilitate their development, growth and progress.

Policy makers, including in Malaysia, should then recognize that they play a very important role and function to provide the relevant support and opportunities that enables the young people to grow, develop and be future leaders. The young people however, should not be dictated nor be imposed based on the vision of the adults, but instead be mentored and guided to empower them with the vision of their own destiny and the ability to undertake the long journey that is sustainable for their own future for there are their own inheritors and beneficiaries of the world ahead of them. However, they should recognize that in doing so, they should emphasize on youth learning for the youth to develop their positive assets, and that this would be enabled through youth leadership programmes as platforms where the programmes are developed through a systematic and logical model aimed at achieving a long-term impact on the community and the nation.
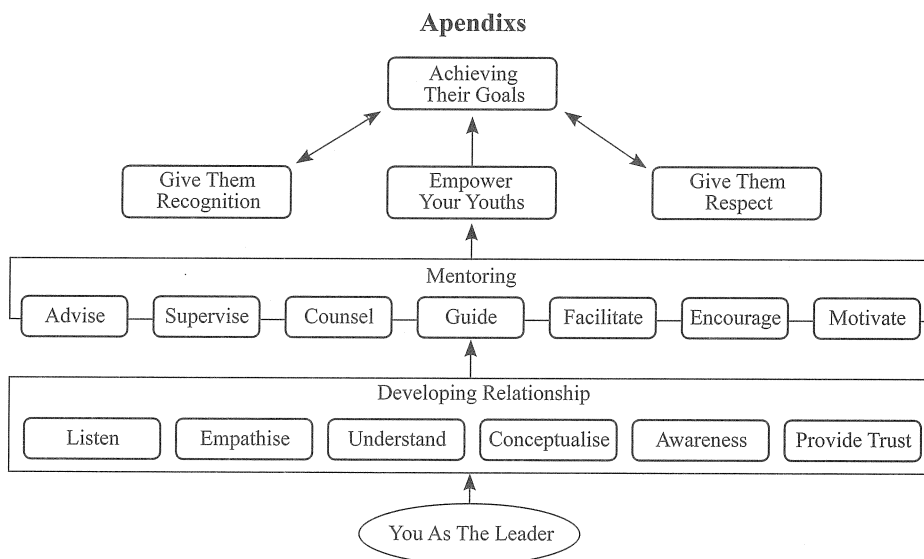
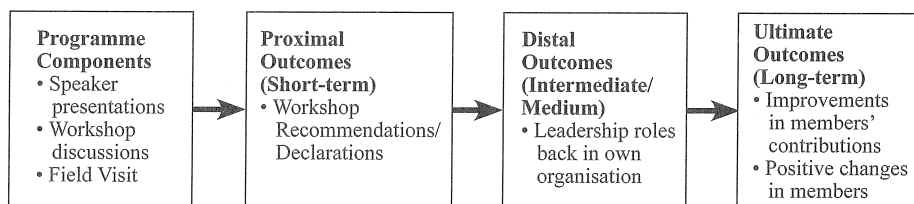**Apendixs**

Figure 1:LEADING THE YOUTH

**Figure 2: LOGIC MODEL OF PROGRAMME OUTCOMES
OF A YOUTH WORKSHOP**
(Adapted from: Peter A. Witt & Linda L. Caldwell, 2005. Recreation and
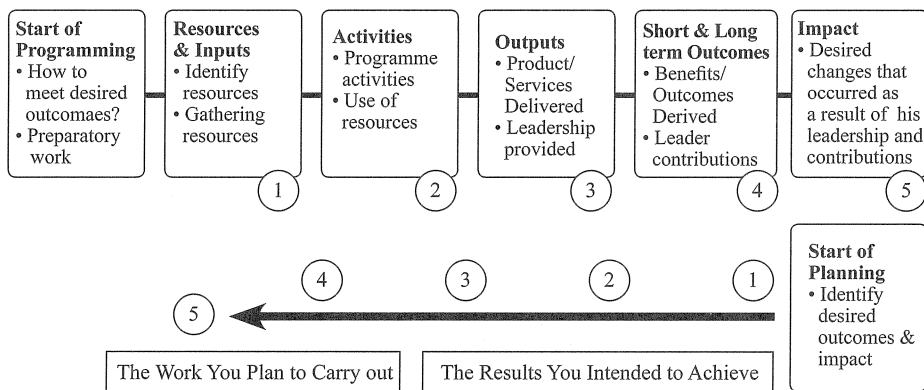Youth Development. Venture Publishing, Inc. p.223)

Figure 3: LOGIC MODEL OF YOUTH PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT
(Adapted from: Peter A. Witt & Linda L. Caldwell, 2010. The Rationale for Recreation Services for Youth: An Evidenced Based Approach. National Recreation and Park Association. p.27).
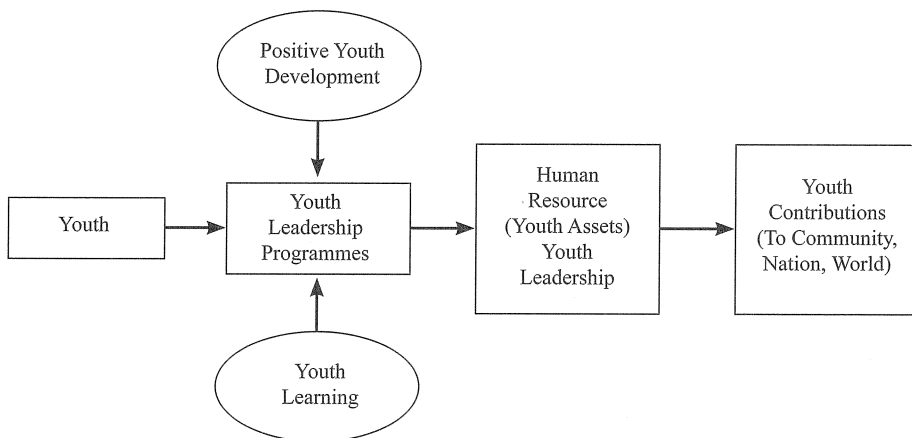

Figure 4: POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH LEARNING IN YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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